

**Sherman Township
Master Plan**

**Reviewed Feb.
2026**

Prepared by:

Sherman Township Planning Commission

Recommended Adoption by Planning Commission – October 2019

Adopted by: Township Board-November 4, 2019

Sherman Township Board
2019

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The 2019 revisions to the Sherman Township Master Plan were completed by the Master Plan sub-committee of the Planning Commission. The Commission members who completed the update appreciated the cooperation that was afforded to them by the Officers of the Township, and Ryan Coffey-Hoag from the MSU Extension Office.

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Mission Statement

“To serve Sherman Township Residents while protecting the health, safety, general welfare and environment of our Township.”

Introduction

Land use planning deals with the complex interrelationship of two basic resources, the land resource and human resource. The land is a fixed, irreplaceable, non-expandable resource. Population is an expanding and mobile resource. The present society is faced with the challenge of accommodating more people on a fixed amount of land.

Man’s relationship with the land’s resources is one of both dependence and dominance. Man depends on land and associated environment systems for all of the necessities that sustain life. At the same time, human society has developed to high degree the ability to dominate the land’s resources. Land use planning is an attempt to establish and maintain a balance between the use and balance of land resources in order that this balance may provide a satisfying lifestyle for both present and future.

Lifestyles and social values rapidly change in our fast paced culture. Individually and socially we need a method not only to anticipate change, but also effectively meet the resulting demands of change. Planning has achieved a measure of success in helping people to anticipate the future and provide for its needs. Planning represents a systematic desire to achieve a degree of order and harmony from the seemingly unrelated aspects of our world.

The basic intent of the Sherman Township Master Plan is twofold. First, it is a study and analysis of the Townships resources, followed by policies to guide future public decisions relative to Sherman Township development land use. This Master plan will provide a basis for the Township Zoning ordinance. This plan is also intended for use by the private sector.

By establishing public policy, it will reduce much uncertainty that may be associated with private development decisions that are made in an atmosphere of no specific public policies. Therefore, the plan will enable private businesses and individuals to make more knowledgeable investment decisions.

Historical Overlook of Sherman Township

Until 1836 the area known as Newaygo County was a land of white pines, scarcely populated by Ottawa and Chippewa Indian tribes. The only white men were a few trappers. Then, in that year Chicago investors came to the area. They saw the tall stands of Pines and the Muskegon River which could be used to transport cut logs. Logging and civilization had come to this west Michigan area.

Boundaries

Boundaries for Newaygo County were first set in 1840. As a result of the new county still being unorganized, it was originally attached to Kent County. It legally became a county in its own right in 1851, and became organized a year later.

At first the county was divided into just two Townships, Brooks covering the western half and Newaygo covering the eastern half. By 1860 ten Townships existed in Newaygo County. See historical maps at the end of this chapter. In 1867 Sherman Township was created out of part of the then Everett, Dayton, Fremont Center and Bridgeton Townships. At that time Sherman Township included its current boundaries as well as the western half of the present day Garfield Township.

Charles W. Stone was the first Supervisor of the new Township, and served from 1867 to 1870. Sherman Township, a center for logging, grew, and by 1882 had its own post office within its boundaries. In that year William Moll was appointed Postmaster at the new office at Wooster Hill. Two years later in 1884, Sherman Township took its present boundaries.

County and Township Name Origins

There are many legends and stories connected with the county name, Newaygo. The most common belief is that it was named for an Ottawa Indian brave, Nah-way-go. He had a reputation for strength and bravery both on and off the battlefield, and was much admired by early settlers who knew him.

As to many Townships and communities created during the mid-to-late 1860's, Sherman Township took its name from a civil war hero. General William Tecumseh Sherman was one of Grant's top generals during the War Between the States. He is probably best known for his

famous “March to the Sea”, cutting a path across the Confederate states from Chattanooga to Atlanta, finishing his campaign with the surrender of Savannah on the Atlantic. Asked to give his comments about war, Sherman remarked the famous; “War is hell”. Both county and Township are named for brave warriors.

Lumbering

Logging operations in the county first started to the southeast of present day Sherman Township, creating the settlement of Newaygo and Croton in the early 1850’s. During this time the pine stands in the southern half of Sherman were surveyed. An estimated 400,000,000 feet of logs on the stump, mostly prime timber, were found. Most of this scouting was done in 1854 and 1855. Much of the land surveyed was controlled by four parties: Peter Johnson, A.B. Watson, Mr. Addis of Newaygo County and the Ryerson and Hills Co. of Muskegon.

It is the last name, Ryerson, which would become the largest operation, not only in Sherman Township, but all of Newaygo County. The Township remained virtually untouched by logging until 1870 when some operations started. It was not until 1876, though, when the Ryerson and Hill Co. began to log in earnest that the lumbering came to Sherman Township.

About the same time lumberman Wilcox and Morgan began operations on the White River just northeast of the Township. Begun in 1872, a settlement quickly grew from these operations and became known as Morgan Station. In 1879 the name was changed to White Cloud.

A mile down stream and on the other side of the river another saw mill was erected about the same time as the Morgan operation. Built by James Ally, it was soon accompanied by a shingle mill. The J. Alley & Co. was formed consisting of James, George and Charles Alley and George Smith. Alleyton, as the community was called, outpaced Morgan Station both in population and business. In 1873 the Chicago and West Michigan Railroad laid track through both communities. A year later a second set of track was laid for the Grand Rapids, Newaygo and Lake Shore R.R.

By this time Alleyton had gained a reputation for its roaring saloons, boarding houses and wild antics of its lumberman. By 1880 it had 550 residents and 32 businesses. Then on June 17, 1881 fire struck. Almost the entire business district of almost 47 buildings was destroyed. Several

new buildings were immediately erected, including a large hotel and McDonnell's big saloon and dance hall.

Experiencing several smaller fires, Alleyton never made a full recovery. Then, on July 4, 1894 fire totally wiped out the village. Almost totally abandoned, Alleyton never rebuilt, most of its residents moving to White Cloud just up the river. Today little evidence remains that the community ever existed.

During the Alleyton era much of the rest of Sherman Township remained a site of logging operations and camps of the Ryerson Company. The first few years' logs were moved by teams in the winter using huge bobsleds on iced paths. They were trucked to Ryerson Switch (Wooster). This was a switch for the Muskegon and Big Rapids branch of the Cadillac and Northwestern R.R. Here logs were loaded on flat cars to the Ryerson saw mills on Muskegon Lake.

Logging camps were established at various strategic points. They were the Supply Camp at Ryerson Switch (Wooster); Headquarters or Jacobs Camp¹ near Long Lake in section 27 (named for Henry Jacob, woods superintendent); Camp 2 on the north end of Long Lake; and Camp 3 near Marl Lake.

In 1882 Ryerson stopped logging operations with both Sherman and Garfield Townships. Although still having other lumbering operations in the Townships, the company gave 8 old logging employees 80 acres each of good farming land in Section 36 of Sherman Township. Three of the employees were Timothy Blake, and Bob and John Deuling. Mose(s) Bell, the engineer for the Ryerson railroad, bought a tract through which the rail ran connecting Long Lake with Kimball Lake. Dix Corners is near the old Bell farm.

During the logging period, not all logs were shipped out of the Township for cutting. As early as 1873, A. M. Fisher had a shingle mill at Ryerson's Station (Wooster). In 1882, George Fitzsimmons built a saw mill in Section 38. A year later Fred Ney built a mill in Section 16 and Cassius Galbraith one in Section 28. Even after the heyday of logging was over in the area, a shingle mill was started in 1895 by Charlie Raiser in Section 9. There was also the Francisco Shingle Mill and the Fred Daenzer Mill both located on Robinson Lake.

The beginning of the 1890's saw an abrupt end to major logging operations in Sherman Township. Within one year, Ryerson sold most of their holdings located in Sherman. Their holdings, concentrated in section 27, went from an assessed worth in 1890 of \$30,432 to a mere \$800 the following year.

As early loggers turned into farmers, the Township gradually became agricultural. In 1894 Cornelius Mast established a general store at Wooster Hill.

The beauty of Sherman Township's many lakes was also not overlooked. By the early 1900's Robinson Lake was a popular summer resort. There was even a dance hall at the north end of the lake. It was then that Jugville, a collection of cottages, was also put on the map. It became famous as home of the colorful "Yer Rural Highness, Newaygo Newt". The AP and UP wires carried the stories of this local character nationwide.

Legacy

Today, the Manistee National Forest, covering most of the eastern third of the Township, is the strongest reminder of Sherman's logging days. The Township is still a combination of active crop farms mostly in the west and southern sections and lake resort, both residences and commercial, around its biggest lakes.

Sources:

1851, 1860, 1867, 1884, Newaygo County Plat Books

1990 Newaygo County comprehensive Development Plan

Newaygo County Library, Mrs. Virginia Steele

"Alleyton—Ghost Town" by William Taylor

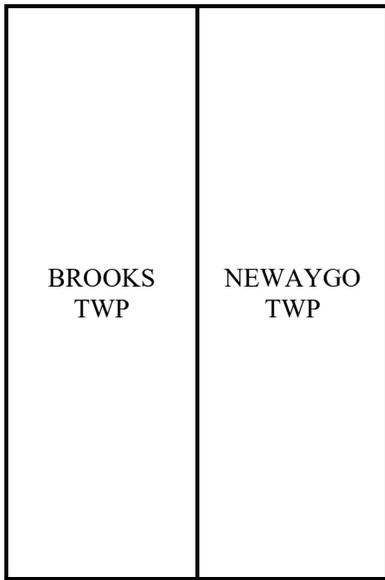
Lumbering in Newaygo County, articles by Robert Thompson

