

**WEST TRAVERSE TOWNSHIP**

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**REVISED 1993**

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# **INTRODUCTION**

In electing to produce a Comprehensive Plan for West Traverse Township, the Planning Commission and Township Board hope to accomplish the following objectives:

- West Traverse Township needs a Comprehensive Plan to act as a guide to the decision making process of the Township Board and Planning commission.
- The permanent and seasonal population of the Township is growing at an extremely fast rate. Development guidelines should be established in order to maintain a mandated (reference township survey of three years ago) request to maintain the Township's rural character.

## **The Planning Process**

In order to develop a Comprehensive Plan the following chapters will be developed:

- Population and its' characteristics.
- Economy.
- Natural Resources and Features.
- Land Use.
- Housing
- Water-Wastewater.
- Transportation.
- Recreation.
- Community Facilities.
- Implementation.
- Goals and Objectives.

## **What is a Comprehensive Plan?**

A Comprehensive Plan is an official public document adopted by a local government as a policy guide to decisions regarding the physical development of the community. It indicates in a general way how the leaders of the government would like the community to develop over the next few years. There have been many terms and definitions to describe a Comprehensive Plan, but T.J. Dent, a leading figure in the area of planning, has stated it in the following manner: "The general plan is the official statement of the local legislative body which sets forth its' major policies concerning desirable future physical development."

### **Why is a plan needed?**

The plan is needed because local governments, such as West Traverse Township, influence and decide the majority of physical developments of their communities. Most local governments are composed of lay citizens and some technological guidance is needed to help in the decision making process. Plans can provide a guide by establishing collimating development policies.

### **The importance of the legislative body.**

Because of their role in making planning decisions, the West Traverse Board and the West Traverse Township Planning Commission must be aware of local needs, the numerous land use changes and policy making decisions being made within and outside the Township. The comprehensive plan should allow Township governmental boards to be aware of these changes and aid in making the important policy making decisions necessary for the functioning of good government.

### **The Principal Client of the Plan.**

West Traverse Township, the principal client, should have a Comprehensive Plan that will be beneficial to itself. Years ago planners believed that their plans should be designed and adopted only by commissions. This meant that all the physical development plans could be approved and repealed by the commission without public approval. Today, most planners' and government officials agree that the Comprehensive Plan should be tailor-made to suit the individual client. One of the most influential ideas of planning is that the Comprehensive Plan is a legislative policy instrument, instead of a complex technical document.

### **The scope of the Plan.**

There are many different ideas on what the scope of the Plan should address. Some planners believe that the Plan should include physical development, such as size, location and regional development. Others believe in social, economical and administrative planning. Henry Fain indicated, "A physical plan and all other plans should be unified in an ultra-comprehensive policies plan." The Comprehensive Plan will include policies and goals within the frame work of physical and social development.

### **Function of the Plan.**

The West Traverse Township Plan will be developed as an inventory of existing land use, physical characteristics, social and economic characteristics of the community. These inventories cumulate in a policies, goals and objectives statement to help community decision makers guide community development.

Although Comprehensive Plans have been in existence for many decades, the Plans were normally used for large scale planning (i.e. cities and regions). Within the past few years, small units of government have begun to use the Comprehensive Plan as a planning tool. The Michigan Legislature felt that planning was so important to small governmental units they passed the Township Planning Act of 1959. It is important to the people of West Traverse Township that they understand this piece of legislation and use it as tool to guide future development.

## **ENABLING LEGISLATION**

Township Planning Act (Act No. 168 of the Public Acts of 1959, as amended through October 1966).

An act to provide for township planning, for the creation, organization, powers, and duties of township planning commissions: and for the regulation and sub-division of land.

The following is a citation of Section S.S.A. #5.2963 (202) Purpose of Planning, section 2.

The purpose of plans prepared pursuant to this act shall be to promote public health, safety, and general welfare; to encourage the use of resources in accordance with their character and adaptability; to avoid the over-crowding of land by building or people; to lessen congestion on public roads and streets; to facilitate provision for a system of transportation, sewage disposal, safe and adequate water supply, recreation and other public improvements and to consider the character of each township and it's suitability for particular uses judged in terms of such factors as the trend in land and population development. (C.L.48 1125.322.).

# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

## **POPULATION**

Several projection methods were used to predict the future population of West Traverse Township. A mix of the projection methods was finally adopted. The result is the following:

Year	Projections		Total
	Resident	Non-Resident	
1990 (actual)	968	1932	2900
2000	1200	3600	4800
2010	1900	5600	7500

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## **ECONOMY**

Over the past few years the traditional "boom bust" economy has almost disappeared. The Township economic base has been diversified. Local businesses now offer year round employment. Once township residents left the Township to work, but now people come into the Township to work. This change can be attributed, for the most part, to the change in the permanent and part time population of West Traverse Township. Many of the township residents are retired on comfortable incomes. These people require the services of electricians, plumbers, landscapers, and builders. These services are in such demand that owners of several of these skilled trades have established their main offices within the Township.

Jobs originating within the Township	
Full Time: 281	Part Time: 246

## **NATURAL RESOURCES**

This section describes the bedrock geology, surface geology, soil associations, watersheds, and water features of West Traverse Township. Knowledge of these natural features and their possible limitations can help planners guide development in the Township.

## LAND USE

This chapter indicates the land use patterns within West Traverse Township. These patterns will help planners guide development within the Township so that we don't have incompatible uses of land.

Historic land use patterns project themselves into present and future land use patterns. The three major factors that influenced the land use patterns in the past 150 years are the fishing, lumbering, and the summer resort industry. These industries both directly and indirectly affected the current land use patterns within West Traverse Township.

## HOUSING

### Projected Growth - Dwelling Units

West Traverse Township is a small community in geographical size, with only about 14 square miles. In contrast a typical Michigan township has 36 square miles. West Traverse's 9,000 acres (14 square miles) are only 38% of those assigned to the standard Michigan Township. Assuming a density of one dwelling unit per two acres, the ultimate dwelling unit count would be approximately 4,500. Because of terrain limitations, the practical limit would probably be on the order of 3,500 units. This assumes a continuation of the emphasis on building single family detached units over the next several decades.

Based upon past building trends, the following is a housing projection to the year 2010:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Resident</b>	<b>Non-Resident</b>	<b>Total</b>
1990 (census)	363	445	808
2000	500	700	1200
2010	600	1200	1800

## WATER - WASTEWATER

This chapter allows the Planning Commission to analyze the relationship between current development patterns and the utility grid. Other public facilities such as transportation and open space will also influence the direction that the community wishes to develop, but water, sewer and electrical plans are powerful tools to implement chosen development policies.

### Conclusions:

- A. The Planning Commission should be involved with all public or private planning for sewer or water.
- B. A capital improvement program should be designed for sewer and water within the Township.
- C. An engineering utility study should be implemented. This study should discuss the possibility of linking the current private water and wastewater systems within the Township. The study should also complete an analysis of future utility needs within the Township.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

The transportation system is the circulatory system of the Township. It brings people and goods into the community and provides the means by which they can move freely from one geographic location to another. Since circulation typically involves the vehicular movement of people and goods throughout the area, the transportation system can be considered as an essential service. This chapter also discusses the function of all of the roads within the Township.

## **RECREATION**

This chapter outlines the various recreational opportunities available within the Township. It also presents a small shopping list of recreational activities needed within the area. This list was partially obtained through the public hearing process.

1. Many people at public meetings have indicated a need for more local public access sites for swimming and passive activities on Lake Michigan.
2. There is a need for additional tennis courts for public use.
3. Local governments need to develop intergovernmental agreements and organizations to handle local recreational needs. This agreement could take the form of an authority which would run and organize local recreational properties and activities.

## **COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

The purpose of this chapter is to inventory all Township facilities and to make recommendations as to eliminating, enlarging, maintaining, and possibly building new facilities. The chapter recommends the need to have cooperative agreements between local governments to control costs of common needs.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

The implementation of the West Traverse Comprehensive Plan outlines ways and means of implementing the recommendations incorporated in this report, and establishes a guideline for administering a planning program.

