



## Newfield Township Master Plan

Approved: May 2009

Updated: November 2014



**WEST MICHIGAN SHORELINE  
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
(WMSRDC)**

The WMSRDC is a regional council of governments representing 127 local governments in the West Michigan counties of Lake, Mason, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, and northern Ottawa.

The mission of WMSRDC is to promote and foster regional development in West Michigan... through cooperation amongst local governments.



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# Chapter I: Introduction

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## Purpose of the Plan

The goal of any future land use plan is to combine the needs and desires of the citizenry with the land's suitability and capability for sustaining those uses, according to the ability and desire of a unit of government to provide public services throughout its jurisdiction. Such planning will minimize the potential for land use conflicts and inappropriate uses of land, for the betterment of all residents.

## Legal Basis

Although this plan is enabled by Michigan law, it does not have the force of statutory law or ordinance. Its foundation is rooted in the Rural Township Planning Act (Act 168 of the Public Acts of 1959), which states, in part, that:

Sec. 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 overcrowding of land by buildings 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 its suitability for particular uses judged in terms of such factors as the trend in land and population development.

Sec. 3. (1). The township board of any township may create, by resolution, a township planning commission with power to make, adopt, extend, add to or otherwise amend, and to carry out plans for the unincorporated portions of the township...

A plan comprehensive enough to meet the requirements of Sec. 2 must begin with an analysis of the area's existing conditions, facilities, natural resources, population characteristics, economy, and land uses. Where appropriate, historical trends should be analyzed to assist in making predictions of the future.

The Michigan Planning and Enabling Act (Michigan Public Act 33 of 2008) was signed into law in March of 2008, and became effective September 1, 2008. However, the planning process for the Newfield Township Master Plan began in spring of 2008, and the plan was therefore developed under the guidelines of Act 168 of the Public Acts of 1959). Future updates of this plan will need to adhere to the rules spelled out by the new legislation.

## The Planning Process

Every effort has been made to present information that is both current and accurate. Newfield Township and the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission (WMSRDC) shall not be held liable for any errors and/or omissions that are related to this plan. This plan is a general document; therefore, a thorough investigation with original research materials should be undertaken before proceeding with any

specific implementation decisions. These materials might include site plans, legal reviews, etc. and would vary by situation.

Citizen input is vital in identifying and discerning the issues facing local residents, as well as identifying a plan for a community's future. Therefore, Newfield Township citizens were invited to take part in the planning process at a public hearing held at the beginning of the planning process. The results of this meeting are discussed under "Township Visions" in Chapter 7 – Development Strategy. Input from this gathering strongly influenced the Goals and Objectives, which can also be found in Chapter 7.

This master plan, especially the Goals and Objectives, should be reviewed by the township on a regular basis. When appropriate, it should be modified to reflect changes of a physical nature or those of general public sentiment. A master plan should always be consistent in maintaining the community's goals. The planning process strives to combine the needs and desires of the citizenry with the land's suitability and capability for sustaining those uses. It also balances the township's ability and desire to provide public services throughout its jurisdiction.



### **How to Use This Plan**

The Newfield Township Master Plan is intended to function as a guide for directing and managing development within the township boundaries. This plan is not a zoning ordinance, which is a legally enforceable document. This plan is a policy-planning document that provides a legal rationale for zoning. It presents a written analysis of the township's physical, social, and historical characteristics, as well as visions and goals for the future of the community. In addition, implementation strategies are identified and are intended to guide policy makers towards accomplishing the established visions and goals of the Newfield Township Master Plan. Future zoning and/or development decisions for the township should be based on the data and information presented in this plan and should also be consistent with the goals and objectives established during the planning process.

### **The Master Plan's Relationship with Zoning**

While most understand that there is a relationship between a master (i.e. land use) plan (with its future land use map) and a zoning ordinance (with its zoning map), it is often misinterpreted and used inappropriately. The relationship is a very important one *because a user cannot appropriately utilize one without the other*. Formally defined, a master plan is a policy document in which the zoning ordinance is a regulatory tool that is used to implement the goals and objectives of the master plan. In other words, *the master plan and future land use map are designed to provide the community with a glimpse of where they desire their community to head, while a zoning ordinance and map provides the means to arrive at this point*.

The ability to change a zoning ordinance or zoning map is a municipality's primary tool for land use regulation and change. The master plan and future land use map are used to guide and support that process of regulation and change. In other words, the master

plan will be utilized to help determine and support what and where zoning changes will occur. An acceptable rezoning request should be consistent with the master plan, as it represents the community's desires for their future.

## Chapter 2: Location and History

### Regional Location

The township of Newfield is located in east-central Oceana County. The county is situated along the eastern shore of Lake Michigan approximately halfway between Traverse City, Michigan and the Michigan/Indiana border. The total area of the township is 35.7 square miles, of which 35.1 square miles are land and 0.6 is water.

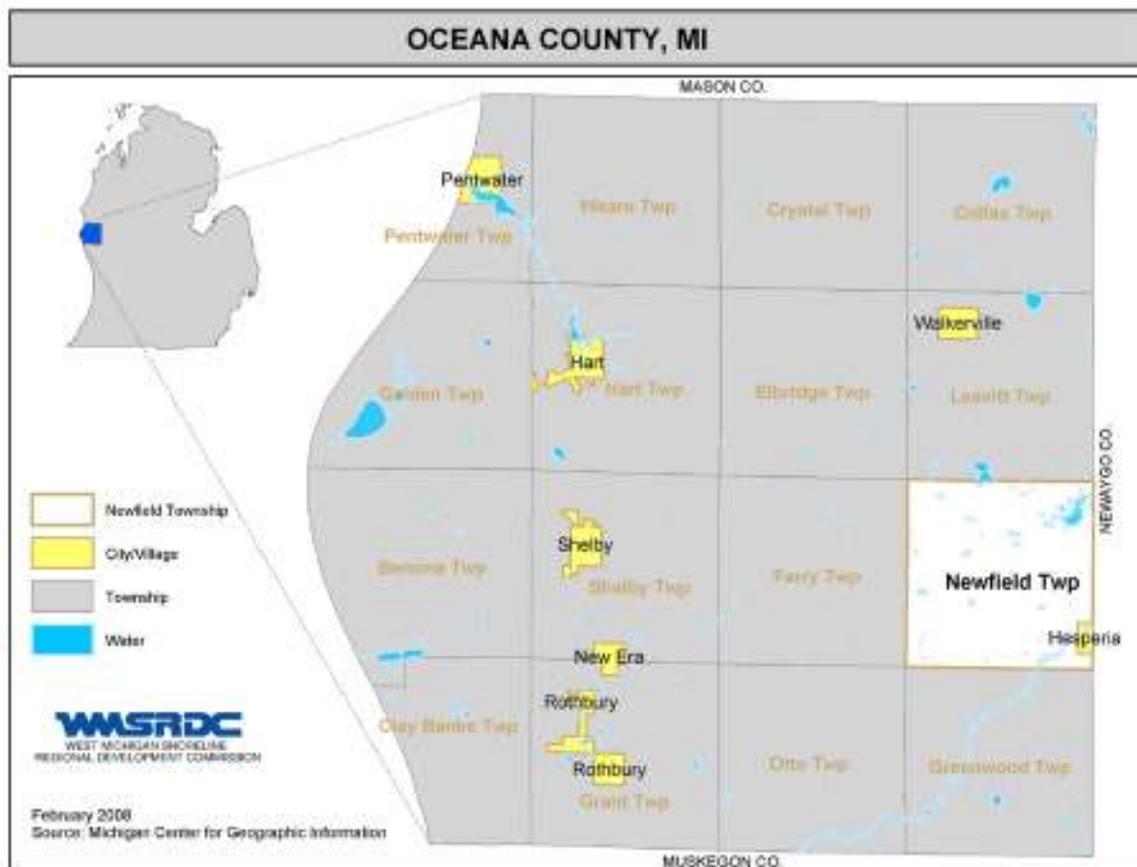
Newfield Township is surrounded by the following communities: Leavitt Township to the north; Elbridge Township to the northwest; Ferry Township to the west; Otto Township to the southwest; Greenwood Township to the south; Dayton Township (Newaygo County) to the southeast; Village of Hesperia and Denver Township (Newaygo County) to the east; and Beaver Township (Newaygo County) to the northeast. Table 1 identifies driving distances from Newfield Township to regionally significant locations.

**Table 1**

Driving Distance from Newfield Township		
Muskegon	30 mi	49 k
Grand Rapids	60 mi	97 k
Traverse City	100 mi	161 k
Lansing	125 mi	202 k
Chicago	210 mi	338 k
Detroit	220 mi	354 k

*\*Distances are approximate*

**MAP 1**



## Community History

The history of Newfield Township is closely connected to Hesperia, the White River, and Michigan's Lumber Era. Consequently, most residents of Newfield Township regard Hesperia as their "hometown." Many township residents rely on the goods and services available in the village, just as the first white settlers began doing in the 1860's. The following historical information is not intended to be an exhaustive account of Newfield Township. It is provided to help explain the origin of the community and also to demonstrate the township's connection to the village.

Newfield Township came to be in 1858 when Stony Creek Township was divided to create Newfield and Greenwood townships. That same year saw the first house built in the vicinity of the future Village of Hesperia. Around 1860, a dam was built on the White River, which spurred the growth of the village and led to its continued existence. With help from West Michigan's lumber boom of the late 1800's, the budding village contained 50 buildings by 1870. When Hesperia officially became a village in 1883, it already had developments including a steam-powered sawmill, school, post office, flourmill, newspaper, and church. By the mid-1890's, the village's growth had peaked and began to decline along with lumbering in the area. At that time logging and sawmills were largely replaced by agriculture and related commerce, however not to the same extent.

Today, Hesperia remains the community center of Newfield Township, and agriculture continues to be a significant part of the local economy. Also remaining is the Hesperia Dam, which provides the Hesperia area with quality sport fishing, another important component of the local economy. For more historical information about the Village of Hesperia, refer to the Village of *Hesperia Master Plan* (2007) and the *Hesperia Centennial 1866-1966* (1966).



