

OCTOBER 2022



NORWOOD
TOWNSHIP

Master Plan

NORWOOD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES
NORWOOD TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

NORWOOD TOWNSHIP
CHARLEVOIX COUNTY
MICHIGAN

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ADOPTED BY:
The Norwood Township Planning Commission
 June 2008

UPDATED BY:
The Norwood Township Planning Commission
 April 13, 2015 and
 October 10, 2022

ACCEPTED BY:
The Norwood Township Board Of Trustees
 April 13, 2015 and
 October 17, 2022

PREPARED BY:
The Norwood Township Planning Commission
 David Kolka, Chair
 David Vermeesch, Vice-Chair
 Doug Warner, Secretary, Board of Trustees Representative
 Theron Reibel
 Trevor Dotson

The Norwood Township Board Of Trustees
 Ben Freds, Supervisor
 Brenda Freds, Clerk
 Lynn Smolenyak, Treasurer
 Mark Pirie, Trustee
 Doug Warner, Trustee

Norwood Township Staff
 Shari Jones, Recording Secretary
 Leslie Meyers, Planner

Design Courtesy
 David Vermeesch

Photography Courtesy
 Norwood Area Historical Society, Babs Young, Bill Dietrich,
 Paul Vermeesch, Ray Bier, Leslie Meyers

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Winter surfing on Lake Michigan, Norwood Township Park. Eighty-two percent of 2021 Township survey respondents agreed that the Township should focus more on improving existing parks rather than acquiring new ones. Nearly 99% of 2014 survey respondents consider the Township's natural resources (beach, park, scenic views, open space, lakes, rivers, streams, woodlots, wetlands and water recharge areas) to be an asset to the community.

Section 1

Introduction

This 2022 document is an update to the Norwood Township Master Plan Charlevoix County, Michigan that was adopted in 2008 and updated in 2015. In 2015 the Planning Commission determined that rather than merely affirming the 2008 plan, it was important to consider the different economic challenges and population the community then experienced. That 2015 Master Plan included development policies that reflected not just the current land uses, but also potentially dynamic future land uses in the Township. This 2022 update affirms the 2015 Master Plan, includes minor edits, and adds relevant updates with more-recent demographic data.

What is a Master Plan?

This Master Plan is a comprehensive long range (20 years) guide for Norwood Township's growth and development. This Master Plan includes analysis, recommendations and proposals for the Township's demographics, economy, housing, transportation, community facilities and land uses. It is based on public input, the survey, existing development, physical characteristics, and social and economic conditions. This plan provides an outline for development for Township Officials and for those residents, developers, and business people interested in living, locating and/or working in the community.

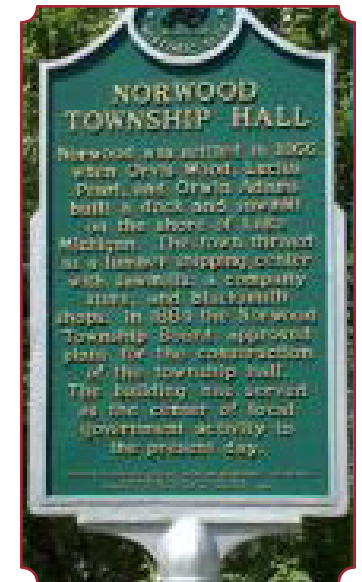
This Norwood Township Master Plan is not a zoning document, therefore the recommendations of the plan are to guide decision-making, not to regulate property. The Master Plan is a document that presents a long-range statement of general goals and policies aimed at coordinated development with the Township. The Norwood Township Zoning Ordinance remains the authority in all Township zoning matters. The Planning Commission and the Township Board ultimately will refine and modify the Zoning Ordinance to implement Master Plan policies. All the people involved with and affected by the Master Plan's policies should understand that implementation should happen over the 20 years the Plan considers. Also, the Planning Commission and the Township Board will make sure implementation is appropriate and timely when they do consider ordinances and policy changes.

This Master Plan addresses three primary topics: Township history, current conditions and our plans for the future.

Where does the Township get authority to prepare a Master Plan?

The Township derives its authority for the preparation of a Master Plan from the Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2008, P.A. 33 of 2008, as amended. Section 33 of the Act states:

1. A master plan shall address land use and infrastructure issues and may project 20 years or more into the future. A master plan shall include maps, plats, charts, and descriptive, explanatory, and other related matter and shall show the planning commission's recommendations for the physical development of the planning jurisdiction.
2. A master plan shall also include those of the following subjects that reasonably can be considered as pertinent to the future development of the planning jurisdiction:
 - a.) A land use plan that consists in part of a classification and allocation of land for agriculture, residences, commerce, industry, recreation, public buildings, schools, soil conservation, forests, woodlots, open space, wildlife refuges, and other uses and purposes.
 - b.) The general location, character, and extent of streets, railroads, airports, bicycle paths, pedestrian ways, bridges, waterways, and waterfront developments, sanitary sewers and water supply systems; facilities for flood prevention, drainage, pollution prevention, and maintenance of water levels; and public utilities and structures;
 - c.) Recommendations as to the general character, extent, and layout of redevelopment or rehabilitation of blighted areas; and the removal, relocation, widening, narrowing, vacating, abandonment, change of use, or extension of streets, grounds, open spaces, buildings, utilities, or other facilities;
 - d.) Zoning plan for various zoning districts controlling the height, area, bulk, location, and use of buildings and premises. The zoning plan shall include an explanation of how the land use categories on the future land use map relate to the districts on the zoning map;
 - e.) Recommendations for implementing any of the master plan's proposals."



How does Norwood Township use this Master Plan?

The Plan serves many functions and is to be used in a variety of ways:

The Plan is a general statement of the Township's goals and policies and provides a single, comprehensive view of Norwood Township's desires for the future.

The Plan serves as an aid in daily decision-making. Goals and policies outlined in the Plan guide the Planning Commission and the Township Board in their deliberations on zoning, subdivision approvals, capital improvements, and other matters relating to land use and development.

The policy orientation of this Plan provides decision-makers with a framework and basis for decisions while recognizing the dynamic character of Norwood Township. The variables upon which this Plan is based will likely change over time. However, adherence to the goals and policies will provide a stable, long-term basis for decision making.

The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act of 2006, P.A. 110 as amended, requires that the Zoning Ordinance be based upon a plan designed to promote the public health, safety and general welfare. The Plan provides the statutory basis upon which zoning decisions are based.

The Plan attempts to coordinate public improvements and private developments. An outcome of the Plan should be that public investments such as infrastructure improvements will be located in areas identified in the Plan as having the greatest benefit to the Township and its residents.

The Plan is an educational tool and gives citizens, property owners, developers and adjacent communities a clear indication of the Township's direction for the future.

In summation, the Norwood Township Master Plan is a document which sets forth an agenda for the achievement of goals and policies for the entire Township. It is a long-range (20 year) statement of general goals and policies aimed at the unified and coordinated development of the Township. As such, it provides the basis for zoning and land use decisions.

BOARDS COMMISSIONS, AND ADMINISTRATION

The Township has a number of official bodies associated with planning and development regulation. A description of each body and its function in relation to planning follows:

Township Board

The Township Board is the chief governing body of the Township and consists of the Supervisor, Clerk, Treasurer and two trustees. All Board members are elected for concurrent four year terms. State statute requires that the Board approve rezoning requests, zoning map and text amendments and subdivision plats. The Norwood Township Board also has a policy that requires it to adopt the Master Plan developed by the Planning Commission.

Planning Commission

In accordance with planning and zoning enabling statutes, the Township has established a five member Planning Commission. These members are appointed to serve three year staggered terms. One member must be a member of the Township Board. The Planning Commission's main responsibility is to develop the Master Plan for adoption by the Township Board. By Ordinance, the Township Board grants the Planning Commission authority to also approve special land uses, most site plans and general development.

Zoning Board of Appeals

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) consists of three members appointed to three year staggered terms. One member is a member of the Planning Commission. The ZBA ensures that the objectives of the Zoning Ordinance can be more fully and equitably achieved, that a means be provided in the application of the Ordinance, that reasonable flexibility be provided in the application of the Ordinance and that the public health, safety and welfare is protected. The ZBA bases a part of their decision making from the Master Plan.

Administration

Township functions relating to zoning, planning and economic development are performed by the Zoning Administrator and Planner. The Zoning Administrator responds to general questions from the public; processes site plans, rezoning requests and special land uses; performs zoning inspections; issues land use permits; addresses code enforcement. The Planner reviews site plans, rezoning requests and special land uses. Both provide support staff to the Township Board, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals and Township Committees. All Township Officials and Staff serve in a quarter time, or less capacity. Detailed contact information is posted at Township Hall and on the township website www.norwoodtpw.org.



Early Norwood Township resident Roy Stafford at the Norwood Village Schoolhouse c. 1930. In the 2014 Township survey, 84% of respondents said the historic buildings of the Village proper are an asset to the community.





Today the Norwood Village Schoolhouse is home to the Norwood Area Historical Society. In 2021 a new historical commission was proposed as a preservation partnership between the Township Trustees, the Township Planning Commission, the community, and the Norwood Area Historical Society.



Section 2

Background Studies Summary

The Background Studies portion of the Master Plan discusses Norwood Township's location, heritage, past trends, current conditions and future projections. These elements are important to illustrate the context from where the Master Plan process begins. This chapter summarizes significant findings from the planners' research into the background topics.

Location

Norwood Township is located in Northwest Michigan in Charlevoix County. Norwood Township contains just over 24 square miles and includes over 7 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline. The unincorporated village of Norwood is in the southwest corner of the Township on the shores of Grand Traverse Bay. Further, the Township is bisected by US-31, a major north-south state arterial.

Heritage

Norwood got its start in 1867 when Orvis Wood, Lucius Pearl and Orwin Adams built a massive lumber shipping dock and sawmill on the Lake Michigan shore.

The village lies on a bluff overlooking the mouth of Lake Michigan's Grand Traverse Bay. The bay itself got its name from its relative location to the Township. Before the lumbermen— perhaps for thousands of years— Native Americans launched canoes from this shore to reach the peninsula on the western horizon. They called it the "Great Crossing." Early French traders here translated the daring seven mile paddle as *le Grande Traverse*.

From 1867 until the turn of the century, millions of board-feet of hardwood were loaded onto schooners and steamers bound for growing urban Lake Michigan ports. Much of the Norwood timber sailed to rebuild Chicago after the disastrous fire of 1871.

By 1890 Norwood reached its population peak of 400. However, the sawmill burned in 1901 amidst a declining industry, and the port never recovered. Norwood remained a farming community, as well as a north

woods summer destination for Chicagoans and others. Vacationers continued to come by steamship, and in 1915 by automobile via the new West Michigan Pike.

Today dock pilings from 1867 are still visible beneath the water. The original 1915 auto pike still connects the village to main roads. Many examples of nineteenth century architecture are found throughout the community, establishing an ideal historic context and identity. There are many period original homes and three community buildings. The original Schoolhouse, Methodist Church and Township Hall are all actively used today.

