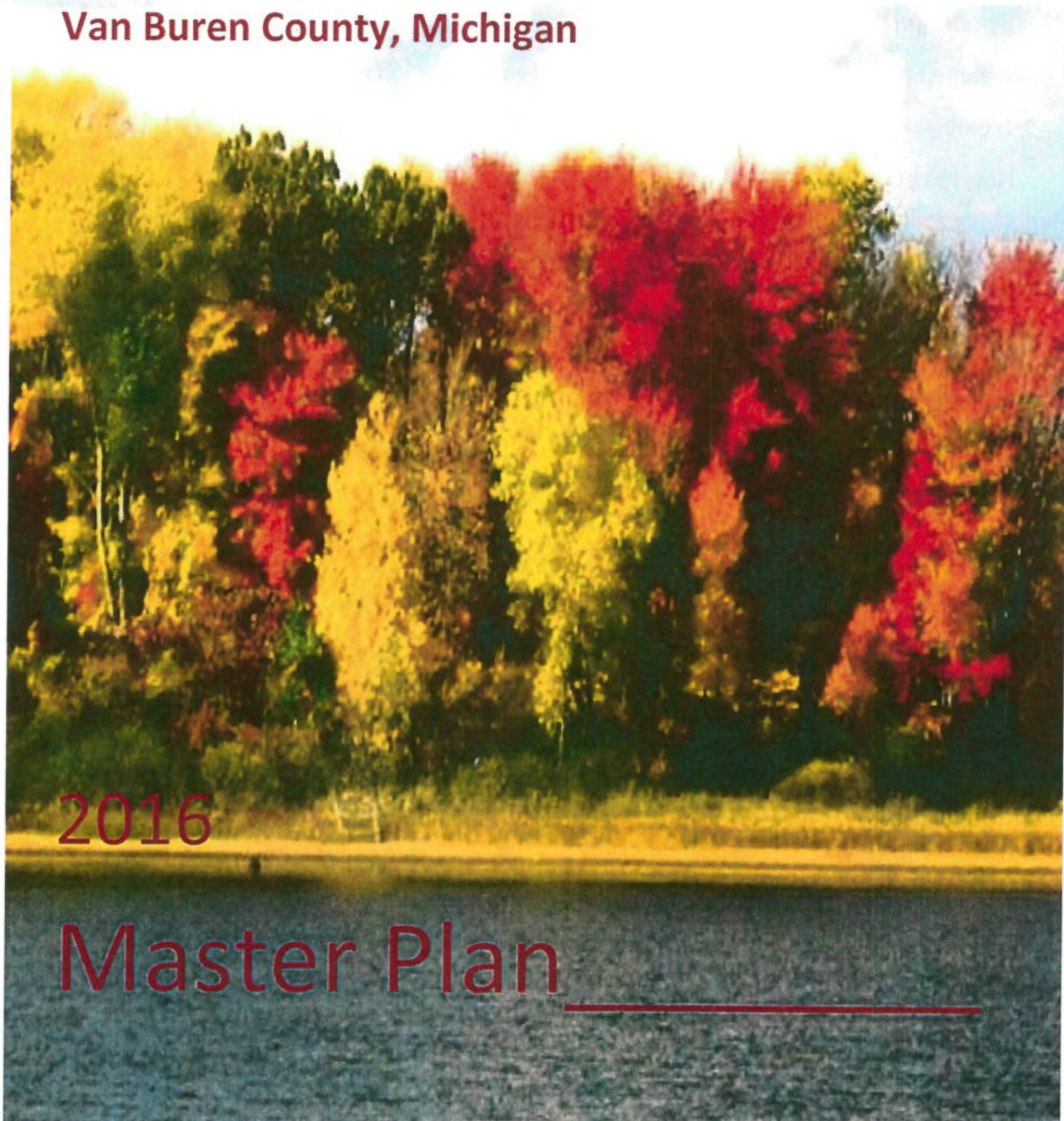


# Paw Paw Township

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Van Buren County, Michigan



2016

Master Plan

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## Chapter 1

### The Master Plan

#### Why Plan?

Paw Paw Township is responsible for considering the long-range consequences of their zoning and land use-related decisions. Those decisions should be guided by a big-picture view of the future of the Township that includes a variety of scenarios. Such an approach to the future of Paw Paw Township is provided through the Master Plan.

Protecting the local agricultural assets, supporting 'small farm' opportunities, the community's position in the region to serve as a key wine route and fresh food corridor, and a desire to move forward as a 'community' with the Village of Paw Paw have surfaced as critical land use issues for the Township. Community leaders and residents want to encourage economic vitality by promoting the Township's strengths while also protecting against sprawl.

Both supporters of growth and those of conservation have a common goal of 'good planning'. Both hold that a 'good plan' requires that the interests of land owners with aspirations to develop their property be balanced with maintaining the very assets that first attracted growth of the community.

The proximity of the Township to the variety and quality of local services provided in the Village of Paw Paw, the numerous local special events, and the advancing regional trailway system

extending through the area give Paw Paw Township unique agri-business and tourism opportunities. A good Master Plan should consider these factors and use the right planning tools to guide land use decisions so as to take advantage of the Township's strengths while still preserving its assets.

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Public Act 33 of 2008) gives communities the authority to adopt a Master Plan to 'address land use and infrastructure issues and may project 20 years or more into the future.' This Plan will provide direction for the use of land within the Township for the next 20 years, based upon the visions and desires of its residents.

#### What is a Master Plan?

The Master Plan can be a very effective tool for a community if there is a willingness to support and implement the vision and goals set forth in the Plan.

Consistent and deliberate use of the Plan's policies and strategies will provide the necessary foundation for land use decisions within the Township and give validity to the Township's zoning standards. A well-constructed Plan will also provide the guidance necessary to keep the community moving forward toward achieving its vision.

The Master Plan is recognized as:

1. . . . a general statement of the vision, goals and policies for the Township. It sets forth a single and comprehensive view of the Township's desires for the future.
2. . . . providing assistance in daily land use decision-making. The policies

set forth in the Plan should be used by the Planning Commission and the Township Board in their daily consideration of zoning regulations, subdivisions, capital improvements, and other land use-related issues.

3. . . . providing the statutory basis upon which zoning decisions are based. The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (Public Act 110 of 2006) requires that ‘the Zoning Ordinance be based upon a plan designed to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare.’
4. . . . providing direction for decisions about public services. New infrastructure or services should correspond with the Plan to give the Township control over new growth, to coordinate public improvements with private development, and to provide for fiscal responsibility.
5. . . . lending credibility in implementing controversial land use/zoning decisions.
6. . . . an educational tool. It provides the mechanism to clearly set forth the Township’s direction for the future to residents, property owners, developers, and surrounding communities.

## **The Master Plan’s Relationship to Zoning**

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The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act states that the ‘zoning ordinance shall be based upon a plan designed to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare, (and) to

encourage the use of lands in accordance with their character and adaptability . . .’

The Master Plan is a policy document and serves as the basis for the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map. Zoning decisions found to be inconsistent with the Plan may be found to be invalid by the courts.

In other words, the Master Plan sets forth the vision for the Township, while the Zoning Ordinance establishes the land use regulations designed to implement that vision. The areas delineated on the Future Land Use Map are called ‘land use classifications’ and are not the same as zoning districts on the Zoning Map. The land use classification sets forth the desired land use, whereas the zoning district establishes what can happen under current conditions.

To that end, the Future Land Use Map will not directly match the Zoning Map or align with existing land uses. However, the Plan reflects the long range desires for land development, and it is expected that future rezonings and land use decisions will conform to the Master Plan.

The Zoning Plan contained within the Master Plan describes how the land use classifications on the Future Land Use Map correlate to the zoning districts on the Zoning Map. The Zoning Plan will help determine how the Zoning Ordinance should be amended to implement the Master Plan.

## Can the Master Plan be Changed? \_\_\_\_\_

The Master Plan provides a guide for the future. As such, changing conditions can affect its original intentions. Over time, established goals will be achieved and new goals will be developed, certain zoning decisions may change the direction of development in a particular area of the Township, or decisions may be made that are contrary to the Plan. All of these changes should be acknowledged and addressed through amendments to the Master Plan.

Further, the Planning Act requires communities to review their current Master Plan every five years to determine whether amendments to the Plan are needed, or if a new Plan should be developed. The Planning Commission may elect to review the Plan on an annual basis to ensure that changes in the area are considered and that amendments are made responsive to current Township philosophies. An annual Planning Commission review will not only fulfill the five-year statutory review requirement, but will also guarantee that the Plan continues to provide relevant guidance on Township issues.

## Creating the Master Plan \_\_\_\_\_

The original Township Master Land Use Plan was adopted in 1978. In 1994, the Planning Commission completed preparation of the Master Plan for Land Use for Paw Paw Township, the Township's first update of the Master Plan.

In 2002, the Planning Commission determined that a complete update of the

Master Plan was in order based on an identified increase in demand for residential home sites and a change in commercial and industrial land use patterns in the area.

Significant public input was received during the 2002/2003 review process, including contributions through a comprehensive township resident/property owner survey. Interestingly, the concerns voiced in the survey and public comment were very similar to those identified by the Planning Commission in determining the need for an update of the Master Plan.

Following a comprehensive review of goal statements related to residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural and open space land use, specific goals and policies were developed for the period of 2003 through 2023. The new goals and policies set forth in the 2003 Master Land Use Plan Update were based on population projections, commercial and industrial development trends, and anticipated land preservation activities.

Consistent with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2008, the Planning Commission conducted a review of the Master Plan in 2015. It was determined that the Plan remains generally relevant on land use policies and continues to respond to the desires of the Township citizenry. A general update of the document was considered to be desirable, however, so as to incorporate current demographic data; respond to new planning law and land use regulatory options; and, recognize recent development activity in the Village of Paw Paw and land use trends within the region.

The Planning Commission and Township Board hired a planning consultant (Rebecca Harvey of Harvey Consulting) to assist them

in the update of the Master Plan for the Township. The 2016 Master Plan update was accomplished in four basic steps.

First, updated information about the community was gathered – demographics, land use, and other background material. This information is presented in Chapter 2 - Community Snapshot. The data set forth in the Community Snapshot was used by the Planning Commission to identify preliminary issues (strengths, concerns, opportunities) for the Township.

Through the use of public meetings, the public had an opportunity to consider the community profile and participate in confirming the values important to them. A summary of the results of the public participation process and the identified land use issues are set forth in Chapter 3 - Planning Issues.

The third step involved the development of Planning Principles. These Principles consist of a Vision, Goals, and Objectives/Strategies that serve as the foundation for the Plan. The Planning Principles are described in Chapter 4.