# Chapter 3: Community Facilities and Services

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## Local Government

Townships are a product of Michigan's early history. Michigan is one of 20 states that currently have some form of township government. There are two types of townships in Michigan which are general law and charter townships. State laws authorize townships to perform a wide variety of functions and are required to perform assessment administration, tax collection, and elections administration. Townships may choose to perform numerous governmental functions, including enacting and enforcing ordinances, planning and zoning, fire and police protection, cemeteries, parks and recreation facilities and programs, and many more.

Newfield Township is a general law township operating under the direction of the Newfield Township Board of Trustees. The board consists of a supervisor, clerk, treasurer, and two trustees. The board members serve four-year terms as elected representatives of the citizenry. The board meets on the third Tuesday of each month at the township hall located at 3890 South 198<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Hesperia, Michigan 49421.

The Newfield Township Board administers the annual township budget. The primary source of revenue for Michigan townships, such as Newfield, is the local government's share of the state sales tax, which has been drastically reduced in recent years. Other revenue may be garnered from addition of a millage rate to local property tax fees, fees for building permits, and planning commission review fees. The 2006 Oceana County Equalization Report provides the information for Table 2 regarding the township's tax base.

**Table 2**

<b>Real and Personal Equalized Valuation - 2014</b>	
Agriculture	\$ 4,521,040
Commercial	\$ 4,075,045
Industrial	\$ 226,385
Residential	\$49,549,507
Personal	\$ 69,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$58,441,477</b>

*Source: 2014 Oceana County Taxable Value Report*

Planning and zoning activities in Newfield Township are the responsibility of a seven-member planning commission. Members of the planning commission are appointed by the Township Board. Meetings are held at least four times a year, depending on the amount of pressing business.

Although Newfield Township does not prepare a written plan for capital improvements, it occasionally takes on projects, such as road improvements, when the budget allows. The township currently employs a part-time zoning administrator and a part-time property assessor. The township does not employ a professional township manager, and it relies on Oceana County for building, electrical, plumbing, and mechanical inspection services.

**Transportation**

Due to the rural nature and location of Newfield Township, transportation options are limited. The primary mode of transportation is automotive. The township contains approximately 85 miles of roads. Table 3 contains approximate roadway statistics for the township. Various modes of transportation as they are related to Newfield are discussed below.

**Table 3**

Township Roadways		
Type	Miles	% of Total
Minor Roads/ Two-Tracks	6.8 mi	7.94%
County Local	59.3 mi	69.28%
County Primary	13.5 mi	15.77%
State Trunkline	6.0 mi	7.01%
Totals	85.6 mi	100.00%

*Statistics were derived from data obtained from the Michigan Center for Geographic Information's Framework v7 and are approximate.*

**Highways** – Portions of two state highways are located within the township. Highway M-20 reaches east and west across 5.5 miles of the township. This highway provides access to the Village of New Era and US-31 12 miles west of the township; M-120 in Hesperia; and the City of White Cloud and M-37 about 17 miles to the east. Farther east, M-20 intersects US-131, M-66, US-127, and US-10. The township's other state highway is M-120, which runs south from Hesperia along a half-mile of the township's eastern border. It intersects M-82 and US-31 on its way to Muskegon, about 28 miles from Hesperia.

**Public Transportation** – The Oceana County Council on Aging (OCCOA) provides transportation within Oceana County for all seniors through the bus transportation program. The program is available to all residents of the county; with seniors and the handicapped receiving first priority in order to receive support services, reduce isolation, and promote independent living. The OCCOA also provides volunteer driving transportation for seniors who need transportation to and from medical appointments outside of Oceana County.



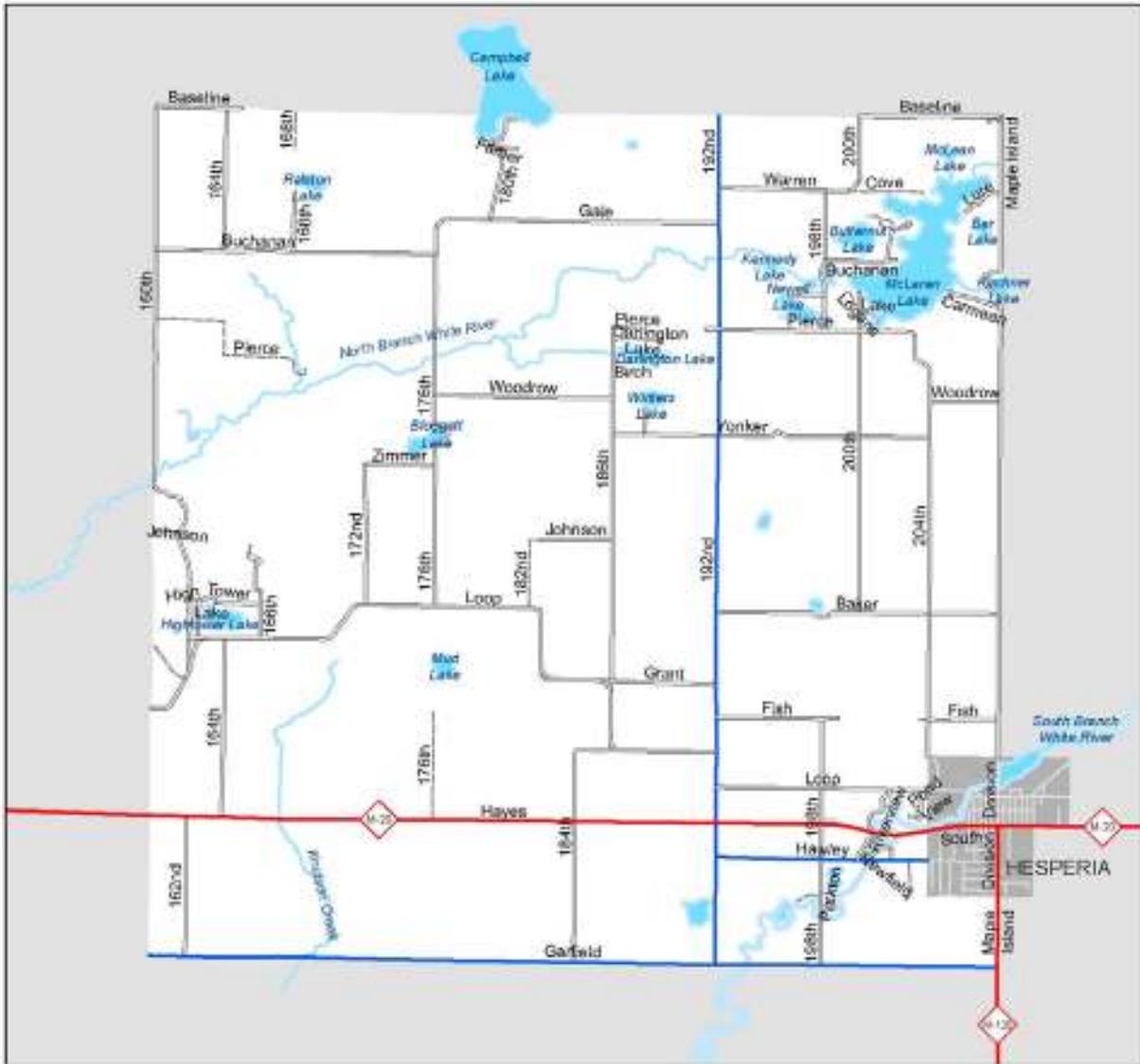
**Rail** – There are no railroads located in Newfield Township. The nearest active rails include a Michigan Shore Railroad line from Muskegon to Fremont, and a CSX Transportation line from Grand Rapids to Baldwin via Newaygo County. The Amtrak station in Grand Rapids, about 60 miles to the southeast of the township, is the nearest passenger rail service.

**Air** – Located 34 miles to the south, the Muskegon County Airport is Newfield Township's nearest commercial airport. In addition, there are three other small airports within 20 miles of the township. The Fremont Municipal Airport (General Utility Airport) is 12 miles to the south; the White Cloud Airport (Basic Utility Airport) is 16 miles to the east; and the Oceana County Airport (General Utility Airport) is 18 miles to the west.

**Water** – Muskegon and Ludington both have deepwater ports which are within an hour driving distance from Newfield Township. These harbors provide shipping and recreational boating access to Lake Michigan, the Great Lakes, and ultimately worldwide. Additionally, both ports offer car ferry services to Wisconsin. In Muskegon, the Lake Express operates from May into November. In Ludington, the Lake Michigan Carferry (also known as the SS Badger) operates daily from May through October.

Map 2

## Newfield Township ROAD NETWORK



- State Highway
- Primary County
- Local County
- Minor Road/Two-Tracks

Map created in June 2008 by:  
**WSRDC**  
WEST MICHIGAN SHORELINE  
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Data Source:  
Michigan Center for Geographic Information (Framework v7b)

Note:  
This map is intended for general planning purposes only.

**Parks and Recreation**

Outdoor recreation opportunities are plentiful in Newfield Township thanks to its rural setting and natural features such as lakes, rivers, and forests. Map #3 Public Lands and Recreation shows areas of the township that are part of the Manistee National Forest, as well as lands owned by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), and Newfield Township. The map also includes various recreation points of interest. Listed below are descriptions of many recreation opportunities in the township.



*Public access at Campbell Lake.*

- Newfield Township contains approximately 2,573 acres of the Manistee National Forest according to the 2006 Oceana County Plat Book. All but 80 acres of this land is located in the western half of the township. The Manistee National Forest was established in 1938 and covers about 540,187 acres in West Michigan. This land is not one continuous mass, but is broken by private property and towns. Much of the land had been abandoned by logging companies after being logged off in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.
- The USFS owns approximately 165 acres of land within the township according to the 2006 Oceana County Plat Book. This land is located along the North Branch of the White River in three separate parcels.
- The MDNR operates a public boat launch at McLaren Lake. This facility offers a hard-surfaced ramp, handicapped parking, 22 parking spaces, and public restrooms. Additionally, the MDNR owns approximately 67 acres of land within the township, according to the 2006 Oceana County Plat Book.
- Newfield Township owns and maintains Oxbow Park on M-20 at the White River. This facility features a pavilion with picnic tables, public restrooms, White River access, and a boardwalk along the river with wheelchair accessible fishing. Additionally, there is public access at Bloggett, Campbell, and Hightower lakes.