Completion of the Comprehensive Plan does not conclude the planning process in West Traverse Township. Continued review of the Township's evolving environment is needed, and the Comprehensive Plan should be periodically re-examined and updated as a result.

# **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

This chapter lists the goals and objectives for each of the functional areas studied by the Planning Commission. A series of public investment, land use and organization policies constitutes the balance of this chapter.

## **Natural Features**

**Goal: PRESERVE AND ENHANCE WEST TRAVERSE TOWNSHIPS' NATURAL FEATURES AND ENVIRONMENT FOR THE BETTERMENT OF ITS' PEOPLE.**

### **Objectives:**

- \* Discourage development in areas designated as unsuitable such as steep slopes, floodplains, wetlands, and poor soils.
- \* Encourage the use of the Emmet County Soils Survey when reviewing large developments within the Township.
- \* Rewrite the Township Zoning Ordinance to reflect the goals and objectives of the Township Plan.
- \* Provide for the preservation of scenic sites, such as M-119 and Lower Shore Drive/
- \* Encourage the use of combined driveways along the scenic roads.
- \* Provide for the preservation of the Lake Michigan Shoreline.
- \* Revise water setback section of the Zoning Ordinance and provide for a greenbelt.
- \* Continue to support The Thorne Swift Preserve.
- \* Maintain Rural Character of West Traverse Township.

## **Transportation**

**Goal: COORDINATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK WITH THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOWNSHIP'S HUMAN AND PHYSICAL RESOURCES.**

### **Objectives:**

- \* Make recommendations for road improvements and seek Planning Commission review of the Emmet county Road Commission annual construction program within the Township.

- \* Discourage strip commercial development within the Township.
- \* Encourage land controls which will minimize development problems including residential, commercial, and outdoor advertising, which interferes with the transportation function of arterial and principal collector roads.
- \* Establish a height limitation on all signs.
- \* Upgrade Quick Road.
- \* Encourage the scenic nature of M-119 be preserved.
- \* Upgrade the following unsafe corners:
  - State and Quick Roads.
  - State and Heynig Roads.
  - Lightfoot and Hughston Roads.
  - Lightfoot and Middle Roads.

### **Water and Wastewater**

**Goal:** PROTECT AND IMPROVE OUR WATER HERITAGE TO ENSURE THE HEALTH AND WELL BEING OF THE TOWNSHIP'S PEOPLE.

**Objectives:**

- \* Encourage the protection of the waters of Lake Michigan.
- \* Encourage the proper maintenance of the private water and waste water systems within the Township.

### **Recreation:**

**Goal:** DEVELOP THE LOCAL PARK AND RECREATION SYSTEM WHICH:

- PROVIDES A WIDE VARIETY OF RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS.
- IS RELATED TO THE USE CAPACITY OF THE ENVIRONMENT.
- WHEREVER POSSIBLE, IS DESIGNED FOR MULTIPLE AND YEAR ROUND USE OF THE FACILITIES.

**Objectives:** Make full use of State and Federal assistance programs to develop and fulfill the objectives of this Plan. Work on goals and objectives even if Federal funds are not available.

Implement a capital improvement plan for the Township properties including the Nature Preserve. Encourage intergovernmental

agreements between townships and villages to provide recreational services. One possible benefit of this arrangement may be the development of another public access on Lake Michigan.

### **Community Facilities**

**Goal: ENCOURAGE THROUGHOUT WEST TRAVERSE TOWNSHIP THE ECONOMICAL DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND Related SERVICES THAT WILL PROVIDE EACH CITIZEN WITH THE BEST POSSIBLE PUBLIC SERVICES.**

#### **Objectives:**

- \* Pave new Township Hall parking lot.
- \* Light the new Township parking lot - Lighting should be low key.
- \* Develop a domestic plan for the two Township vacant parcels. (Ridge Road and Hughston Road).

### **Housing**

**Goal: PROVIDE AND ADMINISTER ZONING TO MEET POPULATION DEMANDS.**

#### **Objectives:**

- \* Encourage the proper development of a wide variety of housing types including; single family homes, cluster development, site condos, and multifamily homes.

### **Commercial/Industrial Development**

**Goal: PROVIDE FOR THE ORDERLY DEVELOPMENT OF COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP.**

#### **Objectives:**

- \* Write a carefully controlled home occupation section in the Zoning Ordinance.
- \* Encourage all commercial development within the Franklin Park area.

Goal: HELP THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES PLAN FOR YEAR ROUND MANUFACTURING AND PROVIDE FOR SUITABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT.

Objectives:

- \* Encourage the development of industrial and facilities within planned parks and areas.
- \* Discourage strip development.

**PUBLIC INVESTMENT POLICIES**

Prepare and update, annually, a five year capital plan and program.

The program may include:

- a. Fire Protection.
- b. Recreational expenditures.
- c. Building maintenance and expansion.
- d. Road improvements.
- d. Zoning and Planning.
- f. Public officials and workers compensation.
- g. Utilities

**LAND USE POLICIES**

In making major land use decisions, utilize the Township Plan.

Unique natural areas which perform important resource production functions or are unsuitable due to the shallowness of soils or high water tables should be preserved.

Seasonal and second home developments should be guided by land use controls. Cluster designs should be encouraged to preserve open space.

Encourage new developments to be placed in areas outlined in the Future Land Use Map which is incorporated as part of the Township Master Plan.

Update and review all Township Ordinances.

Develop a domestic animals - kennel section within the Zoning Ordinance.

Develop a public nuisance ordinance.

# POPULATION

Births, deaths, migration and other population characteristics affect the provisions of essential municipal services to residents. To support the demand for and determine the level of new services, it will be necessary to know to the best extent possible the size and characteristics of future" populations. Decisions of "local officials concerning land use development and the provision of necessary services will depend partly upon future population possibilities. " To make a meaningful assessment of population, it is important to analyze such factors as past population growth, its detailed characteristics and distribution an- lastly, but perhaps more importantly, to examine those factors both regional and local that are likely to have a strong influence on future growth.

## Residential Population Trends

<u>1930</u>	<u>1940</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>
270	245	319	326	420	859	968	1250

Growth in the Township prior to 1900 was difficult to extract. The population trends, in the early part of the century, tend to follow the rise and decline of the lumbering and fishing industries. Since the sixties, population trends tend to follow the expansion of the ski industry, retirement of downstate-outstate people to the area, and an increase in the use of the area as a recreation mecca.

## Problem

West Traverse Township has only recently begun a extensive planning program. In order to facilitate a workable plan, a population forecast of five to ten years must be completed. A forecast of over ten years is generally considered unreliable. What is the best method for a small local unit of government to use in population projections of a relatively small mass of people? Accurate population forecasts for a small political unit under 5,000 people is exceedingly difficult due to the following factors:

1. Sensitivity of forecasts beyond control. In larger communities these factors would be canceled out or balanced and would not be reflected as trends.
2. Current detailed data and concurring or comparative analysis are generally unavailable.

3. Percentage wise, even small numerical changes become large percentage changes.

### Assumptions and Parameters

Prior to the development of a population projection, specific assumptions and parameters must be established. These assumptions and parameters are necessary because of inconsistencies of data collection and reporting, and the uncertainty of future economic conditions, and the credibility of extended projections into the future.

All projections made within this Plan have the following underlying assumptions:

1. The cohort system separates the sexes because of the differences in the survival rates at various age groupings.
2. The population's economic situation will not change drastically for projection purposes for at least one census period.
3. The effect of errors in the data for the past three census periods will be the same for one census period in the future.
4. There will be no World War or serious economic depression during the period for which the projection was made.
5. Economic conditions in West Traverse Township will continue at the same level.
6. Industrial development in the area will continue at a rate at which is at least equal to its rate in recent years.
7. The Comprehensive Plan for West Traverse Township will form the basis of future decisions relating to land use regulations, and population growth within the Township.