Lastly, using the Planning Principles as a guide, a Future Land Use Plan and Future Land Use Map were prepared (Chapter 5). The Implementation Plan was developed (Chapter 6) to guide this Plan into action.

The Planning Commission then initiated the adoption process required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. The draft Master Plan was reviewed by the Township Board and then released for review by the surrounding communities and the VanBuren County Planning Commission. Following the mandated review/comment period, the Planning Commission held a

public hearing on xxxxxxxx, 2016 and the Plan was adopted by the Township Board on xxxxxxxx, 2016. The resolution of adoption is copied on the inside back cover of this document, in accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act.





## How To Use This Plan \_\_\_\_\_

- ✓ If you are a *property owner*, you may have several interests, including the future identified for your property, as well as for other properties similarly designated.
- ✓ As a *homeowner*, you may be interested in the properties in your immediate neighborhood, including uses proposed for vacant land.
- ✓ As a *resident*, you may be interested in the overall vision for the Township as expressed in the Goals and Objectives. These statements should give you an indication of the view of the Township now, and in the future.

Generally, your use of the Plan should follow these steps:

**Step 1 - What land use is proposed for your property, or the area surrounding your property?**

This information is set forth on the Future Land Use Map and described in the Future Land Use Plan in Chapter 5. Find the land use classification in which your property is located and then read the description of the land use classification applied to your property.

Depending on the nature of your interest, this may be as far as you want to go. If you have a specific proposal that is inconsistent with the

expectations of the Plan, you will want to review the Plan in more detail.

**Step 2 - How does the Plan affect your property?**

The Future Land Use designation of your property indicates the planned use of your property. This does not mean that you cannot continue the use that you currently have. Land use within the Township is dictated by zoning. See the Zoning Ordinance or call the Township Office for zoning standards specific to your property.

**Step 3 - How does the Township view development in your area?**

The Future Land Use Plan and Map indicate the type of development planned for your area; it may be specific or somewhat general. The Future Land Use Classification descriptions set forth in Chapter 5 and the Goals and Objectives for future land use within the Township set forth in Chapter 6 provide details on the direction of future land use within your general area

The Master Plan will have an impact on the future of your property. It is important that you become familiar with the Plan and what it may mean to you and your community.



## Chapter 2

### Community Snapshot

#### Introduction

The Community Snapshot provides a profile of the Township and serves as the foundation of the Master Plan. An exploration of the existing conditions of an area . . . and the actions and trends that have created what we see around us . . . help us to recognize cause and effect and position us to have a better understanding of what our 'next steps' can and should be.

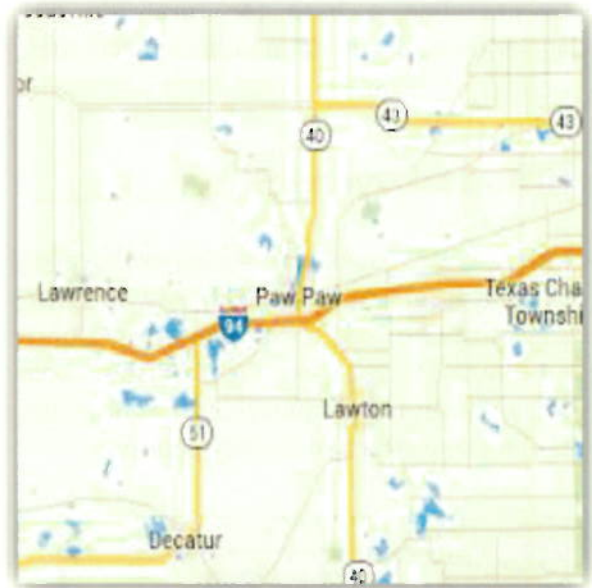
Yogi Berra once said, *'You got to be careful if you don't know where you're going, because you might not get there.'*

The community of Paw Paw is approximately 37 square miles in area, of which 34 square miles make up Paw Paw Township. . . with the remaining 2.8 square miles being occupied by the Village of Paw Paw. In addition to the 36 sections typical of a township, a little over a section in the southwest portion of Waverly Township was added to Paw Paw Township 'out of convenience' . . . this part being separated from the rest of Waverly Township by a swamp.

The community of Paw Paw (Village of Paw Paw and Paw Paw Township) is located in east-central Van Buren County, approximately 20 miles west of Kalamazoo. Three major highways (M-40, M-51 and Red Arrow Highway) serve the Township and provide easy access to nearby communities, as well as providing direct links to I-94 and US-131.

The area's transportation network situates Paw Paw in a prime residential and

commercial market area. In close proximity to several significant lakes (Lake Cora, Eagle



Lake, and Three Mile Lake) and located an easy distance from South Haven and Kalamazoo, the community of Paw Paw also serves as a recreational and service attraction.

Located within Southwest Michigan's wine and fruit producing region, the community

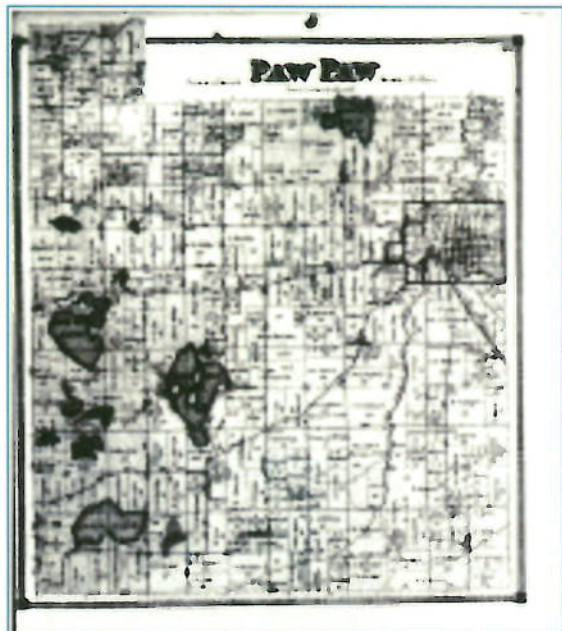
of Paw Paw has established itself as a destination for wine tasting and other agri-tourism opportunities.



Local industry, as well as local retail and service businesses, remain viable in the community and employ area workers; but the majority of residents commute to surrounding areas for employment. Local services continue to both support residents and attract visitors. Much of the land within the Township is in agricultural production or open space that is dedicated to providing a base for rural life and agricultural- or recreational-based activities.

### Historical Overview

Paw Paw Township, originally called Lafayette, and renamed Paw Paw in 1867, was formed by act of the Legislative Council on March 26, 1835 and included the whole of VanBuren County (which at that time was temporarily attached to Cass County).



The first township meeting was held in 1836 when Peter Gremps was chosen as

Supervisor. In March of 1837, by an act of the State Legislature, Lafayette (or VanBuren County) was divided into seven townships . . . of which the present Paw Paw Township retained the name of Lafayette.

The first settlement in the present township of Paw Paw was made upon the site of Paw Paw village in 1832, when Rodney Hinckley located upon a farm in the northern portion of the present village. In that year, Pierce



Barber, of Prairie Ronde, began the erection of a saw-mill on the river at the west end of the village. Barber soon sold his interest in the mill to Job Davis and Rodney Hinckley, who, however, soon disposed of it (in 1833) to Peter Gremps and Lyman J. Daniels.

These gentlemen bought the mill property, improved it, purchased considerable land in the vicinity, and laid out a village which they called Paw Paw. Daniels lived in Schoolcraft, and never became a settler in Paw Paw. Gremps, who came from the Mohawk Valley, in New York, to find a mill site in the West, returned to his home after purchasing the Paw Paw property, and did not settle permanently on his new possessions until 1835, when he moved into a cabin just west of the saw mill.

Early in the summer of 1835, Gremps sent word to Edward Legrave, of Kalamazoo, that he wanted a carpenter capable of building a good store. Legrave found Williamson Mason (a carpenter from Wayne Co., N. Y., who had been in the West working at his trade since 1832), and induced him to go over and build Gremps' store.

It was the first store in Paw Paw, and it stood west of Dodge's tavern. Gremps moved his family into the back part of the building before it was entirely finished, and soon afterwards stocked the store with goods which he had brought from New York.



Mason, who later became a resident and manufacturer in Paw Paw, claimed that when he came to the area in July, 1835, it contained 'on the east side of the river Rodney Hinckley's house, Dodge's tavern, and Dr. Barrett's cabin on the west side, Gremps & Daniels' saw mill, David Thorp's turning shop, and the two shanties occupied by Peter Gremps and Enos L. Barrett.'

Daniel O. Dodge's tavern became "one of the principal stopping places" along the

entire Territorial Road (present-day Interstate 94). Paw Paw's accommodations also influenced the location of Van Buren's governmental center.

As early as 1833, the Paw Paw River was regarded as navigable and was used as a highway for flat boats



between Paw Paw and Lake Michigan. "The Landing" near Lawrence village, came to be a place where freight was received for shipment down the river. However, efforts to use the shallow stream as a water highway were ultimately unsuccessful and it largely remained a mill stream.

In 1859, the Prospect Hill Cemetery Association was organized for the purpose of providing a public cemetery on Prospect Hill. 'Land was purchased there and laid out with lawns, smooth drives, walks, and other attractive



improvements'. Prospect Hill is one of the highest elevations in Van Buren County and, in 1875, a 127

foot high observatory was erected on its summit. It was said that on a clear day . . 'the waters of Lake Michigan and as many as thirty villages may be seen.'

The township was named in 1867 after the Paw Paw River, named by the Indians from the paw



paw fruit, an edible fruit resembling papayas, that grew thickly upon its banks.

## Land Use

### Agricultural

Agricultural preservation in the Township dates back to the first Township Plan in 1978. The Plan demonstrated that a vast majority of the land in the Township was used for agricultural purposes and that a portion of that land should remain in agricultural production in the future.

In the 1994 update to the Master Plan, a strong land use policy was established for agricultural preservation and 'Agriculture' became a future land use classification. Specific preservation strategies set forth in the Plan included 'large lot zoning'; a 'no utility installation' policy; the designation of 'prime agricultural lands'; and, support for continued active enrollment in the PA 116 Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act program.

The Township has continued to recognize the preservation of agriculture as a viable economic business opportunity . . . and has adopted an official Township policy to *'do everything within its power to support agriculture business operations and to preserve certain farmlands for future.'*

After a 2002 tour of Township farmland, a map was prepared that reflected the following three

categories of land use: farmland; open space; and rural homestead development.



It was then proposed that appropriate zoning tools would be employed within each category and/or the Township would seek to purchase (or acquire by donation) development rights for identified properties.

### Residential

Residential land use within Paw Paw Township consists largely of single family housing units located in rural densities and patterns.