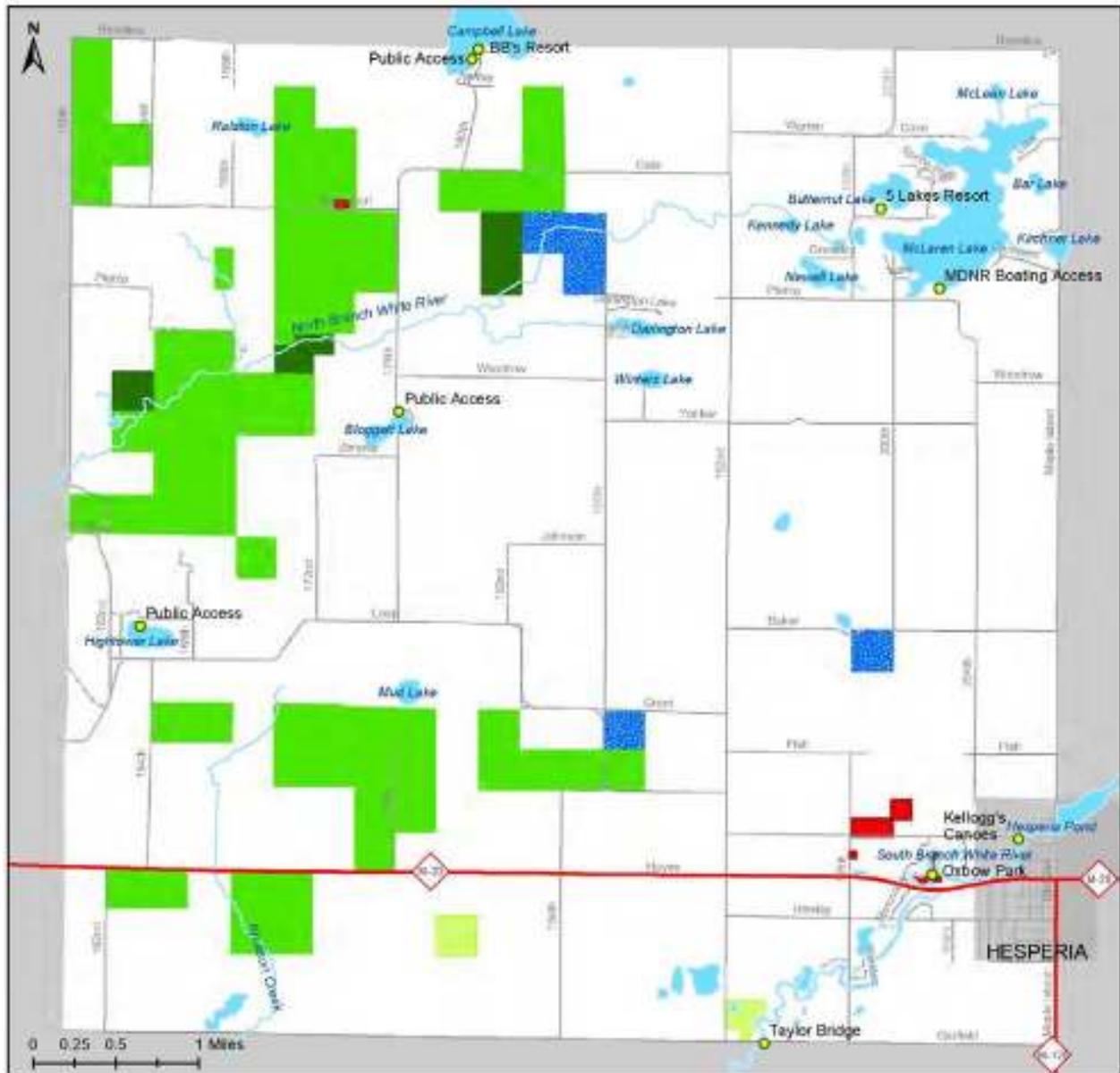


*White River access at Oxbow Park.*

- The township contains two privately owned resorts. BB's Resort on Campbell Lake offers two houses and eleven cottages for rent. Five Lakes Resort on Butternut Lake consists of six cottages with a total capacity of about 30 persons. Five Lakes also provides its guests with access to Butternut and McLaren lakes. Additionally, Kellogg's Canoes in Hesperia offers canoe and kayak rentals for use on the White River. According to the USFS, the stretch of the White River from Hesperia to Taylor Bridge (the southern border of Newfield Township) is 3.7 miles long and takes approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes to travel by canoe.

Map 3

## Newfield Township PUBLIC LANDS and RECREATION



- Recreation Points of Interest
- Hesperia Schools
- Newfield Township
- Manistee National Forest
- US Forest Service
- Michigan DNR

Map created in November 2008 by:

**WSRDC**  
WEST MICHIGAN SHORELINE  
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Data Source:  
Michigan Center for Geographic Information

Note:  
This map is intended for general planning purposes only.

**Education**

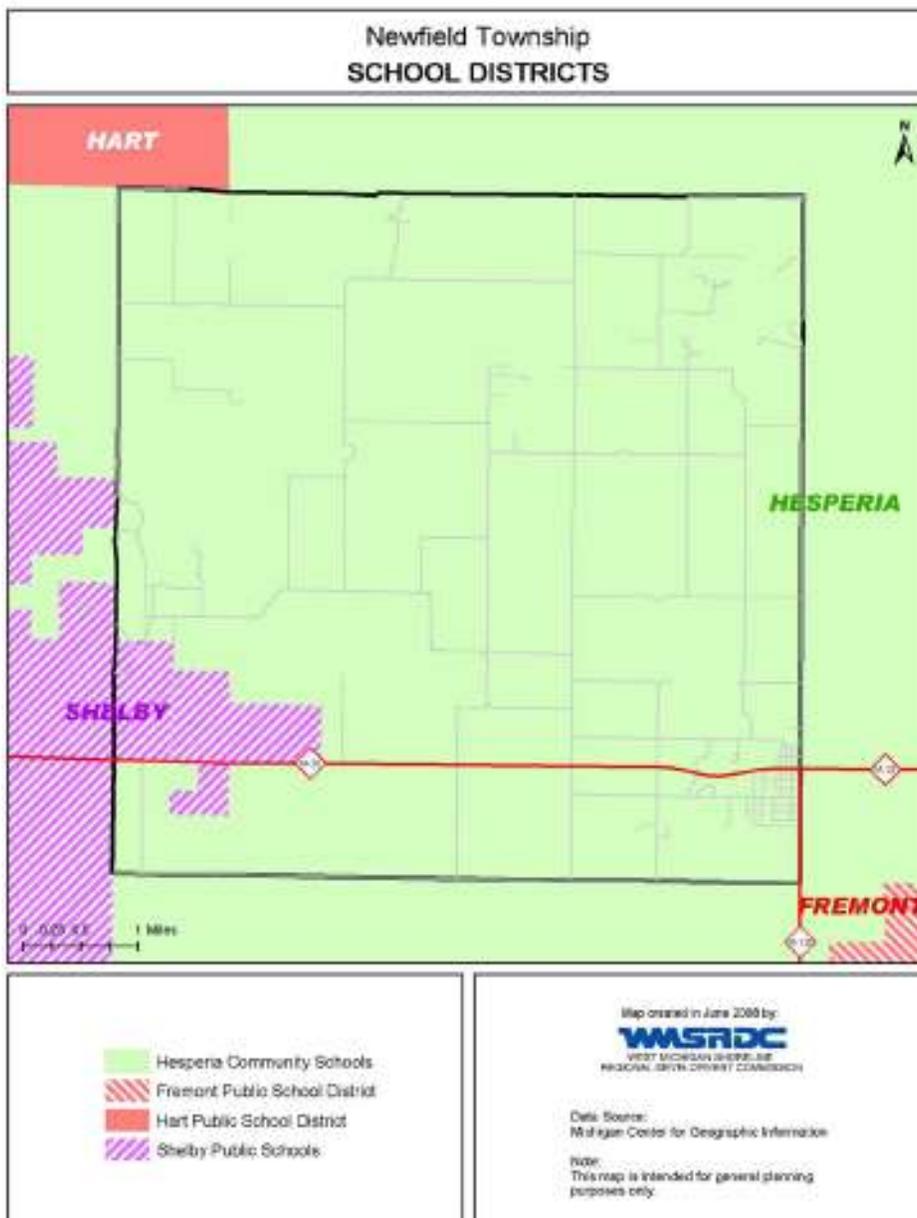
Map 4 shows that most of Newfield Township is situated within the Hesperia Community Schools district. A small portion of the township along the western reaches of highway M-20 is covered by Shelby Public Schools. Table 4 contains key statistics for the Shelby and Hesperia school districts. Other nearby school districts include Hart Public School District to the northwest and Fremont Public School District to the southeast.

**Table 4**

School Districts		
	Hesperia	Shelby
Grade Levels Offered	K – 12	Pre K – 12
# Students	1,200	1,806
# Full-Time Teachers	67	110
Student/Teacher Ratio	18.0:1	16.4:1

Source: www.homes101.net

**Map 4**



In addition to the grade schools, there are six higher education institutions within 60 miles from Newfield Township. Table 5 lists these institutions with the distances measured by driving distance from the township hall.

**Table 5**

Nearby Colleges & Universities		
Baker College	<i>Muskegon</i>	31 mi
Baker College	<i>Fremont</i>	12 mi
Muskegon Community College	<i>Muskegon</i>	31 mi
Ferris State University	<i>Big Rapids</i>	41 mi
West Shore Community College	<i>Scottville</i>	53 mi
Grand Valley State University	<i>Allendale</i>	54 mi

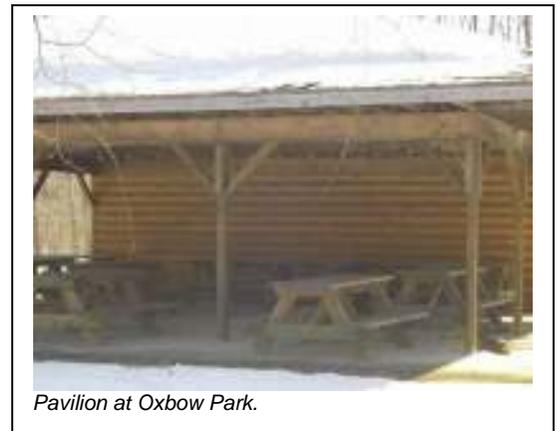
**Fire and Police**

Fire protection in Newfield Township is provided by the Hesperia Area Fire Authority. The fire station is located within Newfield Township at 8320 East Hayes Road (M-20). The Authority was established by an agreement between Greenwood, Newfield, and Denver (Newaygo County) townships on April 1, 2001 to provide fire emergency services, the equipment and personnel for fire protection, and funding in the geographic area of the townships. The Authority is governed by a seven-member Authority Board consisting of two members from each township and one member selected by the other members.