Newaygo County Society of History and Genealogy Newsletter

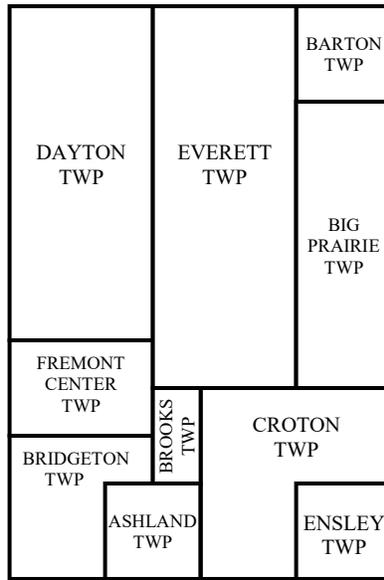
Sherman Township Supervisors History

<u>Name</u>	<u>Dates</u>		
William Davis	Elected April 3, 1899	until	April 1900
Seymour Doud	Elected April 1, 1900	until	April 1909
Henry Redder	Elected April, 1909	Resigned	Dec 15, 1911
William Davis	Appointed Dec 15, 1911 Elected at next election	until death	July 1917
Henry Redder	Appointed July 28, 1917 Elected at next election	until	
Emmet Eldred	Elected April 12, 1935	Resigned	Nov 4, 1935
Walter Boeskool	Appointed Nov 4, 1935 Elected at next election	until	Jan 12, 1956
E. Fenton Griswold	Appointed Jan 12, 1956 Elected at next election	until	April 9, 1959
George Lindsey	Elected April 9, 1959	until	Dec 1969
E. Fenton Griswold	Appointed Jan 16, 1970 Elected at next election	until	Nov 1976
Charles Seabrook	Elected Nov 1976	until	Nov 1984
Stanley Stroven	Elected Nov 1984	until	Nov 1988
Joan M. Obits	Elected Nov 1988	until	Nov 2008
Robert Sullivan	Elected Nov 2008	until	Sep 2015
Roman Miller	Appointed Sep 2015 Elected at next election	until	Present

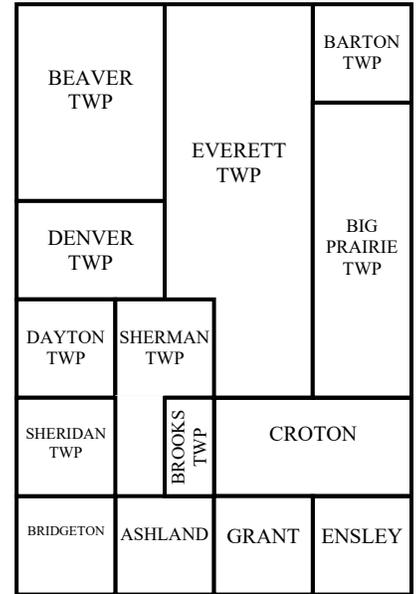
Newaygo County
Historical Overview of Township Creation



1851



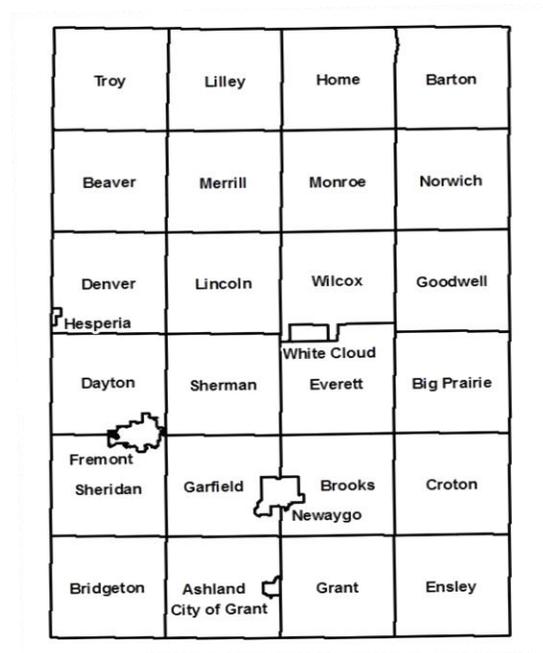
1860



1867



1884



2019

Sources: Newaygo County Plat Books and GIS Department

Historic Sites

Sherman Township has two sites of historic interest.

They are:

The Old Wooster Site

Site of an old lumber camp, post office and railroad depot. See the previous chapter.



Wooster Railroad Depot and Post Office

Windmill Gardens and Museum Village

Restoration of old historical buildings and a display of many different types of windmills.

These sites have been recognized as historically important in the 1994 Newaygo County Recreational Development Plan. Although presently not on the State or National official registers, the two sites are of county-wide interest. It is possible that they could be eligible for official recognition in the future. The Windmill Garden site is a valuable non-renewable resource whose preservation can only serve to strengthen Sherman Township's local and cultural heritage.

Present Land Use

Sherman Township, located in central Newaygo County, is a land of deep forests, blue lakes and rolling farmland. The Sherman Township Land Cover Map follows at the end of this chapter. Most of the urban land uses are limited to areas around the three largest lakes that run in a north/south pattern down the center of the Township. These are primarily residential dwellings with some recreational resorts. Residential use accounts for an important segment of land area. A separate chapter on "Housing" covers residential use more fully.

Agriculture

Agricultural use makes up a large portion of the Township. Croplands account for almost all farming activity. Most of the western third and much of the southern third of Sherman is presently in agriculture.

The Agricultural Cultivation Land Cover map, identifies currently cultivated farm tracts. The agricultural lands under Michigan's PA 116 Act are identified on the Agriculture-1990 map that is located in the Agriculture Categories section. As of the beginning of 1990, Sherman Township farmers had a total of 27 contracts with PA 116. These contracts cover 5,743 acres which translates into over 26% of the total Township. Encompassing almost all cultivated lands, this indicates a strong commitment to the continuation of farming in the Township. These lands are spread over an area that forms a diagonal through the center of Sherman Township, running from the northwest corner down to the southeast corner of the Township. Much of this farmland has prime agricultural soils. These soils are identified and discussed in the Soils section in the Environmental Quality chapter.

Forests

With over 11,000 acres of forests, trees make up largest of all land uses in the Township. Most of these forests are located in the northeastern part of Sherman Township and much of that land is part of the Manistee National Forest.

"Forested Land Cover", Map, identifies these areas. If compared to the "Agriculture -

1990" map it shows the remaining half of the Township formed by that diagonal to be in forests. Two thirds of these wooded areas are upland hardwoods. Pines, which a hundred years ago covered the Township, now only account for a small portion of Sherman's forested lands. Lowland hardwoods, aspen and birch stands comprise the remainder.

Water-Wetlands

Almost all the water in Sherman Township is from its lakes. Three large ones; Robinson, Crystal, and Ryerson/Long lakes run from north to south down the center of the Township. These all have high residential concentrations around their perimeters. Other lakes include Peterson, Blackberry, Alley and Little Robinson in the north; Dutch in the middle; and Bolan, Kemperman, Ford, Peck and Mudd lakes in the south. The White River cuts across the northeast corner of the Township.

Wetlands are scattered in small pockets throughout much of Sherman Township. The greatest concentration is in the Manistee National Forest running from the east side of Robinson Lake east to the Township borders, and an area running parallel to the north along the shores of the White River. Most of these wetlands are shrub lands, with very little aquatic beds or emergent areas in the Township. The Wetlands and Subwatershed maps graphically show where the water resources are located in the Township.

White Cloud Sherman Township Sewer Authority

Sherman Township constructed a sewerage system that runs between Long-Ryerson, Crystal and Robinson Lakes and connects to the treatment plant in White Cloud. The system consists of a pipe line that picks up all of the sewerage from the lake residents and along the route and through a series of 15 lift stations transports the material to the treatment plant that is shared with the City of White Cloud. The system has worked well to keep the lakes clean by eliminating the possibility of water pollution from individual septic systems.

Recreation

Since the turn of the century, people have been drawn to Sherman Township's lakes. Recreation remains an important land use in the Township. Resorts capitalizing on the area's excellent swimming, fishing, boating hiking and hunting are found on Robinson Lake.

Miller's Resort, with three cottages, is open year round.

The former Snuggle Inn Resort is now only a retreat for family and friends.

The Shack Country Inn is a "bed and breakfast", having 54 rooms, 11 with hot tub and 18 with fireplaces. The Inn also recently completed construction of a 150 seat conference room.

Good fishing waters remain one of the Township's biggest attractions. The state D.N.R. has a public access on Robinson Lake with a concrete launch ramp and ample parking. There is a Federal Public Access in the Manistee National Forest on Alley Lake. Crystal Lake has a public beach and picnic area and a concrete boat ramp.