Newer, subdivision-style residential development has occurred on a limited basis and has largely located in close proximity to the Village. Multiple family residential development represents approximately 25% of the Township's housing units.

A large percentage of the single family housing stock within the Township is located on the area's lake frontage, some of which is used only seasonally for recreation and vacation purposes. It is estimated that approximately 10% of the housing stock within the Township is considered 'seasonal housing', with some of the lakeside homes defined as 'lake cottages'.

### Commercial

Commercial land use in the area has developed primarily at the intersection of Red Arrow Highway and Kalamazoo Avenue (M-40). This major intersection has historically served as the 'downtown' of the Paw Paw community and continues as the commercial core in the area. It is occupied by a mix of retail, office and civic uses, intermingled with residential properties.

Generally, commercial development remains near the geographical center of the community, allowing for a vital commercial core and the growth of a strong civic center that includes the Village Offices, Township Offices, a library, post office, schools, and public lands.

The strength of this center has encouraged an active community life and has served to maintain a vital business district – as well as influence and support the surrounding commercial and residential land use pattern in the Township.

A potential challenge to the strength of the community's commercial core is unplanned growth along Red Arrow Highway, the Township's major corridor. Unlimited nonresidential development along Red Arrow Highway will serve to diminish the role of the Village core, destabilizing both the existing business district and the corridor itself.

### 43<sup>rd</sup> Street (CR 671) Corridor

Large agricultural parcels and limited residential land use exist along the 43<sup>rd</sup> Street corridor as it extends from I-94 north to Red Arrow Highway. Accented by random commercial land use at the 43<sup>rd</sup>

Street/Red Arrow Highway intersection to the north and the 43<sup>rd</sup> Street/I-94 interchange to the south, the area represents a corridor in transition.

This segment of 43<sup>rd</sup> Street is less than one mile in length and has the potential to serve as a neighborhood commercial corridor for the lake properties. Specific use/design standards will be needed to prevent random patterns of development that distract from its focus on the convenience needs of nearby residents and visitors.

### Industrial

Significant land area along Red Arrow Highway, just west of the Village of Paw Paw, has been set aside for industrial development, though currently only partially developed. Several processing plants, including Coca Cola/Minute Maid and Dr Pepper/Snapple, are located along the corridor and serve as employers in the area.





Coca-Cola North America has worked to be a responsible corporate citizen in Paw Paw and has supported

environmental initiatives ranging from watershed management to community and home recycling. The juice plant was the first in Michigan to shut down sprayfields and replace them with a \$7 million state of the art wastewater treatment facility.

Significant industrial growth beyond existing planned areas is not envisioned. Largely, the Township intends to continue to rely on adjacent communities who are recognized for their planned industrial development and the availability of utilities to support growth in this sector.

*Township Assets*

Paw Paw Township celebrates a rich historical and cultural heritage with its Village neighbor. The community’s history of wineries and distilleries has provided the area with the renowned annual Wine & Harvest Festival.



Further, the presence of the lakes in both Paw Paw Township and the Village of Paw Paw. . and the numerous related parks and recreational sites located in the center of the community have encouraged continued support of the civic realm within the Village, as well as a very active community life for community residents and visitors.



Land area within the Township is largely dedicated to agriculture operations, providing the Township with an opportunity to tap into the rising interest and success of Michigan’s ‘food systems planning’ initiative.

The agricultural land use pattern has also somewhat limited unwanted sprawl in the Township through its dominance of the landscape. The Township recognizes its ability to capitalize on these land use limits by identifying areas surrounding the Village of Paw Paw that are in close proximity to services and employment for targeted residential and mixed-use growth.

*Common Ground*

Paw Paw Township and the Village of Paw Paw not only share a history and common boundaries, they share a common major transportation corridor; community ‘gateways’; waterfront areas; and, recreational assets. Their potential for a successful economic future is tied together.



The Township recognizes that collaboration on land use strategies ranging from residential densities . . . to storm water management and water quality . . . to shoreline preservation . . . to 'gateway' streetscape and building design standards . . . to non-motorized trail networks . . . is possible.

## Transportation

Paw Paw Township is served by I-94 through which it is provided linkage to Kalamazoo and Battle Creek to the east . . . and Benton Harbor, and eventually Chicago, to the west. The Township is also served by Red Arrow Highway, a primary east-west



corridor in the County. This highway effectively connects the Paw Paw community with M-40, a key north-south route and the Allegan and Holland areas to the north.

Red Arrow Highway serves as a through transportation route for truckers and bypass traffic and so this corridor can experience reduced levels of function as it extends through the Township and Village.

The remaining street network within the Township consists largely of local roads.

Historically, the Paw Paw area was served by the West Michigan Railroad, a short line that traveled west to Hartford where freight cars were transferred to the CSX main line.



As of 2011, the railroad from Hartford to Paw Paw was all but abandoned. A filing with the Surface Transportation Board in 2012 requested abandonment of 10.67 miles of the line from Paw Paw west to a point west of 56th Street on the west side of Lawrence, Michigan. Since January 2013, a group of local officials has been considering converting the rail line into a rail trail patterned after the nearby Kal-Haven Trail.

In 2015, Pioneer Railcorp sold the capital stock of West Michigan Railroad Co, to an unaffiliated non-carrier entity, Hamilton Hartford Group, LLC, and is therefore no longer in control of WMI. The new owners have identified a dozen potential customers who have expressed interest in hauling freight along the line.

Passenger rail is available nearby in Kalamazoo and Battle Creek via the Amtrak lines west to Chicago and east to Detroit.

The nearest passenger airports are located in Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids. Public transit is not currently available within the Paw Paw community.

Having choices in transportation is recognized as providing benefits related to public health, a cleaner environment, economic development and mobility across all ages/abilities.



The adoption of a ‘complete streets’ approach to infrastructure planning and improvements within the Township would provide opportunities to improve safety, access, and mobility for all travelers in the Paw Paw community.

A ‘complete street’ is one that accommodates all people who use a roadway, not just those in cars. It offers a safe way for people to travel, regardless of their age, ability or mode of transportation—whether walking, biking, using transit or driving a car. Where we have ‘complete streets’, people have choices in transportation right outside their door that are affordable and healthy.

## Utilities/Public Services

The Village of Paw Paw provides public sanitary sewer service and public water service to the Village and adjacent areas.

Paw Paw Township properties are largely served by private on-site sewer and water systems. The Water and Sanitary Sewer Master



Plans reflect the proposed service areas extending out from the Village boundaries, consistent with the planned growth areas of the Township.

Electric and gas utilities are supplied through Consumers Energy, Midwest Energy Cooperative, and Indiana Michigan Power. Broadband is available throughout the Paw Paw community and is provided through Charter Communications.

Paw Paw Township is served by the VanBuren County Sheriff’s Department, with assistance from the Village police department. Fire protection is provided by the Paw Paw Fire Department. Paw Paw is one of the few departments left in the State that is totally volunteer. The Department services all of Paw Paw Township, the Village of Paw Paw and portions of Antwerp, Almena and Waverly Townships . . . covering a total of 88 square miles.

Paw Paw Township is situated almost entirely within the Paw Paw Public School District. District facilities include Early Elementary (K-2) and Later Elementary (3-5) Schools situated on a single campus within

the Village of Paw Paw; Paw Paw Middle School; Paw Paw High School and the Paw Paw Performing Arts Center; and Paw Paw Community Education. Paw Paw Middle School is advantageously situated in close



proximity to the downtown area of Paw Paw.

The southeast portion of the Township is within the Lawton Community School District. The District provides a single elementary school, middle school and high school, all located near the Village of Lawton

## Parks/Recreation

The Township does not currently provide any public park, open space or recreational facility. Facilities owned and operated by the Village are used by Township residents.

Canoeing and kayaking on the Paw Paw River; water sports on Lake Cora, Eagle Lake, and Three Mile Lake; and,



picnic areas, fishing sites, and boat launches that dot the shorelines of the area's lakes provide a host of recreational opportunities to residents and visitors.

The Township understands that the area's natural features and recreational lands are valuable common assets that serve both the residents of the Paw Paw community and its visitors.

## Natural Environment

### Surface Waters

Lake Cora, Eagle Lake and Three Mile Lake are the three largest lakes located in Paw Paw Township. A portion of Maple Lake, as well as several smaller lakes, also help make up the almost two square miles of surface water found within the Township.



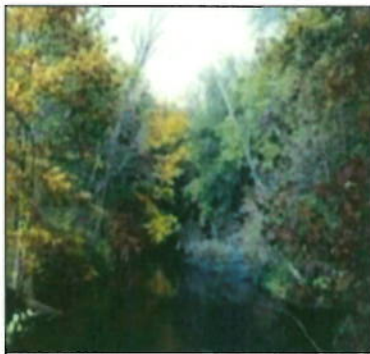
Lake Cora is located on the western boundary of the Township and is home to the popular Lake Cora Hills Golf Club. The lake is approximately 200 acres in size with an average depth of 58 feet. Limited water depth makes the launching and retrieving of larger boats difficult . . but water sports and fishing remain popular recreational activities on the lake. A hard-surfaced public access ramp serves the lake . . with parking and toilets provided.

Eagle Lake is a spring fed, all-sports lake located in the western portion of the

Township. The lake has a maximum depth of 60 feet and a surface area of almost 200 acres for motor boating, canoeing, and kayaking. White sand beaches ring the lake, making it a great lake for swimming and families. Public access to the lake is from a gravel boat ramp. Eagle Lake is popular for fishing with reported abundant populations of bluegill and largemouth bass.

Three Mile Lake is situated east of Lake Cora and Eagle Lake in the western portion of Paw Paw Township. The immediate 'lake community' consists of Three Mile Lake and Little Three Mile Lake, which are joined by a limited-access channel. Three Mile Lake is an all-sports lake, but it has boating restrictions unique to only a few lakes in the state of Michigan. Little Three Mile Lake has restrictions regarding high-speed boating and the towing of skiers. The combined acreage of both lakes totals 176 navigable acres and approximately 100 acres of pristine wetlands, which are home to many species of wildlife. A well-balanced fish population can be found in the lakes and includes an abundance of bluegill, pumpkinseed, black crappie, yellow perch, sunfish, northern pike, bowfin and largemouth bass.

The Paw Paw River extends through the eastern portion of the Township and flows north into Briggs Pond and Maple Lake.



The Paw Paw River is a coolwater system, which provides a refuge for types of fish such as trout and other coldwater aquatic

species. It also provides recreational opportunities.

Along the East Branch within the Village - - industrial, public, commercial and residential development is permitted. Upstream of the many residential areas - - in Paw Paw Township - - exists both agricultural and industrial areas with little to no runoff protections.

Along the West Branch of the Paw Paw River, public land occupies much of the surrounding area leading into Briggs Pond. However, continuing south into the Township, there are large tracts of privately-held agricultural land.