Law enforcement in the township is provided by the Oceana County Sheriff's Department in Hart, and the Michigan State Police posts in Newaygo and Hart. The Village of Hesperia has its own police department; however it generally does not provide services outside of the village limits.

**Public Facilities and Infrastructure**

As a rural community with a relatively low density of development, Newfield Township contains little along the lines of public facilities and infrastructure. The township owns and operates the Newfield Township Hall at 3890 South 198<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Hesperia, MI 49421; Oxbow Park on M-20 at the White River; and public lake access points on Bloggett and Hightower lakes. The township also has a cemetery on Loop Road and one on Buchanan Rd.



*Pavilion at Oxbow Park.*

Roads are by far the most prevalent form of infrastructure in Newfield. There are also bridges over the White River at M-20 (Hayes Road), Hawley Road, and Garfield Road (Taylor Bridge). The Oceana County Road Commission is responsible for all non-private roads and bridges within the township.

The nearest community that offers municipal water and wastewater services is the Village of Hesperia. At the time this document was written, there were no township residences outside Hesperia receiving these municipal services. Additionally, a Consumers Energy transmission line runs through the southern township sections of 31, 32, 33, and 34. Table 6 reveals private utility providers for the township.

**Table 6**

Private Utilities	
Electric Energy	- Consumers Energy - Great Lakes Energy
Natural Gas	- MichCon/DTE
Telephone	- Frontier
Cable	- Michigan Cable
Internet Service	- Frontier DSL, NCATS

## Chapter 4: Community Profile

Population characteristics; such as growth, age distribution, income, and educational level; and housing characteristics help planners make predictions based on historic patterns. A picture of the future can be painted by analyzing these factors. The following sections provide a demographic profile of Newfield Township, utilizing figures from the 2010 U.S. Census and the 2005-2009 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates. It is important to note that the statistics for Newfield Township include the Village of Hesperia. This is somewhat appropriate given the strong ties the township shares with the village.

### Population Trends

According to the 2010 Census, Newfield Township contained 2,401 persons. Between 2000 and 2010, the township experienced population change of -3.3%, compared to Oceana County's change of -1.1%. When the township's population is adjusted to omit the village, Newfield's 2010 population equaled 1,786, which was a 5.7% decrease from the similarly-adjusted population in 2000.

The Newfield Township population is expected to continue to decline, however the rate of change can only be estimated. Table 7 details the growth for the township since 1970 and projects growth in five-year increments from 2010 to 2035. Note that these projections are done on a county level (annual average growth for the previous ten years applied to current population) and then aggregated to the municipal level according to the municipality's most recent share of county population. They do not take into account variations in development trends between individual municipalities.

**Table 7**

Population Trends and Projections										
	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2015*	2020*	2025*	2030*	2035*
Newfield Twp	1,551	1,968	2,144	2,483	2,401	2,387	2,374	2,361	2,347	2,334
Oceana	17,984	22,002	22,454	26,873	26,570	26,420	26,270	26,122	25,974	25,827

Source: U.S Bureau of the Census

\*Projections calculated by WMSRDC

### Age and Gender

Table 8 illustrates that the distributions of age within Newfield Township greatly resemble those of Oceana County. The largest combined age groups in the township include the ages 25-54 (36.3% of the population) and children and teenagers (27.9%). This demonstrates a healthy population distribution. The smallest age groups in Newfield Township are ages 20-24 (5.1%), ages 75-84 (5.1%), and ages 85 and up (1.6%).

Table 9 shows that the township's population is nearly evenly divided between male (49.0%) and female (51.0%) persons. In contrast, the county has a slightly higher percentage of males (50.2%) and females (49.8%).

**Table 8**

Age Distribution				
Age	Newfield Township		Oceana County	
	number of persons	percent of persons	number of persons	percent of persons
0-4	128	5.3%	1,782	6.7%
5-9	165	6.9%	1,778	6.7%
10-14	172	7.2%	1,814	6.8%
15-19	204	8.5%	1,937	7.3%
20-24	122	5.1%	1,300	4.9%
25-34	211	8.8%	2,756	10.4%
35-44	256	10.7%	2,966	11.2%
45-54	404	16.8%	4,028	15.2%
55-59	183	7.6%	1,879	7.1%
60-64	156	5.6%	1,805	6.8%
65-74	239	10.0%	2,591	9.8%
75-84	122	5.1%	1,412	5.3%
85+	39	1.6%	522	2.0%
Total	2,401	100.0%	26,570	100%

Source: 2010 U.S Census

**Table 9**

Gender Distribution		
	Newfield Township	Oceana County
Male	1,176 (49.0%)	13,344 (50.2%)
Female	1,225 (51.0%)	13,226 (49.8%)

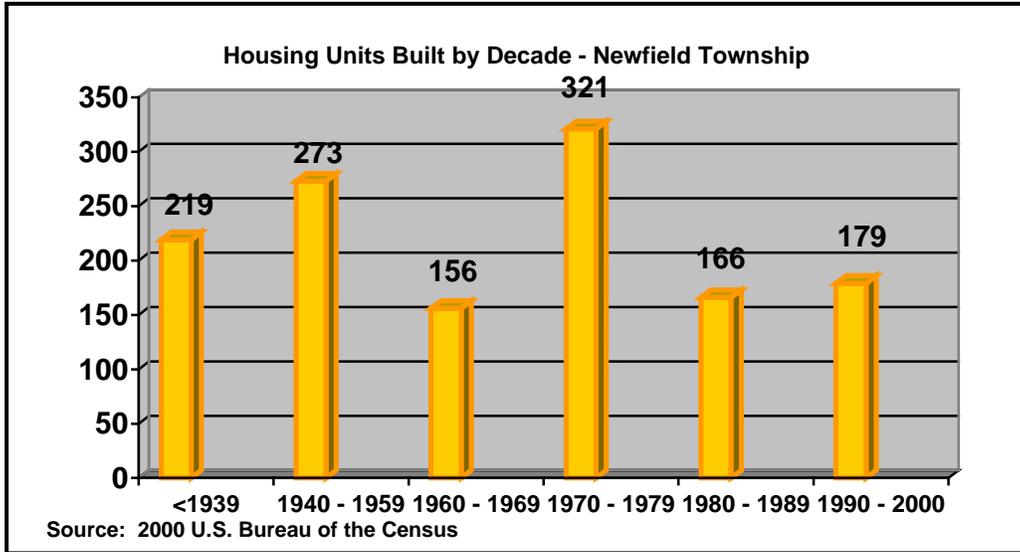
Source: 2010 U.S Census

## Housing

Housing and any significant changes in an area's housing stock have a direct impact on planning decisions. It is important to note that changing trends related to housing stock are often the first indications that important changes are taking place with the population base and land use. It is also important to note that a vital aspect of housing stock is the presence of a variety of house choices (i.e. traditional single-family homes, duplexes, and manufactured homes). Various housing types allow for affordable housing opportunities for all segments of the population.

The housing characteristics presented herein for Newfield Township are based on the 2010 U.S. Census. According to demographic information, there were 1,366 total housing units in the township in 2010. The graph below illustrates the building pattern for housing units up to the year 2000.





The decade from 1970-1979 saw the greatest increase in the number of housing units of any decade in the development of Newfield Township. Of the total housing units in 2000, over half were built since 1970 and about 14% were built since 1990. The coming decades promise to expand the housing stock as well. With a projected increase in population, the township needs to remain proactive in addressing housing issues in order to preserve its rural character, as well as to protect the environment.

According to Table 10, housing units in the township area have a higher rate of occupancy (69.3%) than the entire county (63.8%) and, consequently, a lower rate of vacancy. It is noteworthy that nearly a quarter of the housing units in Newfield Township are for seasonal, recreational or occasional use. This may be explained by the abundance of lakes and outdoor recreational opportunities that combine to create an attractive setting for a vacation home or cabin.

**Table 10**

Housing Occupancy				
	Total Units	Occupied	Vacant	Vacant for seasonal, recreational or occasional use
Newfield Township	1,366	946 (69.3%)	340 (30.7%)	322 (23.6%)
Oceana County	15,944	10,174 (63.8%)	5,770 (36.2%)	4,381 (27.5%)

Source: 2010 U.S. Census

### **Racial Composition**

Table 11 illustrates the racial distribution within Newfield Township and Oceana County. As noted in the table, the majority (92.7%) of the township residents have a white ethnic background. This concentration is more than Oceana County, which shows 83.7%.

**Table 11**

Ethnicity		
	Newfield Township	Oceana County
Total Population	2,401	26,570
White	2,225 (92.7%)	22,227 (83.7%)
Black or African American	7 (0.3%)	100 (0.4%)
American Indian or Alaska Native	12 (0.5%)	212 (0.8%)
Asian	8 (0.3%)	60 (0.2%)
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0 (0.0%)	4 (0.00%)
Other Race	0 (0.0%)	20 (0.1%)
Two or More Races	39 (1.6%)	318 (1.2%)
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)*	110 (4.6%)	3,629 (13.7%)

Source: 2010 U.S Census

### **Income and Poverty**

Table 12 identifies annual income in Newfield Township and Oceana County, while Table 13 shows income distribution. These figures show that the township and the county have very similar income distributions. Also, Newfield Township achieved slightly lower per capita income and slightly higher median family income than countywide. The township had a higher percentage of its population earning more than \$50,000 annually (40.1% versus 37.5%).

Table 14 identifies poverty statistics for Newfield and Oceana County, according to the ACS 5-year Estimates. Of the 2,401 residents in Newfield Township, about 400 persons were listed as being below the poverty level. This is equal to 16.7% of the population and is lower than the county poverty rate of 19.6%.