All projections within this plan follow these parameters:

1. To conform with census data, ages are defined as "age at last birthday" and are identified in 16 age groups with an increment of five years.
2. The sex ratio of all births is almost equal.
3. The projections will be limited to ten years.
4. The rates at which babies are born will be considered as a function of numbers of women of childbearing ages, 15-44.

## Methods of Solution

Different methods of population projections will be attempted using data compiled prior to 1990. These projections will then be compared to actual 1990 census data. From these studies a technique comparable with the true population curve of West Traverse Township will be used to project the Township population to 2000 and beyond.

### Arithmetic Projections.

An arithmetic projection assumes that the average numerical increases which the Township has experienced in the past will continue into the future with no significant change.

The arithmetic projection does not consider birth and death rates, nor migration into or out of the Township, except in the indirect manner since average figures are products of births, deaths, and migration. The amount of land yet available for residential construction is not taken into consideration by the arithmetic method. These projections, then, are only of limited value.

### Ratio Protection

The ratio projection method has the advantage of utilizing population projections of larger geographic areas, therefore, overcoming many of the inherent problems of population projection in the smaller communities.

### Natural Increase and Migration

A population projection based on natural increase and migration was used for West Traverse Township. Natural increase in the excess of births over death and is determined from natality and mortality statistics from Emmet County.

### Linear Regression Analysis

Populations can be projected by trend lines. "A line drawn in such a way that deviations of individual values from it are minimized." This line uses the formula  $y = mx + c$ .

### Least Square Exponential.

This method is similar to linear regression but it uses a curved line. Besides giving us a projection it will tell us how the line is moving, i.e., increasing at an increasing rate, decreasing at an increasing rate, etc.

## Conclusion

Because of the many disadvantages involved in projecting future population growth for a small township, it is not, wise to single out anyone of the five projections as being the most reliable. Presumably, the actual population will fall within a range provided by the results of the five methods of projections. Considering the large amount of underdeveloped land and vacant building lots within the Township, there is the potential for a large increase in total population.

The following is excellent data provided by Emmet Judge and his committee. This data was developed very recently and backs up the population projections produced earlier in this chapter.

Current census figures indicate that West Traverse has a resident population of approximately 968 and a non-resident of 1932 for a total of 2900 in 1990.

The 1970 to 1990 levels reflected a tripling for the total population over the twenty year period. Assuming some acceleration of the population growth of the past four years, it is reasonable to expect a further increase of the population over the next twenty years to about 2599 by the year 2010 as reflected on the attached chart of population trends.

The 1980 census showed 51% of the homes in the Township to be vacant at census time in April. This assumes 302 out of a total of 593 dwelling units to be seasonal in use. The 1980 census showed an average occupancy of 2.98 persons per permanent dwelling unit.

Throughout the current century, West Traverse Township has been a community of dominantly non-resident dwellings. For example, it is estimated that in 1930 there were about 100 dwellings (41%) compared to about 140 non-resident (59%).

# WEST TRAVERSE TOWNSHIP Population Trends, 1970-2021

## Resident Population

	<u>Population</u>	<u>Voters</u>	<u>Housing units</u>
1970 Census	420	285	123
1980 Census	859	672	291
1986 Estimate	919	631	311
1987 Estimate	959	625	325
1988 Estimate	977	661	331
1989 Estimate	1099	714	336
1990 U.S. Census	968		

## Non-resident Population

		181
1970 Estimate	543	
1980 Estimate	906	302
1986 Estimate	1374	458
1987 Estimate	1446	482
1988 Estimate	1590	530
1989 Estimate	1650	550
1990 U.S. Census	1932	968

## Total population

	963
1970	
1980	1765
1986	2292
1987	2405
1988	2567
1989	2738
1990	2900

## Projections of Population

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Resident</u>	<u>Non-Resident</u>
2000	4800	1200	3600
2010	7500	1900	5600

1970 and 1980 data is taken from published census records showing 3.39 persons per dwelling in 1970 and 2.95 in 1980 for resident units.

Voter data is from County records.

The 1986 to 1988 housing units data is from building records, using a 2.95 factor for population per resident household and 3.00 for non-resident. 1989 and projected population assume 3 persons per household.

# ECONOMY

In a technical sense, an economic inventory of West Traverse Township has two purposes. The principal purpose is to provide data regarding the local economy that will assist development of a series of goals and objectives. A secondary purpose is to provide quantitative estimates of future employment and population. In a general sense the purpose of an economic study can be expressed as a series of practical, direct, and interrelated questions.

1. Why does the community exist? What factors explain the continuing development, or lack of development, of the Township? Is it a matter of location, labor force composition, intangible leadership factors, physical community design and facilities or weakness of competitive communities and areas?
2. What are the most important forms of imbalance in the community economy? Roughly classified, economic imbalances can be viewed as self-adjusting and non-self adjusting.

Non-self adjusting economics usually require some managed adjustment where sharp cyclical and seasonal production shifts are evident. Imbalances reflecting inadequate economy size and diversification also frequently require managed adjustment.

Self- adjusting imbalances include such factors as wage levels, labor force housing supply, labor force skills, and competitive effectiveness of area businesses.

3. What are the principal causes of change in the economy? What have been the principal influences of change in the past? The present and more remote future cause of change must be related closely to economic function. For the extractive and manufacturing economy, forces of technologic and market change and competitive strength may be the most pertinent. Professional and service economics are highly responsive to change in social custom and general income distribution. Institutional impacts of governmental regulation and policy decisions will have differential impacts, depending on their type and timing.
4. How can imbalance of the economy be remedied? Remedies may range from the importation or local creation of new jobs, creation of new services or products or maintaining the current economic conditions.

5. How do the facts of community economics structure, problems, problem remedies, and targets relate to the other community problems and targets?

The elements to the answer to this question include:

- a. Consideration of priorities. Are economic issues to lead or follow other elements of the plan? If they follow, what is the order?
- b. Feasibility. To what degree is the feasibility of implementation of the other parts of the planning program dependent on practical feasibility of the economic development plan?
- c. Appraisal of the consistency of economic means and goals with the means and goals of other elements of the community plan. What are the feedbacks, the pluses and minuses, the relationship of one part of the local economy to the other?

6. How can economic problem remedies be expressed as community development targets? Examples of these targets may take the form of creation of jobs and the development of a strong" local economy.

The following table indicates the type of jobs currently offered by businesses within the township:

Jobs originating within the Township		
COMPANY	FULL TIME	PART TIME
Bank (NBA)	5	0
Bosker	4	0
Bosker (siding)	0	3
Upholstery Workshop	2	0
Goodhart Glass	3	0
Squire Electric	10	4
Evening Star Joinery	10	0
MacGregor Heating	27	0
American Lap	3	2
KRG	3	12
Jamie Martin	7	0
Glahn Bookkeeping	4	0
Mark Wentworth	12	0
Snow Country Decorating	15	0
County Wide Mfg.	3	1
John Cupps	2	2
Gorman Design	1	0
State Road General Store	2	3
Haverstick Builders	3	0
Prudential Insurance	1	0