Lake Brownwood, (formerly known as Pugsley Lake), is one of the area's smaller lakes with a surface area of 125 acres. It is located in the northeast portion of the Township within 2 miles of the Village of Paw Paw and is popular as a spring-fed fishing and boating lake.

### Topography/Soils

The topography in the Township is varied due to the presence of the water features and glacial landforms. It ranges from flat to moderately sloped embankments around the water areas. With an average elevation of 760 feet above mean sea level, the generally level landscape reaches over 800 feet above sea level at Prospect Hill in the southeast corner of the Township.

The general geology of the area is characterized by glacial deposits overlying a shale bedrock formation. This area of outwash plains and glacial moraines are characterized by well-drained sandy and loamy soils well suited for agriculture.

## Demographics and Housing Trends

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In order to plan for future growth and development, there must be consideration of how many people will be residing in the community; where there is a demand for new land uses; and, who will be shaping the community of Paw Paw in the coming years.

The following analysis focuses on the prevailing trends in Paw Paw Township, as well as Van Buren County and in Michigan as a whole. The County- and State-wide trends are assumed to reflect the situation in Paw Paw Township, and therefore are considered relevant to the planning process.

### Data Sources

All data for 1990, 2000 and 2010 comes from the US Census Bureau's Decennial Census. Taken every ten years, the Census is considered the most reliable source of demographic data. Many categories of information come from 100% counts, while others are derived from sampling.

Population Trends

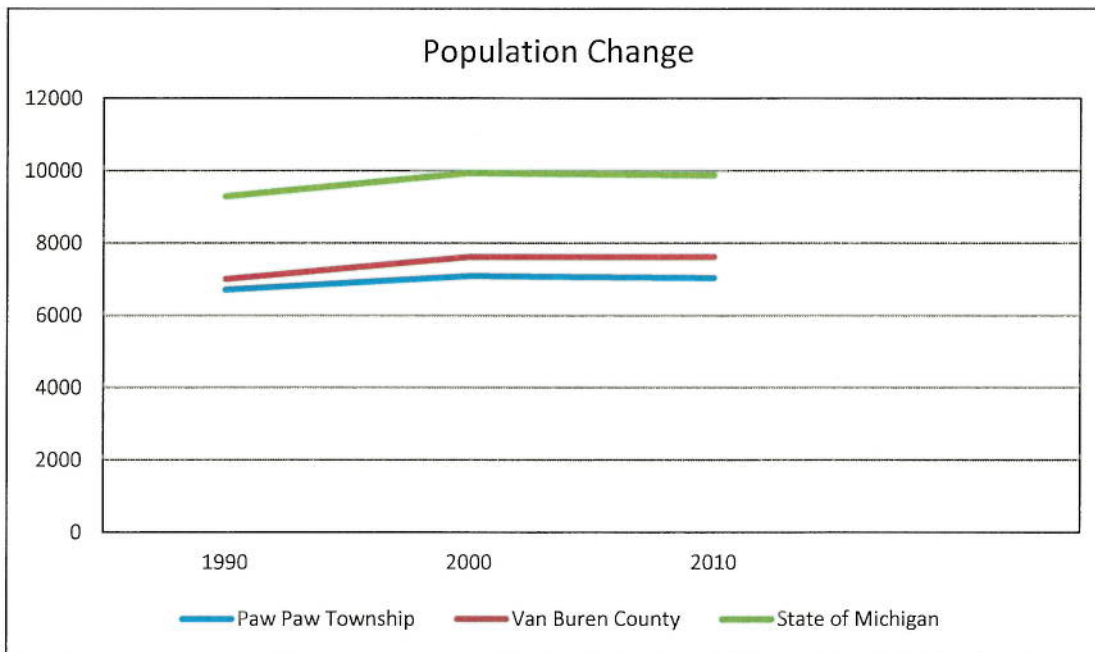
As shown in Table 2.1 and Figure 2.1, after growing much of the 1990s, the population of Paw Paw Township decreased slightly between 2000 and 2010. The growth and decline in population experienced in the Township is consistent with the trends experienced in surrounding communities, as well as Van Buren County and the State of Michigan as a whole.

Table 2.1 Population of Paw Paw Township and Surrounding Communities

Geography	1990	2000	2010	Change 1990 - 2000	Change 2000 - 2010
<b>Paw Paw Township</b>	<b>6,701</b>	<b>7,091</b>	<b>7,041</b>	<b>5.8%</b>	<b>- 0.7%</b>
Village of Paw Paw	3,169	3,363	3,534	6.1%	5.1%
Antwerp Township	9,293	10,813	12,182	16.4%	12.7%
Lawrence Township	3,030	3,341	3,259	10.3%	- 2.5%
Waverly Township	2,188	2,467	2,554	12.8%	3.5%
Van Buren County	70,060	76,263	76,258	8.9%	- 0.007%
State of Michigan	9,295,297	9,938,444	9,883,640	6.9%	- 0.6%

Source: US Census

Figure 2.1



Source: US Census

## Households

Table 2.2 shows that the number of households in Paw Paw Township and Van Buren County, unlike the population, increased from 2000 to 2010. The rise in the number of households in the Township provides some explanation for the reduction in average household size over that same time period as the population began to migrate.

This increase in the number of households is generally consistent with the trend seen throughout the State of Michigan, where population decreased, but the number of households actually increased, primarily due to a decrease in the average household size.

The shrinking average size of a household in the State is considered to indicate a combination of an increase in the number of 'empty nester' retirees and in the number of young people waiting longer to marry and having fewer children. Paw Paw Township's average household size is significantly less than that of surrounding communities but is generally consistent with the trends seen throughout Van Buren County and Michigan.

Table 2.2 Household Characteristics of Paw Paw Township and Surrounding Communities

Geography	Number of Households 2000	Number of Households 2010	Change – Number of Households	Average Household Size - 2000	Average Household Size – 2010	Change – Average Household Size
Paw Paw Township	2771	2895	4.5%	2.49	2.38	- 4.4%
Village of Paw Paw	1417	1499	5.8%	2.27	2.27	0%
Antwerp Township	3764	4457	18.4%	2.80	2.70	- 3.6%
Lawrence Township	1194	1224	2.51%	2.74	2.65	- 3.3%
Waverly Township	912	959	5.15%	2.70	2.66	- 1.5%
Van Buren County	27,982	28,928	3.38%	2.66	2.61	- 1.9%
State of Michigan	3,785,661	3,872,508	2.3%	2.56	2.49	- 2.7%

Source: US Census

## Age

As shown in Tables 2.3 and 2.4, the average age of Paw Paw Township's population is 40.7 years, with almost 30% of the population being between the ages of 20 and 44. This group is generally comprised of young professionals and working families with children that support the local economy and the school district. As such it is seen as an indicator of economic health of an area.

Table 2.3 Median Age

<i>Geography</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>Change 2000-2010</i>
<b>Paw Paw Township</b>	<b>37.6</b>	<b>40.7</b>	<b>8.2%</b>
Village of Paw Paw	36.3	36.4	0.3%
Antwerp Township	35.1	37.3	6.3%
Lawrence Township	35.8	39.3	9.8%
Waverly Township	36.3	39.6	9.1%
Van Buren County	36.6	39.8	8.7%
State of Michigan	35.5	38.9	9.6%

Source: US Census

Table 2.4 20-44 Age Group Percentage

<i>Geography</i>	<i>% of Total Population 2000</i>	<i>% of Total Population 2010</i>	<i>Change in % of Total Population 2000 - 2010</i>
<b>Paw Paw Township</b>	<b>33.7%</b>	<b>29.8%</b>	<b>- 3.9%</b>
Village of Paw Paw	37.4%	34.0%	- 3.4%
Antwerp Township	34.4%	31.2%	- 3.2%
Lawrence Township	32.0%	28.3%	- 3.7%
Waverly Township	36.3%	27.7%	- 8.9%
Van Buren County	33.2%	28.9%	- 4.3%

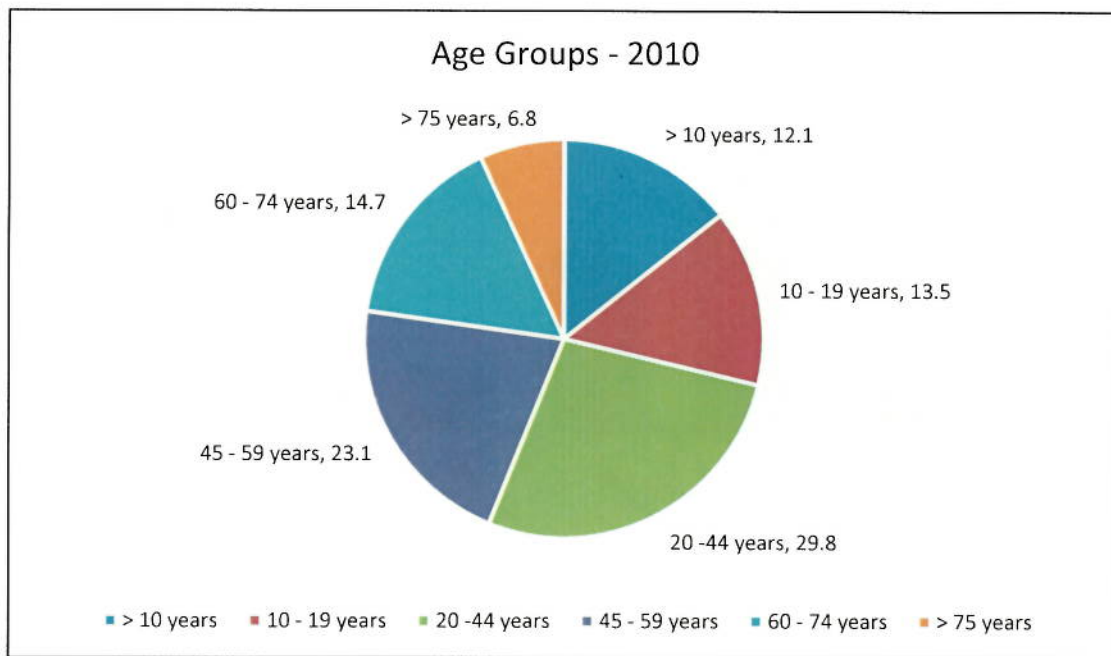
Source: US Census

Table 2.4 suggests that many communities in the area are beginning to find it difficult to attract and retain residents in the 20 to 44 age group. However, overall the Township and surrounding communities have maintained relatively stable numbers since 2000, similar to Van Buren County as a whole.