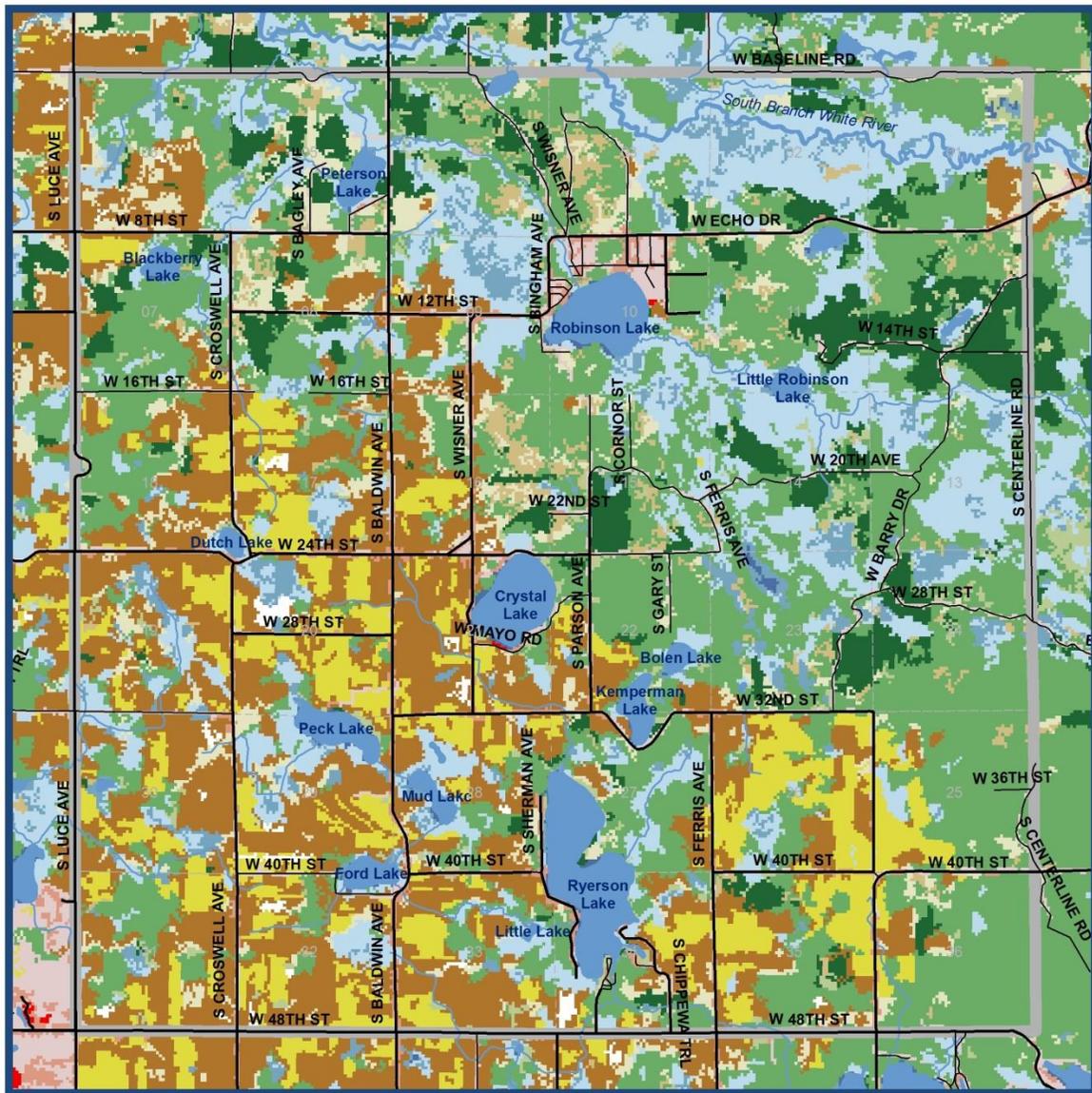
**SHERMAN TOWNSHIP
LAND COVER**

	<u>TYPE</u>	<u>ACRES</u>	<u>%</u>
Urban		597.71	2.61
	Residential	468.00	2.04
	Institutional	21.29	.09
	Industrial	13.06	.06
	Open Pit – Extractive	8.87	.04
	Outdoor Recreation	86.49	.38
Agriculture		7,389.98	32.22
	Cropland	7,328.39	31.95
	Orchard	20.56	.09
	Permanent Pasture	7.26	.03
	Other	33.77	.15
Open		1,428.14	6.23
	Herbaceous	167.44	.73
	Shrub	1,260.70	5.50
Forest		11,833.70	51.59
	Upland Hardwood (North Zone)	47.36	.21
	Upland Hardwood (Central Zone)	6,918.24	30.16
	Aspen, Birch	1,250.49	5.45
	Lowland Hardwoods	2,038.94	8.89
	Pine	1,403.65	6.12
	Lowland Conifers	158.45	.69
	Christmas Tree Plantation	16.57	.07
Water		735.88	3.21
	Lakes	735.88	3.21
Wetlands		953.13	4.16
	Shrub	927.51	4.04
	Aquatic Bed	15.21	.07
	Emergent	10.41	.05
TOTAL AREA		22,938.54	100.00%

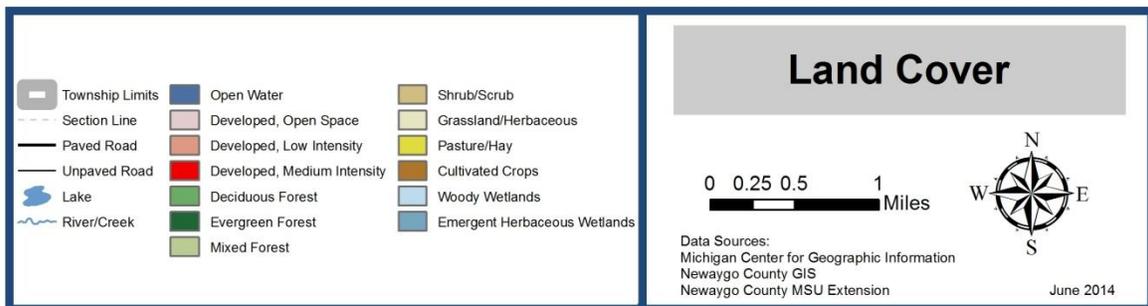
Source: Michigan Resource Information System, DNR, August 14, 1990.

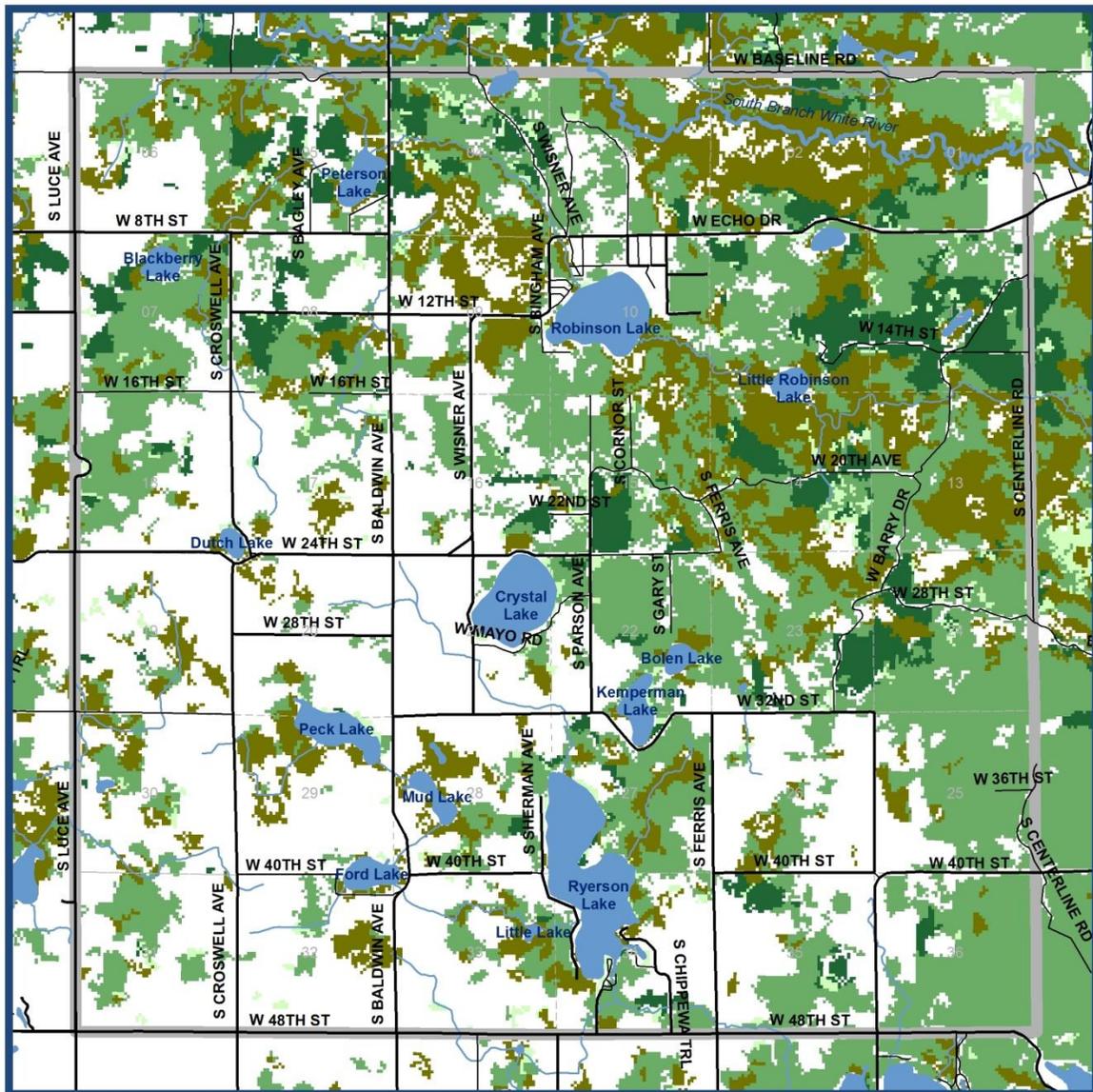
Sherman Township Land Use

<u>CLASS</u>	<u>CODE</u>	<u>ACRES</u>
Residential	1	485.83
Commercial/Institutional	2	34.33
Other Developed Area	4	153.43
Cropland	5	6914.85
Orchard or Other Specialty Crop	6	188.50
Confined Feeding and Permanent Pasture	7	14.38
Other Agricultural Land	8	46.06
Open Field	9	1407.79
Forest	10	11902.01
Water	11	736.04
Wetland	12	1050.35
Transitional Land	14	4.98
Total		22938.55

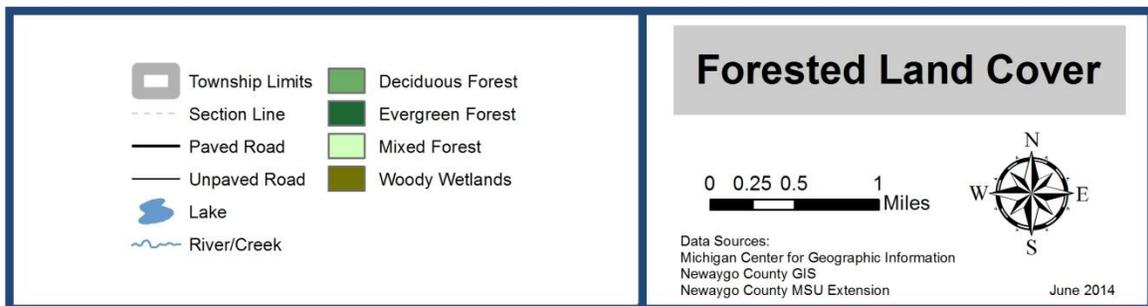


Sherman Township - Newaygo County, MI





Sherman Township - Newaygo County, MI



Population Characteristics

Growth

With a current population of 2,109 according to the 2010 U.S. Census, Sherman Township's dramatic population increase of the previous thirty years have decreased to a more moderate rate. Throughout the 50's, 60's and 70's the Township's population increased at or near 30% increments every 10 years. Except for the 70's, Sherman's growth rate far exceeded that of Newaygo County as a whole. During the past 30 years that trend has been reversed. With a growth rate of only 3.1% during the 80s and 12.6% during the 90's, Sherman Township's growth has been much less than that of the county's.

Table #1
Sherman Townships and Newaygo County
Population Comparison

Year	Sherman Twp	% Inc./Dec.	Newaygo County	% Inc./Dec.
1950	855	19.2	21,567	11.8
1960	1,085	26.9	24,160	12.0
1970	1,411	30.0	27,992	15.9
1980	1,810	28.3	34,917	24.7
1990	1,887	3.1	38,202	9.4
2000	2,159	12.6	47,847	20.6
2010	2,109	(2.4)	48,460	1.3

When comparing the growth rate over the last 30 years of Sherman Township with surrounding Townships, only Sheridan and Dayton have had a slower growth rate. One explanation for the sudden reverse growth pattern may be explained by Sherman's measures taken during the last two decades to curb unbridled and unplanned growth through zoning regulations. This possible reason is given more credence when we see that Dayton Township also has had a very small growth during this same period, even though both Townships border the city of Fremont which is experiencing fast growth. Dayton, like Sherman is consciously working to control unplanned growth.