Mining operations in Norwood Township are an important part of the community's history and future. St. Mary's Cement currently owns the Charlevoix quarry and associated production facility, which has operated since 1967. It is one of the largest cement operations in Michigan and one of the largest employers in the area. Over a million tons of materials are extracted from the quarry each year. St. Mary's Cement, the current owner and operator of the quarry, publicly released plans that they would like to swap land with the adjacent Fisherman's Island State Park to increase the contiguous quarry area. Pewangoing Quarry, also known as Chert Mine, in Norwood Township is on the National Register of Historic Places. It was a major source of Norwood Chert, used widely throughout Michigan by native American people.

Population and Housing Characteristics

Another very important component in the comprehensive planning process is the understanding of a community's people, particularly their social and economic characteristics. This section explains the current and historic population changes, age distribution, housing characteristics and employment data for Norwood Township. Much of this information is best represented in graphs. We compare Township data to the County wide data when we can identify important similar or opposite trends.

Map 1

RELATIVE LOCATION



Population and Age Distribution

Past Master Plans attempted to predict Norwood Township’s population growth in order to join the need for future land uses and community services. In the 1990’s, the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments (NWMCOG) projected the Township would reach a population of 1365 by the year 2020. However Northern Michigan’s economic and demographic profile, similar to many rural areas across the country, does not suggest that there will be anything more than slow growth over the next generation.

The 2020 US Census puts the Township’s population at 700, a decrease from 733 in the 2010 Census. Chart 1 shows population from Decennial Censuses.

Our research and our intuition lead us to believe that although different segments of the population may grow significantly, the overall number of people and households, along with the land necessary to develop in order to maintain them, will not change dramatically over the horizon of this Master Plan. According to Charlene Schlueter, demographer for NWMCOG, “Michigan has experienced a downward streak for the past ten years and will experience this trend for the next ten years or so.”

The economic downturn that plagued Michigan from 2005–2012, and the associated ‘hangover’ the state still suffers from today, necessitates that the Township address an approach that considers population growth stagnation.

The 2019 American Community Survey shows us that the median age of a Norwood resident is 54.7. The median age in 2010 was 47.3. The median age in 2000 was 42.2. Chart 2 shows the change in age distribution in years over the past 20 years. The population’s age distribution and median age suggest a community composed of middle aging+ households, likely without children.

This conclusion is most important for future capital programming. Ultimately, amenities like parks and libraries, while universally accessible, should be tailored to the growing share of the Township’s population over 35.

Housing and Households

Data for housing comes from both the Township and the US Census Bureau. The 2019 American Community Survey estimates that 96% of the Norwood Township housing stock is comprised of single-family detached homes; 22% are seasonal homes. Table 1 demonstrates that household size is relatively stagnant. Households with children have decreased by half, while households with individuals over 65 years age have increased by 1/3. While there will be some new building permits produced, it is most likely that new units will replace older ones and not create much development pressure. 2019 housing data was gleaned from the 2019 American Community Survey.

Table 1
HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

	1990	2000	2010	2019
Total Housing Units	291	385	412	459
Seasonal Housing Units	81	92	93	100
Households (w/ age > 65 yrs)	49	75	98	160
Households (w/ age < 18 yrs)	69	89	81	44
Average Household Size	2.68	2.47	2.49	2.06

Economic Base

Most of our residents are employed outside the Township with close proximity to the Cities of Charlevoix, Petoskey, East Jordan and Boyne City, as well as the Village of Elk Rapids. US 31 provides easy access from Norwood to these population and employment centers. Norwood is considered a bedroom community. In 2019 the Township’s median household income was \$63,125.

Chart 1
POPULATION

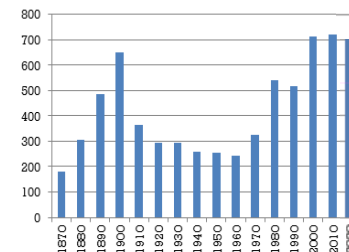
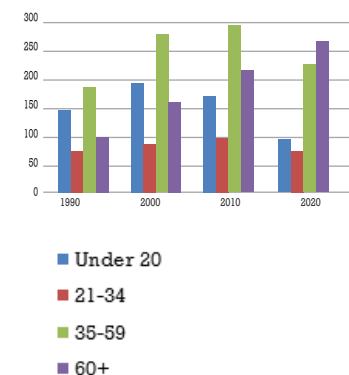


Chart 2
AGE COHORTS



According to the 2019 American Community Survey, there are 346 workers over 16 that live in the Township. The vast majority of these workers commute by themselves to jobs outside the community. In 2015 6% of workers had home based businesses, and we expect that number to continue to grow. The 2019 top three industries for residents' employment are:

1. Educational services, and health care and social assistance (15%)
2. Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services (13%)
3. Manufacturing (12 %)

In 2015 the state equalized value (SEV) for real property in the Township shrunk by 25% since 2000. Residential property carries the majority of the tax burden with 86.66% of total SEV. Agricultural constitutes 10.33%, commercial 1.07%, and industrial 1.94%. These classifications of SEV are displayed in Chart 3.

Estimating demand is an essential part of planning for commercial growth. However, the ability of the Township to generate economic land use opportunities is weakened by lack of common commercially essential utilities such as municipal water, natural gas, and competing opportunities in neighboring communities. Further, there is limited interest in promoting additional commercial retail and service growth. The Township wants to focus on enhancing its existing agriculture and tourism economic engines.

Community Facilities and Services

New Township Hall

A modern Township Hall was built in 2021 at the original lakefront lumber mill site, adjacent to the Norwood Township Park.

Historic Township Hall

The Historic Township Hall has been located at 19759 Lake Street since 1884. Renovations have been limited as the Hall does not have running water or sanitary facilities. This hall served as the center of township government for 136 years until it was replaced in 2021. In 2020 the Township Trustees and the Norwood Area Historical Society commissioned an architectural preservation plan for the old hall. In 2021 the Trustees formed a collaboration committee with the Historical Society, the Planning Commission, preservation experts, and the community to explore long-term preservation recommendations and options for the historic hall.

Emergency Services

Fire protection services are contracted with Charlevoix Township and Banks Township. EMS protection is contracted with the Lake Charlevoix Ambulance Authority. Norwood Township property owners are assessed for these services. Mutual Aid agreements are in place with both Charlevoix and Banks Townships. Police protection is provided by the Charlevoix County Sheriff Department and a limited state police presence.

Sewer and Water

Municipal water and/or sewer service within the Township is extremely limited. With the exception of Island View's privately maintained community water system, all parcels are served by individual wells and on-site septic systems.

Utilities

Electricity and landline phone service is readily available. In 2020 high speed fiber optic internet trunk lines were installed throughout the township by Great Lakes Energy. There are no short-term plans for natural gas extensions and the Township actively communicates with the gas company to anticipate upgrades and maintenance.

Education

The Charlevoix Public School District provides traditional learning in addition to three charter schools and the Charlevoix-Emmet Intermediate School District.

Parks and Recreation

The Township enjoys an abundance of public recreational facilities:

Fisherman's Island State Park which covers over 2600 acres, 5 miles of Lake Michigan Shoreline, camping and hiking. Fisherman's Island and the adjacent mainland became a Michigan State Park in 1973. The area is still referred to as Bell's Bay Park by locals.

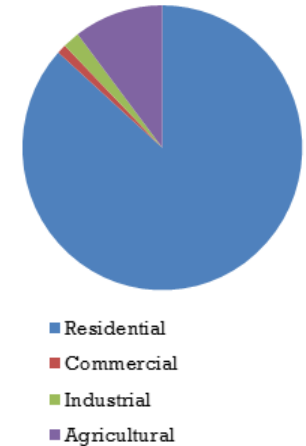
Norwood Township Park boasts 20 acres, 1000 feet of Lake Michigan, pit toilets, picnic tables and grills. Norwood Township Park was deeded to the Township by the Department of Conservation of the State of Michigan (today's MDNR) on October 17, 1963.

Cemetery

The Norwood Township Cemetery is owned and maintained by the Township.

Chart 3

REAL PROPERTY



In 2014 a widely supported charitable effort raised private community funds to install this new cemetery gate and fence.



The predominate land use in the Township is farming. Agriculture encompasses approximately 2800 acres of land or 24% of the Township's area. These lands are actively farmed, producing field crops such as corn and soy. The farm fields provide scenic views as well as an economic base for the Township.

Transportation/Traffic

There are private and public roads within the Township. Adjacent/abutting land owners are responsible for maintenance of private roads in Norwood. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the Charlevoix County Road Commission share the responsibility for operating, repairing, and maintaining all public roads.

MDOT is responsible for maintenance and improvement for US-31. The remainder of the Township's public roads are under the jurisdiction of the Road Commission. The Road Commission maintains about 12 miles of gravel and 14 miles of paved roads, according to the Michigan Geographic Framework File. US-31 is the community's major travel corridor and is heavily traveled throughout the year.

In 2021 the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) invested \$13.3 million to completely rebuild a 7-mile portion of US 31, a long stretch of which runs through Norwood Township (from the northern township border to Norwood/Barnard Roads). This was the most significant road-building improvement to this section of US 31 in decades.

The Township's commercial activity is dependent on access to US-31. Natural resource extraction, agriculture, and recreation/tourism all rely on the two-lane, concrete arterial. Resurfacing and other maintenance activities on US-31 can cause significant traffic disruptions for those that live, work, and recreate in Norwood Township.

It is important to note that the County (after a majority vote of County residents) levies a 1 mill tax, and the Township levies a 1 mill tax (for 2 mills total) to pay for road repairs. The Township residents voted to collect the 1 mill tax and the Road Commission coordinates improvements and repairs with the Township to efficiently spend Norwood's 1 mill funding on roads within the Township boundaries. Township elected officials and Township residents feel that county-wide funding from property taxes and gas taxes is not spent frequently within the Township. The Township and the County Road Commission will continue to work diligently to return funding to the community for fixing roads. The Township could develop an 5-year spending program for road improvements using the locally generated 1 mill levy.

EXISTING LAND USE

The foundation of any planning study is an understanding of the existing land uses within the community. Knowledge of existing land development patterns and site conditions furnishes the basic information which future residential, commercial, industrial and public land use decisions can be made.

As of 2019 there are 459 dwelling units, 100 of which are occupied on a seasonal basis. There is one destination-oriented commercial area, two active mining operations in the MIRD District, and several areas of active farming in the Township.

Norwood Township is comprised of 11,700 acres. 2,226 acres are publicly owned, allowing the remaining approximately 9,474 acres for private purposes. Much of the privately owned land has significant terrain, with slopes exceeding 30% or contains wetlands. Several hundred acres of privately owned land is dedicated to conservation easements. A general overview of existing land uses in the Townships follows:

Active Farming

The predominate land use in the Township is farming. Agriculture encompasses approximately 2800 acres of land or 24% of the Township's area. These lands are actively farmed producing various agricultural products. The farm fields provide scenic views as well as an economic base for the Township. There are also many opportunities for cash crops such as fruits and gourds because of the Township's unique microclimate.