Figure 2.2 illustrates the age profile of Paw Paw Township residents and reveals that, in addition to the Township's stable percentage of the 20 to 44 year age group, nearly one quarter of the community's residents are in the 45 to 59 year age group. This age group is characterized by new empty nesters and retirement age households looking to down-size their living space and seeking services and amenities related to their lifestyle changes.

Figure 2.2



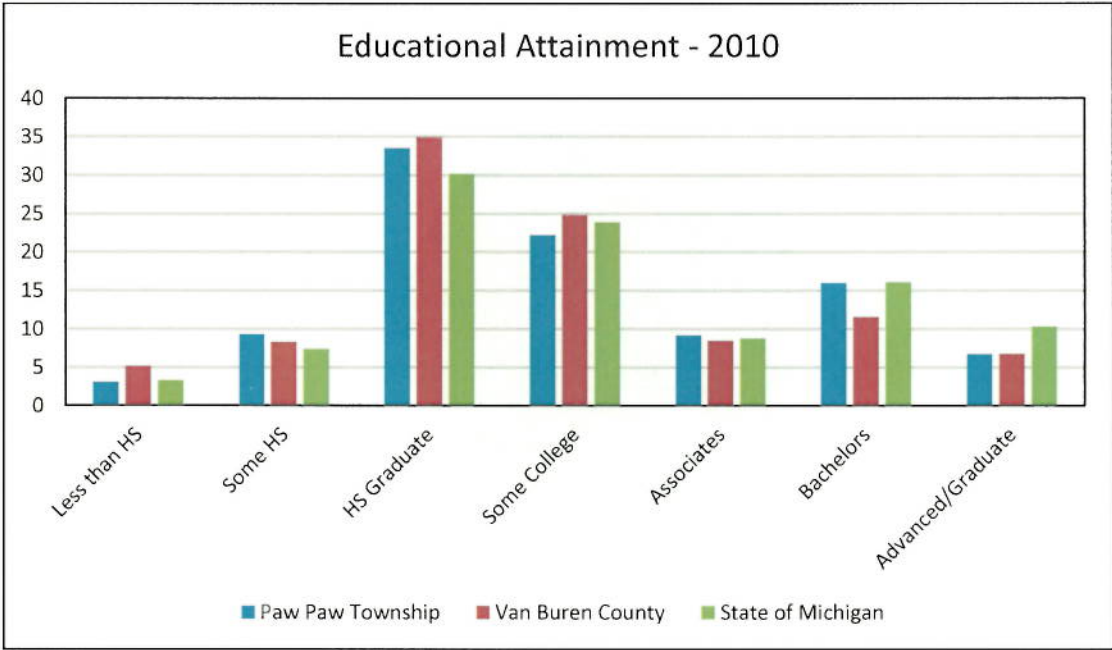
Source: US Census

Providing a variety of high quality single-family options will be important in addressing the future housing needs of a majority of the population in the Paw Paw community. Land use decisions that respond to both the millennial and baby boomer demographics and a desire to retain families will be a priority for both the Township and the Village.

**Educational Attainment**

Figure 2.3 shows the educational attainment of Paw Paw Township residents over the age of 25, compared to Van Buren County and the State of Michigan. While the majority of residents in the Township over 25 have completed high school (88%) both the Township (32%) and the County (27%) lag behind the State as a whole (35%) when it comes to college degrees.

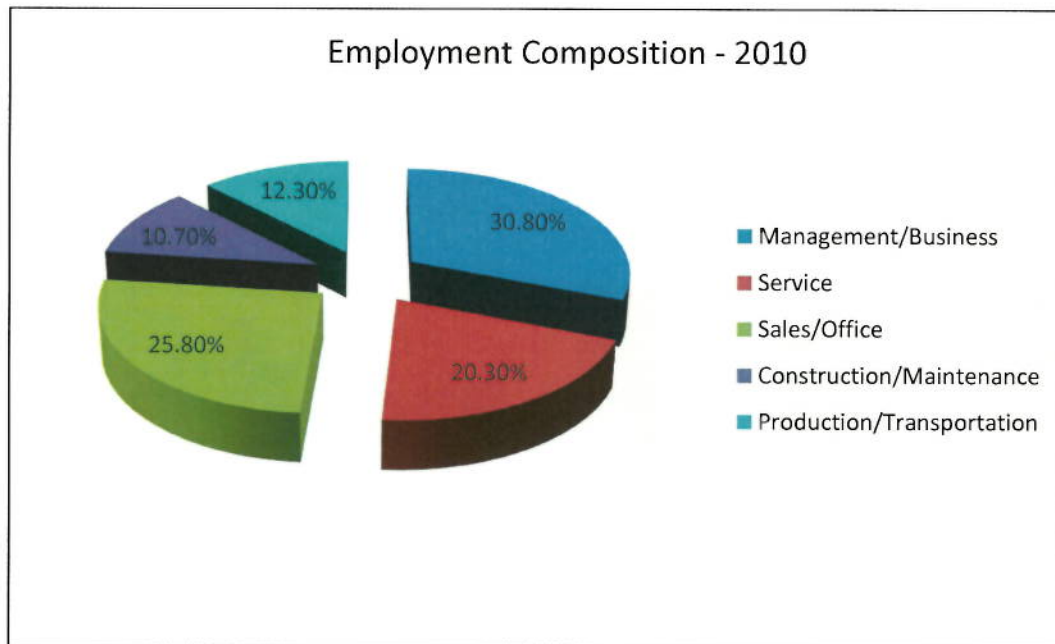
Figure 2.3



## Employment

As Figures 2.4 and 2.5 show, residents of Paw Paw Township are employed in a variety of fields, with the largest proportions being in management, sales, and service occupations.

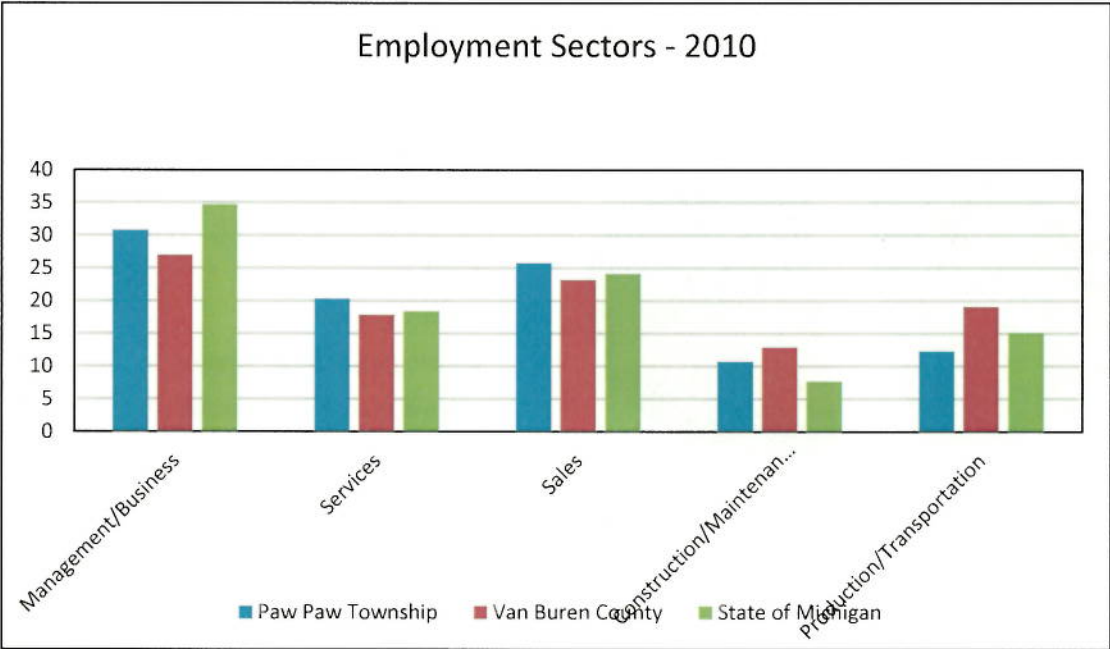
Figure 2.4



Source: US Census

Similar to Paw Paw Township, Van Buren County has a high proportion of its population working in the management and sales sectors . . . consistent with employment equivalents for Michigan that reflect the highest percentage of the State’s population to be employed within the management sector.

Figure 2.5

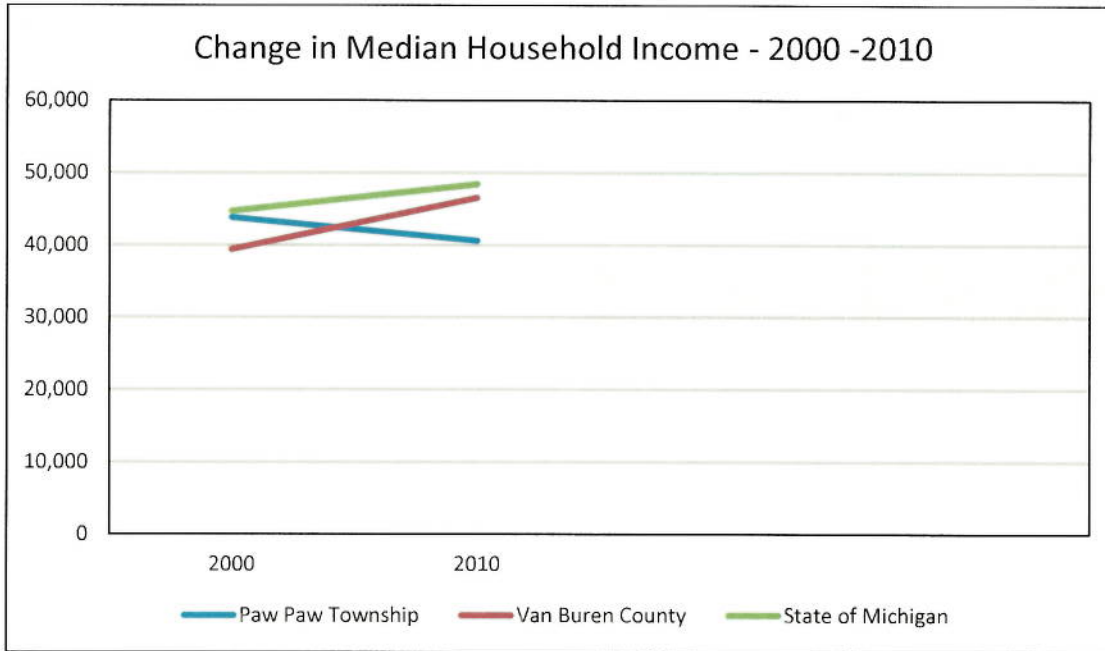


Source: US Census

Income

From 2000 to 2010, the median household income in the Township fell, in contrast with the household income growth that was experienced in Van Buren County and the State as a whole.