Shirt Tails	5	3
Polly's Planters	2	27
Birchwood Construction	25	0
Birchwood Farms	20	65
Arboretum	10	25
Birchwood Inn	7	5
Frank Lauer (Builder)	4	0
Harbor Point	7	46
George's Redi-Mix	2	3
Kleinhenz Electric	1	0
Bob Lauer (builder)	4	0
Keith Young	1	0
Birchwood Realty	13	3
Gerry Swiss (builder)	4	2
Bill Jensen (Lawncare)	1	0
Alford LaCount	1	0
Dave Leik (farming)	1	0
Dick Collie (Builder)	6	2
Bluff Gardens	3	8
H & T Roofing	9	2
Out-To-Lunch	6	0
Ken Barkley (Lawncare)	1	0
Tom Hoffman (Nursery)	1	0
Woodland Builders	4	0
Carl Norris (Plumbing)	2	0
William Hayslip (Architect)	1	0
Williams Monuments	1	0
Curtis Lightfoot (farming)	1	0
Veota Lightfoot (dressmaking)	1	0
Windward	2	1
Jim Spencer (investments)	1	0
West Traverse Township	0	10
Al & Jim's Tree Service	5	5
Mike Fairbairn (carpet laying)	1	0
Bonnie fairbairn (dressmaking)	1	0
Art Piel (builder)	1	4
Jerry Tippet (bookkeeping)	1	0
Linda Henry (horse-boarding)	1	1
John Peterson (mason)	1	0
Omar Troyer	1	0
Catholic Cemetery	0	1
Lakeview Cemetery	1	1
Thorne Swift	1	4
TOTAL	278	246

## EMPLOYMENT BY CATEGORY

	FT	PT
A. Wholesale & Retail Trade	0	0
B. Manufacturing	10	3
C. Mining	0	0
D. Personal Services	34	85
E. Professional & Related Services	9	0
F. Agriculture, forestry	5	8
G. Business & Related Services	2	3
H. Transportation	0	0
I. Public Administration	1	10
J. Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	19	3
K. Construction	155	39
L. Entertainment & Related Services	43	95
M. Industry not Reported	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>246</b>

1. Why does the community exist?

For the most part, the community of West Traverse township exists and prospers because of three main geographic and one historic reason. a. The townships close proximity to Lake Michigan:

- a. The townships' close proximity to Lake Michigan
- b. The topography of the Township which affords magnificent views of Lake Michigan and the adjacent rolling terrain.
- c. The moderating effect of the Great Lakes on the climate in the West Traverse area.
- d. Historically the Township was used as a resort area. The momentum and the success of the resort era has been extended into the success and growth of what is now West Traverse Township.

In summary "It is a great place to live."

2. What are the most important forms of imbalance in the community economy? Roughly classified, economic imbalances can be viewed as self-adjusting and non-self adjusting.

Non-self adjusting economics usually require some managed adjustment where sharp cyclical and seasonal production shifts are evident. Imbalances reflecting inadequate economy size and diversification also frequently require managed adjustment.

Self- adjusting imbalances include such factors as wage levels, labor force housing supply, labor force skills, and competitive effectiveness of area businesses.

In reviewing the labor force available to the community the Township Planning Commission finds a diverse work force and labor skills are available to meet current demand. We do however recommend that the educational system pursue more education in the technical and skill trades area.

3. What are the principal causes of change in the economy? What have been the principal influences of change in the past? The present and more remote future cause of change must be related closely to economic function.

In the past, the labor" force of West Traverse Township was employed by the local utilities, Penn Dixie cement, Northern Michigan Hospitals, Burns Clinic, local boat shops, local stores, shops and the several resort associations in the area. Other than the jobs at the utility companies, most employment tended to be seasonal. This created a seasonal "boom - bust" economy with the local people working in spring, summer and fall and then going on credit in the winter.

Over the past few years, the "boom - bust" economy has almost disappeared. The Townships economic base has been diversified. Local businesses now offer year-round employment. Once Township people left the Township to work. Now people come into the Township to work. This can be attributed, for the most part, in the change in the permanent and part time population of West Traverse Township. Many of the township residents are retired on comfortable incomes. These people require the services of electricians, plumbers, landscapers, and builders. These services are in such demand that owners of several of these skilled trades have established their main offices within the Township.

4. How can imbalance of the economy be remedied? Remedies range from the importation or local creation of new jobs, creation of new services or products or maintaining the current the current economic conditions.

As indicated by the job survey and considering the population base of the Township the Township Planning Commission concludes that we do not have an imbalanced economy and at this time we do not need to actively pursue economic development in West Traverse Township.

5. How do the facts of community economics structure, problems, problem remedies, and targets relate to the other community problems and targets in which the West Traverse Township Planning Commission is involved? The elements to the answer to this question include:

- a. Consideration of priorities. Are economic issues to lead or follow other elements of the plan? If they follow, what is the order?

The basic economic foundation within the Township is solid. Therefore economic issues should follow some of the other elements of the plan.

- b. Feasibility. To what degree is the feasibility of implementation of the other parts of the planning program dependent on practical feasibility of the economic development plan?

The Township Planning Commission believes that the implementation of other parts of the planning program are not directly dependent upon the current strong economic base of the Township.

- c. Appraisal of the consistency of economic means and goals with the means and goals of other elements of the community plan. What are the feedbacks, the pluses and minuses, the relationship of one part of the local economy to the other?

West Traverse Township is not a economic enclave. The economic base is directly related to not only other local economies but also the national economy as well. We support sound planned economic growth in local geographic areas which are designed for such growth. Our feed back from surveys and public information meetings has been to support our local commercial park, but do not actively seek out new business for the park.

6. How can economic problem remedies be expressed as community development targets? Examples of these targets may take the form of creation of jobs and the development of a strong local economy.

Our survey of the local economic base indicates that the base is strong when compared to the total Township population. At this time the West Traverse Township Planning Commission does not feel a need to target the formation of new jobs within the township.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The following points stand out when considering the economic picture of West Traverse Township.

1. The economy of the Township draws upon itself by providing jobs for local people.
2. The Township is not just a bedroom community. It has a robust workforce working within and outside the Township.
3. Local Township officials do not need to search out additional commercial or industrial development. They need to encourage the use of the industrial/commercial park for local business.
4. As indicated at the public meetings, held to obtain information for this plan, there does not seem to be a demand or a desire to rezone more land for industrial/commercial development.
5. The strong economic base within the Township is directly related to the efforts of the local Township officials. These officials, over the past several years, have encouraged growing local businesses to locate in Franklin Commercial Park and have promoted the building of quality homes within well planned developments.

# **NATURAL RESOURCES AND FEATURES**

## **Natural Resources and Features**

Developmental policies should reflect the influences, advantages, and disadvantages of all natural features in a area. Housing, commercial and industrial development, and recreation areas all depend upon the area's natural resources and geologic features. West Traverse Township has a variety of topographic features that must be understood in order to implement the planning process into the form of a Comprehensive Plan. The natural resources and features section of the plan should be used as a guide to sound zoning proposals and regulations.

## **Historic Role of Resources**

Historically the area was used by the native American Indians. The Indians fished the lakes and streams, hunted in the forest, trapped and did some gathering. European settlers were attracted to the area because of trapping and fishing. Later the prime forest within the area attracted lumbering companies. Once the forest was harvested it was either given up for taxes or sold as farms. At the same time the extensive logging was going on, large summer resorts began to be developed. Most of the resorts are still in operation today.

## **Forest Types and Animals**

Maple, beech, birch and pine are the predominant commercial trees found growing in the well-drained loam soils within the Township. The hardwoods give way to swamp conifers in the soils that are not drained.

In the past the variety of forest types gave rise to a variety of wildlife. Pine marten, fisher, otter, beaver, mink, muskrat, deer, squirrel, and black bear were all hunted or trapped by the local people. Logging destroyed most of the natural habitat for wildlife. Only the squirrels and deer remain in large numbers.

## **Geology**

The Geology section is divided into two areas of study. The Subsurface Geology (bedrock) and the Surface Geology (overburden). Bedrock is generally concealed by a mantle of unattached, loose fragmented rock and soil. Surface geology refers to the surface glacial deposits within an area. By categorizing these many deposits into general soil associations, certain assumptions about the material can be made. Those assumptions will be in the area of soil suitability for wells, septic systems, and the soil's ability to support the various types of land uses.