Scattered Residential

Homes sites range from two to forty acres in size. Median home market value is \$207,000, according to the 2019 American Community Survey.

Residential Cluster/Concentrations

Home sites either were planned as part of a formal subdivision process or were built to enjoy a shared amenity, such as Lake Michigan or Harwood Lake. They range from 1/2 acre to one acre in size. They are all single family residences.



In the 2014 Township Survey, of farmers who manage large farmlands, more than 75% said they intended to keep their farms in production beyond the next 10 years.

The Village

This area is in the southwestern portion of the Township and is not incorporated. It has a village layout and character with grid streets and homes close together. This area is known as the Village of Norwood.

The Village, platted in 1867, retains the feeling of an earlier age. Its white clapboard homes are situated along streets lined with mature maples as well as the original church, schoolhouse and Township Hall. It is similar to an historic New England village. During the late decades of the nineteenth century, both summer cottages and farms homes were added to the village while still other structures were built during the twentieth century. As a result, Norwood Village has a diversity of architectural style that creates a charming village in a quiet rural environment. The village is one of Michigan's few remaining nineteenth century rural towns and a treasure worth preserving.

Commercial

Although there are a few scattered businesses along US-31, the main commercial area is in the north-central area of the Township.

Industrial

Located further west is a portion of St. Mary's limestone cement quarry operation, which is part of the cement manufacturing process. On the east side of US-31, at the north end of the Township, is Manthei Development Corporation's redi-mix cement operation.

Lakeshore

The shoreline along Lake Michigan is approximately 2/3 publicly owned. The natural resource value of Michigan's Great Lakes and the unique legal protections that accompany public access and use of the shoreline necessitates a unique approach to land use planning.



The St. Mary's Challenger passes close to shore in Norwood Township, headed to the deep water terminal port at St. Mary's cement plant in nearby Charlevoix Township.



Section 3

Goals and Policies

A. OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION

Retain open space as Norwood Township's defining characteristic. People travelling through Norwood Township enjoy the view of a mosaic of undeveloped landscape. This landscape is composed of forest lands, active farm fields and cleared fields. People living in Norwood Township are able to enjoy these views daily on state owned and privately owned open spaces. The predominance of open space reinforces the Township's rural character and makes this place special. Open spaces and minimal development are the main reasons why people live in Norwood Township.

The community wants to preserve the rural character of the Township that is defined by undeveloped and agricultural areas; therefore, efforts should preserve and connect open spaces. Preserving the Township's character can be achieved by:

1. Developing zoning incentives or Land Trusts that encourage development on private properties without disrupting continuous open spaces.
2. Investigating grant opportunities and partnerships with land conservancies so the Township can obtain high priority open space areas.
3. Conserve open space and agricultural land through encouraging the purchase of development rights.
4. Require landscape restoration to improve mined areas to a natural and undisturbed condition.

B. PROTECT VIEW CORRIDORS

If there is any one experience that Norwood Township residents associate with home, it is the magnificent views. From many locations in the Township, one has unobstructed views of forest lands, fields and the horizon over Lake Michigan. These view corridors inspire awe when traveling along US 31 and are the basis for Norwood's reputation as one of the most beautiful communities of our state.

The view corridors are critical in preserving Norwood Township's character. Carefully considered placement and design of structures can preserve view corridors. Visually disruptive structures could be cell towers, wind turbines, billboards, unattractive signs or strip mall development. It is the intent of the Planning Commission to protect the Township's scenic vistas by:

1. Defining what makes view corridors important and then mapping those viewsheds that meet the criteria.
2. Working with landowners to develop designs that will minimize the visual impacts of a structure, such as placing buildings within wooded areas.
3. Limiting the number and size of signs along roadways.
4. Promoting access management (sharing driveways, cross access easements, and the use of internal roads) to minimize the number of driveways.
5. Exploring methods of tree preservation and protection through establishing a woodlands ordinance.
6. Collaborating with interested land groups and investigating grant opportunities to obtain development rights and easements for view corridors. Investigate "Cost for View" corridors.
7. Developing a co-location cellular tower ordinance that strongly encourages the co-location of antennas on existing structures prior to building new freestanding towers. If a new tower must be built, the Township should have the tools in place to ensure it harmonizes with the surrounding landscape to the greatest extent possible.
8. New technologies for renewable energy systems make solar panels and wind turbines more attractive for both commercial applications and individual homeowners. The Township should consider regulations that allow use of these technologies without creating visual pollution.

C. CONTROL COMMERCIAL GROWTH

Norwood Township is not a shopping destination and does not have the infrastructure to develop any commercial or retail centers, although there is infrastructure in close proximity along US 31 north of the Township. Residents have not expressed a desire to develop additional commercial activities because they are provided in the nearby towns and are adequate to serve their shopping needs. Norwood Township is primarily a residential community and the people that live there want to keep it that way.

Commercial and industrial growth can be controlled by:

1. Reviewing the zoning ordinance to ensure that an appropriate amount of land is zoned for commercial and industrial uses, considering regional needs.
2. Developing zoning and design techniques to ensure commercial and industrial use buildings and structures are compatible with Norwood's character (promote more compact development than strip development).
3. Allowing for home-based businesses that are in character with the community.
4. Regulating the impacts that occur as a result of commercial and industrial growth, such as lighting, signage, parking, etc.
5. Allowing any franchised or trademarked architecture only when used with materials and embellishments that fit with the Township's character.
6. Facilitate the development of technologies that are not visually intrusive to the Township's rural fabric.

D. HIGHLIGHT AND PRESERVE THE VILLAGE OF NORWOOD'S HISTORICAL CHARACTER

The unincorporated village of Norwood is a jewel in Northern Michigan's crown and reminds residents and visitors alike of a much earlier era. The village was founded over 125 years ago and has changed in only small ways since then. The village streets are narrow and lay out in a simple grid. The lots are close together, with homes intermixed with public buildings - church, schoolhouse and the Township Hall. There is very little parking for the church and Hall, because they were planned and

built for people to walk to them from their homes. The village streets are lined with ancient maple trees that provide a canopy over all.

Although homes represent a variety of styles, a good collection of housing dating from the post-civil war era are built in the vernacular style of the country farm homes of that period. Homes and yards are well-maintained, providing a clean, neat and charming scene. Inappropriate development or intense land uses would significantly detract from the character of the settlement.

The Village can be preserved by:

1. Working with the Norwood Area Historical Society to explain the significance of the village with appropriate signage and interpretive opportunities.
2. Work with property owners to develop a natural buffer area between the existing structures in the village of Norwood and any new construction on adjacent property. This buffer should focus on preserving the existing trees and use primarily native species of vegetation.
3. Working with the people who live in the village to develop a historic preservation district. Such a designation could make federal and state tax credits available to property owners that repair their property consistent with period construction.
4. Limiting the width of roads. The Township should encourage the Charlevoix County Road Commission to implement road design standards that complement the village character.
5. Developing a heritage tree program to protect and replace street trees.
6. Minimizing parking lots sizes and use a common-sense approach to establishing parking areas.
7. Improving Norwood Community Park with accessible features and maintaining it in a fashion that encourages family friendly gatherings and community activities.

E. PRESERVE AND ENHANCE EXISTING FARM OPERATIONS

Agriculture is the dominate land use in Norwood Township and its prominence may increase in the future. Agricultural activity is vital to the rural character of the Township and Northern Michigan.

If agriculture is not stabilized and protected, Norwood Township could suffer a form of gentrification where development pressures increase and the community’s character is altered into something less rural and charming. When a farm field or orchard is developed it is usually no longer used for agriculture production. Farmland preservation programs, like the Charlevoix County Farmland and Open Space program can assist in maintaining these areas. These lands provide open space, as well as jobs for Township residents. Although it is unlikely that the Township will face significant development pressures in the short-term because of relatively stable population, long-range stewardship of agricultural lands is important.

Agricultural potential can be preserved by:

1. Working with farmers to create ways to maintain the large amount of farmlands, while allowing for some development (such as cluster developments).
2. Establish special approval use standards for agricultural accessory uses that make sense where proposed yet respect and enhance Norwood Township’s overall community character. “Agri-CULTURE” and home-based businesses are the Township’s best opportunities for economic activity in the foreseeable future. It is appropriate for a two-step approach where the US-31 corridor has more intense commercial accessory uses to agriculture than other less developed parts of the Township. For example, a corn maze would not fit well in Norwood Village because of parking and intensity.
3. Minimizing conflicting land uses next to farmlands. Require natural buffers for non-agricultural uses when built on adjacent lands.
4. Considering a purchase of development rights program, other tax incentives or payment programs to protect farmland.
5. Development of off-site signage standards for commercial uses accessory to agriculture. Such signs should mesh with the Township’s rural character but not encourage a proliferation of visually polluting signs. The Township could work to establish a way-finding system that points out local attractions and activities.

F. PROACTIVELY GUIDE LAND USES AND GROWTH

The Planning Commission should manage and control growth so it won’t control the Township. Identify existing land use patterns and infrastructure needs when developing land use guidelines and regulations. Use this information to develop densities, intensities and development designs that are appropriate for Norwood. This can be done by:

1. Using natural features and topography to distinguish between land uses.
2. Encouraging neighborhood designs in developments (such as parks, open spaces, and walking trails).
3. Providing incentives to create the type of developments that are appropriate for Norwood Township. Appropriate lot sizes through standard splits are an example of how to preserve large swaths of interior agriculture and open spaces.
4. Developing ordinances that are easy to read, follow, understand and are realistic. Graphics and examples can be included in the Ordinances. The Township does not need to create confusion and unnecessary layers of regulation. Norwood is a practical community and regulating land uses should use common sense.
5. Natural resource extraction and mining can have very serious consequences for all of Norwood Township, especially its rural, agricultural character. These very serious consequences can include the impact on existing land uses near the property, reduction of property values near the property, the impact on pedestrian and traffic safety near the property and along the proposed hauling route, the impact on other identifiable health, safety and welfare interests in the Township, [or] the overall public interest. The Township should develop tools to avoid or mitigate negative impacts associated with natural resource extraction and mining. This approach is consistent with the zoning and general law ordinances the Township establishes to eliminate, reduce, or mitigate the negative impacts of other functions like agriculture or commercial land uses.
6. Uniformly and fairly enforce the Township Zoning Ordinance.



Example of a locally-scaled wayfinding system that provides off-site directions to attractions and destinations.



Whiskey Creek. In the 2021 Township Survey 64% of respondents disagreed that industrial and commercial zones should be expanded, even if it meant more jobs in the Township. In the 2014 Township Survey, 85% of respondents supported special efforts to protect the Township's natural resources.

Section 4

TOWNSHIP SURVEY AND PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY

Norwood Township has a strong history of active community involvement. This Master Plan includes survey data from two community surveys, the most recent 2021 survey, as well as the previous 2014 survey.