Figure 2.6



Source: US Census

Further, the median household income for Paw Paw Township in 2010 was \$40,625 . . below a median household income of \$46,536 for Van Buren County and \$48,432 for the State of Michigan.

Table 2.5 Median Household Income

Geography	Median Household Income 2010
Paw Paw Township	\$40,625
Village of Paw Paw	\$28,869
Antwerp Township	\$57,869
Lawrence Township	\$42,096
Waverly Township	\$52,143
Van Buren County	\$46,536
State of Michigan	\$48,432

Source: US Census

**Housing**

As is clearly reflected in Table 2.6, the majority of the housing units in Paw Paw Township are single family detached homes. This is generally consistent with the housing stock in the County as a whole. Though this is supported by the nature of the households prevalent in the Township (2.38 average household size/40.7 years average age), it also demonstrates ‘the missing middle’ housing pattern that has been identified statewide and has become the focus of targeted placemaking efforts.

Table 2.6 Housing Type

Housing Type	Paw Paw Township 2014	Van Buren County 2014
Single Family, Detached	67%	76%
Single Family, Attached	0.5%	1%
Small Multi-Family (2-9 Units)	18%	9%
Large Multi-Family	9.5%	3%
Mobile Homes	5%	11%

Source: US Census

### *Housing Occupancy and Tenure*

In 2000, nearly 15% of the housing units within the Township were vacant. In 2010, the vacancy rate had increased to just over 17%. (Table 2.7) It is significant to note, however, that a majority (57%) of the units in the Township identified as vacant were categorized as 'for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use'. Less than 12% of the vacant housing units were identified for sale and approximately 18% for rent.

Table 2.7 Housing Occupancy and Tenure

<i>Geography</i>	<i>% Vacant Housing Units 2000</i>	<i>% Vacant Housing Units 2010</i>	<i>% Renter Occupied Housing Units 2000</i>	<i>% Renter Occupied Housing Units 2010</i>
<b>Paw Paw Township</b>	14.7%	17.4%	29.0%	33.1%
Village of Paw Paw	6.2%	10.5%	43.2%	51.1%
Antwerp Township	5.1%	5.9%	15.4%	17.3%
Lawrence Township	21.2%	22.9%	19.8%	20.2%
Waverly Township	8.0%	12.2%	12.4%	11.2%
Van Buren County	17.6%	21.4%	20.4%	22.1%
State of Michigan	10.6%	14.6%	26.2%	27.9%

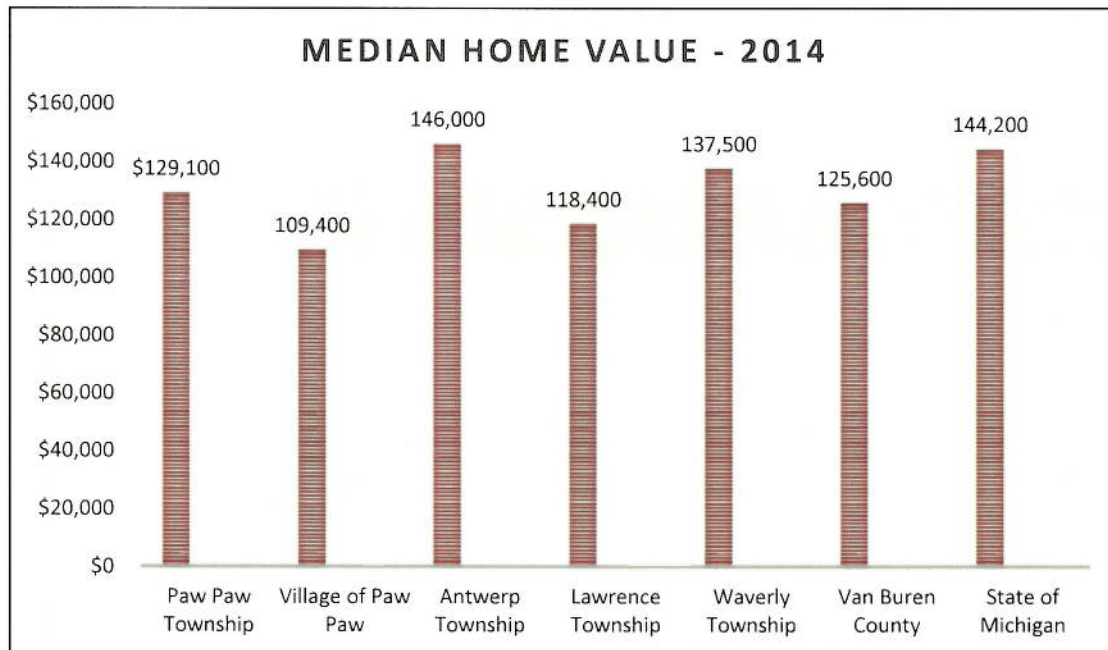
Source: US Census

The general housing tenure in the Township has remained largely owner-occupied, consistent with the trends in the County and the surrounding townships.

### Housing Value

The median home value in Paw Paw Township in 2010 was \$129,100, below the State of Michigan’s median value of \$144,200 but consistent with the median home value in Van Buren County of \$125,600. Though somewhat consistent with housing values in surrounding communities, it reinforces the need for the Township to focus on maintaining existing single family housing stock and to continue to enforce zoning and general nuisance ordinances.

Figure 2.7





## Chapter 3

### Planning Framework

This Master Plan Update has been developed based on the planning issues identified through the 2003 public input process and confirmed through the current public review process. These issues provided the foundation for the Township vision and helped define the values, goals and strategies of the Plan, as well as the specific elements of the Future Land Use plan.

#### Public Participation

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The Paw Paw Township Planning Commission welcomed the residents and property owners of Paw Paw Township in the process of updating the Master Plan. From the informal group settings of Planning Commission work sessions to the publicized and structured setting of the public hearing, community members were afforded the opportunity to provide input and participate at a meaningful level in the planning process.

#### Planning Commission Work Sessions

The Planning Commission hosted monthly Master Plan Update Work Sessions during the course of the update process. These work sessions were open to all community members and were publicized on the Township's web site agenda postings.

It was through the work sessions that the Planning Commission received public

comment and direction regarding every stage of the update process.

The *Issues* set forth in this Chapter were identified and explored through Planning Commission debate and public input.

#### Public Hearing

The public hearing held on the draft Master Plan Update by the Planning Commission offered an additional opportunity for public input in the planning process. The public hearing was held on xxxxxxxx, 2016 at the Township Hall and was well attended by the community. The positive comments received on the Plan are a testimony to the value of public participation throughout the process and the importance of having a Master Plan that reflects the priorities and planning values of the community.

#### Collaboration

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An important theme in this Master Plan Update is the desire for collaboration, at both the local and regional levels.

Paw Paw Township understands that collaboration with the Village of Paw Paw on important local issues is essential in driving economic prosperity in the Paw Paw community.

Further, an expanded partnership with Van Buren County and the Southwest Michigan Prosperity Region 8 will allow for an alignment of shared assets and movement forward on projects that are important to the prosperity of the region.

This Master Plan embraces the notion of local and regional collaboration as a means

of ensuring that available resources are targeted where they will have the greatest impact possible for job creators and residents.

## Issues

The *Issues* identified during the Master Plan Update process can be summarized as follows:

- ❖ **Agri-Business Opportunities** – recognizing ‘wine corridor’ opportunities; recognizing the Paw Paw area as a crucial part of the regional food system.
- ❖ **Agri-Tourism Opportunities** – establishing Paw Paw Township as a ‘fresh food corridor’ in the area; promoting ‘food hubs’ as part of the local tourism trade; capitalizing on the area’s numerous local events/festivals in support of local food entrepreneurship.
- ❖ **Agricultural/Rural Preservation** – continuing to discourage sprawl; preserving the ‘small farm’ opportunity; protecting areas with prime agricultural soils and key open space habitats.
- ❖ **Commercial Development** – working with the Village of Paw Paw to support commercial land use at a community level; strategically directing commercial development to the fringe areas of the Village of Paw Paw for targeted impact and efficient use of infrastructure;
- ❖ **Housing** – providing for mixed density residential options in Village fringe areas; using mixed density residential areas to provide affordable housing choices; locating to improve connectivity to local service areas and/or employment centers.
- ❖ **Regional Non-Motorized Trailways** – strengthening connections to area-wide recreational assets and points of interest to attract visitors/tourists; improving recreational opportunities in the larger community of Paw Paw.
- ❖ **Watershed Protection** – establishing land use patterns responsive to watershed boundaries; transforming watershed protection elements into tourism opportunities.
- ❖ **Coordinated Planning** – exploring coordinated land use efforts between Township and Village planning officials; recognizing Paw Paw Township and the Village of Paw are a community with shared assets; recognizing the Paw Paw community as an active partner in Van Buren County and Region 8 – Southwest Michigan Prosperity Region.

These planning issues provide the foundation for the planning principles (*values, vision, goals, and strategies*) outlined in Chapter 4 - Planning Principles.



## Chapter 4

### Planning Principles

The *Issues* set forth in Chapter 3 have been used to define the planning values of Paw Paw Township and form the structure of the Master Plan. These *values* provide the foundation for an overall land use *vision* for the community, from which planning *goals* and *strategies* have been developed. The Future Land Use Plan (Chapter 5) has been created based entirely upon these **Planning Principles** (*values, vision, goals and strategies*).

### Planning Values

The following *Values* have been derived from the previously discussed *Issues*. They represent the general beliefs and desires of the community and are the source of the *Vision* statement.

**Paw Paw Township and the Village of Paw Paw are a single community.** The strength of the community lies in the value of the area's commercial core, small-town and rural housing options, water features, agricultural lands, and recreational/tourism opportunities. To separate the Township from the Village in the community picture would fail to recognize the interrelationships between these assets and prevent the growth of the community to its full potential.

**Agriculture plays a key role in Paw Paw Township.** As a primary industry in the Township, agricultural activity defines the history of the community and positions Paw Paw Township favorably in Southwest

Michigan's emerging 'regional food systems' scene.

**Opportunities for growth exist in Paw Paw Township without contributing to sprawl.**

The Village of Paw Paw and the M-51/Red Arrow Highway/I-94 area provide Paw Paw Township existing development areas toward which to direct commercial growth and promote diverse and affordable housing choices. Targeted growth in these areas will preserve the agricultural lands in the Township for agri-business and agri-tourism opportunities.

**Local water features are a key community asset.**

The natural water features in the area are valued for their beauty, their recreational and tourism potential, and their contribution to the residential base of the Paw Paw community.

**Connectivity within the Paw Paw community provides economic advantages.**

Connectivity between area-wide assets (recreational features, points of interest, activity centers, and residential development) offers potential for growth. Accessibility attracts residents and visitors and translates into economic activity.