The hilly portions of the Township are called moraines. The steep slopes along the Lake Michigan shoreline are old beach fronts of a much larger Great Lakes Water System, which was in place several thousand years ago. The moraines, like those of the Alps, from which the term was derived, were formed along and to some extent under, the margin of the ice sheet. They contain not only gravelly material, but also a confused mixture of stony clay, sand, cobblestone, etc. varying greatly in texture and general make-up within a short distance. In general the moraines are thickly strewn with boulders, and thus are in striking contrast with outwash plains, on which small stones and large sandy areas appear. Within this morainic area, however, there are large valley-like lowlands, with flat or very gently undulating beds. Typically the beds are swampy and poorly drained. From these valleys, there is a somewhat abrupt rise to the elevated moranic areas. These valleys appear to have held local lakes during the melting back of the glacier. The swampy areas are generally to the north east of the Township, as an example the center portion of Pleasantview Township.

### Soils

The movement of glaciers over bedrock material creates additional soil material which is added to the soils already carried by the glacier. The tons of pressure and slow movement of the ice turned solid rock into an extremely fine ground material. The finely ground soil was deposited and transported by melt water and ice in an unorderly fashion. Some of this material came from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and some from Canada. Thus, we have the scattered patterns of soil types that are seen on the soils map of West Traverse Township. Because of this scattering and mixing of soil types, specific statements have to be made with regard to type and location of soils. Any detailed work dealing with soils should refer to specific data within the Emmet County Soils survey.

The degree of limitation of the soil types provides a measurement by which the impact of a particular soil association can be gauged. The following is a brief description of the limitations of the soil associations within West Traverse Township:

Emmet Association: Deep, well-drained, gently sloping to very steep, loamy soils on moraines.

Blue Lake-Leelanau Association: Deep, well-drained, nearly level to very steep, sandy soils on moraines.

East Lake-Blue Lake-Kalkaska Association: Deep, well-drained nearly level, sandy soils on lake beaches and outwash plains.

Deer Park-Dune Land Association: Deep, well-drained, nearly level very steep, sandy soils on lake beaches and dunes.

**Emmet Association:** This Association makes up most of the sandy loam moraines in the county. It makes up 20 percent of the county. It formed in well-drained sandy loam materials.

Emmet soils make up about 80 percent of this Association. The other 20-percent is made up of minor soils. These minor soils are somewhat poorly drained Charlevoix soils and poorly drained or very poorly drained Ensley soils in the low spots. Some of the larger valleys contain organic Carbondale and Linwood soils.

Most of these soils can be used for crops or pasture. Livestock and dairy enterprises are important. Woodland areas occur throughout the Association, mainly as small farm woodlots. Water erosion is a hazard if the soil is left bare over the winter. Strip-cropping systems are used extensively to control erosion. These soils are suitable for recreation areas and for urban development, having few limitations for these uses.

**Blue Lake-Leelanau Association:** This Association includes the most hilly areas in the Township. It is the most extensive group of soils within the Township. The soils are nearly level to very steep.

Blue Lake soils make up about 65 percent of this Association, and Leeanau soils, about 25 percent. The rest of the Association consists of well-drained and poorly drained minor soils. Blue Lake and Leelanau soils are well drained and formed in loamy sand and sand. Blue Lake soils have a dark-brown subsoil, and Leeanau soils have a light yellowish-brown to dark-brown subsoil. Both soils have several layers of loamy sand and sandy loam at a depth of 24 to 60 inches. Many of the drainways are occupied by poorly drained or very poorly drained Ensley soils.

The soils in the Association are medium to low in natural fertility. They are somewhat draughty, and they erode easily in areas where the vegetation is sparse. They are subject to both soil blowing and water erosion.

The wooded areas are covered with such northern hardwoods as sugar maple, beech, elm, ash, aspen, paper birch, hemlock and scattered red and white pine. The cleared areas are cultivated and used for pasture and hay or are idle.

The hilly areas are well suited to recreational uses. They have few limitations to use as camping areas, picnic areas, hiking trails, and bridle paths. These soils have a high potential for sustained- yield forests.

**East lake-Blue Lake-Kalkaska Association:** Deep, well-drained, nearly level, sandy soils on lake beaches and outwash plains.

The soils in this Association lie in outwash plains and valleys and on some of the lake beaches. The soils are nearly level, except for steep escarpments at the edges of some of the outwash plains and lake plains.

East Lake soils make up about 25 percent of the Association: Blue Lake soils, about 25 percent: Kalkaska soils, about 25 percent; and minor soils, the remaining 25 percent. East Lake soils formed in sand and gravel deposits, Kalkaska soils in deep sand, and Blue Lake soils in deep loamy sand and sand. Small areas of somewhat poorly drained Au Gres soils and poorly drained or very poorly drained Roscommon soils and other minor soils are intermixed with the well-drained soils.

The soils in this Association have medium to low natural fertility. They are somewhat draughty and are subject to soil blowing in areas where the soil is exposed.

A large part of this Association was cleared and farmed at one time. At present many of the cleared areas are lying idle, are pastured, or have been planted to pine. Some areas are suited for limited farming.

Reforestation is important on these soils, especially for Christmas tree production.

This Association is well suited for recreational purposes.

**Deer Park-dune Land Association:** Deep, well-drained, nearly level to very steep, sandy soils on lake beaches and dunes.

This Association consists of sandy and some gravely shoreline soils along Lake Michigan. The active dune soils are next to Lake Michigan shoreline.

Deer Park soils formed on stabilized dune topography. Dune land is nearly level to very steep. It consists of active sand dune formations.

The soils in this Association have low natural fertility and low available water capacity. They are subject to severe soil blowing if the vegetation is removed. In areas where these soils are stabilized, they are covered with northern hardwoods and a mixture of red and white pine, scattered hemlock, and northern white cedar. These soils are mainly suited to woodland.

The degree of limitation of soils provides a measurement by which the impact of a particular soil Association can be gauged. Major indicators of the ability to use the land can be described as follows:

1. Soils with a high water table at some times of the year have severe limitations for residential development. A high water table makes it difficult to keep dry basements, install and maintain public utilities, and support driveways.
2. Soil texture has an influence on limitation. Clay soils have a high shrink/swell potential, and can cause foundations to shift and crack.
3. Sandy soils, with low available water capacity, provide unique problems when attempting to establish and maintain lawns, shrubs and trees.
4. Bedrock at, or near the surface becomes a major limitation, as it is impossible to construct an operating septic system, difficult to locate basements and foundations.
5. When combined with gradient factors, many soils have a more severe limitation, due to the fact that septic systems located in steep slope areas have side hill seepage.
6. Very sandy soils may allow unfiltered effluent to enter and contaminate shallow ground water supplies. Clay soils prevent proper functioning of septic system drain fields as they do not allow for absorption of effluent.

Each of the above points can be expanded into an economic impact. Because of the influence of the different soil types upon the Township, this natural resource takes on an important significance.

Although this list of soil Associations seems exhaustive it is only the beginning. All large developments proposed within the Township should be analyzed first for their soil Associations and then the individual soils and their limitations should be studied. These limitations are outlined in the Emmet County Soils Survey.

## **Watersheds**

The lay of the land, or topography, determines the direction water falling on the surface will drain. In turn, the topography also outlines the size and shape of these drainage basins. One of these basins is called a watershed. Precipitation accumulated in these watersheds supplies water to streams, lakes, underground reservoirs, and overall water table. The movement of the water through the soils acts as a purifier. Then, man taps the various supplies of water that yield quantities sufficient for his needs. But, after the water is used, it contains impurities that need to be removed before the water can be returned to the natural environment. Inefficiencies or complete neglect of treatment are often the case because of the economics involved in such treatment operations. More conscientious attempts at water purification are coming about now with the increase in legislation and monitoring by governmental agencies. Though regulations can bring unexpected expenses to communities that were unknowingly polluting their water resources, each corrected situation means a better chance for fresh water in the future.

There are several small drain-ways within the Township draining into Lake Michigan. There are two large drain-ways within the Township. Five Mile creek; which drains an area in the North West portion on the Township, and the Franklin Park drain-way which drains the Birchwood Farms area and flows East and through Franklin Park and then into drainage ways within the City of Harbor Springs.