When the population estimates are taken every two years another pattern emerges. Seen on the 1980's Population graph following this chapter, the Township's population was shown to decrease during the 1982-1984 period. This coincides with the early 80's recession, when unemployment was very high and many people throughout the state moved, seeking jobs elsewhere.

Another cause may be a flaw in the 2010 Census itself. Although these are the official numbers for the Township, it is known that in many areas of the state population counts are low because the census did not accurately identify the home community of many of the snow birds. These are persons who reside a portion of each year in some other location, usually south. Sherman Township has a high percentage of older residents who may be making this migration.

Whatever the reason for the current slower growth, urbanizing pressures will only increase. Sherman is located within a reasonable commuting distance from Grand Rapids, Big Rapids and Muskegon. As both population and housing demands become greater, more people will increasingly be looking to outlying areas as bedroom communities.

Table #2
Age Distribution Comparison
Sherman Township and Newaygo County
Revised Age

Age	Sherman Twp		Newaygo County	
	Total	%	Total	%
0-4 yrs	111	5.3	3018	6.2
5-9 yrs	126	6.0	3230	6.7
10-14 yrs	143	6.8	3533	7.3
15-19 yrs	167	7.9	3594	7.4
20-24 yrs	102	4.8	2616	5.4
25-29 yrs	92	4.4	2453	5.1
30-34 yrs	86	4.1	2509	5.2
35-39 yrs	91	4.3	2712	5.6
40-44 yrs	125	5.9	3120	6.4
45-49 yrs	171	8.1	3897	8.0
50-54yrs	158	7.5	3821	7.9
55-59yrs	155	7.3	3438	7.1
60-64 yrs	139	6.6	2991	6.2
65-69 yrs	114	5.4	2415	5.0
70-74 yrs	95	4.5	1954	4.0
75-79 yrs	73	3.5	1345	2.0
80-84 yrs	61	2.9	958	2.0
85 and older	<u>100</u>	4.7	<u>856</u>	1.8
TOTAL	2,109		48,460	

Table #3
Race and Ethnicity

Race	Sherman Twp		Newaygo County	
	Total	%	Total	%
White	2,033	96.4	45,625	94.1
Black or African American	20	0.9	495	1.0
American Indian and Alaska Native	8	0.4	372	.8
Asian and Native Hawaiian	5	0.2	198	.4
Some Other Race	15	0.7	942	1.9
Two or more races	28	1.4	828	1.8
Total	2,109		48,460	

Of the 2109 persons living in Sherman Township in 2010, nearly 94% listed their race as White. 20 persons listed themselves as Black, 8 American Indian, 15 as other. Sherman Township is comprised overwhelmingly with persons of Northern European ancestry.

The Amish make up a notable part of our community with 24 families owning over 750 acres in Sherman Township.

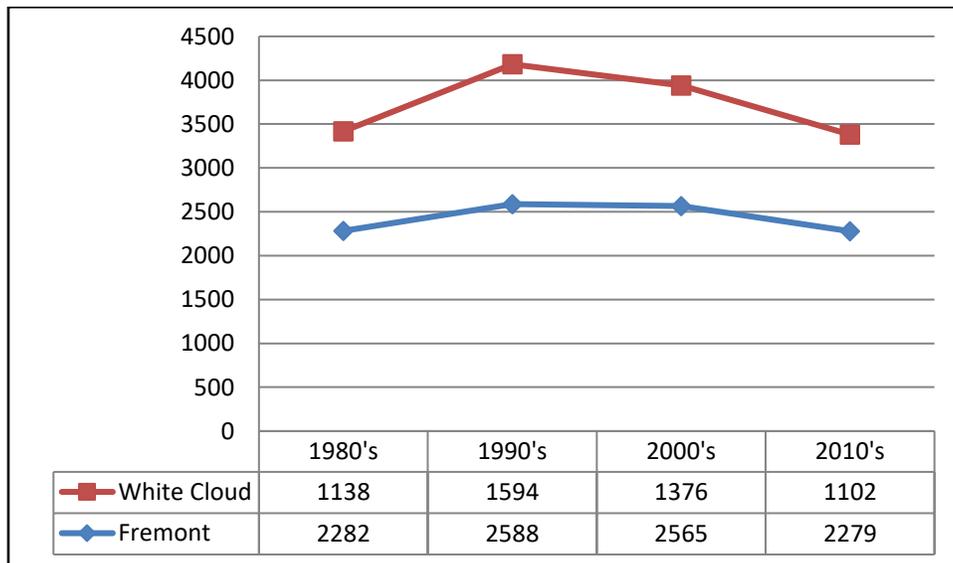
Education

Two School systems are predominant in Sherman Township. The Fremont and White Cloud School Districts fairly evenly divide the Township. The School District map shows graphically how the districts are divided in the Township

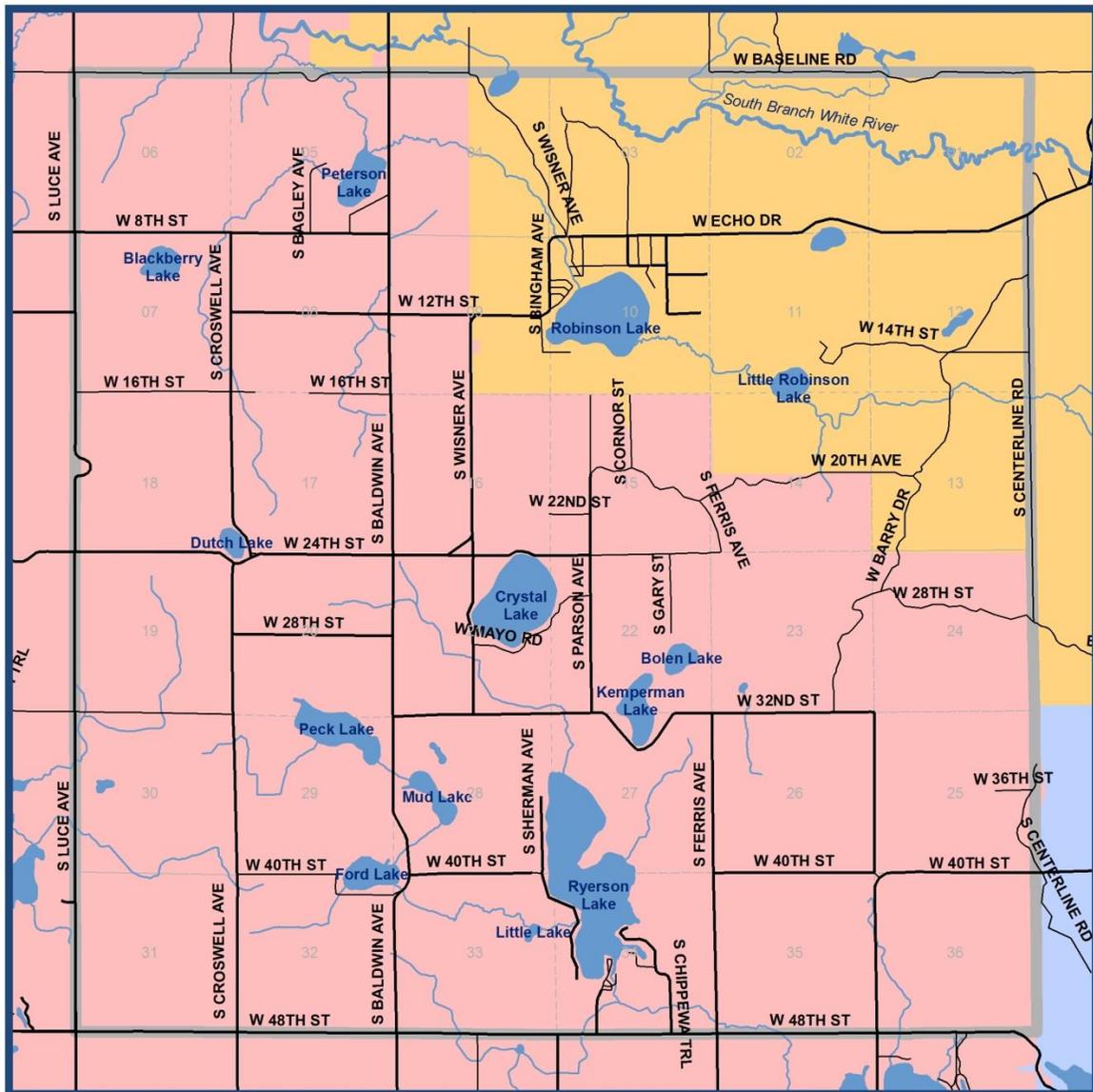
Sherman Township students can also enroll at the Newaygo County Area Vocational Center where training is offered in a wide variety of skills that will help them in the job market. Among the many skills offered are auto mechanics, commercial art, cosmetology, printing and office occupations, building trades and data processing. In addition, Muskegon Community College and Baker College have opened up campuses which allow the high school students to obtain associate and 4 year college degrees.

Student Enrollment

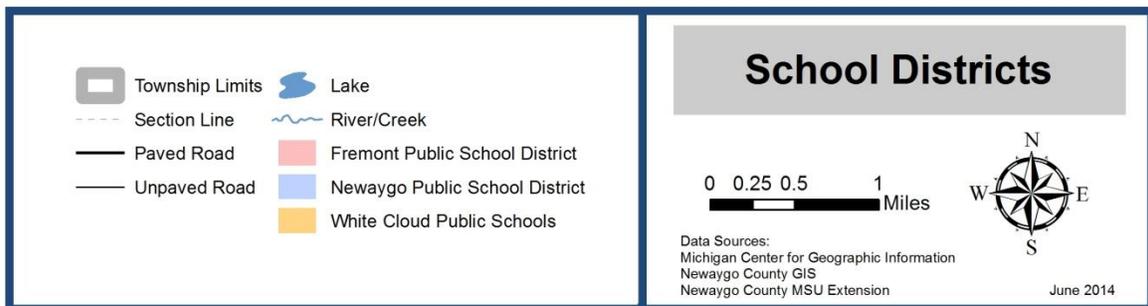
Graph #1



Various private schools are also nearby, of which Fremont Christian is the largest. Enrollment covers pre-school through junior high.



Sherman Township - Newaygo County, MI



Housing

Changes in population are generally reflected in demands for housing. Sherman Township, although showing only a small growth increase during the past ten years, has experienced one of the highest numbers of new home permits in the County during the same time period.