### Vision

The *Vision* is a statement that describes how Paw Paw Township would like to see its future unfold. Having a clear sense of the past and present . . . and direction for the future . . . will allow the township to meet its land use challenges and identify its economic opportunities successfully.

The *Vision* is an 'ideal' and likely will not be possible to attain entirely. However, it

should serve to motivate and provide guidance to decision-makers and residents. The **Vision** embraces the community's **Planning Values** and is designed to provide a focus that will translate into action.

***Our Vision for Paw Paw Township is to move forward as a community characterized by:***

***A dedication to progress*** -- defined by its consistent efforts to recognize the Township and the Village of Paw Paw as the 'community of Paw Paw' in its overall economic and land use strategies and to take advantage of the role the community plays in the County and the Region in moving towards prosperity.

***A significant agricultural partner in the Region*** -- that capitalizes on the area's strong agricultural history and the Region's emerging food systems network. Paw Paw Township is a community plugged in to the agri-business and agri-tourism opportunities that are supported further by the area's reputation for events/festivals.

***A rich natural environment*** -- quality waterfront areas, ample residential lakefront property, and scenic areas near rivers and wetlands provide a unique and beautiful setting. These areas are valued by the community and play a major role in the economic stability of the area.

***Economic strength through connectivity*** -- between area-wide assets (natural features, recreational facilities), activity and employment centers, and residential areas. This connectivity improves accessibility and serves as a catalyst for business growth;

*attracts travelers; and links the area's economic and recreational network.*

## **The Vision Realized: Goals & Strategies**

The **Vision** serves to inspire specific *goals* and *strategies* that will then be implemented through the Future Land Use Plan (Chapter 5).

A *goal* is a general statement of a desired outcome – it should be realistic and obtainable. Each *goal* is followed by a set of *strategies*. A *strategy* is a specific action that accomplishes the outcome set forth in the *goal*. The *strategies* provide the basis for the Implementation elements of the Plan.

### **Vision Element: A Dedication to Progress**

**Goal:** *Collaborate with the Village of Paw Paw on land use issues common to both jurisdictions.*

**Strategy:** *Engage in coordinated land use planning with the Village of Paw Paw in targeting Village 'fringe areas' for commercial, mixed use, and residential growth.*

**Strategy:** *Adopt zoning ordinance elements that coordinate with and/or complement Village zoning standards along jurisdictional boundaries.*

**Strategy:** Work in conjunction with the Village of Paw Paw to adopt common waterfront and gateway development standards.

**Strategy:** Work with the Village of Paw Paw to develop and adopt a Paw Paw Community Recreation Plan.

**Strategy:** Establish joint meetings with Village planning officials to establish a productive and collaborative relationship.

**Goal:** *Recognize the role of Paw Paw Township and the larger Paw Paw community in the County and Region.*

**Strategy:** Establish a relationship with Van Buren County planning officials as the 'Community of Paw Paw' . . . to enhance communication and participation in land use programs and grant opportunities.

**Strategy:** Plug in as a partner of Region 8 – Southwest Michigan Prosperity Region.

**Strategy:** Consider County and Regional plans in local land use decisions.

**Strategy:** Partner in county and regional land use grant applications (ie. non-motorized and blueway corridor improvements)

**Goal:** *Serve as 'ambassadors of collaboration' for economic prosperity.*

**Strategy:** Concentrate efforts on communication and participation with planning and land use officials at the local, county and regional levels.

**Strategy:** Represent the Township as a collaborative community . . . marketing the area as the Community of Paw Paw.

**Strategy:** Actively educate residents and business owners of the Paw Paw community about shared assets and economic advantages through partnering.

### **Vision Element: A Significant Agricultural Partner in the Region**

**Goal:** *Recognize the role of agriculture in the local economy and the Township's position in the overall Van Buren County economy.*

**Strategy:** Facilitate a partnership between the local agricultural base and the regional food system network.

**Strategy:** Facilitate a partnership between the local agricultural base and area retailers/institutions.

**Strategy:** Work with the County and area communities to foster

the Paw Paw community as a 'fresh food corridor'.

**Strategy:** Update the agricultural zoning district to support viable agri-business land use opportunities

**Strategy:** Develop zoning standards that support 'food hubs' and local food entrepreneurships.

**Strategy:** Market the agricultural base as part of the local tourism trade . . . recognizing the area's reputation for festivals/events.

**Goal:** **Preserve Township farmland and open space**

**Strategy:** Maintain the Farmland Preservation land use classification and AGR Agricultural (Farmland Protection) Zoning District.

**Strategy:** Continue to initiate and/or support local participation in federal, state, and local farmland preservation programs.

**Strategy:** Maintain the Open Space and Rural Residential land use classifications - - and the application of cluster and open space zoning techniques.

**Strategy:** Seek to purchase or acquire by donation the development rights from properties identified to have significant

open space qualities or sensitive natural resources.

**Strategy:** Actively discourage sprawl by directing residential and commercial growth to the areas adjacent to the Village of Paw Paw.

**Vision Element: A Rich, Natural Environment**

**Goal:** **Recognize and promote the lakes and wetland areas as community assets.**

**Strategy:** Work in conjunction with area lake associations, the Village of Paw Paw and the Van Buren County Drain Commission to create a long-term plan for water quality preservation and shoreline management.

**Strategy:** Apply zoning techniques, developed in conjunction with the Village of Paw Paw, designed to manage shoreline development, such as a waterfront overlay approach.

**Strategy:** Seek opportunities to expand or enhance the vistas around the lakes.

**Goal:** **Protect the water quality of the lakes and wetland area.**



**Strategy:** Continue to implement the Township/Village Wellhead Protection Plan.

**Strategy:** Establish floodplain protection measures using updated FEMA information provided by the State of Michigan.

**Strategy:** Educate waterfront homeowners about environmentally-friendly practices.

**Strategy:** Apply low-impact development solutions along shorelines, such as a waterfront overlay approach, vegetative buffers, and rain gardens.

**Goal:** Provide for recreational opportunities that take advantage of the natural environment.

**Strategy:** Plan for non-motorized paths that will connect parks and other activity centers throughout the Paw Paw community.

**Strategy:** Establish blueway corridors that extend throughout the Paw Paw community and that are provided planned points of access and connect points of interest.

**Strategy:** Use the Open Space land use classification to identify land that contributes to the formation of an 'open space corridor' . . . instead of

isolated pockets of open space surrounded by other land uses.

**Strategy:** Initiate protection of identified open space through the application of federal, state or local preservation programs or purchase.

### **Vision Element: Economic Strength Through Connectivity**

**Goal:** Promote Red Arrow Highway as a vibrant corridor within the Paw Paw community and a gateway into the Village of Paw Paw.

**Strategy:** Identify and use public spaces within Village 'fringe areas' to establish 'gateway' entrances that direct traffic into the Village. Apply coordinated streetscape improvements to these 'gateways' so as to provide a visual connection to the downtown area.

**Strategy:** Make Village 'fringe area' portions of the Red Arrow Highway corridor more pedestrian friendly with pedestrian crossings at key locations, safe sidewalks, and pedestrian amenities.

**Strategy:** Work in coordination with the Van Buren Road Commission to develop an access management plan for the Red Arrow Highway corridor.

**Strategy:** Create a wayfinding system (signs and/or other graphic communications such as colors, logos, etc) to guide motorists and pedestrians to the downtown area and to local attractions.

**Goal:** Target areas for commercial and residential growth to allow for connectivity and avoid the impacts of sprawl.

**Strategy:** Direct commercial growth to the 'fringe areas' of the Village of Paw Paw and the M-51 corridor (between Red Arrow Highway and I-94) to take advantage of existing infrastructure and/or allow for connectivity to existing development.

**Strategy:** Allow for diverse and affordable housing choices (density, form, building type) in the 'fringe areas' of the Village of Paw Paw to take advantage of existing infrastructure and allow for connectivity to existing development.

**Goal:** Promote connectivity through land use, transportation and recreation planning policy.

**Strategy:** Direct development to areas that can achieve connectivity to surrounding points of interest and area recreational assets.

**Strategy:** Accommodate non-motorized facilities (eg. bike lanes, sidewalks) within transportation routes that connect area-wide assets (recreational features, points of interest, activity centers, residential development).

**Strategy:** Effectively use greenway and blueway corridors to connect assets within the Paw Paw community.

**Goal:** Promote connectivity through asset-based marketing.

**Strategy:** Use a wayfinding system (signs and/or other graphic communications such as colors, logos, etc) to guide motorists and pedestrians throughout the Paw Paw community.

**Strategy:** Work with area business owners to cross-promote attractions within the Paw Paw community, emphasizing accessibility and network connections.

## Chapter 5

### Future Land Use

#### Future Land Use Classifications

The Future Land Use Map is a visual depiction of the overall land use arrangement proposed for Paw Paw Township. The following classification scheme is used to illustrate the desired future land use pattern:

##### Farmland Preservation

The Future Land Use Map identifies those areas that have the greatest long-term potential for active agricultural production. The Farmland Preservation classification has been applied largely in consideration of parcel size, designated prime farmland soils, lands that are actively farmed, and continuity of agricultural lands.

The presence of agricultural activity can be found in much of Paw Paw Township and has been the primary factor in shaping its rural character. In order for profitable agricultural production to continue and agri-business and agri-tourism opportunities to take root, new residential and non-farm development will be directed outside of the Farmland Preservation classification to targeted areas within the Township.

##### Open Space

These areas consist of lands identified as environmentally significant due to acreage, soils, elevation, or vital characteristics; are

or could be enrolled in a conservation program; and/or contribute to an aggregate of meaningful open space.

Consistent with the Township's open space preservation policies, these land have been identified on the Future Land Use Map to assist in the effective application of open space zoning techniques and/or land acquisition.

##### Agricultural - Rural Residential

Lands within the Agricultural - Rural Residential classification may be similar to those within the Farmland Preservation classification, such as large parcels, but are either surrounded by urbanizing residential development or have significant natural features that enhance the rural atmosphere of the community. Generally, these lands exhibit traits considered most important to the rural character of the community - - lakes, wetlands, open spaces, woods, fields, hills, and wildlife.

The purpose of this classification is to define those areas of the Township where controlled, low density residential development respects the character of the land and surrounding area.

To that end, open space residential development should be encouraged as a means to provide buffers from neighboring agricultural lands and preserving natural features while allowing development.

Residential densities are envisioned to range from one unit per two acres to one unit per five acres, depending upon the design of the residential development. This density will promote community design that protects natural resources and the country

lifestyle which is respectful of rural amenities and the history of this agriculturally-based Township.