## **Water Features**

The enjoyment of outdoor water activities is a well-known recreational attraction. The activities include swimming, boating, and sport fishing. Water sports are available because of the high quality of the water we have in the Township. West Traverse Township has only one useable lake which is Lake Michigan. This Great Lake provides fishing, bathing, boating, sunbathing, water, and it acts as a climate moderator. Lake Michigan is the second largest of the Great Lakes and it is a major contributor to the popularity of the West Traverse Area.

Five Mile Creek, the only creek within the Township which runs year round, is also the only sizeable cold water creek between Harbor Springs and Mackinaw City. The stream is also completely under private ownership.

## **Topography**

The surface characteristics of an area are explained by its topography, which is described through the measurement of elevation above sea level. These changes in elevation add character to an area as well as noteworthy considerations for development. The steeper grades may be an enticing location for single-family homes, but the potential hazard to natural areas is greatly increased. Construction costs rise both for the individual and the public as services are provided. This is not suggesting that all construction should take place on level terrain, but consideration should be given to incurred expenses.

West Traverse Township has topography which is similar to other northwestern Michigan Townships which border Lake Michigan. Most seem to have steep old beach fronts with the hinterlands offering heavy relief caused by glaciation. The steep slopes of the old beach fronts offer extreme problems regarding building and caution should be used when building is allowed.

WEST TRAVERSE TOWNSHIP  
SOIL ASSOCIATIONS MAP

# LAND USE

Historic land use patterns project themselves into present and future land Use patterns. The first three major factors that influenced growth in West Traverse Township were lumbering, commercial fishing, and the growth of the summer resort industry. These three industries, both directly and indirectly affected West Traverse Township.

The lumber industry directly affected land use by the operation of logging camps, saw mills and their harvesting operations. The last large operating commercial saw mill in the township ceased operations in the 1950's. The lumbering era land use is reflected in large tracts of land belonging to farming families who bought the land outright from the logging companies or acquired it through tax reversion after the land was logged off.

The summer resort industry also affected land use in the Township. The summer resort associations have influenced land use patterns on a major portion of the Lake Michigan shoreline in the Township. The largest of these resorts was Harbor Point. This summer resort has its summer home association and golf course within the Township. The summer resort industry indirectly affected single family land use land use patterns within the township. Some of the local people who worked at the larger summer resorts lived in scattered homes and farms within West Traverse Township.

The fishing industry indirectly affected land use by offering housing for some of the men who worked for and owned the local commercial fishing operations.

Recently the Lake Michigan beach front property and the old farms with view property have become highly desirable as retirement and second home properties. This desirability has drastically changed land use patterns within the Township in the past few years by converting farms and woodlots into site Condominiums, Planned Unit Developments and Plats.

The opportunity to build, tear down buildings, or change land use patterns within the Township has been given to the home buyer, owner of undeveloped land, local government, etc. It is interesting to note that each one of these decision makers, with the exception of local government, have not oriented its activities to overall community improvement, or considered the effect of its developments on surrounding land uses, utilities, and services.

Public agencies such as Federal, state, county, and City Governments, play an important role in land use changes. The Federal Government changes land use through: planning, housing, urban renewal, water and waste water grants. Although these grants change land use, they have little control of the magnitude or direction of change.

The state provides enabling legislation to local governments to regulate growth and development. Some of the greatest effects of the state upon land use are public health powers, zoning legislation, and the placement of state highways.

Local governments exert the most effective influence on land use through such projects as schools, parks, roads, water, and wastewater projects. Local government can also influence growth by way of such vehicles as building codes, subdivision regulation, zoning, planning, utility extensions and taxation.

### **Obtaining the Information**

In the analysis of West Traverse Land use patterns, the following three steps were used:

1. field work inventory
2. research
3. analysis

In obtaining the field work inventory for West Traverse Township, a field survey was conducted, noting building conditions, general land use patterns of residential, commercial, and industrial development and transportation conditions. Remarks were noted on building characteristics, auxiliary buildings and then coded by a standard land use activity code. The standard created by the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, was used to determine if a building was in sound, deteriorating, or dilapidated condition.

The survey also helped determine the following the following areas of concern:

- Determine the type, character, and amount of each major land use.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of past land use practices.
- Identify potentials and limitations for expansion of residential, commercial, industrial, and public land uses.
- Identify areas that are suitable for the different type of land uses which are needed in the Township.
- Evaluate current land ownership patterns and their impact on future land use patterns.

- provide a source of information for future planning and possible revision of development controls.

### **Township Land Use Survey Technique and Definitions**

Contrary to popular belief, land use does not follow exact property or political boundaries. Land use descriptions and maps show generalized areas which are occupied by a particular land use. It was very difficult to obtain a high degree of accuracy in plotting land use in some of the remote sections of the Township. Without a direct interview, it was extremely difficult to determine if some cottages are used as seasonal dwelling or are occupied year round. Realizing the inherent limitations with our two survey methods, they are the most practical methods of plotting land use in relation to costs and time consumed by other methods. The inventory of existing land use within West Traverse Township was conducted in two ways:

- Walking survey - A survey method by which the participants walk, make a close study of, and take notes on existing land use. This method was used in the more populated sections of the Township.
- Windshield survey - A survey method by which the participants ride in a car, make a close study of and take notes on existing land use.

Land uses have been divided into five general categories. These categories include:

residential, commercial/industrial, public, special land use, semipublic and open space.

#### **Residential:**

Household units, group quarters, residential hotels, mobile home parks, or courts, and transient lodgings.

#### **Commercial**

Includes grocery stores, bakeries, drugstores, hardware stores, laundering, dry cleaning, liquor stores, photography, shoe repair, locker plants, beauty parlors, barber shops, clothing stores, furniture and household appliances, variety shops, jewelry, gifts, and other specialty shops, banks, offices for insurance, finance, real estate, law, medical, dental, art engineering and other professional offices; hotels, motels, and cabins, eating and drinking places, gas stations, auto sales and service, theaters, funeral homes, plumbing and heating sales, and other similar activities.

Industrial:

Includes warehousing and outdoor storage areas, implement dealers, lumber, sand and gravel, repair shops, foundries, junk yards, sawmills, fuel storage, and railroad right - of- ways.

Public and Semi-public:

Includes churches, schools, parks and playgrounds, ski areas, hospitals, nursing homes, post offices, museums, courthouses, township halls, fire stations, police departments, cemeteries, etc.

Low Density -open space:

Space which is used for low density housing (example- one house per 8-10 acres); land which is fallow, woodlots, and designated nature preserves.

(See Future Land Use Map)

# **HOUSING**

(Most of this chapter was written and compiled from the Emmet Judge 1989 survey and report)

The number of dwelling units within the Township virtually doubled between the 1970 and 1980 census counts, This growth of nearly 300 units was also equally divided between building in the Birchwood Development, the shoreline oriented properties and other inland sites. The next ten years to the 1990 census reflect a similar total with about half the units in Birchwood.

The distribution between resident and non-resident building changed between 1970 and 1980 to reflect an increase in the percentage of resident ownership. This is also felt to be a reflection of the early building in Birchwood during the 1970's. The pattern since 1980 has been toward a lower percentage of resident dwellings. The 37% level of resident units in 1989 is expected to further decline to about 25% in the projected future. This pattern reflects the dominant ownership of land parcels and homes by seasonal owners.

During the period 1986 through 1989, an average of 47 dwelling units were added to the housing stock each year, including single family detached homes and condominiums. Assuming a continuation of this rate of building through the 1990's the total units could be 1600 by the year 2000 and 2500 by 2010. (The projections for the years 2000 and 2010 assume an acceleration of the average yearly building rate to 66 and 90 respectively.)

**West Traverse Township**  
**Residential Units**

(Taken from 1989 Emmet Judge Report)  
(with modification to projection of housing units.)