In 2021 an online survey link was distributed to township residents and property owners via a community flyer. About 120 people completed the survey.

In 2014 the Planning Commission began this Master Plan update process by creating a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis for the Township. This process was implemented at a Planning Commission meeting and included a group tour of the Township. Postcards were sent to all unique property owners (totaling 534) encouraging them to take the online survey or request a paper copy. The Township received 168 responses to the survey, provided for a 95+/- statistically significance to the results.

Summaries and detail of both Township Surveys are included in Appendices A and B.



For over 50 years Norwood Township residents have gathered annually at the Norwood Lakeside Cemetery to honor veterans on Memorial Day.



Some elevations in Norwood Township rise to 300 feet above Lake Michigan, opening to 50-mile sunset views.



Section 5

Future Land Use Plan

The Future Land Use Plan serves as a general guide to the Township's desired future land use patterns and as a graphic representation of the Township's goals and policies. In general, this Plan was developed after careful consideration of the following features in each area and the surrounding properties:

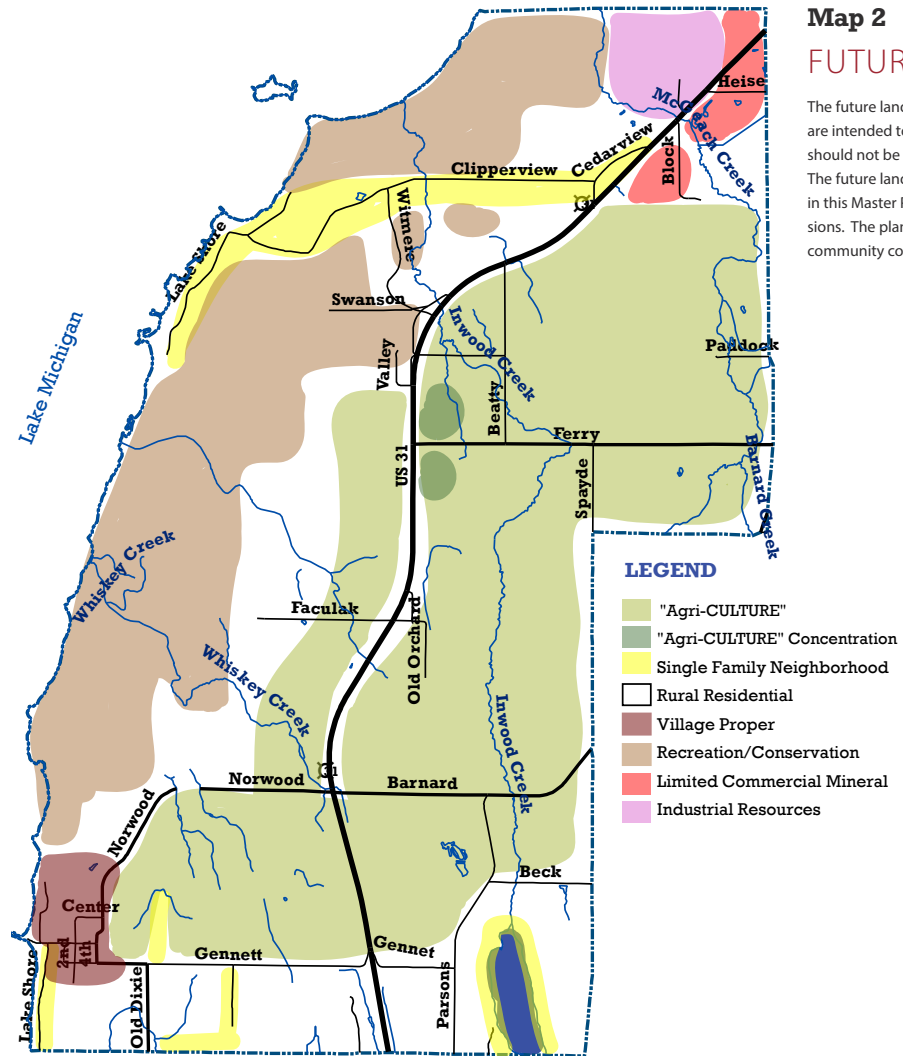
Natural features, including streams, ponds, lakes, wetlands, woodlands, steep slopes, soils, wildlife habitats, and other features that help define the natural capability of the land to support various land use densities;

- Existing development patterns and trends in the Township;
- Capacity of the Township's roadway system;
- Northwest Michigan Health Department's policy for septic systems;
- Residents' expressed needs through the community survey; and
- Desired future land use and character.

The Future Land Use Plan not only reflects the goals and policies of this Master Plan, but also assumes that land will be developed, redeveloped, or remain undeveloped using the other regulatory tools the Township has at its disposal. Tools such as the Zoning Ordinance provide guidance for many elements of a development. The Future Land Use Plan map is a representation of the future as far off as 20 years from now. Readers are cautioned to review other elements of the Master Plan, such as changes which may have occurred since the Master Plan was developed, and the conditions which existed at the time the Future Land Use Plan map and other elements of the Master Plan were prepared.

Since zoning shall be "based on a plan," as stated in the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, all Zoning Ordinance changes in Norwood Township should be consistent with the policies established in this Master Plan. If they are not compatible, then the Zoning Ordinance should be changed to match the Master Plan descriptions over time and in a logical fashion.

If any Zoning Map change is approved by the Township Board, it is vital that the change match both this Future Land Use Plan and the other policies in this document. If it doesn't, the rezoning, the Master Plan and the Zoning Ordinance's legitimacy could be at risk. The Master Plan should be reviewed and revised, if necessary, prior to substantial zoning changes.



Map 2
FUTURE LAND USE

The future land uses shown on this map are intended to show relative locations and should not be used as a strict, scaled measure. The future land use map is one tool provided in this Master Plan to guide land use decisions. The plan in its entirety establishes the community context for those decisions

FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES

“Agri-CULTURE”

This Master Plan strongly encourages a creative agricultural resources element coined “Agri-CULTURE.” The concept of “Agri-CULTURE” allows for agritourism and cultural accessory uses in Norwood Township. These accessory uses, while maintaining the rural character and preserving farmland in the Township, should be allowed when in harmony with the health, safety and welfare of the citizens. All of these “Agri-CULTURE” accessory uses should enhance the fabric of the community and have a logical relationship to the principal land use on each property. “Agri-CULTURE” presents a unique opportunity to combine aspects of tourism, agriculture and cultural opportunities for financial, educational and social benefits to tourists, producers and the broader community.

“Agri-CULTURE” provides the Township with the potential to increase its local tax base and provide new and innovative employment opportunities for residents. In addition, “Agri-CULTURE” provides educational opportunities to the public, helps preserve agricultural lands and allows the development of businesses that might otherwise be outsourced to other communities or eliminated altogether.

There may be three general levels of these “Agri-CULTURE” uses. First, typical accessory uses may be allowed by-right after an administrative review. A second, more intense tier, would require development of some zoning standards and should be approved through a site plan review. A third, most intense use set of standards would permit some specialized agriculturally-oriented industries to be developed on agricultural or low density residential zoned properties in accordance with special use approval standards that make sure uses are not developed in a manner that negatively impact surrounding properties.

“Agri-CULTURE” Concentration would represent a potential concentration of agritourism style primary uses (by-right).

Comparatively there are many active traditional farms in Norwood Township. The hilly terrain and amazing microclimate in this area are conducive for wineries and fruit orchards. The intent of this “Agri-CULTURE” classification is to maintain and promote existing traditional farming operations to continue and flourish by protecting them from encroachment by incompatible uses. This “Agri-CULTURE” classification

includes active farms and land uniquely suited to traditional agricultural practices. These are the parcels where there is active farming and where it is likely to continue. The recommended future land uses are primarily agricultural operations, not residential development. The Township wants to promote these uses including dairy, beef, and crop farming in addition to agriculture-oriented accessory uses such as farm markets, U-pick operations, nurseries, corn mazes, hayrides, and other customary, ancillary, and incidental uses.

The overall residential density should be one unit per five (5) acres; however, individual lot sizes may be smaller when the development is clustered in order to protect interior open spaces and agricultural lands. To encourage clustered developments, the Township should consider implementing a bonus density alternative for standard lot splits or large-lot single family condominium subdivisions.

Rural Residential

People move to rural areas such as Norwood Township to own a larger lot or property than is possible in urban areas. This can mean five acre, ten acre, or even larger lots. The desire for large-lot rural residential development is common in northern Michigan.

The hilly topography in Norwood Township is not conducive for high-density development. In some instances, a five acre parcel may only have 10,000 square feet suitable for development. An overall density that does not exceed one (1) unit for every three (3) acres is appropriate for areas with steep slopes and other physical constraints for structures. In some instances, cluster development (building the majority of the residences on a portion of the development parcel) may be best suited for this area. These cluster developments should be reviewed as a standard site plan as opposed to going through a more intensive review process.

The overall residential density in this planned land use should be one (1) unit per two (2) acres; however, individual lots sizes may be smaller when the development is clustered. To encourage clustered developments, a bonus density program should be implemented.



Small farm animals in Norwood Township.

Village Proper

The village of Norwood is a location that has a distinct sense of place. When a person arrives in the village, they immediately know they are in a special place unique from the surrounding areas in the Township. This is a village that was designed prior to the automobile and it continues to have this feel. The village is comprised of homes built from the 1800's to the present. This area also has the original church, schoolhouse and Township Hall. The roads are narrow and lined with large, mature maple trees. There are no parking lots in this area; vehicles are parked along the street. This Master Plan recommends establishing a specific zoning district that preserves the character of the village of Norwood and does not make any existing development legally nonconforming.

Any new development in the Village should be compatible with the existing character of the village (e.g. narrow tree-lined roads in a grid pattern). Boundaries for the village of Norwood should be established through the Zoning District Map.

Single-Family Neighborhood

This land use area is comprised of single-family homes and it is the intent of this Master Plan to provide for livable and desirable neighborhoods for current and future residents. The primary use should be standard single-family homes. The increasing availability of computer internet connections allows people to work from home. Also, home-businesses that have minimal impact on surrounding neighbors should be encouraged to diversify job opportunities and stimulate year-round local economic opportunities.

The overall residential density shall be one (1) unit per (1) acre; however, individual lot sizes may be smaller when the development is clustered. The Township should implement a bonus density program to promote clustered developments. Clustered developments help preserve the Township's rural character while still meeting the housing needs for future residents.

Recreation/Conservation

Land designated for Recreation/Conservation is intended to protect, preserve and enhance unique and vital natural features and provide areas for parks, recreation, and open spaces which preserve and enhance

the rural character of the Township while, at the same time, broadening recreation and conservation opportunities in appropriate areas. Both public and private recreational/conservation lands are included in this category.

The backbone of the area's economy is its lakes and streams, so protecting them is good for commerce and environmental stewardship. Some locations in northern Michigan have allowed development along their natural resource corridors that negatively impact scenic views and the environment. Norwood Township, through this Master Plan, desires to keep these areas in their natural state.