### **Low Density Single Family Residential**

Although the majority of lands within Paw Paw Township are rural in character, residential development has occurred at a higher density in the eastern portion of the Township, apart from lakefront areas, evoking a suburban atmosphere.

A density of one dwelling unit per acre is envisioned in these areas to provide a smooth transition from the rural development pattern in the Township to the denser land use arrangements present in areas adjacent to the Village of Paw Paw and along Red Arrow Highway.

The Future Land Use Map reflects the transitional nature of the Low Density Single Family Residential classification through its placement in the eastern quarter of the Township, adjacent to the medium- and high- density residential and commercial land use targeted to the Village Fringe area.

### **Single Family Lake Area Residential**

This classification generally includes existing residential development found near the Township's lakes. Housing within these areas has developed as a ring around the lakes, with back lots created to obtain lake views. Many of these lots are platted, and are small without access to public utilities. Properties within these areas (within 500 feet of a waterfront) also have been

identified for natural resource protection through application of the Waterfront Overlay classification.

Due to the fragile nature of the lakes and their environs, further intensive shoreline development should be discouraged. While infill development can occur on existing lots, new small-lot subdivisions should not be allowed.

The Plan puts a high priority on preventing overcrowding and intensive development near lakes to further the goals of water quality protection, preservation of natural features, and managed growth.

Densities should range between one and four units per each two acres, depending on the availability of utilities. Existing development at higher densities should be allowed to continue, provided that efforts are made to avoid additional impacts on water resources. Land divisions resulting in densities higher than the recommended density are strongly discouraged.

### **Mobile Home Park**

It is estimated that the existing and planned manufactured housing development areas within adjacent communities will meet the demand for manufactured housing during the life of this Plan.

### **Commercial**

**(Includes Convenience Commercial; Highway Service Commercial; Heavy Commercial)**

The commercial classifications are directed to the commercial areas along the Red

Arrow Highway corridor and 43<sup>rd</sup> Street as it extends between Red Arrow Highway and I-94.

These classifications are characterized by auto-oriented commercial activity and are intended to recognize 1) the 'gateway' potential of Red Arrow Highway to the downtown area of Paw Paw; 2) 43<sup>rd</sup> Street as a local commercial corridor for the lake community, and 3) the attributes of the I-94/43<sup>rd</sup> Street interchange.

**Red Arrow Highway:** As a 'gateway corridor', streetscape improvements and appropriate site development standards should be considered to present an attractive entrance to the 'downtown' of the community and announce to travelers that they have entered a special place.

Adding gateway elements such as wayfinding signs and common streetscape treatments will also help provide continuity and connection between the Red Arrow Highway corridor and the downtown area.

Given its importance in Paw Paw Township, the Red Arrow Highway corridor has been identified as a 'highlighted plan element' and is discussed in more detail later in the Chapter.

**43<sup>rd</sup> Street:** As a local commercial corridor serving the lake community, site development standards that serve to recognize the 'neighborhood-convenience' nature of this commercial hub in the Township should be developed. A separate approach to this commercial area can strengthen its ability to function as a neighborhood-based economy and protect the surrounding rural landscape.

**I-94 Interchange:** Located in the rural part of the Township and in close proximity to

area lakes, the commercial potential of the I-94 interchange is guided by the vision for the 43<sup>rd</sup> Street commercial corridor.

Highway commercial land use should be responsive in intensity and design to the plans for 43<sup>rd</sup> Street to serve as a local commercial corridor for the lake community.

## Industrial

### (Includes Heavy Commercial – Light Industrial; Industrial Park)

An industrial land use pattern exists between Red Arrow Highway and I-94 on the western side of the Village of Paw Paw. Support of this industrial land use pattern is proposed through a mixed approach that allows light industrial and industrial park activity to coexist with the heavy commercial activity planned for segments of the Red Arrow Highway corridor and I-94.

## Waterfront Overlay

Waterfront Overlay exists as a 'classification layer' that recognizes shorelines and wetland areas within the Township. These areas play a crucial role in preserving the water quality of the Township's lakes and tributaries. They also are key in the area's natural storm water management systems, as well as providing important natural habitat and wildlife corridors.

The Waterfront Overlay functions as a 'classification layer' placed 'over' (and therefore, in addition to) the land use classification. It is envisioned to offer design/use alternatives in these important

areas in recognition of their value to the environmental health and safety of the region.

Implementation in conjunction with the 'waterfront overlay' approach envisioned within the Village of Paw Paw will maximize the effect of this preservation technique on the water quality and shorelines of shared water features.

### Sewage Treatment Plant

This classification encompasses lands devoted to the area's sewage treatment plant. Their public use is not expected to change over time and should be recognized.

### Highlighted Plan Elements \_\_\_\_\_

The Highlighted Plan Elements are detailed on the following pages.

### Village Fringe

**(Includes: Medium Density Single Family Residential; High Density Single Family Residential; Multiple Family Residential)**

Areas close to the Village of Paw Paw are designated Village Fringe. The Plan recognizes the ability of the area within the



Township that surrounds the Village to serve as a transition from the rural landscape of the Township to the 'small-town' atmosphere of the

Village.

This area of 'transition' is ideal for providing a mixture of housing options in locations that are close to areas of employment and commerce (downtown) and avoiding random residential development in the Township that results in sprawl and the loss of valuable agricultural land.



Consistent with the land use strategies of the adjacent areas within the Village of Paw Paw, these 'fringe areas' are ideal receiving zones for a mixture of medium- and high-



density residential development. Such development is envisioned to include lofts, mansion apartment buildings, townhouses, mixed-use buildings, and senior housing (independent/assisted living and continual

care), ranging in density from 4 to 8 dwelling units per acre.

Site and building design within these transitional areas is very important and should project an image that compliments the surrounding built environment. For this reason, development standards for the area should be developed in conjunction with the Village of Paw Paw.

### Red Arrow Highway Corridor

While the Red Arrow Highway Corridor may be an established economic benefit for the community of Paw Paw, its suburban 'strip' character (parking lots, buildings set back from the street, poorly defined pedestrian amenities, lack of an attractive streetscape) creates an impression that Paw Paw is just like any other highway, auto-oriented community.

The Red Arrow Highway Corridor should be re-visioned as a **gateway** into the core of the community and made to serve as a catalyst in attracting shoppers, diners, and travelers.



The Plan envisions a **streetscape scheme**, that would be common to Red Arrow Highway as it extends through the larger community - - with a unified look and feel to the corridor, including lighting, signs, sidewalks, and bike lanes.

A system of **wayfinding signs** should also be incorporated to guide visitors to local points of interest, including water features and

parks and existing/planned greenways that connect to area-wide recreational assets.



**Bike lanes** should be designed to provide functional and visual connectivity between the gateway corridors in the Township and the downtown area of Paw Paw.



**Crosswalks** make crossing a street feel safer and should be established in appropriate locations along Red Arrow Highway to make the gateways feel pedestrian-friendly and encourage migration along the corridor.



### Non-Motorized Trail Connections

The adopted Master Plan for the Village of Paw Paw proposes connection with the existing/proposed non-motorized trail within the railroad right-of-way recognizing the environmental and aesthetic value of the lands surrounding that area.



The non-motorized trail will have the added ability to connect to the area's proposed bike lane routes. These connections can be further planned for enhancement with parking facilities and retail/recreational opportunities that would identify and encourage their use as 'trailheads'.

Extensions of the non-motorized pathway in ways that will serve to connect recreational facilities and activity centers community-



wide is a priority. A completed trail system would provide easy access to residents and

visitors of the region and encourage the exploration of the community of Paw Paw.

Paw Paw Township's recognition of its agri-tourism opportunities provides rich incentives to move forward in creating these desired green ways.



### Zoning Plan

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Act 33 of 2008) requires that a Master Plan include a Zoning Plan, which 'include(s) an explanation of how the land use classifications set forth on the Future Land Use Map relate to the districts on the zoning map'.

The Zoning Plan sets forth the future land use classifications and identifies the corresponding zoning district from the Paw Paw Township Zoning Ordinance.

The Zoning Plan also provides recommendations regarding the implementation of the Master Plan through the regulations of the Zoning Ordinance.



## Zoning Plan

Future Land Use Classifications	Corresponding Zoning Districts
Farmland Preservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>AGR Agricultural District</b></li> <li>• This district is intended primarily to conserve and protect appropriate lands for farming and agricultural uses. Concentrations of residential dwellings are discouraged.</li> </ul>
Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CSV Conservation (open space) District</b></li> <li>• This district is intended to implement the open space protection goals of the Plan.</li> </ul>
Agricultural – Rural Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>ARR Agricultural Rural Residential District</b></li> <li>• Typically located adjacent to areas of agricultural use, this district provides a transition between agricultural uses and higher density residential use.</li> </ul>
Low Density Single Family Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>LDR Low Density Residential District</b></li> <li>• The intent of this district is to allow for low density single family residential development at a density of 0.5 units/acre.</li> </ul>
Single Family Lake Area Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>WFR Waterfront Area District</b></li> <li>• This district is designed to provide for residential development of land within 500 feet of water bodies/waterways, including waterfront and second tier properties.</li> </ul>
Mobile Home Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>MHR Mobile Home Residential District</b></li> <li>• This district is intended to facilitate the development of mobile home communities and be located to serve as a transition and in recognition of accessibility and public facility needs.</li> </ul>
Commercial	
Convenience Commercial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CC Convenience Commercial District</b></li> <li>• This district is intended to provide for small retail trade for the residents in the immediately surrounding area.</li> </ul>
Highway Services Commercial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>HSC Highway Service Commercial District</b></li> <li>• This district is intended to provide for serving the needs of highway traffic at the interchange while protecting adjacent properties in other districts from the adverse influence of traffic.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Heavy Commercial</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>GC General Commercial District</b></li> <li>• This district is intended to provide for small retail trade which is convenient to the larger community.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Industrial</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Heavy Commercial – Light Industrial</li> <li>- Industrial Park</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>HCI Heavy Commercial and Industrial District</b></li> <li>• This district is intended to provide for commercial uses that offer goods and services on a major scale, as well transportation facility and light industrial uses.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Waterfront Overlay</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no corresponding district to this classification.</li> <li>• In order to better implement the Plan, development of an overlay district specific to the Township’s wetlands and shorelines should be considered.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sewage Treatment Plant</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no corresponding district to this classification.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Village Fringe</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Medium Density Single Family Residential</b></li> <li>- <b>High Density Single Family Residential</b></li> <li>- <b>Multiple Family Residential</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>MDR Medium Density Residential District, HDR High Density Residential District, and MFR Multiple Family Residential District</b> are designed to implement the objectives of the mixed-use village fringe approach.</li> <li>• Implementation of the village fringe approach would be best accomplished through a single district that establishes appropriate density and design standards.</li> </ul>