Strategically located within a triangle formed by White Cloud to the east, Newaygo to the south and Fremont to the west, it is at the heart of Newaygo County both in population centers and job opportunities. As these communities fan out, as already the case in the City of Fremont, the Township will feel increased growth pressures. Sherman's great natural assets of lovely lakes and forest make this area a particularly attractive potential growth center. Its natural features also continue to make it an attractive location for those seeking a vacation or retirement home.

Seasonal Housing

Newaygo County has one of the largest numbers of seasonal housing in the State of Michigan. Sherman Township has one of the higher percentages of seasonal homes in the County. The number of seasonal homes for Newaygo County is 19% of total housing units, used on a seasonal basis. Sherman, in the 2010 census, had 21.4% or 228 dwellings. With one fifth of its housing being used on a seasonal basis only, Sherman experiences great fluctuations in its overall population and on demands for public services. This includes fire and police protection, and road repair; as well as demands on sanitary and sewage facilities. By the 2010 Census Sherman had reached a total housing unit count of 1064, with 772 being owner occupied and 292 as renter occupied.

Listed below is a table comparing seasonal housing in Sherman Township with that of its surrounding Townships and the County as a whole.

Table #4
Dwelling Held for Seasonal or Occasional Use
Sherman and Surrounding Townships

Township	Total Housing units	Seasonal
Sherman	1,064	228
Brooks	2,069	573
Dayton	767	35
Denver	920	100
Everett	893	111
Garfield	1,089	212
Lincoln	868	314
Sheridan	1,047	57
Wilcox	<u>604</u>	<u>125</u>
Newaygo County	25,075	4,885

Table #5
Housing Units by Age

Revised Table

Year Built	Total	Percent
2005 or later	11	1
2000-2004	109	10
1990-1999	123	12
1980-89	89	8
1970-79	168	17
1960-69	209	20
1950-59	89	8
1940-49	89	8
1939-Earlier	130	12

Source: 2010 US Census

Land splits

There has been a decrease in the number of splits throughout Michigan. Which can be attributed to the enactment of the Land Division Act of 1997 and the township ordinance that required a subdivided parcel in the Agriculture and Rural Residential districts only, to be a minimum of 3 acres. The Land Division Act has additional criteria when splits are proposed on the same parcel or parcels within a 10 year period. Analyzing land split data does not seem to show any significant trend in either location or size, outside of the 3 acre rule mentioned above.

Economic Base

Income

The Per Capita Income (PCI) in Sherman Township is as high as or higher than that of its surrounding Townships. It is greater than the county as a whole. The latest Census estimates, issued in the spring of 2010, show the PCI for the Township at \$27,077 and Newaygo County's at \$21,120.

Table #6
Thirty Year Per Capita Income Comparison

Community	2010	1999	1989	1979
Newaygo Co.	21,120	16,976	8,716	5,696
Sherman Twp.	27,077	16,195	8,311	5,456
Brooks	22,798	19,088	8,874	6,439
Dayton	25,983	19,433	11,040	6,650
Everett	19,031	14,164	7,411	4,870
Garfield	21,667	16,410	8,347	5,776
Lincoln	21,747	15,659	7,338	4,778
Sheridan	22,691	21,834	9,323	6,262
Wilcox	20,144	13,564	7,780	4,933

Employment

Sherman Township historically has a lower unemployment rate than its surrounding Townships. This may be due to the fact that many Township residents have traditionally looked for employment beyond county borders. The average travel is 25 minutes. Sherman's labor force has the greatest employment in educational and health care service professions. Gerber, the baby food company also provides much of the township's employment. Retail trade also offers a source of employment. The above mentioned categories comprise over one-half of the Township's employment.

Table #7
Twenty-five Occupations with Greatest Growth Potential
Job Outlook in the State of Michigan

Occupations	Percent Job Growth	Projected Annual Openings
Accountants and Auditors	14.8%	180
Computer Systems Analysts	22.8%	47
Computer Controlled Machine and Tool Op.	33.7%	187
Cost Estimators	16.8%	58
Electrical Power Line Installers & Repairers	26.3%	55
Electricians	21.9%	114
Financial Managers	10.6%	74
Healthcare Social Workers	22.2%	48
Industrial Engineers	12.6%	176
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	31.9%	166
Machinists	21.4%	244
Management Analysts	19.4%	45
Market Research Analysts	22.8%	67
Mechanical Engineers	13.0%	117
Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technologists	20.3%	46
Medical and Health Services Managers	19.3%	85
Occupational Therapists	26.5%	43
Personal Financial Advisors	18.7%	45
Physical Therapists Assistants	37.2%	54
Physical Therapists	31.7%	94
Physician Assistants	27.0%	31
Physicians and Surgeons	16.3%	41
Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	20.2%	62
Registered Nurses	23.9%	650
Software Developers, Applications	24.4%	65

Source: Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives (2018)

County Equalization

The State Equalization Valuation (S.E.V.) is an important indicator of the economic health of a community. It is the tax base for the community as well as the funding. Each County is responsible for assessing their own jurisdiction and these reports are sent to the state.

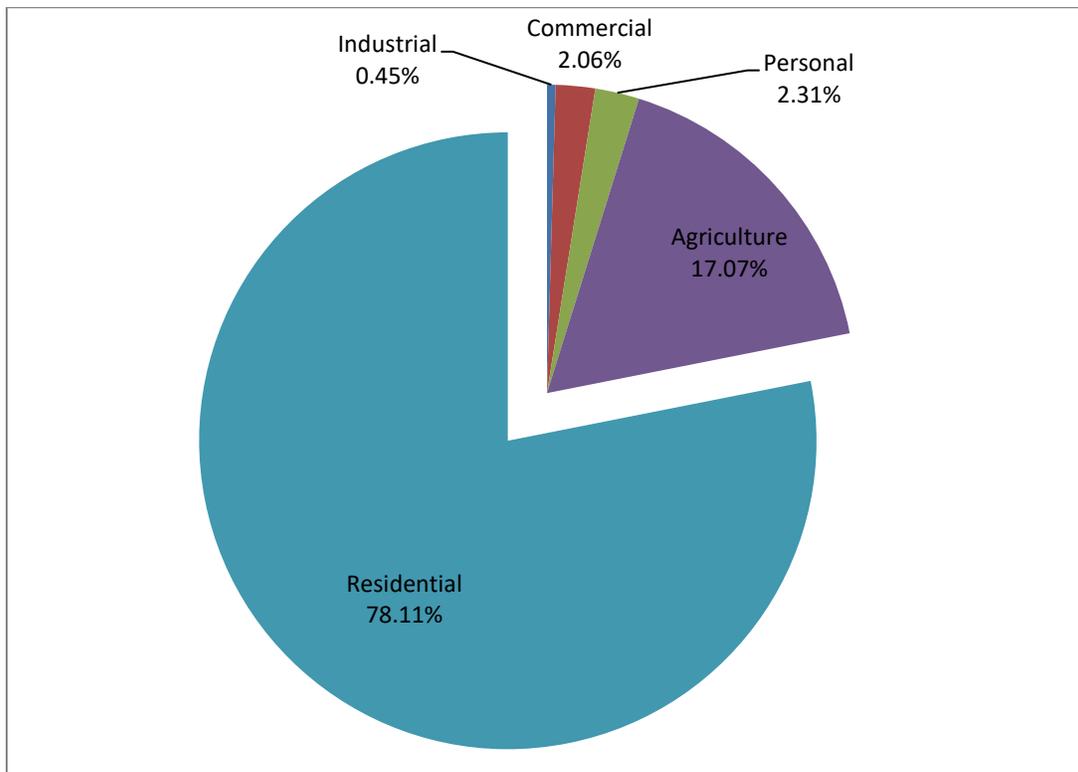
The S.E.V. consists of two components: real and personal. The real component includes the equalized value of physical real estate, such as land and buildings. This is broken down into several categories that include Agriculture, Residential, Commercial and Industrial. Until the 1970's Sherman Township was assessed for a Timber Over-Cut category as well. Another category, Developmental, is assessed except in urbanizing areas. The personal component of the S.E.V. covers such non-permanent fixtures as equipment and machinery.

Showing value by land use can be an indicator of land use trends within the community. Unlike many communities, agricultural land shows a fairly stable rate, which indicates as of yet there has not been major inroads coming from residential development. Residential lands have been stable, which backs up the recent census that shows a leveling of population. The assessments also indicate a slight growth of commercial and industrial activities.

Table #8
State Equalized Valuation
Sherman Township

<u>Category</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2016</u>
Real			
Agriculture	\$7,184,600	<u>\$12,380,700</u>	<u>\$15,380,700</u>
Residential	\$50,602,700	<u>\$66,783,100</u>	<u>\$68,731,400</u>
Commercial	\$1,526,400	<u>\$1,842,900</u>	<u>\$1,811,500</u>
Industrial	\$148,700	<u>\$372,000</u>	<u>\$393,900</u>
Personal	<u>\$1,230,600</u>	<u>\$1,674,100</u>	<u>\$2,034,200</u>
Total	\$60,693,000	<u>\$83,052,800</u>	<u>\$87,999,100</u>

Graph B
Sherman Township 2016 S.E.V.



Source: 2010 Newaygo County Equalization Reports, NC Board of Commissioners

Soils and Quality of Life

Today, man's misuse or unwise use of Soils is affecting the quality of life in many communities. Large areas of prime agricultural soils are lost each year through water and wind erosion. Each year more soil and groundwater are contaminated. Erosion and contamination pose a greater threat due to the predominance of sandy soil in Sherman Township. With increased urban development (residential, commercial and industrial), land use controls could help to decrease soil erosion and prevent groundwater contamination from continuing throughout the Township.

Soil and Ground Water Contamination

Since 1982 the State of Michigan has developed an annual listing of contaminated sites throughout the state. It is a lengthy process involving on-site analysis, effect on the surrounding community and public in-put.

Sherman Township has 3 contaminated sites. The DEQ and the MDNR have done both site cleanup and soil and water testing to verify the extent of contamination that still exists at these sites. The Belle-Sommers Foods brine on 16th St. is referenced in the 2014 Master Plan as being a contaminated site, it was noted that the DEQ had no information on the site in 2014 and a 2018 search indicates no info as well. A quick overview of each location as of 4/18/19 is listed below.