Most of the Lake Michigan shoreline is already in public ownership, but some of it is privately owned. Intermittent segments of a regional trail system (beginning in Harbor Springs and ending in Eastport) exist in this area. The Master Plan seeks to maintain and complete these connections.

Limited Commercial

The main commercial operation in the Township is a small retail complex. These businesses generally serve northern Michigan and are not oriented to Norwood Township's population. They do provide jobs and an economic base. These businesses should continue to exist but not greatly expand. Any expansion should be done westwards from the existing retail complex, and future commercial principal uses should be limited to furnishing goods and services for the Township's economic market area. This Master Plan does not promote strip-style development along the US 31 corridor.

Mineral Industrial Resources

The citizen survey reflects a desire to have no further industrial development in the Township. Therefore, this Master Plan limits industrial uses to presently-zoned mining and industrial resource properties. This Master Plan also recognizes that mining and drilling are specifically permitted uses in Michigan's Zoning Enabling Act and that zoning or other controls on these uses should be to mitigate the very serious consequences of these uses.



Apple Orchards in Norwood Township c. 1890. In 1897 Norwood Township pioneer and statesman William Harris introduced a bill to the State Legislature which recognized the Apple Blossom as the State Flower.



Agri-inspired pottery from the Norwood Township Bier Pottery Studio.



Beachcombing the Lake Michigan shore at Norwood Township Park. Petoskey Stones and chert abound for the persistent. In the 2021 Township survey respondents were split on whether additional zoning regulations should be enacted to reduce the risk of structural damage from rising water levels in Lake Michigan. In the 2014 survey 71% of respondents said they visited the Norwood Township Park at least once in the last year.

Section 6

Thoroughfare Plan

Norwood Township does not physically tend to any of its roads. Like most Michigan Townships, the roads are maintained by the County Road Commission. The Charlevoix County Road Commission is funded by a portion of Michigan’s fuel taxes, vehicle registration fees and a county-wide millage. The exception to this is US 31, which is under the Michigan Department of Transportation’s (MDOT) jurisdiction.

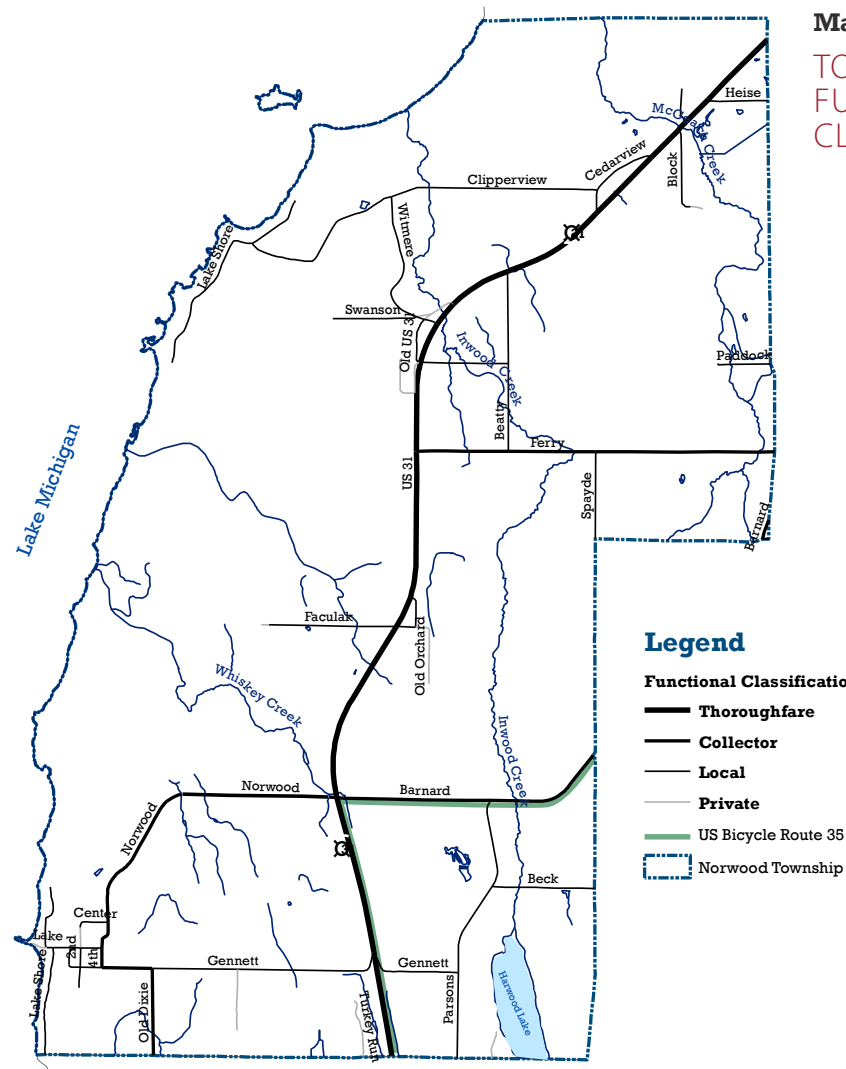
US 31 is the main travel route through the Township. According to MDOT, approximately 8,000 vehicles travel on US 31 in Norwood Township per day. About 4% of this traffic is from commercial trucks. Barnard and Ferry Roads are important east-west roads for local access. Gennett Road connects the Village of Norwood to US 31.

In 2021 the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) invested \$13.3 million to completely rebuild a 7-mile stretch of US 31, most of which runs through Norwood Township (from the northern township border to Norwood/Barnard Roads). This was the most significant road-building improvement to US 31 in decades.

According to the results of the community survey developed for this Master Plan, the issue of paving gravel roads is complex and does not have an easy answer. Feedback from the survey included comments that traffic is increasing, widening roads would change the rural character of the community, the existing paved roads are not maintained well, and that the Road Commission did not prioritize investments well.

US Bicycle Route 35

In 2012, a 500-mile route from Saulte Ste Marie in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula to the Indiana line just east of New Buffalo was established as USBR 35. Research and jurisdictional support for USBR 35 along the Lake Michigan shoreline were completed in late 2011. The route was developed by a committee of city managers, administrators, and planners from communities along Lake Michigan who conducted a series of public meetings through the fall of 2010. The committee secured resolutions of support from all affected road agencies, and the DOT field-reviewed the route. In Norwood Township, the route follows Barnard Road and US 31.



Map 3
TOWNSHIP ROADS
FUNCTIONAL
CLASSIFICATION

ROAD FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS

Thoroughfares

These roads have a planned right-of-way of 120' to 150' or more and are intended to carry high volumes of through traffic both within the Township and to or from the surrounding region. Major thoroughfares also can provide access to larger abutting properties and large commercial or business areas, such as shopping centers or industrial parks.

Collector Roads

These roads have a planned right-of-way of 66' and have three purposes. First, they collect traffic from local roads and distribute that traffic to local destinations or major thoroughfares. Second, they funnel through traffic from major thoroughfares to local destinations. Third, collector streets can provide internal circulation and access to shopping centers and industrial parks.

Local Roads

These roads have a planned right-of-way UP TO 66' and may have a developed footprint as small as 22' wide. They provide access to adjacent land uses, such as residential neighborhoods. Generally, these roads carry relatively small volumes of traffic.

Specific recommendations for implementing transportation improvements in this Master Plan include:

- The Township should work with the Road Commission to develop context-appropriate guidelines so that road improvements maintain the character of the community. Roads in Norwood Village and roads that have scenic views are the priority for establishing such guidelines.
- Norwood Township should work with the Road Commission to ensure an equitable return of funding that residents pay in the county-wide millage. It is important that some capital maintenance occurs to slow the deterioration of local roads in Norwood Township.
- If any roads are repaired or paved, priority should be given to more heavily traveled routes like Barnard Road, Richardson Road, and Norwood Road.
- The community should stay actively engaged in the planning for a regional trail connector between Traverse City and Charlevoix. Norwood Township lies within the middle of the planned non-motorized, regional trail connector between Traverse City's TART (Traverse Area Recreational Trail) Trail and the Charlevoix section of the Little Traverse Wheelway. The 45+ mile connector segment has been named the Nakwema (nah-KWAY-mah) Trailway, Ojibwe for "where paths connect." The inspiration for the name comes from the long-ago established Indigenous routes through the waters and woods of the region. As of August 2020, the Norwood-to-Charlevoix segment of the Nakwema Trailway is in the early design stages, with a goal of an approved design by 2023, and construction to begin in 2025. The estimated budget for this segment is \$27 Million. The trailway will be funded through state and federal grants, contributions from local units of government, and private funding.



US Bicycle Route 35 was identified with signage through the Township in 2014.



Norwood Township has a rich history of artisans and craftsmen. Thirty years ago the historic Hilton Schoolhouse was transformed into the landmark Bier Art Gallery and Pottery Studio on US 31.



Section 7

Environmental Profile and Natural Features Plan

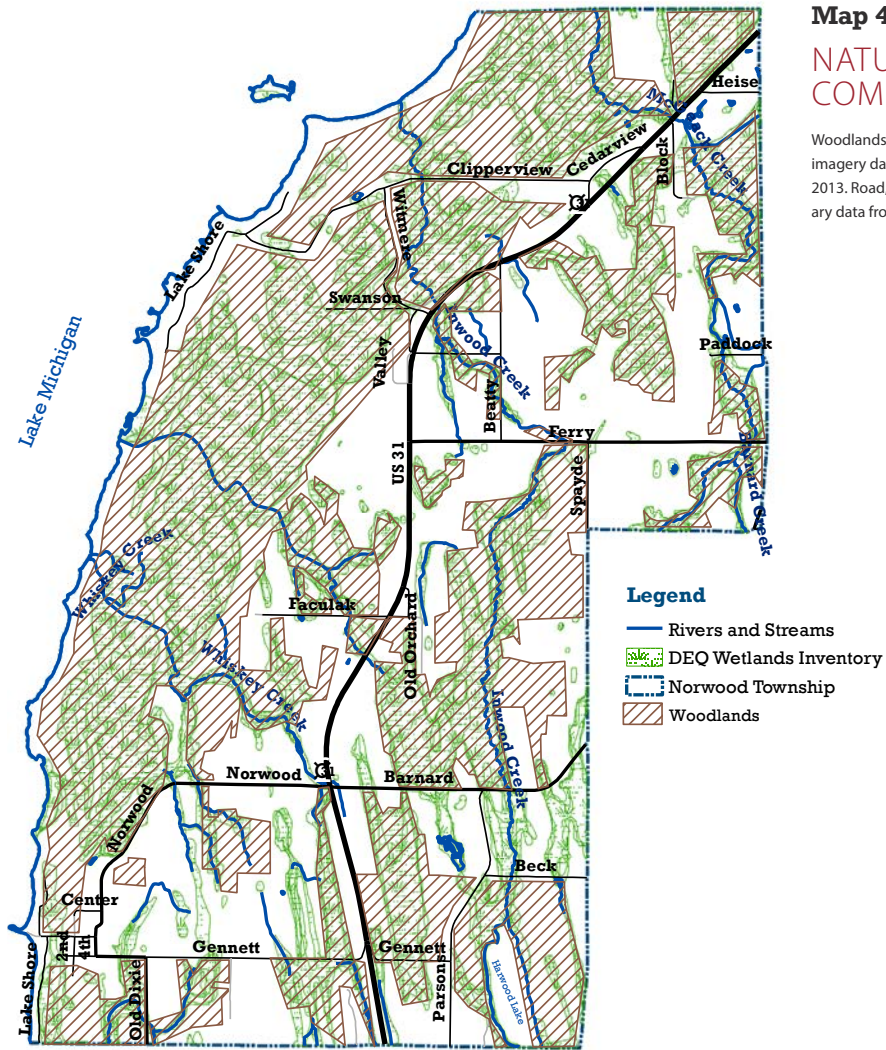
NATURAL FEATURES

Lakes, streams, hills, wetlands, drainage systems, and vegetation provide Norwood Township with a highly varied landscape and significant local natural resources. The Township is located within a hilly zone of glacial moraines and gently undulating plains, and enjoys the rivers, lakes, and wetlands that are characteristic of this type of glacially formed landscape. The Township is located within the Grand Traverse Bay Watershed. Extensive wetland systems are significantly present throughout the Township.