Total Household units:

Year	Total Units	Residents	Non-Residents	% Residents
1970 Census	304	123	181	40%
1980 Census	593	291	302	49%
1986 Projected	769	311	458	40%
1987 Projected	812	325	482	40%
1988 Projected	857	331	530	38%
1989 Projected	886	336	550	37%
1990 Projected	936	345	591	37%
1990 Census	808	363	445	45%

Projection of Housing Units

Year	Total Units	Resident	Non-Resident
2000	1200	500	700
2010	1800	600	1200

1970, 1980, and 1990 data is from published census reports

Data for 1986 through 1992 is from County Building records

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**WEST TRAVERS TOWNSHIP**

**RESIDENTIAL BUILDING**

**1980 THROUGH 1992**

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Year	Total Permits S.F.	Birchwood	Common Wall Condominiums
1980	32	25	
1981	27	18	
1982	07	4	24
1983	23	9	
1984	12	4	11
1985	23	7	14
1986	19	10	
1987	32	8	14
1988	24	9	36
1989	21	5	
1990	22	2	
1991	36	8	
1992	41	13	
<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b><u>319</u></b>	<b><u>122</u></b>	<b><u>99</u></b>

Data from County Building Inspection records and the records of The Township Zoning Administrator.

The shoreline properties are essentially developed and platted and the sites are occupied or owned by those who intend to build. A small number of sites are currently restricted by sewer requirements and wetland considerations. Proximity sites are in essentially the same situation with the owners awaiting implementation of building plans. With the limitations on the first four categories, the future focus will be on the last three. The Birchwood development will continue to add housing stock because of the large number of vacant housing sites. However, there is no possibility of another comparable development evolving in the Township. A land mass the size of Birchwood is not available. There may be smaller developments on inland areas but not with the extensive amenities of Birchwood.

Inland hill view sites are an area of major growth. The elevated wooded areas of the Township could support significant growth. The interior rural areas, which constitute approximately half of the Township, will continue to supply about forty percent of the building sites. Agricultural use has already declined to seven percent of the Township SEV and to .01% of the parcel count.

### **Projected Growth** **Dwelling units**

West Traverse Township is a small community in geographical size, with only about 14 square miles. Contrast this data to a typical Michigan Township of 36 square miles. Converted to acres West Traverse's 9,000 acres are only 38% of those in the standard Michigan Township.

Assuming a density of two acres per dwelling unit, the ultimate dwelling unit count would be approximately 4,500. Because of terrain limitations, the practical limit would probably be on the order of 3,500 units, assuming a continuation of the emphasis on single family detached dwellings over the next two to three decades.

To reflect future growth, the Township has been divided into seven land classifications in accord with the current trends.

**Area 1**      Shore frontage - sites with homes in place or planned for use.

**Area 2**      Shore proximity - sites adjacent to shore properties with or without beach accessibility.

**Area 3** Shore Bluff - West - sites on the immediate shore bluff overlooking the bay and lake - north of Birchwood Development.

**Area 4** Shore Bluff - East - sites on the inland side of the shore drive to the south boundary of the Township and the Birchwood development.

**Area 5** Inland hill view properties.

**Area 6** Birchwood Development which has some 1400 acres devoted to home sites and amenities.

**Area 7** Inland rural sites comprising approximately one half the township.

## WATER-WASTEWATER

Sewer and water system planning is an engineering problem, and most systems are designed by engineers. Planning commissions play only a small part in the detailed technical aspects, but they play an extremely important role in general policy planning. The Planning commission can contribute to the design of any sewer and water study by providing basic information to the engineer and by helping to make utility plans useful implementation devices that will guide future growth patterns.

### WATER

At the present time there are several water systems operating in the Township in addition to individual wells.

### WASTE-WATER

At the present most residential, commercial, and industrial development are serviced by individual well and septic systems. There are however private systems operating in the Township.

### THE ROLE OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Traditionally, water and sewage system planning has been treated merely as an engineering problem with only a token effort being made to shape growth pattern. The typical pattern has been to provide for past, unmet needs and to extrapolate present development trends, little attention has been paid to alternative policies concerning design, location, and timing of utilities to guide new growth in a predetermined direction. What has been known intuitively for some time has been substantiated by research: that the provision of utilities often is a triggering device influencing the direction and rate of land development.

The Planning Commission can analyze local development patterns and ascertain the implications for utility pattern. Other public facilities such as transportation and open space will also influence the direction that a community wishes to take, but water and sewer plans are powerful tools to implement chosen development policies.

## CONCLUSIONS:

- A. The Planning Commission strongly recommends that an engineering study should be undertaken, in the near future, to look at the possibility of linking the current private water/wastewater systems. This engineering study should also include:
- A complete analysis of all current utility systems within the Township.
  - A projection of future Township utility needs.
- B. A capital improvement program should be designed for sewer and water within the Township.
- C. The Planning Commission should be involved with all public or private planning for sewer or water.

**WEST TRAVERSE TOWNSHIP**

**DRAINAGEWAYS**

**MAP**

# TRANSPORTATION

The transportation system is the circulatory system of the Township. It brings people and goods into the community and provides the means by which they can move freely from one geographic location to another. Since circulation typically involves the vehicular movement of people and goods throughout the area, the transportation system can be considered as three basic interrelated subsystems.

## A. THE TRAVEL WAY

Circulation takes place over permanent pathways, namely streets of all types, side walks, and separate right-of-ways for railroads and other types of mass transportation facilities. The travel way is the major structural element of the community, since these facilities can occupy up to 30 percent of the total community land area. In West Traverse Township this figure is quite a bit less. The circulation system influences the shape of blocks, and thus the lots within them and helps fix the boundaries of residential communities and other major land uses. The quality of the circulation system directly influences the volume and orientation of travel within the Township and thus indirectly its economic well being. The different types of facilities- local, collector, arterial streets, freeways, and mass transit right-of-ways are the components used in building the circulation system.

## B. THE VEHICLE

Automobiles, busses, trucks, and rapid transit cars are simply different types of vehicles; each has its function and efficiency in transporting persons or cargo. In terms of use, the auto accounts for approximately 99 percent of total travel on freeways, arterials, and local streets and trucks for most of the remaining travel.

## C. TERMINAL FACILITIES

A terminal is any facility providing for delivery receipt, and temporary storage of the vehicle itself. Off-street auto parking and garages are forms of terminal facilities, as are railroad yards, airports, truck terminals, and docks.

# The Circulation System

Much of the present difficulty in moving people and goods in rural townships like West Traverse Township results from various elements of the circulation system being called upon to fulfill functions for which they were not designed; hence, the importance of understanding the appropriate functions of different elements to prevent misuse and failure of the system. Streets, the principal component of the circulation system, can be divided into four categories: Local, collector, arterial streets, and freeways, although other ways to differentiate streets are sometimes used.

## A. Local Streets:

Local streets have several functions to perform that can be listed as follows:

1. The principal purpose of a local street is to provide access to property abutting the public right-of-way; this includes both vehicular and pedestrian access.
2. Moving traffic is a secondary function of the local street. This traffic is generally so light that the primary function is not impaired. Since land service is its primary purpose, the local street should not carry through traffic; busses and heavy trucks should be excluded except where the local street is in a commercial or an industrial district of the Township.
3. The local street serves as an easement for all types of utilities, such as sewers, water lines, gas mains, electrical and telephone conduits, and poles.
4. The local street serves as an open space between buildings to provide light and air to adjoining properties and to serve as a fire break.
5. The local street functions as an element in Township design; it is a site for buildings, and its arrangement in curves or straight lines, together with trees, shrubbery, grass, and flowers, can form the basis for a large scale composition. In residential areas the street serves as temporary storage space for vehicles, and in densely populated areas it may have to be used for all-night parking

## B. Collector Streets:

The collector street is primarily a residential phenomenon which filters traffic from local streets before their capacity is exceeded and then conducts it to arterial or to local generators such as shopping centers, schools, or community centers. In commercial areas, traffic volumes build up too rapidly for the efficient use of collectors, and local or land-access streets should, therefore, connect directly with an arterial. In industrial areas, a collector street may be needed occasionally.