Wooster Gas Station-3048 West 24th street

Discovery Date 5/1/1989 - Still being monitored by the DEQ

DNR Owned (Old Gas Station) - 815 South Nicholas Avenue

Discovery Date 1/16/2002 - Still being monitored by the DEQ

Green Jug General Store - 1190 S. Bingham Avenue

Discovery Date 3/30/1999 - Still being monitored by the DEQ

Source: MIDEQ Website

Agriculture

Sherman Township has strong agricultural activities. As a land use it covers one third of the Township. This is due in great part because much of the southern tier of Sherman is prime agricultural soil. The greatest concentration is in the southwest corner of the Township.

Merlette loam and the Metea-Marlette-Spinks Complex account for most of the prime agricultural soils in Sherman Township. Marlette Loam is a well drained to moderately drained soil found in the glacial till of the Township's morains and till plains. This is a particularly good soil for cultivated crops and orchards. Crops that grow in greatest success in Marlette soils are corn, winter wheat, oats and hay. Marlette loam is often found in the same area as Metea and Spinks soils, which is sandier. Metea soils are loamy sand with sand being mainly in the upper strata. Spinks soils are sandy throughout. Metea soil is a particularly good for corn, winter wheat, oats, hay and asparagus.

Both Marlette and Metea soils are susceptible to water erosion. Metea is also susceptible to wind erosion because of this the Soil Conservation Service has been ordered to identify all highly erodable active farmland. Farmers having these soils must have an active plan to reduce soil losses or face possible loss of their farm subsidies.

Agricultural soils form roughly a diagonal across the Township from the northwest to the southeast. The remainder of Sherman Township is composed chiefly of sandy Plainfield and Brems soils. These are found on the outwash plains covering the northern and eastern portions. Their main use is woodlands.

Home Construction

The type of soil is important in construction of dwellings, for many soils either cannot take the weight of a structure or could cause flooding or severe wetness. Unless the lot is on a sewer hookup line, the ability of the soil to make an adequate sanitary absorption field must be taken into account.

The soils that make good absorption fields in Sherman Township are located along the western boundary, with small areas along the southeast boundary. The four main soils that make up most of Sherman all have severe limitations. Marlette soils perk slowly, and the remainders all have poor filtering properties that can cause groundwater pollution: meaning it has the strong potential for contaminating wells. This problem can be alleviated by making sure lot sizes are large enough to accommodate an enlarged absorption field or for the installation of an alternating drain field.

When looking at a soil's ability to bear weight of a building and keep it dry, the Township's soils are better. The largest areas though are the Manistee National Forest. Outside of the forest, there are sections in the northwest and southeast corners of Sherman that present only moderate difficulties. There are also areas, mainly between Robinson and Crystal Lakes, which have severe limitations for basements, but offer only moderate problems for dwellings without basements.

Source: The Newaygo and Kent County Soil Surveys: U.S. Soil Conservation Service

Land Use Goals and Policies

The study of historical, demographic and physical data or information, along with public opinion input forms the basic groundwork for this community's land use goals and policies. Previous chapters have studied and analyzed these factors. In the course of preparing this Master Plan, the Sherman Township Planning Commission considered the needs and desires of residents and property owners and the feasibility and impact of various land use alternatives.

The essence of this planning process is reflected in the following summary statements, which attempt to communicate the Planning Commission's vision for the future of Sherman Township.

Sherman Township strives to:

- Preserve the rural, small community qualities that are central to its image and identity.
- Provide a planning and regulatory environment that is well matched to the community's expectations.
- Retain its wealth of natural features, wooded areas, lakes and open spaces.
- Allow a limited, well-planned, low-density residential development.

OVERVIEW:

The following sections will contain planning goals that express the community's long range desires and policies that were developed to provide direction for planning-related activities such as zoning.

GOALS: Goal statements are typically more general in nature. You will find in this section that there are a series of broadly crafted goal statements, each supported by a series of more detailed or more specific proposals. An effective goal statement should describe a desired end-state, that meets local needs or interests, is typically long range and forward looking, but is achievable.

POLICIES: Policies are the substrata that support Goals. They are generally more detailed in their structure and state measurable components.

THE ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL FEATURES

GOALS

- ❖ To insure that future development takes place in an environmentally sound and consistent manner to reduce potential hazards or the negative impacts associated with flooding, soil erosion, groundwater contamination, disturbances to the natural drainage network, overwhelmed infrastructure, and comparable events; thereby protecting natural resources and preserving the existing quality of life.
- ❖ To protect and preserve in a responsible and orderly manner, those sensitive natural resources and environmental resources that are recognized as being important components of Sherman Township's rural character.
- ❖ To maintain and update roads and existing sewer system to ensure minimal environmental impact.

POLICIES:

- Balance the rights of individual property owners with the concern and interest shared by Sherman Township residents to preserve the existing natural environment, wherever possible.
- Maintain land use restrictions along lakes, streams, wetlands and other environmentally sensitive and unique areas in the Township.
- Encourage approaches to land developments that take into consideration natural features such as soils, slopes, hydrology and natural vegetation during the process of site design and site plan review.
- Protect surface and groundwater quality in the Township and review options for possible groundwater protection standards that might be employed by a rural Township and incorporated within the site plan review process.
- Promote special consideration of natural features such as flood plains, wetlands, slopes, woodlots and water features, in development proposals.
- Evaluate potential zoning ordinance provisions that regulate the clearing or grading of sizeable or significant acreage.
- Supplement the site plan review, planned unit development and other design review criteria in the Sherman Township Zoning Ordinance to specifically address the protection of natural features such as woodlands, flood prone areas, wetlands, rolling topography and special or unique views.

- Review various options for implementation of storm water management standards that prevent direct discharge of storm or melt water into surface water and would be appropriately tailored to Sherman Township.
- As part of the review of storm water management options consider limiting the amount of impermeable surfaces in certain types of new developments.
- Retain existing anti-keyholing or funneling regulations along water bodies.
- Encourage educational efforts promoting the use of non-phosphorous fertilizers for waterfront properties.
- Special attention is to be paid to development in the shoreline “zone”; that strip of land immediately adjacent to the water’s edge as the best and easiest technique available to improve water quality and stabilize the shoreline to prevent erosion.
- Promote the use of easements, land trusts or deed restrictions when and where appropriate to preserve environmentally sensitive areas.
- Support the development of wind energy systems.
- Demonstrate to all Township residents a strong commitment to sustainable development and promoting sources of clean, reliable and affordable energy for future generations.
- Encourage procedures and standards to ensure that siting decisions for energy generation facilities will be consistent with community objectives and the overall protection of public health, safety and welfare.

AGRICULTURE/OPEN SPACE

GOALS

- ❖ Encourage the preservation of prime agriculture lands as both an economic and natural resource, so as to ensure “the farmers right to farm”.
- ❖ Help protect agricultural land, open spaces and natural features from encroachment and the negative effects of development.

POLICIES

- Discourage development of non-agricultural land uses in prime farming areas through the application of zoning regulations.
- Reduce the potential for conflicts arising from certain agricultural practices and non-farm residences through the implementation of “buffer” land use districts.
- Separate higher density development and consumptive land uses from agricultural land and sensitive natural area.
- Develop design guidelines that create buffers to protect agricultural lands and natural features from encroachment.
- Promote clustering of development, design flexibility and innovation that protects natural amenities and open space.
- Implement a review and approval process for all types of flexible or cluster development projects to make them an attractive option to developers.
- Support the desires of large acreage property owners who wish to keep their land in agricultural production or as undeveloped or natural areas.
- Evaluate options for land use and zoning provisions for areas abutting active agricultural operations in order to prevent conflicts with surrounding land uses and minimize the development of conflicting land uses in adjoining areas.
- One of the most popular open space uses in Michigan is the development/construction of non-motorized trails and greenways that connect parks or other open space areas. Sherman Township should evaluate any opportunities for this type of open-space or recreational network within this community.
- Help develop greenways throughout the Township by coordinating the interconnection of open spaces between large scale projects as part of in development reviews.

RESIDENTIAL

GOALS

- ❖ Encourage a general low density pattern of residential development consistent with the rural character found in most of the Township, while allowing for the expected, continued growth in the lake area, but in a controlled and planned manner.
- ❖ By and large, Sherman Township should be developed as an agricultural, open space and low density, single family community.

POLICIES

- Establish lot size and density standards that are consistent with the natural capability of soils to handle on-site septic systems where there is not sewer service.
- Encourage higher densities of development in locations in and along public sewer systems.
- Reduce blighted conditions in the Township through enforcement of “junk” regulations.
- Ensure any large scale residential development is in compliance with Township goals and policies for subdivision regulations.
- Guide all elements of new residential development towards delivering a quality end-product.
- Plan for safe, creative and desirable residential areas that meet the needs of people of varying ages and lifestyle’s.

Future Land Use Plan

Although the socio-economic and natural resource analysis is a major factor in determining the location of future growth, it alone does not constitute a land use plan. A successful plan should join together the cultural and physical data with Township goals in such a way as to guide development in a rational manner. A goal to consider is the acceptance of future needs of energy, telecommunications and transportation.

The purpose of the land use plan is to offer a hypothesis about the way Sherman Township could develop, given both the potentials and limitations of the land as well as the desires of its residents. It is not a zoning regulation. The map is not a zoning map. See the Future Land Use Map at the end of the chapter. It is a plan that should be used as a guide for decisions governing meeting and complying with Township goals. It's not intended to show particular uses on individual parcels of land.

To reduce the cost of community services (i.e. roads, fire and police protection, and sewer and water services): to preserve important agricultural lands and other natural assets; and to encourage a compatible development pattern, it is recommended that a concentrated higher density development take place in select areas, rather than scattered throughout the Township.

The following land use categories are proposed:

- A. Agricultural
Ag/Rural Residential
- B. Medium density Residential
Lake Residential
High Density Residential
- C. Recreational – Wilderness
- D. Commercial – Resort

A. Agricultural Categories

A major conclusion from the community June 2002 survey was that agricultural lands and rural atmosphere of the Township should be preserved. The major land use in Sherman Township is agricultural. The Township's most productive farm soils are typically found in contiguous blocks with few non-agricultural uses. These areas present the fewest land use conflicts and provide the best environment for farming in the Township. Sherman should focus its strongest efforts to conserve land where continued agriculture is most likely.