**Table 12**

Income (2009 inflation-adjusted)		
	Per Capita Income	Median Family Income
Newfield Township	\$17,899	\$49,318
Oceana County	\$18,183	\$46,007

Source: 2005-2009 ACS 5-Year Estimates

**Table 13**

Household Income Distribution		
	Newfield Township	Oceana County
Total Households	941	10,180
Less than \$10,000	84 (8.9%)	753 (7.4%)
\$10,000 to \$14,999	75 (8.0%)	708 (7.0%)
\$15,000 to \$24,999	110 (11.7%)	1,657 (16.3%)
\$25,000 to \$34,999	145 (15.4%)	1,402 (13.8%)
\$35,000 to \$49,999	151 (16.0%)	1,836 (18.0%)
\$50,000 to \$74,999	187 (19.9%)	2,051 (20.1%)
\$75,000 to \$99,999	121 (12.9%)	1,043 (10.2%)
\$100,000 to \$149,999	60 (6.4%)	564 (5.5%)
\$150,000 to \$199,999	8 (0.9%)	88 (0.9%)
\$200,000 or more	0 (0.0%)	78 (0.8%)

Source: 2005-2009 ACS 5-Year Estimates

**Table 14**

Poverty		
	Newfield Township	Oceana County
Entire Population	16.7%	19.6%
Under 18 years	15.4%	28.5%
18 to 64 years	17.4%	18.4%
65 years and Over	16.0%	9.0%

Source: 2005-2009 ACS 5-Year Estimates

**Educational Attainment**

Table 15 details levels of educational attainment for Newfield Township and Oceana County residents 25 years of age and over. It should be noted that 36.5% of the township’s population of 25 years and older has had some college or obtained higher education degrees, which is less than the county’s level of 44%.

**Table 15**

<b>Educational Attainment: Persons 25 Years and Over</b>		
	<b>Newfield Township</b>	<b>Oceana County</b>
Less than 9 <sup>th</sup> grade	85 (5.2%)	1,398 (7.7 %)
9 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	131 (8.1 %)	1,758 (9.7 %)
High School Diploma	817 (50.2 %)	7,049 (38.7 %)
Some College	268 (16.5 %)	4,189 (23.0 %)
Associate Degree	162 (10.0 %)	1,395 (7.7 %)
Bachelor’s Degree	103 (6.3 %)	1,499 (8.2 %)
Graduate or Professional Degree	61 (3.7 %)	926 (5.1 %)

*Source: 2005-2009 ACS 5-Year Estimates*

**Labor Force Composition**

The population of residents 16 years of age and over in Newfield Township totaled 1,943 according to the ACS 5-year Estimate. Of those individuals, 938 were employed. Almost 60% of laborers work in one of the top three industry sectors of Manufacturing (19.8%), Retail Trade (19%), and Education, Health and Social Services (18.7%). Tables 16 and 17 give additional employment distribution and labor force statistics for the township, as well as Oceana County.

**Table 16**

<b>Industry Employment: Ages 16 Years and Over</b>		
	<b>Newfield Township</b>	<b>Oceana County</b>
Total Employed	938	11,629
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining	14 (1.5%)	1,194 (10.3%)
Construction	82 (8.7%)	975 (8.4%)
Manufacturing	186 (19.8%)	2,449 (21.1%)
Wholesale trade	2 (0.2%)	248 (2.1%)
Retail trade	178 (19.0%)	1,360 (11.7%)
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	53 (5.7%)	449 (3.9%)
Information	9 (1.0%)	74 (0.6%)
Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing	49 (5.2%)	359 (3.1%)
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	33 (3.5%)	422 (3.6%)
Education, health and social services	175 (18.7%)	2,119 (18.2%)
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	57 (6.1%)	1,016 (8.9%)
Other services (except public administration)	52 (5.5%)	579 (5.0%)
Public administration	48 (5.1%)	385 (3.3%)

*Source: 2005-2009 ACS 5-Year Estimates*

**Table 17**

<b>Labor Force Composition: Ages 16 and Over</b>		
	<b>Newfield Township</b>	<b>Oceana County</b>
Total Employed	938	11,629
Private wage and salary workers	666 (71.0%)	9,291 (79.9%)
Government workers	214 (22.8%)	1,434 (12.3%)
Self-employed workers	58 (6.2%)	860 (7.4%)
Unpaid family workers	0 (0.0%)	44 (0.4%)

Source: 2005-2009 ACS 5-Year Estimates

## **Unemployment**

Table 18 identifies the total labor force and gives information on employment and unemployment for Newfield Township, Oceana County, and the State of Michigan according to the 2005-2009 ACS 5-year Estimates. The township's unemployment rate (12.9% of the civilian labor force) is more than the county's (9.3%) and the state's (5.8%).

**Table 18**

<b>Civilian Labor Force</b>			
	<b>Newfield Township</b>	<b>Oceana County</b>	<b>Michigan</b>
Civilian Labor Force	1,077	12,828	5,001,503
Employed	938 (87.1%)	11,629 (90.7%)	4,479,502 (89.6%)
Unemployed	139 (12.9%)	1,199 (9.3%)	522,001 (10.4%)

Source: 2005-2009 ACS 5-Year Estimates

## **Economic Outlook**

According to the 2005-2009 ACS 5-year Estimates, 43 of Newfield Township's 938 employed citizens worked at home, while the remaining workers experienced an average commute of 28.3 minutes. The 2000 U.S. Census revealed that commuters experienced an average travel time of 31.5 minutes. These statistics not only suggest that a significant portion of the population travels outside the township to work, but also reflect the township's status as a "bedroom community."

In light of the information presented above, it may be useful to look at recent changes in the makeup of employment for the surrounding communities. This will allow a view into the economic course of the region around Newfield Township. Table 19 contains employment estimates for the seven largest employment sectors of Oceana, Newaygo and Muskegon counties. It reveals that, although Oceana increased manufacturing jobs by over 50% between 2004 and 2006, the county still lost about 204 (2.2%) jobs overall. This trend is unique to Oceana, however, as Muskegon and Newaygo both experienced increases in total employment despite losing manufacturing jobs.

**Table 19**

<b>Major Employment Sectors: 2007 &amp; 2009</b>						
	<b>Oceana</b>		<b>Newaygo</b>		<b>Muskegon</b>	
	<b>2007</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b>Accommodation and food services</b>	1,297	<b>1,012</b>	935	<b>1,017</b>	6,625	<b>5,913</b>
<b>Construction</b>	690	<b>574</b>	1,178	<b>1,007</b>	4,183	<b>3,540</b>
<b>Farm</b>	1,184	<b>1,102</b>	1,233	<b>1,160</b>	809	<b>757</b>
<b>Government and government enterprises</b>	1,674	<b>1,744</b>	2,644	<b>2,511</b>	9,395	<b>8,974</b>
<b>Health care and social assistance</b>	498	<b>495</b>	1,602	<b>1,618</b>	12,049	<b>12,144</b>
<b>Manufacturing</b>	2,009	<b>1,536</b>	1,841	<b>1,455</b>	13,214	<b>10,390</b>
<b>Retail trade</b>	994	<b>921</b>	2,303	<b>2,168</b>	13,096	<b>12,344</b>
<b>Total Employment*</b>	10,872	<b>10,107</b>	17,263	<b>16,624</b>	84,331	<b>78,292</b>

**RED** figures show employment loss; **GREEN** figures show employment gain.

\* includes other sectors not presented above, some for which specific data is not available

Source: Regional Economic Information System

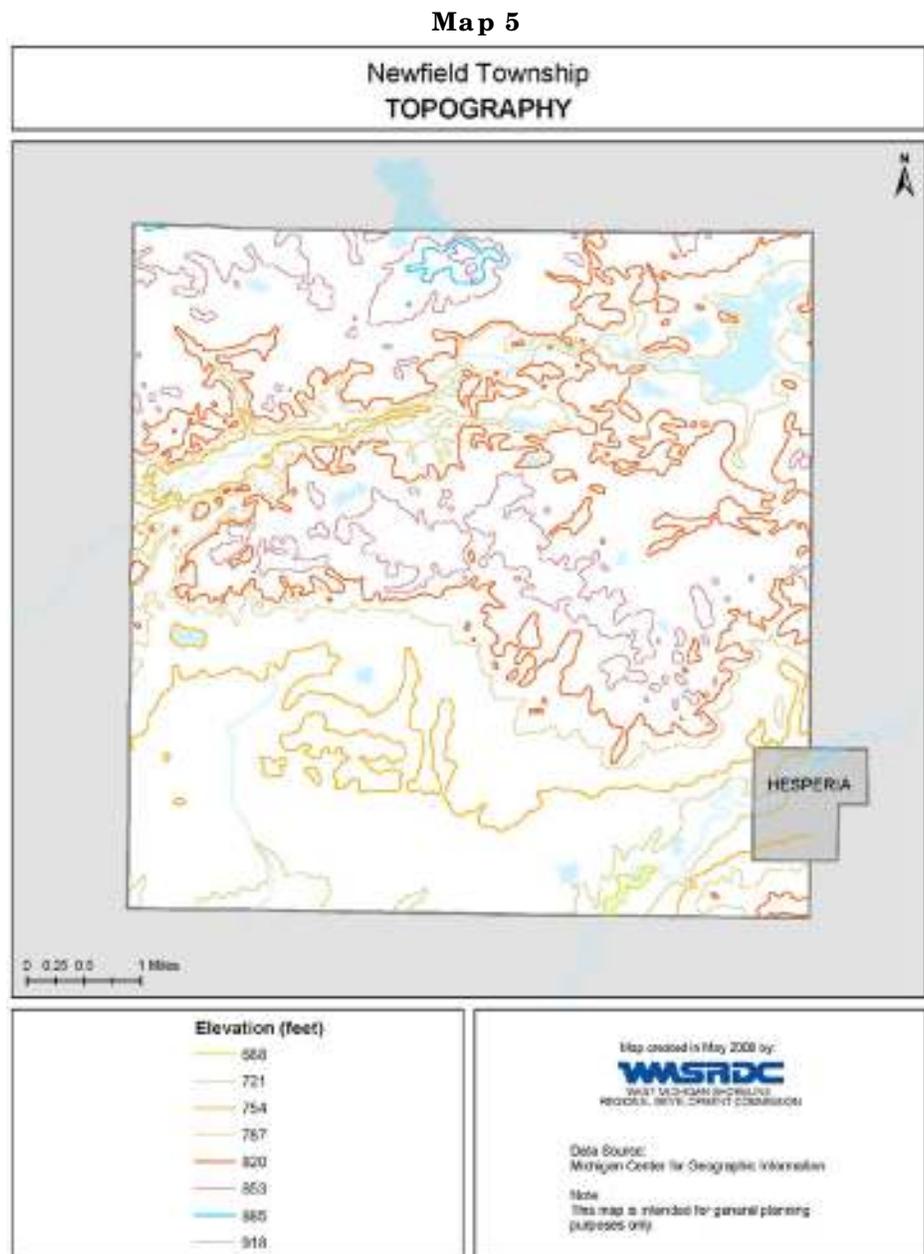
## Chapter 5: Natural Resources

Newfield Township contains an abundance of natural resources and open spaces that help exemplify its rural character. The following sections describe those resources.