The main function of a collector street is to conduct traffic from local residential streets to arterials or freeways. Land access should be secondary function of a collector, and its design and operation should reflect this fact. Parking should be discouraged and residential buildings should not have driveways entering the collector. As in the case of the local street, a collector functions as an easement for utilities, as an open space furnishing light and air and as a design element in the residential area.

## C. Arterial:

The first and most important function of the arterial is to move large volumes of vehicles, such as cars, and trucks and busses and includes, as the name artery implies, larger trips from one part of the urban area to another.

Land access should be a secondary function of arterial but owners usually have a legal right to access. Historically, traffic brought people, brought trade, and trade led to commercial development. Zoning has tended to perpetuate the location of commercial strips on arterials. The design of the arterial and the development of abutting properties has not recognized the problems created in increasing traffic volumes. Parking on arterial streets is, however, one function that is being increasingly controlled due to the pressure of increased traffic volumes. The arterial also serves as an easement for utilities and is also an open space, providing light and air. The greater width of arterial streets creates an opportunity for impressive design, but this opportunity has seldom been utilized - with their utility poles, advertising signs, billboards, and tasteless architecture they are without a doubt the ugliest streets in rural America.

## D. Freeways:

The freeway has only one function - to carry traffic. Because it is thus specialized, with controlled access, no parking and no grade intersections, it is a highly efficient carrier. Freeways are not generally used as sites for public utilities or communication lines. The depressions and elevations, and especially the grade separated interchanges, make the construction and maintenance of utilities too difficult.

In order to understand the transportation system within West Traverse Township, we now should classify the street and road system based upon the standards described above.

- Freeways:

There are no freeways within West Traverse Township and there does not appear to be a need for many years.

- Arterial:

M-119  
State Road  
Quick Road  
Lake Road

- Collector:

Hoyt Road  
Lightfoot Road  
Hughston Road  
Five Mile Creek Road  
Ridge Road  
Lacount Road  
Heynig Road  
Middle Road  
Cemetery Road  
Lower Shore Drive.

- Local:

All roads within recorded subdivisions, Franklin Park, Site Condominiums, Planned Unit Developments, and old plats

WEST TRAVERS TOWNSHIP  
TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM MAP

## **RECREATION**

The community and area furnishes the framework and environment in which most organized recreation lives and grows.

Every emphasis today in community organization indicates a purposeful movement to create cooperative efforts for maximum results. No matter what the field of interest - education, welfare, health, work, religion, or recreation, the supreme test at this time is the extent to which all community forces blend capacities and potentials for social well being.

Many homes have two working parents, they are taking additional educational classes, participating more actively in the school system, the political process, and working on service projects. Quality leisure time then becomes an important issue. Local government has taken a leading role in developing our recreational areas for general use. Private corporations participate in providing recreational areas which require large amounts of capital, i.e.. downhill skiing, and golf courses. Table" A" can be' used as a guide to determine if we are lacking in any important recreational areas. A quick glance at these guidelines indicates that most of the recreational activities are provided within the local area.

The Township has several miles of prime Lake Michigan water frontage most of which is under private ownership. Only one small year round stream, Five Mile Creek, is within the Township. This stream is also under private ownership.

## **PRESENT RECREATIONAL FACILITIES: INVENTORY**

Currently within the Township, we have the following tracts of land which are set aside for the recreational activities.

1. Thorne Swift Nature Preserve. The Preserve is located on Lake Michigan and is a cooperative effort between the Little Traverse Conservancy and West Traverse Township. The Preserve provides nature trails, interpretive walks, swimming, and special courses in interpretive studies.
2. Eighty acres on Ridge Road. The acreage is used by local people for hiking and cross country skiing.
3. Forty acres on Hughston Road. The acreage is the site of an old dump. Currently there are no organized recreational activities on the site.
4. Birchwood Farms. The area is owned by private individuals and provides several recreational activities for its' owners. These recreational activities are cross country skiing, golf, bridle paths, hiking trails, and tennis.
5. Windward. This area is owned by private individuals and provides a 40 acre parcel for its' residents for passive recreational activities also tennis courts are provided.
6. Harbor Point Golf Course. This is a eighteen hole private golf course owned and operated by the Harbor Point Association. The Association does have a program by which local people can use the course from time to time.
7. Harbor springs Area School District. The school district provides gym facilities, a community school program, and a excellent swimming pool.
8. Barn Yard Golf. This is a small par 3 very rough golf course.
9. The local townships and city of Harbor Spring have a cooperative agreement to provide a swimming beach, a ski area (Kiwanis Park), and an ice rink which can be used by the residents of West Traverse Township. Township residents share the operational and maintenance costs of the recreational facilities with the City of Harbor Springs.

## **PRESENT RECREATIONAL NEEDS**

The following list was obtained through the public meeting process, comparisons with national standards and observations by the consultant.

1. Many people at public meetings have indicated a need for more local public access sites for swimming and passive activities on Lake Michigan.
2. There is a need for tennis courts for public use.
3. The local governments need to develop intergovernmental agreements and organizations to handle local recreational needs. This could take the form of an authority which runs and organizes local recreational properties and activities.

# **COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

The purpose of this short chapter is to inventory all Township facilities and to make recommendations as to eliminating, enlarging, maintaining, and possibly building new facilities. With the increasing demands placed upon public budgets, intelligent Planning commissions will be expected to determine needs, priorities, and standards for a wide range of public facilities.

## **West Traverse Township Hall**

The Township Hall is of frame construction with a concrete basement. The Hall is shared with the local Grange. The outside has just been landscaped. The parking next to the building has been paved and a new parking lot has been created across Lake street. The basement has been totally remodeled with new offices, a meeting room, a rest room, and new heating system being added.

Current needs:

1. Paving new parking lot.
2. Lighting for the new parking lot.

## **Fire Protection**

At the present time, fire protection is provided by the Harbor Springs Area Fire Authority. The Department is a volunteer association of several townships and the City of Harbor Springs.

## **Police Protection**

At the present time police protection is provided by the Emmet County Sheriff Department and State police.

## **Ambulance Service**

Provided by an all volunteer service.

## **Airport Authority**

West Traverse Township appoints a person to represent the Township on the Harbor Springs Airport Authority.

# **IMPLEMENTATION**

The implementation section of the West Traverse Comprehensive Plan outlines ways and means of implementing the recommendations incorporated in this report. It also establishes a guideline for administering a planning program. Every effort should be made on the part to Township officials and residents to follow a program of this nature. A number of legal and administrative methods are available to West Traverse Township to implement this Comprehensive Plan.

An important method of implementing the Land Use Plan recommendations is through the West Traverse Township Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Ordinance regulates the use of private land, population densities, lot densities, and heights of structures. This ordinance consists of a map outlining the various land use districts, and a written document governing standards and administrative procedures. It is recommended that the Township Planning Commission and Township Board take a strong stand on enforcement of the Township Zoning Ordinance. The need for intergovernmental cooperation has been stressed at several points throughout this plan but, its importance warrants additional comments in the final chapter. Cooperation may be advantageous among neighboring communities as well as among several levels of government. Cooperation among official groups within the Township will also be essential. The need for cooperation and contact between the various levels of government is apparent when one considers that many decisions, which have important implications upon development within the Township, are frequently beyond the control of local officials. This is particularly true in regard to decisions pertaining to location or improvement of highways.

Completion of the Comprehensive Plan does not conclude the planning process in West Traverse Township. Continued review of the Township's evolving environment is needed, and the Comprehensive Plan will have to be periodically re-examined and updated as a result of these changing conditions.

A multi-level approach is needed to implement the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. Services and programs available at local, state, county and federal levels, should be utilized in the implementation of the Plan.

The Plan cannot be fully implemented unless the citizenry and officials of the Township are made cognizant of the problems of the future, and are willing to work together for the common good.