Identification of the most important farm land is the first step. Four factors were used to achieve this. They were:

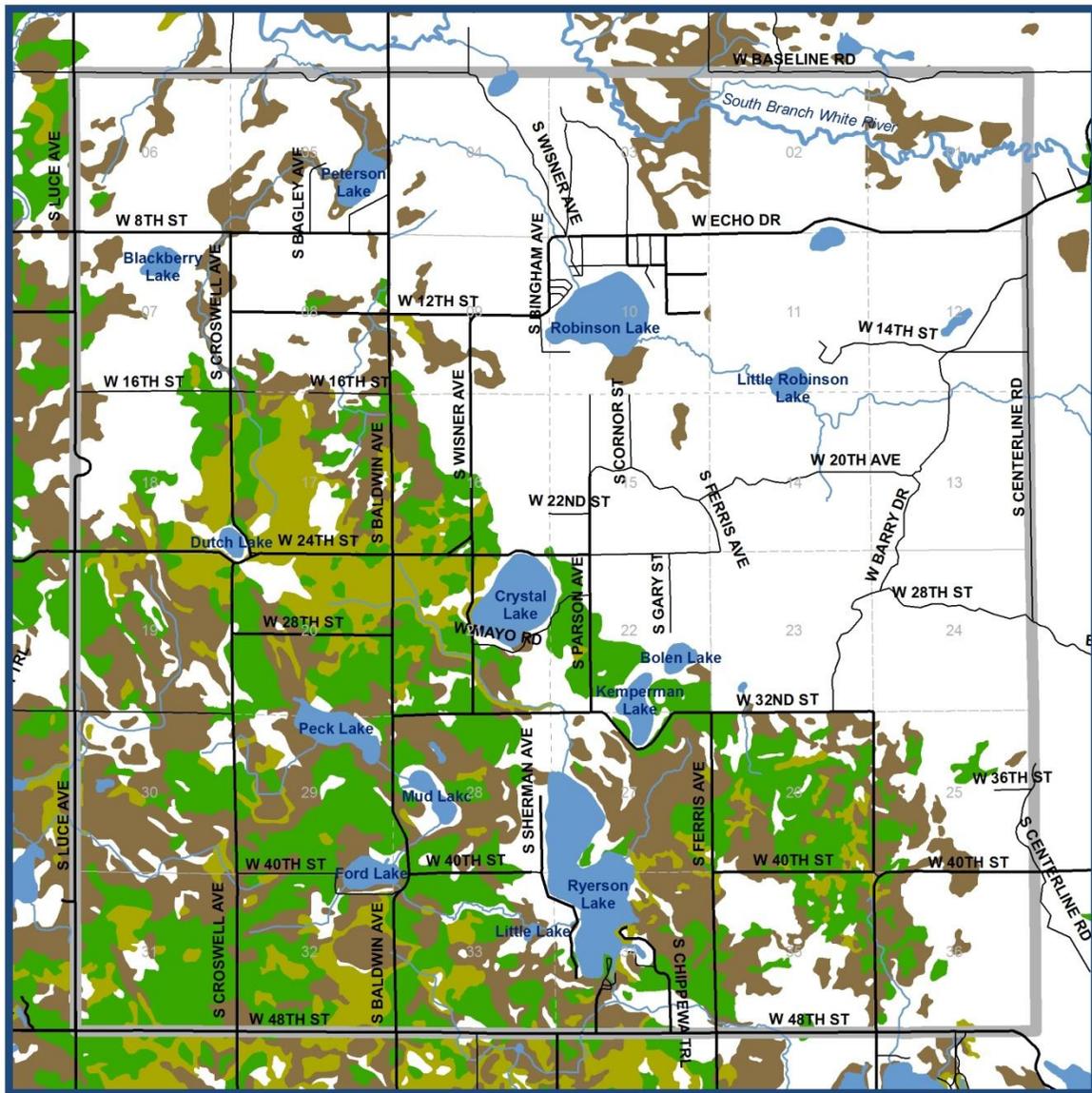
- Prime Agricultural Soils
- Existing Agricultural Use
- Lands in PA 116
- Size of Parcels

Prime agricultural soils in Sherman Township are located on the Prime Farmland map. The Land Use Map shows the Existing use and along with the lands in PA 116 program. An analysis of these factors led to identification of these areas. Agricultural areas are intended for active agriculture and low-density single-family dwellings. Wetlands, woodlands and open space are preserved as important features of these areas.

Agricultural

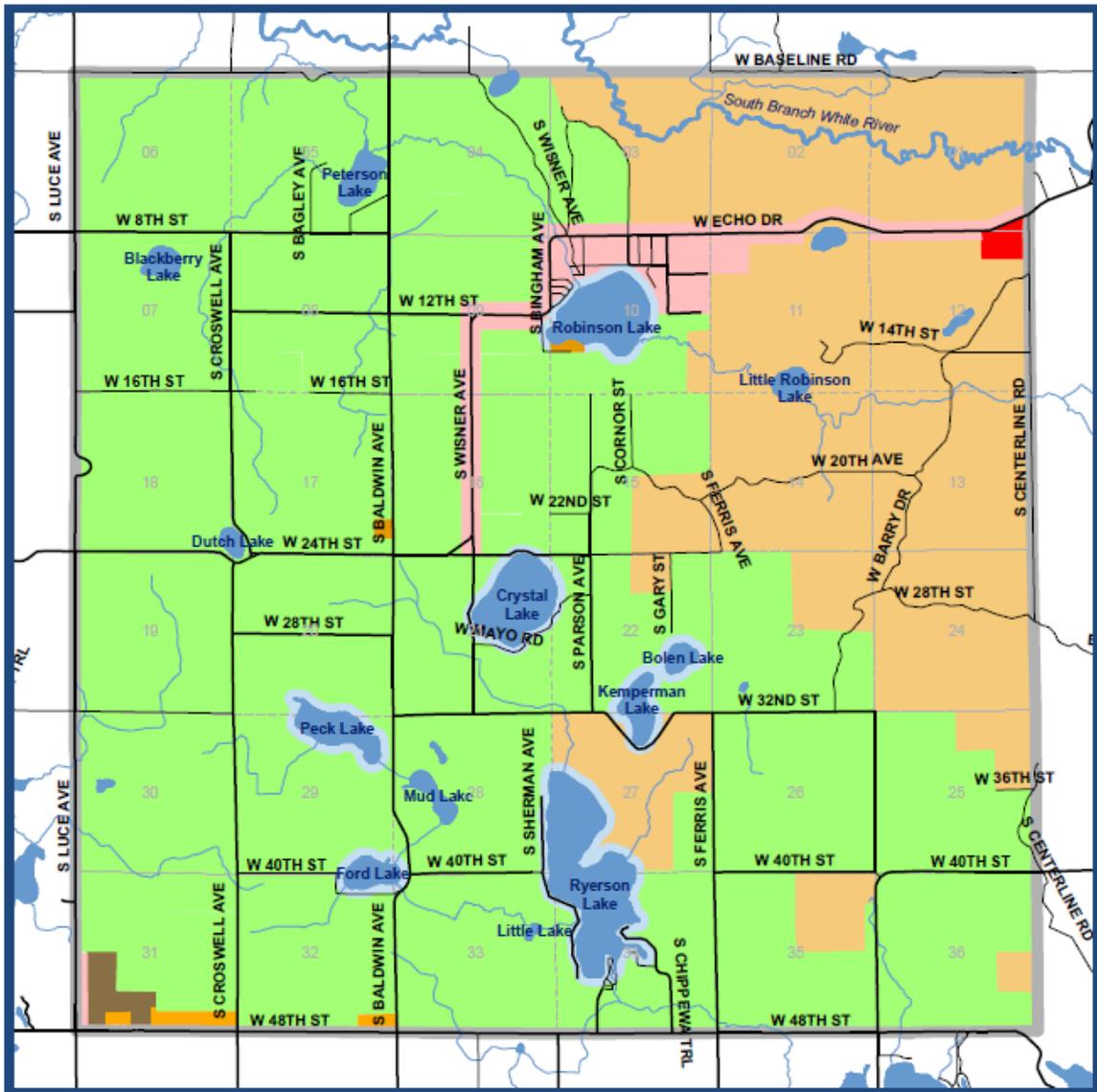
This area is where all four of the above factors are typically found. This land should be preserved for agriculture and related practices. Activities that would interfere with agricultural production or would create pressures for other uses, such as private roads, public utility extensions and land subdivisions should be avoided. Any new residential development should be limited to a very low density to minimize land use conflicts and preserve active farmland.

Proper zoning techniques should be utilized to limit the conversion to non-agricultural uses in these areas. Most of this land is located in the Southwest third of Sherman Township.



Sherman Township - Newaygo County, MI





Sherman Township - Newaygo County, MI



Plan Implementation

Planning is an ongoing process. The completion of the Sherman Township Land Use Plan should be considered having completed the first step of this process. Constantly changing social, governmental and physical trends involving the Township will require periodic updating of the Plan.

The Land Use Plan itself has no legal regulatory power. Rather, it serves as the foundation upon which specific regulatory measures can be developed. The following are the major recommendations Sherman Township should pursue in order to establish and maintain the goals and policies of the Land Use Plan.

Township Zoning Ordinances

The Primary tool for implementing the Land Use Plan is the zoning ordinance. Areas that need special attention include minimum lot size, agriculture, lake residential, lots of record, junk regulations and environmental protection. Many goals and policies have been implemented through careful and explicit guidelines to support the Ordinance.

Subdivision Regulation

Subdivision regulation is the tool to guide land development in accordance with a community's Land Use Plan. Based on the protection and promotion of the public interest, it offers protection and stability to both the public and private sectors. Many of the most perplexing growth problems are the result of premature, excessive or substandard subdivisions. A specific subdivision ordinance prevents the toleration of unneeded expansion, while at the same time enables a community to require adequate specific, physical improvements and design standards for all new developments.

Property Maintenance Codes

The Township has adopted ordinances to regulate blighting influences which result from failure of property owners to maintain property and structures in a manner that does not decrease the quality of life in Sherman Township.

Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

The objective of the Capital Improvement Program is to look at future needs for capital expenditures and evaluate priorities, community impact and conformance with Township goals and policies. The advantage to a CIP is that attention can be focused on the Township's needs and goals, as well as, the methods of implementing them. State enabling legislation provides for planning and commissions to review and comment on their community's CIP, as it pertains to the Land Use Plan.