### Topography

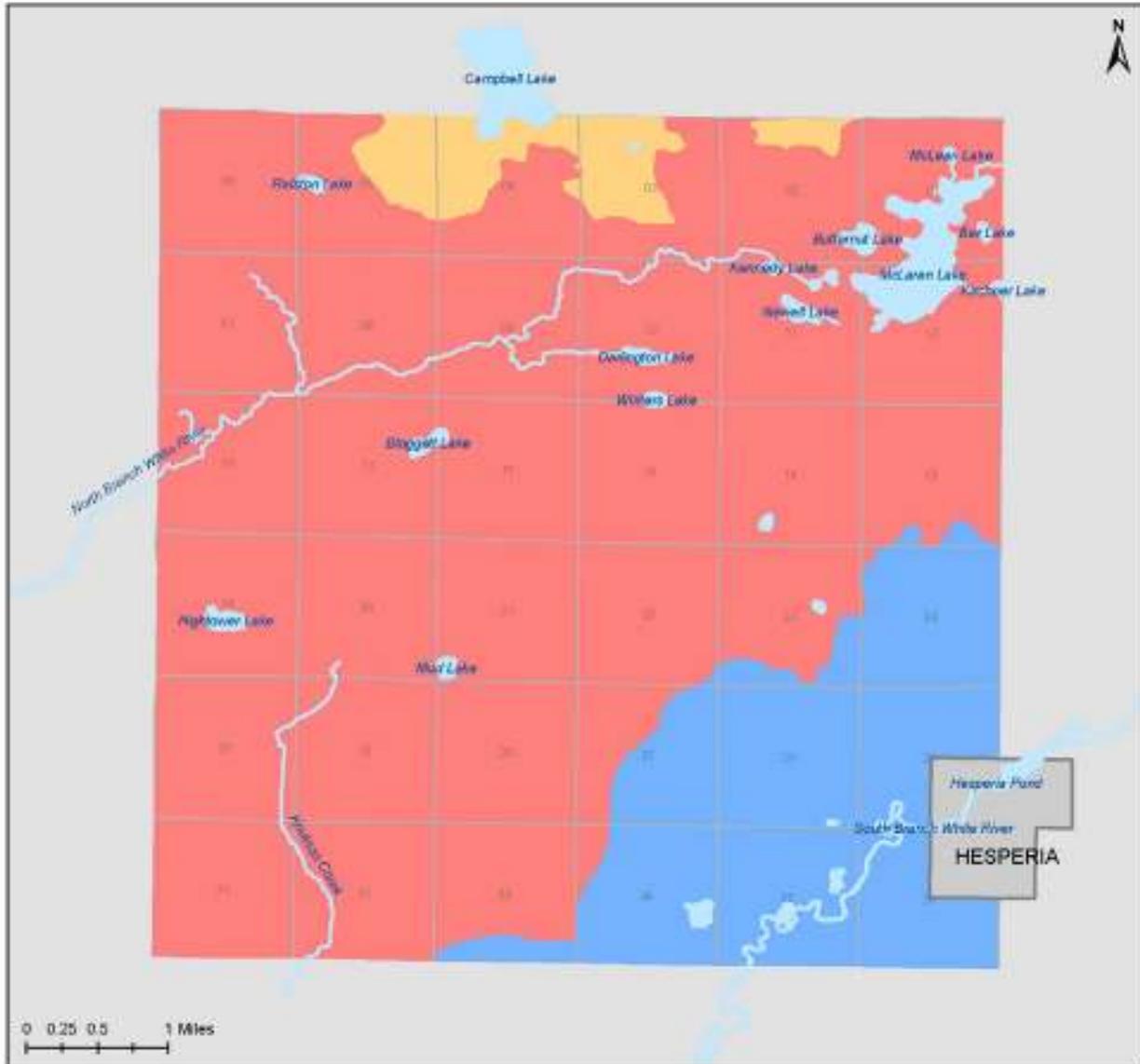
The varied topographic features found across Michigan, including Oceana County, owe their existence to the activity of glaciers. The formation, movement, and recession of glaciers shaped the landscape by moving soil, cutting rivers and depositing lakes.

The terrain of Newfield Township varies from rolling to level. The highest elevation, about 918 feet above sea level, is located near Campbell Lake in north-central Newfield Township. The lowest point, about 688 feet above sea level, is located at the White River where it exits the township at the township's southern boundary. Map 6 - Watersheds shows that most of the township drains into the North Branch of the White River. Additionally, much of the southeast quarter of the township drains into the White River South Branch, and land around Campbell Lake lies within the Pere Marquette River South Branch watershed.



Map 6

# Newfield Township WATERSHEDS



- Surface Water
- North Branch White River
- South Branch White River
- Big South Branch Pere Marquette River
- Township Sections

Map created in May 2006 by:  
**WSRDC**  
WEST MICHIGAN SHORELINE  
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Data Source:  
Michigan Center for Geographic Information

Note:  
This map is intended for general planning  
purposes only.

## Soils

Soil is a primary factor in determining where future development will occur. It is especially important in areas where there are no public water and sewer services available. The suitability of soils for developments such as roads, foundations, wells, and septic systems is critical in determining their location and intensity.

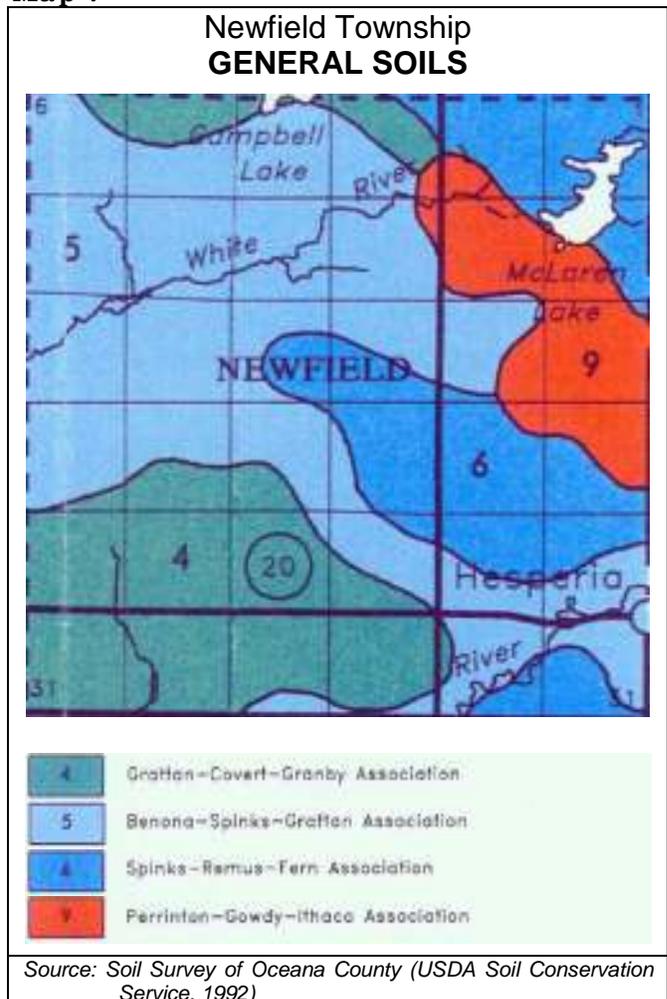
Soil surveys are a primary source of soil information. Soils in Newfield Township are described in the Soil Survey of Oceana County (USDA Soil Conservation Service, 1992). It provides information that may assist in determining soil characteristics such as the extent and location of flood-prone areas, access to aquifers, erosion and sedimentation potential, ability to accommodate site septic tanks and absorption fields, and the limitations for construction. Maps are an important component of the soil survey and are critical to the planning process because they can geographically depict areas that have development limitations based on the soil(s) present. Map 8 - Soil Limitations for Dwellings With and Without Basements provides an example of the detailed information available from the survey.

### **General Soils**

Map 7 - General Soils shows soil associations in Newfield Township. Each association is a unique landscape with a distinctive pattern of soils, relief, and drainage. The general soils map can be used to compare the suitability of large areas for general land uses such as building site development, farming, recreational development, and other uses. This may be helpful for broad land use planning, however is not suitable for selecting a site; such as the location of a farm, road, or other development; for a specific use because of its small scale.

The parts of Newfield Township that are suited to building site development consist of the less sloping soils in the Benona-Spinks-Grattan and Spinks-Remus-Fern associations and the well drained soils in the Perrinton-Gowdy-Ithaca association. Some of these soils are considered to be prime farmland. The seasonally high water table in most areas of the Grattan-Covert-Granby association and the slope of the rolling to very steep soils in the Benona-Spinks-Grattan and Spinks-Remus-Fern associations severely limit building site development. The Spinks-Remus-Fern and Perrinton-Gowdy-Ithaca associations are farmed. Much of the township is well suited to woodland. The

**Map 7**



largest area of woodland is in the Benona-Spinks-Grattan association. Detailed descriptions of the soil associations illustrated on Map 7 have been included in Appendix B.