The rolling wooded hillsides, lakes, wetlands, and relatively undisturbed areas of the Township have provided the “rural” atmosphere that has drawn many people to Norwood.

We note that along with the typical natural features present, the glaciers left large deposits of sand and gravel throughout the Township. Additionally, an examination of aerial photography over Norwood Township shows long and narrow properties and land formations running from north to south.

Township leaders are challenged by the task of balancing protections for property owners against mitigating the negative impacts of mining and resource extraction activities. The Michigan Legislature tasked local communities with finding this sensitive balance between industry, environment, and sense of community.



Woodlands

We established wooded areas across the Township by examining aerial photography. Not surprisingly, many of these woodlands correspond to wetlands. Forested wetlands (wetlands where trees are the dominant plant species) are particularly valuable because they take a longer time to mature.

Wetlands

This classification is for lands that are perceived to have wetland qualities, such as containing standing water or have always been considered “wet.” The majority of these areas follow Inwood, McGeach and Whiskey Creeks and correspond to the wetland boundary provided by the Michigan Resource Information System. The wetland areas shown on the map were not surveyed prior to being drawn— they are shown for generalized land use planning purposes and include marshes and bogs.

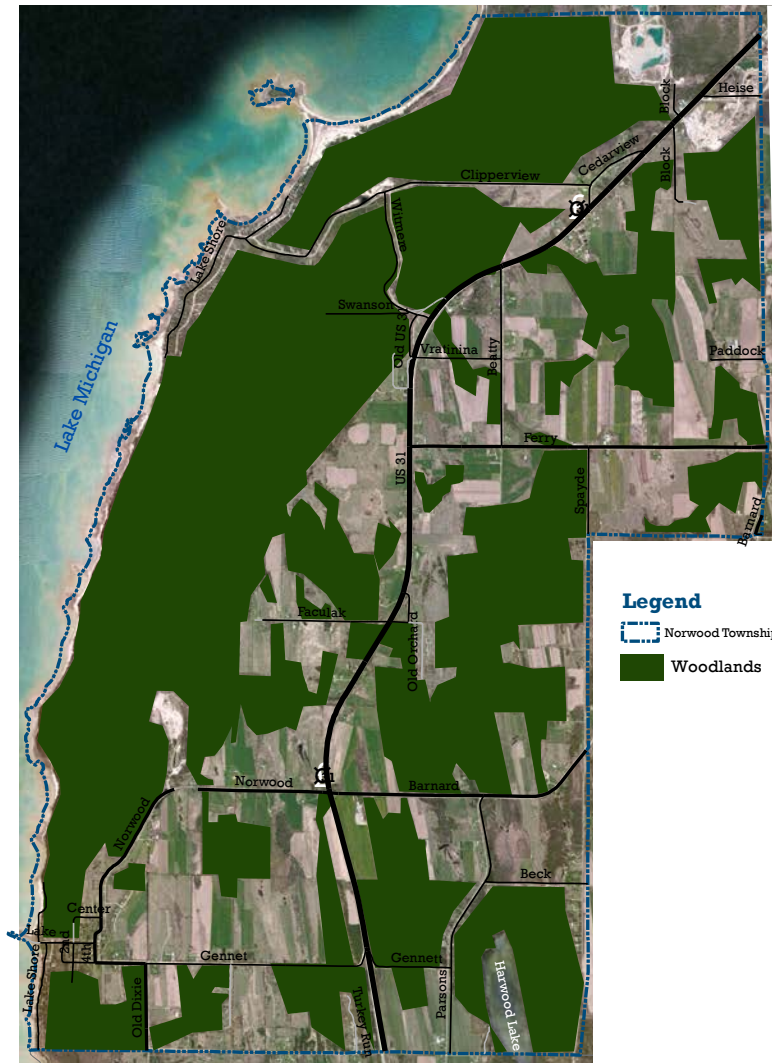
Wetlands serve many purposes in the Township. They provide habitat for a wide variety of plant and animal life, function as natural stormwater retention and filtration systems, and have an important role in the groundwater recharge cycle.

Significant Views

Norwood Township has many spectacular vantage points. These include views of Lake Michigan, the rolling topography, open areas, forest areas and farmlands. The Township should work to identify and prioritize viewsheds.

Topography

Rolling topography contributes to Norwood Township’s scenic beauty, recreation opportunities, and economic base. The same rolling topography is generally unsuited to intensive development.



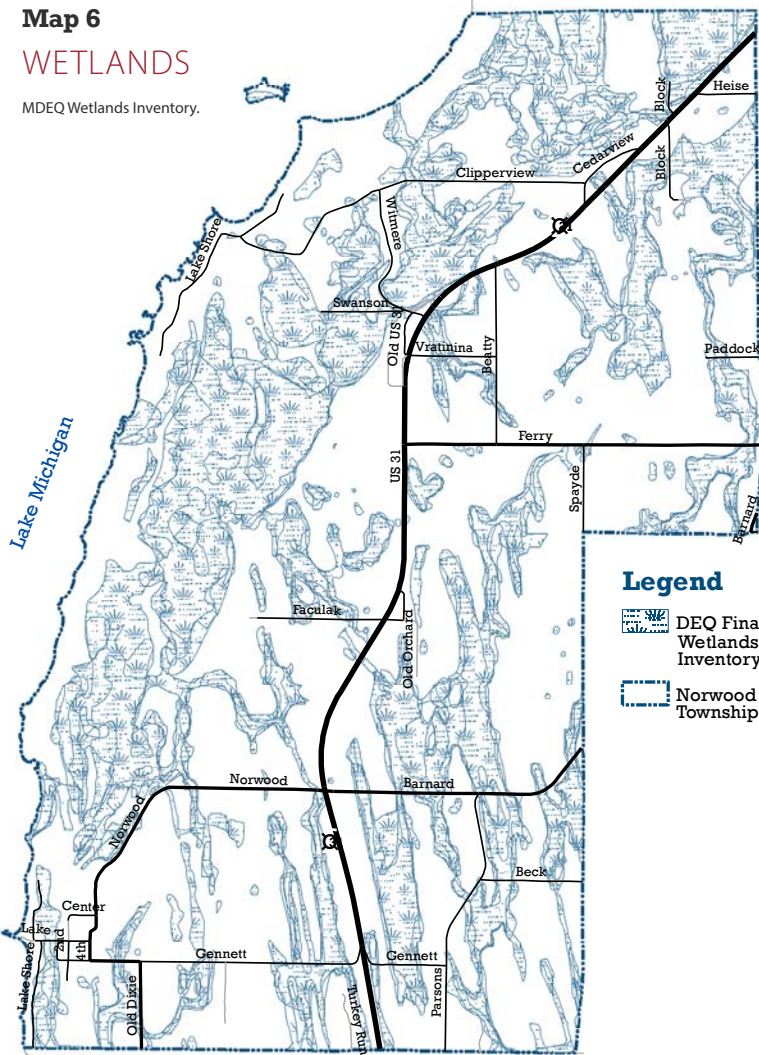
Map 5

WOODLANDS

Woodlands identified by staff from satellite imagery data copyrighted by DigitalGlobe 2013. Road, Hydrography, and Political Boundary data from Michigan State Framework.

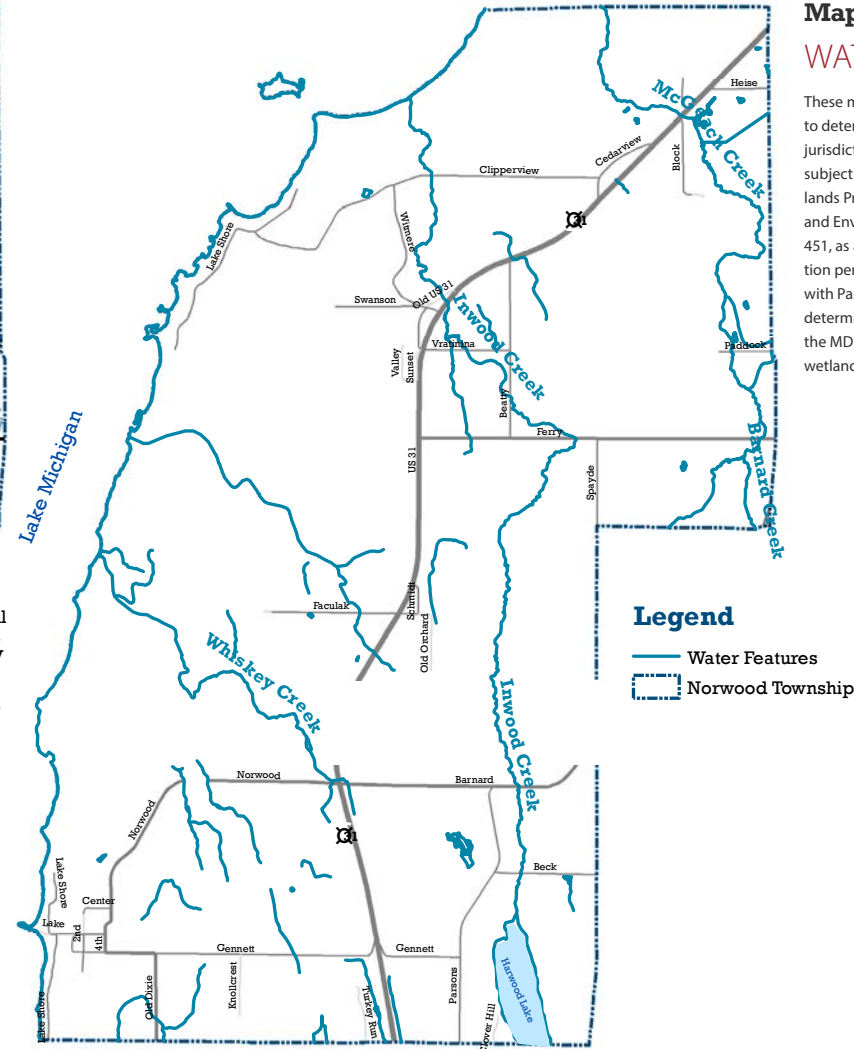
Map 6
WETLANDS

MDEQ Wetlands Inventory.