Public Cooperation

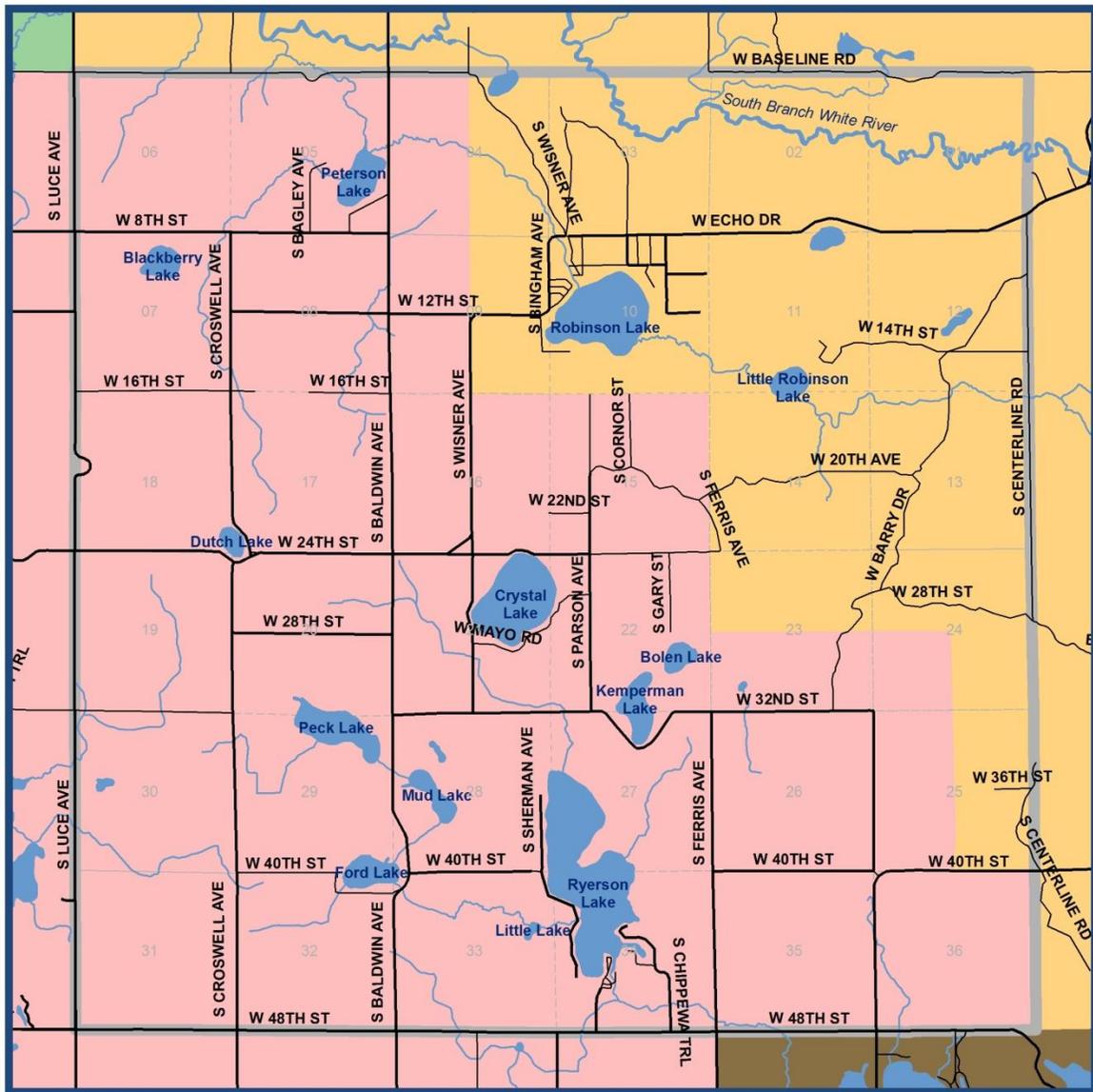
Citizens of Sherman Township have the opportunity, as well as the responsibility to provide comments and discussions regarding development within the Township. As representatives of its citizens, the Sherman Township Board and the Planning Commission welcome and appreciate input from the public.

Complete Streets

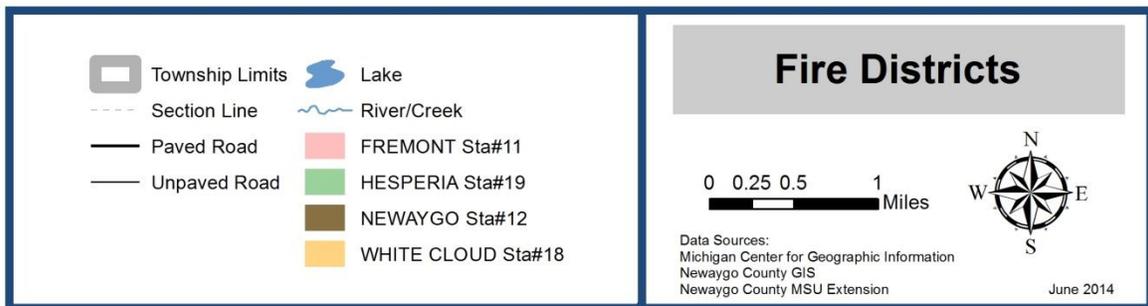
Changes to Act 51 under PA135 stipulate that the definition of streets to include all legal users including bicyclist, pedestrians and all transportation systems that move people and goods. Transportation improvements will be appropriate to the context of the community and considers all legal users of the public right of way. Transportation changes within the township will be implemented in cooperation with the county Road Commission and/or MDOT.

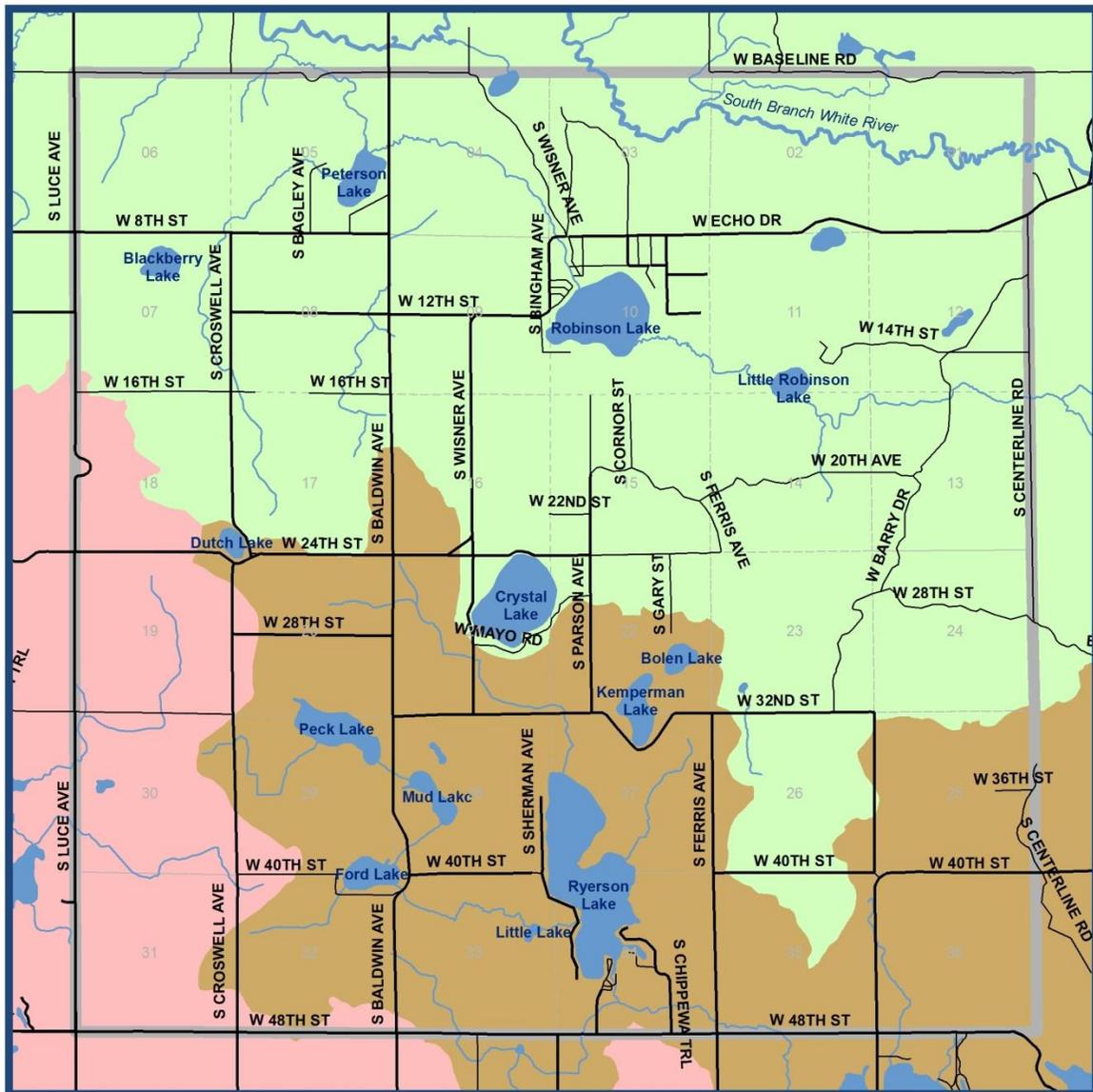
Floodplain determination by FEMA

FEMA has made a determination of areas in the township that are considered to be in a floodplain. The residents in these designated areas are now eligible to purchase flood insurance. FEMA held a seminar for Newaygo County and all Township Board members to discuss the details on how the program will work. The information will remain on file for residents to review at the Township Hall.

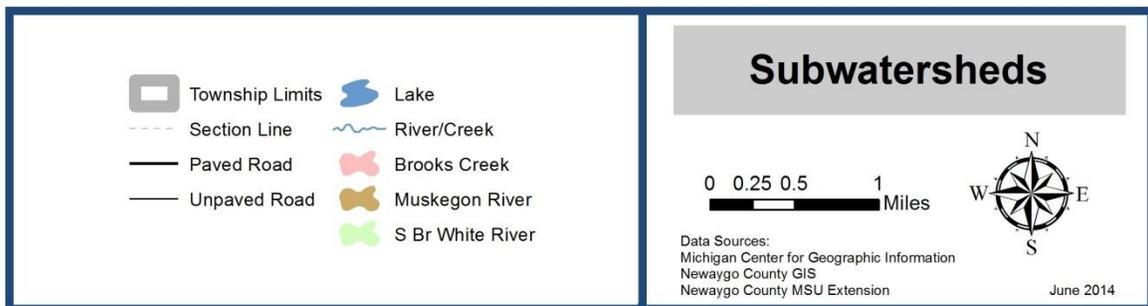


Sherman Township - Newaygo County, MI





Sherman Township - Newaygo County, MI



Sherman Township Road Map



-  - Primary Road
-  - Local Road
-  - River, Stream, or Drain