### **Septic Suitability**

Soil is not considered to be suitable for septic systems if it has excessively high or low permeability, if the slope is excessive, or if the water table is too close to the surface. The permeability and coarseness of soil has a direct impact on its ability to properly filter toxins (i.e. septic material) as they pass through the soil. Much of Newfield Township is covered by highly permeable sandy soils. This is cause for concern because of their excessive percolation capability and subsequent potential for groundwater pollution.

Soils with a high flood frequency are also not generally considered to be adequate locations for septic systems. As the ground becomes saturated and floods, the toxins may be removed from septic tanks and flow into groundwater or surface water supplies. Quite often the waste deposited in septic systems is much more hazardous than human waste alone because materials such as household cleaners, bacteria, and other toxic nuisances may be present as well. Frequently flooded soils are widely scattered throughout the township and most commonly located near surface water features.

In order to reduce the amount of pollution released from septic tanks, citizens should refrain from the disposal of medicines and household chemicals, such as ammonia, bleach or other hazardous substances, into the septic system. Septic tank maintenance should also be addressed on a regular schedule by adding necessary chemicals, cleaning, and using only to capacity. Additionally, a septic system should be emptied at a minimum of once every seven years but preferably every other year.

Access to municipal sewage systems is the principle alternative to septic usage. These systems have more efficient capabilities to treat wastewater before it is discharged into the environment. The treatment process often includes aeration, sedimentation, exposure to sunlight, which releases many types of contaminants, and chemical treatment. While all Newfield Township residences rely on individual septic tanks and drain fields, the neighboring community of Hesperia operates a wastewater system within its municipal boundaries. The Hesperia service area, however, does not extend beyond the village limits or to the north and west across the White River. Given the limited access to a municipal sewer system within Newfield Township, the suitability of the soil for septic tanks is critically important to maintaining ground and surface water quality.

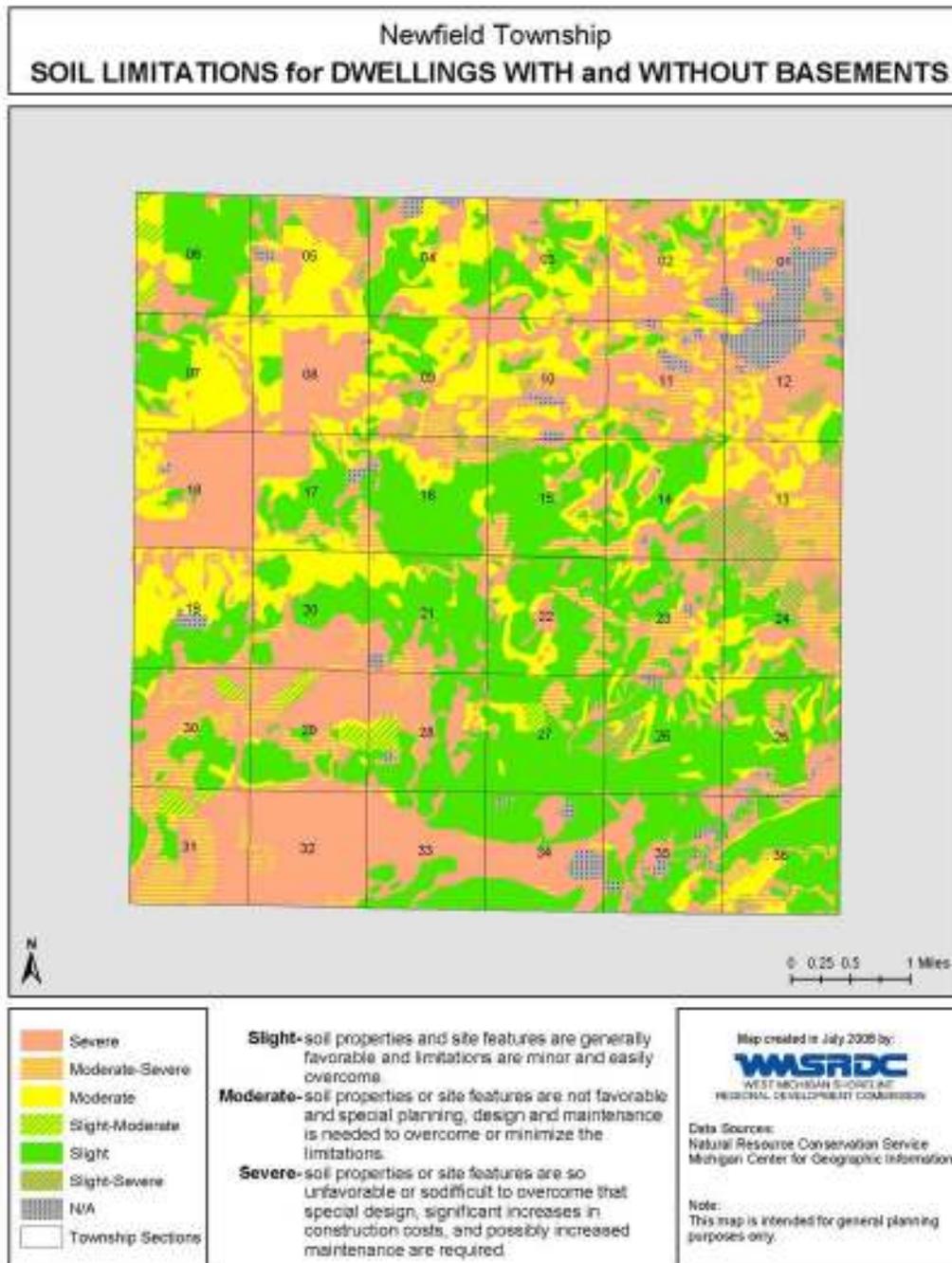
### **Soil Erosion**

Soil information presented earlier in this section has indicated the presence of sandy soils, which tend to be susceptible to erosion. However, the prevalence of forests and other natural land cover in the township greatly reduces the erosion potential. Natural cover acts as a barrier to erosion in that trees, grasses, forest litter and stones hold the soil in place, even during torrential rainfall. Removal of this cover could expose the soil to its erosion potential. In addition, changes in development patterns often create substantial changes in the ratio of permeable surfaces in an area. Even in a heavily forested area, addition of asphalt, pavement, and roofs can make a substantial difference. Table 20 highlights important considerations for development with respect to erosion.

**Table 20**

Soil Erosion Characteristics	
1	The amount of runoff generated is dependent upon the type of soil and the kind of land use prevalent in any given area.
2	Natural areas, where vegetation remains intact, are almost always better-equipped to absorb and retain water than are areas in either agricultural or urban use.
3	Those areas best able to absorb and retain rainfall include forests and other areas of dense vegetation.
4	Those areas which have the greatest impact on the amount of runoff created typically include urban lands with high percentages of impervious surfaces, and agricultural lands typically in row crops.

**Map 8**



**Clim a te**

Newfield Township is located in an area of the United States which experiences unique and diverse climatic conditions due to its proximity to Lake Michigan. Oceana County is classified as having “quasi-marine” (when westerly winds pass over Lake Michigan) and “continental” climates (when the winds become easterly or southeasterly and pass over a large expanse of land).

Because Newfield Township is located along the eastern reaches of Oceana County, inland from Lake Michigan, its climate is more “continental” than the western areas of the county. This translates into slightly warmer maximum summer temperatures and slightly cooler winter minimum temperatures. Table 21 shows notable climatic data from the period 1951-1980, including temperature and precipitation averages and records for the Village of Hesperia.

**Table 21**

Temperature and Precipitation Summary for Hesperia for the 30-Year Period Between 1951 and 1980								
Month	Average Daily Temperatures (Fahrenheit)			Average Monthly Precipitation (Inches)				Snowfall  maximum month amount
	maximum	minimum	mean	mean	Liquid Equivalent			
					mean # of days with at least:			
.1"	.25"	.5"						
January	28.6	12.7	20.6	2.40	7	3	1	48.1 (1979)
February	31.6	12.5	22.0	1.63	5	2	>1/2	28.0 (1958)
March	41.2	21.3	31.2	2.30	6	3	1	28.0 (1965)
April	56.4	32.9	44.6	3.34	7	4	2	12.0 (1965)
May	69.0	42.5	55.7	2.70	6	4	2	T (1979)
June	78.2	51.8	65.0	3.05	6	4	2	0.0
July	82.1	56.1	69.1	2.81	6	4	2	0.0
August	80.1	54.7	67.4	3.79	6	4	2	0.0
September	72.2	47.6	59.9	3.22	6	4	2	0.0
October	60.7	38.3	49.5	3.05	7	4	2	3.0 (1962)
November	45.7	29.0	37.3	2.78	8	4	2	17.0 (1966)
December	33.4	18.6	26.0	2.50	7	3	1	40.0 (1968)
<b>Annual Averages</b>	<b>56.6</b>	<b>34.8</b>	<b>45.7</b>	<b>33.57</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>48.1 (1979)</b>

Source: Michigan State Climatologist's Office. <http://climate.geo.msu.edu/stations/3769/>. 1-8-07.

The proximity of Lake Michigan (about 20 miles to the west of Newfield Township) causes a meteorological phenomenon called lake effect snow. During the winter months, the relatively warm waters of the lake provide moisture for weather fronts as they cross over from Wisconsin. When these fronts reach the cooler land of Michigan, the moisture condenses and falls as snow. Lake effect snows can be serious and hazardous weather events; however, their actual duration and severity can vary greatly. Winter weather, often in the form of lake effect snow, will annually affect Newfield Township through treacherous driving conditions, cost of snow removal, and infrastructure failures. Rural areas often experience the worst road conditions during the winter because their roads are the last to be cleared and salted.

In addition to severe winter weather, Newfield Township may experience severe thunderstorms and high wind. According to FEMA's "Wind Zones in the United States" map, Newfield Township is located in Zone IV, where winds of up to 250 miles per hour are possible. These winds may be produced by strong weather systems, tornadoes, or thunderstorms. The NOAA estimates that the township should experience around 30-40 thunderstorm days per year. Thunderstorms primarily occur during the warm months between spring and fall, but may occur any time of the year.