Map 7
WATER FEATURES

These maps are not intended to be used to determine the specific locations and jurisdictional boundaries of wetland areas subject to regulation under Part 303, Wetlands Protection, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended. Only an on-site evaluation performed by the MDEQ in accordance with Part 303 shall be used for jurisdictional determinations. A permit is required from the MDEQ to conduct certain activities in wetlands regulated under Part 303.



Specific recommendations for protecting Norwood Township's important natural features in this Master Plan include:

- Identifying important viewsheds that are important to the Township's character and have significance to the region's heritage.
- Norwood Township should continue to represent the interest of Township residents during discussions between the State of Michigan and St. Mary's Cement Company regarding a potential land exchange.
- Determine if there is impetus in the community to protect woodlands and tree stands from overdevelopment. This should be differentiated from forestry and agriculture activities.
- The Township should continue to work with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality to ensure that protected wetlands remain considered during the development review process.
- If there are champion trees, which are old and large examples of specific species, then they should be documented. These trees may be very valuable components of viewsheds or other protected areas.
- The Township should develop tools to avoid or mitigate negative impacts associated with natural resource extraction and mining. This approach is consistent with the zoning and general law ordinances the Township establishes to eliminate, reduce, or mitigate the negative impacts of other functions like agriculture or commercial land uses.



Coastal ice caves on Lake Michigan, near the Norwood Township Park.



Seven miles of northwest-facing coastline uniquely exposes Norwood Township to Lake Michigan's unparalleled beauty and unpredictable fury.



Appendix A

2021 Community Survey Summary

In 2021 an online survey link was distributed to township residents and property owners via a community flyer. About 120 people completed the survey.

When prompted with the question of whether more industrial and commercial land in the Township should be permitted if it would attract businesses and jobs, the majority of the Township was in disagreement. Open response comments to this question commonly mentioned maintaining the existing rural and small character of the community.

Several questions of the 2021 survey were dedicated to recreational opportunities in Norwood Township. When asked what types of recreational resources are most important for the Township to improve, respondents supported improving nature preserves/conservancies, nonmotorized trails, and beaches/waterfront access. Comments mentioned a desire for improving walking and hiking trails that would be used by residents. In relation to nonmotorized trails, 63% of those surveyed supported expanding nonmotorized trails. The open responses to this question showed slight hesitation because of the possibility that the trails could be used by motorized bikes and ATVs. Many comments expressed a desire for more information on the potential placement of the nonmotorized infrastructure.

Whether Norwood Township should regulate lakefront development was the most controversial topic in the survey. Of those surveyed, 46% agreed that the Township should adopt additional zoning regulations to reduce the risk of damage to structures from rising water levels in Lake Michigan, and 54% disagreed or strongly disagreed. Comments ranged from the fact that private property owners should be responsible for protecting their structures not the Township and that zoning language is already too restrictive to a desire to change the regulations because they are not adequately written to adapt to a shifting water elevation. The first lakefront regulation question was followed by a more detailed question about if the Township should reduce risk from the occasional high-water level, not just the yearly average. Slightly more people disagreed or strongly disagreed with this approach, 58% in total. Open responses to this question were similar to the first.

SPECIFIC RESPONSES TO INDIVIDUAL SURVEY QUESTIONS

The remainder of this section lists the individual survey questions and their responses.

More land should be allowed for industrial or commercial if it would attract additional firms/jobs to the community.

Strongly agree	11.11%
Agree	24.79%
Disagree	31.62%
Strongly disagree	32.48%

On which types of recreational resources are most important for the Township to work on improving?

Nature preserves/conservancies	55.56%
Nonmotorized trails	50.43
Beaches/waterfront access	45.30%
Recreation/community open space	18.80%
Youth recreation	9.4%

Would you be supportive of expanded nonmotorized trails and recreational opportunities for Township residents and visitors?

Yes	62.71%
No	19.49%
Undecided	17.80%

Norwood Township should focus more on improving existing parks rather than acquiring new ones.

Strongly agree	34.48%
Agree	47.41%
Disagree	17.24%
Strongly disagree	.86%

Additional zoning regulations should be enacted to reduce the risk of damage to structures from rising water levels in Lake Michigan.

Strongly agree	11.61%
Agree	34.82%
Disagree	35.71%
Strongly disagree	17.86%

Water levels fluctuate in Lake Michigan from year to year. Please rate the degree to which you agree with the following statement: The Township should reduce the risk to public and private properties from occasional high water levels rather than just yearly averages.

Strongly agree	6.96%
Agree	34.78%
Disagree	38.26%
Strongly disagree	20.00%

Please rate how much of a problem, if at all, each of the following is in the Township:

Street / Road Conditions	
Not an issue	8.62%
Minor issue	14.66%
Moderate issue	30.17%
Major issue	46.55%

Junk & Trash	
Not an issue	25.89%
Minor issue	49.11%
Moderate issue	23.43%
Major issue	3.57%

Zoning Enforcement	
Not an issue	44.04%
Minor issue	32.11%
Moderate issue	18.35%
Major issue	5.50%

Property Maintenance	
Not an issue	48.67%
Minor issue	37.17%
Moderate issue	11.50%
Major issue	2.65%

Noise or nuisance from incompatible land uses	
Not an issue	48.70%
Minor issue	30.43%
Moderate issue	13.04%
Major issue	7.83%

Short-term rentals	
Not an issue	53.04%
Minor issue	22.61%
Moderate issue	11.30%
Major issue	13.04%

Appendix B

2014 Community Survey Summary

Seventy-five percent of the respondents are year-round residents and have lived in the Township for more than ten years. By far the majority of respondents were over 45 years old. A summary is as follows:

The majority of respondents stated they live in Norwood Township due to the rural atmosphere, country living, peacefulness/privacy and scenic views.

Nearly 99% of respondents consider the Township's natural resources (beach, park, scenic views, open space, lakes, rivers, streams, woodlots, wetlands, water recharge areas) to be an asset to the community. They believe these resources should be protected with appropriate regulations. 71% of the respondents believe the Village is valuable and should be protected.

The majority of respondents support lot sizes of less than 5 acres, where appropriate. Dense residential developments are not favored.

Less than 25% of the respondents farm their land, but there are several significantly sized farms.

The majority of respondents believe that the number of commercial businesses in the Township is about the right size and character of the community. They do support additional commercial development with appropriate land use regulations.

The super majority said industrial development should be discouraged with many land use restrictions.

The super majority of respondents support elected officials working to bring internet access to Norwood Township, however, are not necessarily in favor of public funding.

Most of the respondents believe the roads are in fair to good condition.

The majority support improvements to roads and Norwood Township Park using creative funding mechanisms, not additional taxes.

The majority of respondents either don't think that additional taxes for fire protection, policing, or ambulance services are important or that there was even a debate about the sufficiency of those services.

SPECIFIC RESPONSES TO INDIVIDUAL SURVEY QUESTIONS

The remainder of this section lists the individual survey questions and their responses. Many of the questions gave the respondents an opportunity for individual comments and this section summarizes those comments in cases where there are several similar comments.

Which of the following are reasons that you live in Norwood Township?

The top 3 responses to this question were peacefulness and privacy, country living, and rural atmosphere. The bottom 3 responses from residents were living close to work, affordable housing, and quality of schools. These responses seem reasonable given that there are few employment opportunities in the Township, the average household income is around 30% of average housing values, and the age cohort with the most responses to the survey was over 45.

Please check the choice below that best describes how you feel about the rate of residential growth in Norwood Township.

Over 70% of the respondents indicated that the residential rate of growth in the Township was just right. Only 3% of the survey respondents felt residential growth was happening much too slowly.

Which density (for single family homes) do you think is appropriate for future development in Norwood Township?

The majority of respondents indicated that the preferred residential density was 1 house per 3 acres. The least preferred residential density selected was 1 house per 1/2 acre. Individual

comments about this question were supportive of varied lot sizes as long as natural features and open spaces were preserved.

What types of residential development would you like to see?

The choice selected with the most responses was low density single family homes on smaller lots in a manner that preserves open spaces. The least favored response was multiple family and/or attached condominiums. Comments included in the responses focused on preserving open space, making sure there were adequate services to support different residential densities, and limiting denser developments unless there were trade-offs that preserved Township character.

In general, do you feel that the right of the Township to regulate land uses should come before the rights of the property landowner?

The majority of the responses was that each case must be considered individually. The least preferred response was that the Township's ability to regulate land should come first.

Which best describes how you view the number of commercial (retail and services) businesses in Norwood Township?

The most selected response was that the number of commercial businesses was about right for the size and character of the community. The lowest response was that there was too much.

Where would you like to see future commercial (retail and services) growth located to serve the citizens of Norwood Township?

The intersection of US-31 and Heide Road, the intersection of US-31 and Richardson Road, and the Village of Norwood were preferred for commercial growth. However, nearly 44% of the respondents expressed that they did not want anymore commercial development in the Township. Specific comments about the locations mentioned a context appropriate convenience market close to the village.

What type of new retail/service would you like to see in Norwood Township?

The top three responses were a farm market, a food service/produce/general store, and an art gallery or studio. The lowest response was a strip mall. Nearly 31% of respondents said they didn't want more retail/service. A common theme through many of the individual responses is that any new commercial establishments should respect the appearance of the community and have reasonable hours of operation.

Please check the response that best describes how you feel about a small shopping center (4-6 stores) located in the Township.

Only about 20% of respondents indicated that they would be in favor of a small shopping center.

Please check the response that identifies the village or city that you conduct most of your business.

The top three responses to this question were Charlevoix, Petosky, and Traverse City. Individual comments support these responses.

In general, commercial (retail and services) development in the Township should be:

The largest response was allowed with appropriate land use regulations (44%) while the smallest response was highly promoted with few land use restrictions (4%).

Would you like to see more employment/job opportunities created in the Township?

Responses were mixed on this question, with the largest choice being neutral. The remaining responses were slightly biased towards being in favor of opportunities, however we will infer from the rest of the survey that any new developments would need to respect the overall context of the community.

In general, industrial development in the Township should be:

The largest response to this question was discouraged with may land use restrictions (53%). The smallest response was highly promoted with few land use restrictions. The comments for this question focused on appropriate regulations and green industry.

In general, mining operations in the Township should be:

The largest response to this question was that mining should be discouraged with many land use restrictions (62%). Comments related to this question focused on keeping mining operations in the existing designated district.

If there were going to be industrial development in the Township, where would it be located?

Although 66% of the respondents indicated opposition to industrial development, 26% indicated a preference for the north quadrant. Comments for this question generally supported siting any new developments adjacent to existing developments.

Do you consider the Township's natural resources (beach, park, scenic views, open space, lakes, rivers, streams, woodlots, wetlands, water recharge areas) to be an asset to the community?

Almost 99% of respondents indicated that they felt these features were community assets.

Do you feel that the Township should enact special measures to protect these natural resources?

85% of respondents supported special efforts to protect the natural resources. Individual comments suggested that residents would like to better understand what these special measures could entail.

Do you consider the historic buildings of Norwood Village to be an asset to the community?

84% of the respondents agreed with this statement. Only 5% opposed the statement.

Do you feel that the Township should enact special measures to preserve the Village and surrounding area?

71 % of respondents support special measures to protect the village while about 14% of respondents opposed the concept.

How many acres do you farm or lease in the Norwood Township?

Of the respondents that answered the question that they do farm, about 50% farm 40 acres or less while about 18% farm more than 100 acres.

If you presently farm 40 acres or more in Norwood Township, how long do you plan to keep this land in agricultural production?

More than 75% of respondents indicated that they were keeping their large farmlands in production longer than 10 years.

How many times have you, your family and/or guest(s) used the Township Park on Lake Michigan in the past 12 months?

71% of respondents used the Township Park at least once over the past 12 months.

Would you support improvement of Township Park on Lake Michigan?

This question discusses different alternatives for funding park improvements. Of the 71% that answered the question positively, the majority (52%) supported other means like outside grants and funding, 13% for funding with special assessments, and only 7% would support increased taxes for park improvements. This question, along with question 24, focus on specific Township Park improvements that are very valuable for developing a new Township Parks and Recreation Plan. This Parks and Recreation Plan is a key implementation recommendation from this 2014 Master Plan.

Do you support the Elk Rapids to Charlevoix Trail?

Only 13% of respondents do not support the trail concept. The other respondents were almost evenly split between supporting the trail concept and not being aware of it.

How many members of your household are employed outside the home?

29 of the respondents skipped this question, but 66 indicated no members of the household worked outside the home, 29 had 1 worker, 39 had 2 workers, and 9 had more than 2 workers.

If you live in the Township, how far do you and each employed member of your household drive (one way) to work?

About 19% of respondents more than 20 miles from home while about 18% work 5-10 miles from home. These responses are consistent with answers to earlier questions about travel habits. 36% indicate they are retired. 23% of respondents state that they work from home, which is much greater than the results of the 2012 American Community Survey.

Check the roads typically used by members of your household on the way to and from work.

The three top roads indicated by respondents were US-31, Norwood Road, and Barnard Road. The three least indicated were Parson's Road, Beatty Road, and Warner Road.

Do you feel there is a traffic congestion problem on Township Roads?

95% of respondents did not think there is a congestion problem on Township Roads.

How would you describe the condition of the roads in the Township?

75% of respondents selected that the Township Roads were in good or fair condition.

Would you support an additional millage to pave gravel roads in the Township?

Almost half of the respondents selected no for this question. Comments on this question suggested a better accountability from the Road Commission for the existing funding sent to the County.

If you have been a Township resident five or more years, please rate how you feel the following categories have changed in the last five years:

The majority of respondents selected that road conditions have stayed the same or gotten worse. The majority of respondents selected that privacy has stayed the same or gotten worse. The majority of respondents think crime has stayed the same. The majority of respondents think traffic has stayed the same or gotten worse. The majority of respondents indicated that the natural environment has stayed the same or improved.

In your opinion, what do you consider needs more protection by the Township? (Please rank your top 5 choices in order of importance, assigning "5" to the most important)

	Average Rating
Scenic Views	4.05
Open space	3.24
Forestry	2.87
Agriculture	2.76
Norwood Village	2.59

Many of the comments focused on protecting personal property rights and that each of these topics were somewhat equal. Identifying scenic views is an important implementation step for this 2014 Master Plan.

Should your elected officials actively work to bring internet access to the Township?

78% of respondents answered this question yes, and the majority of comments were favorable to the prospect.

Would you support a tax millage or other funding mechanism to pay for improved internet service?

Although respondents were favorable to the previous question, they were not supportive of using a millage to fund such improvements (47%).

Would you support a property tax millage for purchasing additional park land?

In general, comments to this question suggest more information is needed, but 58% of respondents said No.

The Purchase of Development Rights is the voluntary sale of the right to develop property by the landowner to a government agency or land trust. The government agency or land trust acquiring development rights typically restricts future uses of the land to farming, recreation or open space.

Would you support a property tax millage for purchasing development rights?

Comments for this question were mixed, however, almost 41 percent of respondents answered no.

Would you support a property tax millage to improve fire protection in the Township?

Many of the comments were unaware fire protection was an issue. Responses were split 37% yes, 34% no, and 18% undecided.

Would you support a property tax millage to improve Ambulance Services in the Township?

The response to this question was very similar to the previous question about fire protection. Responses were split 35% yes, 47% no, and 18% undecided.

Would you support a property tax millage to improve Public Safety in the Township?

Responses were split 20% yes, 47% no, and 18% undecided.

Which of the following best describes your residential status in Norwood Township?

75% of respondents are year-round residents while 22% are seasonal residents.

How long have you owned property in Norwood Township?

Almost 75% of respondents have owned property in Norwood Township more than 10 years. Less than 10 percent of the respondents have owned property for less than 5 years.

What type of property do you own in Norwood Township?

Commercial	0.0%
Residential < 2 acres	30.30%
Residential 2 to 5 acres	20.61%
Residential 5 to 10 acres	15.15%
Residential > 10 acres	17.58%
Farm 40 acres or greater	10.91%
Multifamily	0.0%
Waterfront	25.45%
Industrial	0.61%
Renter	2.42%

Notably, owners of small lots responded to the survey in the greatest number.

Are you a registered voter?

92% of responses stated yes and 8% stated no.

What is your age?

18-24	1
25-34	3
35-44	11
45-54	31
55-64	43
65-74	38
75+	26

90% of survey respondents that answered question 45 indicated they were over 45.

The remaining three questions were open ended questions listed below, followed by the number of responses. We try to mention comments that were repeated multiple times.

In your own words, what characteristics would make Norwood Township an exceptional place to live five (5) years from now?

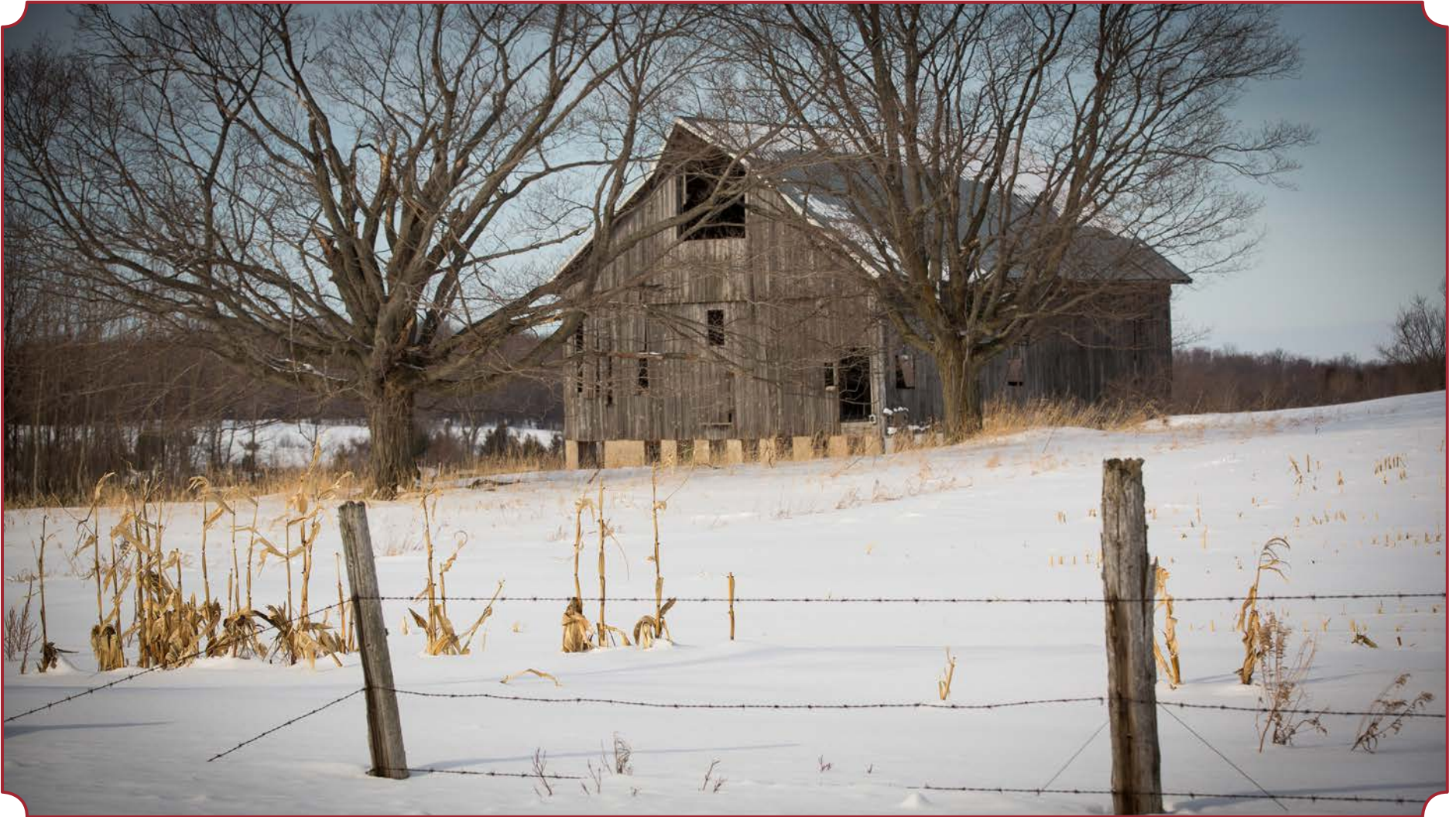
132 comments
The historic quaintness and simple rural character are mentioned repeatedly in the comments. Keeping the Township growing at a sensible and moderate pace are also mentioned.

In your own words, what characteristics might hinder Norwood Township from being an exceptional place to live five (5) years from now?

131 comments
Industry, additional mining, and urban/suburban style development are repeated throughout the comments for this question as characteristics that will hinder Norwood Township from being an exceptional place to live 5 years from now.

Is there anything else that you would like to suggest to the Township Planning Commission?

91 comments
Suggestions for the Planning Commission were varied from praise to criticism. Some comments include negative responses on the proposed land swap, positive responses for the protection of natural resources, and support for the introduction of broadband internet service to the Township.



In the 2014 Township Survey when asked about protecting resources, residents said open space preservation and scenic view preservation were their top priorities.