### **Prime Forest Lands**

Most of Newfield Township is blanketed by natural vegetation and forests. The western half of the township is dominated by forests, while agricultural activities are more common over the eastern half. More than three-quarters of the township lies within the boundary of the Manistee-Huron National Forest. According to the 2006 Plat Book of Oceana County, published by Farm & Home Publishers, about 2,573 acres of land belong to the Manistee-Huron National Forest, 165 acres belong to the National Forest Service, and 67 acres are owned by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Given the vast amount of undeveloped and forested land, Newfield Township faces an increased threat of wildfire. Most Michigan wildfires occur close to where people live and recreate, which puts people, property, and the environment at risk. Development in and around rural forested areas often increases the potential for loss of life and property from wildfires, since most are caused by human activities such as outdoor burning, and can also create fire-fighting challenges.

Residents should be encouraged to take actions to properly protect their property. For example, residents can create "defensible space" around their homes. This entails clearing a radius of about 30 feet of brush and any other fire fuel to prevent fire damage to structures and private property. Common development practices include setting structures back from slopes (slopes allow fires to spread faster than flat terrain) and assuring accessibility and adequate water supply for fire-fighters.

### **Water Resources**

Groundwater, surface water, and wetlands located within Newfield Township are valuable assets. Essential to the character of the township, they provide diverse natural habitats, recreation opportunities, and desirable places to live. These attributes must be protected in order to ensure future prosperity.

Notable water features within the township include the White River, headwaters of the White River North Branch, Blodgett Lake, Butternut Lake, Campbell Lake, Darlington Lake, Hightower Lake, McLaren Lake, and Newell Lake. The largest body of water is McLaren Lake, which covers approximately 261 acres.



All water features must be properly managed and protected to prevent detriment to the environment. Eutrophication, erosion, and polluted runoff are just a few examples of how water systems can be degraded. Potential sources for polluted runoff in Newfield Township include roads, homes (including lawn care measures, sewage, etc.), and erosion. Increased siltation and eutrophication are examples of potential effects that could result from contaminated runoff or erosion. Proactive precautionary measures must be explored constantly to protect surface water resources and ensure their preservation.



*Bald eagle at McLaren Lake*

Another important surface water resource is wetland. Commonly known as marshes or swamps, wetlands are lands that are wet for most of the year. Wetlands have the capacity to perform many functions such as, provide important and diverse habitats, protect from flooding, and filter water runoff. This filtering process includes removing many toxic elements from precipitation or surface water as it seeps into the ground and eventually into the groundwater supply.



*Campbell Lake*

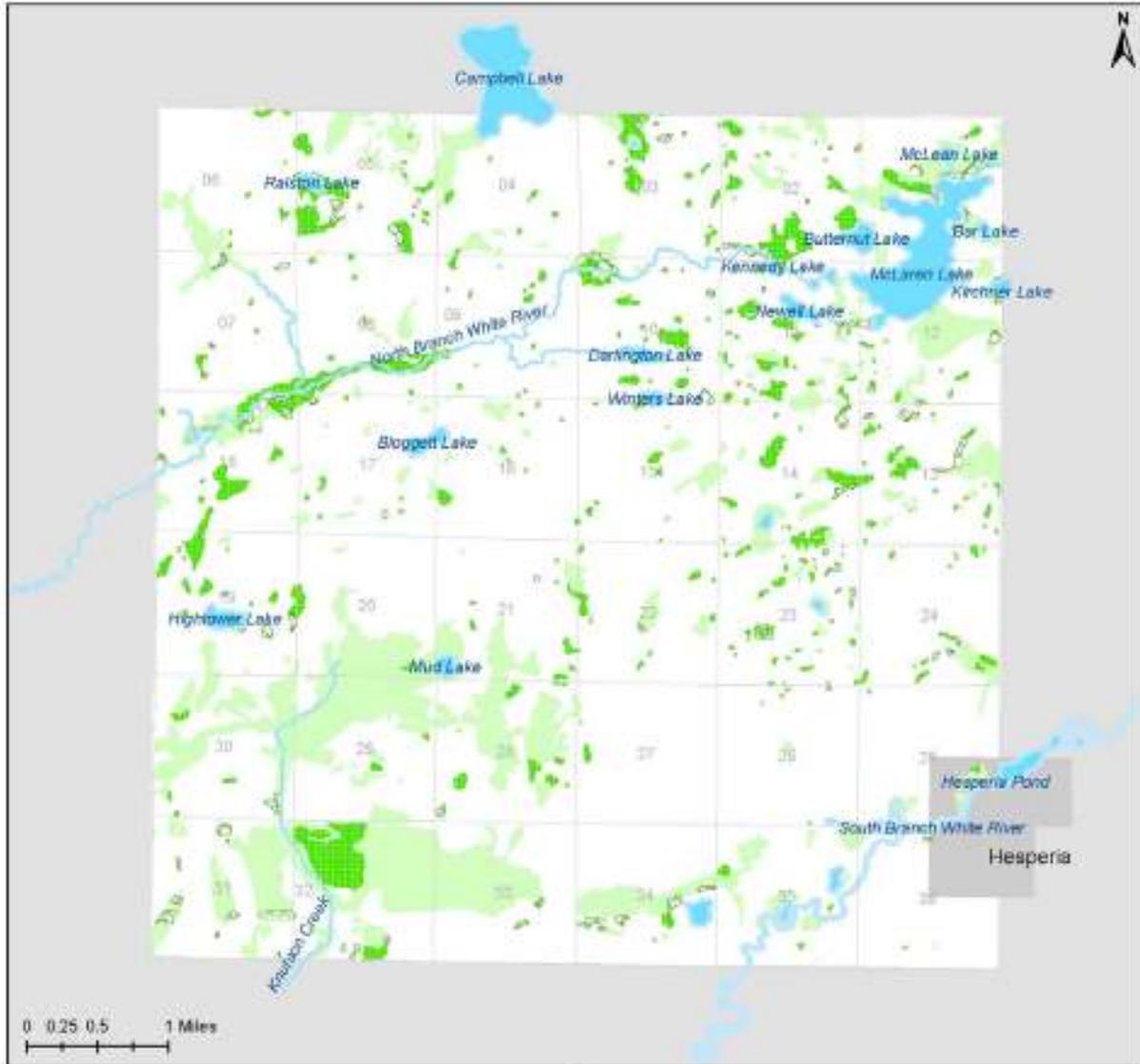
Wetlands can be found scattered throughout Newfield Township. The largest areas of wetlands are located along Knudson Creek, the North Branch of the White River, and around McLaren Lake.



*White River at Oxbow Park*

Map 9

### Newfield Township WATER and WETLAND FEATURES



Map created in May 2008 by:  
**WASRDC**  
WEST MICHIGAN SHORELINE  
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Data Source:  
Michigan Center for Geographic Information

Note:  
This map is intended for general planning  
purposes only.

**Flood Frequency**

Floods are caused when the ground becomes saturated beyond its capacity to absorb any more water or when precipitation is so intense that the ground cannot absorb it quickly enough. The less permeable the soil and the higher the water table, the more susceptible an area is to flooding.

Newfield Township has participated in the National Flood Insurance Program’s (NFIP) Regular Program since 1986. This means that a Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) is in effect and that full limits of flood insurance coverage are available to the community. Between September 1, 1986 and April 30, 2008, two reported flood losses in the township have resulted in \$36,442.14 in flood insurance payments. As of May 31, 2008 the township had seven flood insurance policies in-force worth \$735,200.

While isolated flooding is possible virtually anywhere in the township, it is most likely to occur in low-lying areas and near bodies of water. The NFIP FIRM for Newfield Township reveals “ZONE A” areas along the White River. This zone is defined by FEMA as the flood insurance rate zone that corresponds to the 100-year floodplains that are determined in the (community’s) Flood Insurance Study by approximate methods. While mandatory flood insurance purchase requirements apply only within this zone of the township, flood insurance is available to all township residents thanks to its participation in the NFIP.

The 100-year floodplain is an area that has a one percent chance, on average, of being equaled or exceeded in any year. It does not mean that a flood of this size only happens every 100 years; such a flood could occur more than once in a 12-month period. The 100-year flood is also referred to as the *base flood* and is the standard adopted by the NFIP. It represents a compromise between minor floods and the greatest flood likely to occur.

Flooding often transmits contaminants from streets, parking lots, soils, etc., into surface water sources. In the more developed part of the township near the Village of Hesperia the presence of parking lots, high traffic roads, and other impervious structures increase risk of surface water contamination in the White River.

***What Are the Odds of Being Flooded?***

The term “100-year flood” has caused much confusion for people not familiar with statistics. Another way to look at flood risk is to think of the odds that a 100-year flood will happen sometime during the life of a 30-year mortgage – a 26% chance for a structure located in the Special Flood Hazard Area.

<b>Chance of Flooding Over a Period of Years</b>				
<b>Time Period</b>	<b>10-year flood</b>	<b>25-year flood</b>	<b>50-year flood</b>	<b>100-year flood</b>
1 year	10%	4%	2%	1%
10 years	65%	34%	18%	10%
20 years	88%	56%	33%	18%
30 years	96%	71%	45%	26%
50 years	99%	87%	64%	39%

Even these numbers do not convey the true flood risk because they focus on the larger, less frequent floods. If a house is low enough, it may be subject to the 10- or 25-year flood. During a 30-year mortgage, it may have a 26% chance of being hit by the 100-year flood, but the odds are 96% (nearly guaranteed) that it will be hit by a 10-year flood. Compare those odds to the 1-2% chance that the house will catch fire during the same 30-year mortgage.

*Source: FEMA*

The potential for any toxic substance to enter into the water supply through the process of surface flooding does exist in the township. However, it is not a major concern because development is relatively light within the township's flood-prone locations. Additionally, the potential for groundwater contamination from the flooding of (and subsequent failure of) septic systems along the White River is a possible threat because there are no public utilities available outside of the Village of Hesperia.

**Map 10**



## Chapter 6: Existing Land Uses and Cover

Newfield Township’s rural nature is reflected by its land use and land cover, which is illustrated on Map 10 – Land Cover circa 1992. While some land cover is likely to have changed since 1992, the overall character of the area has remained. It is important to note that between 1990 and 2000, the township experienced a 15.8% population increase. This is less than the county’s increase of 19.7% over the same period.

Map 10 reveals that a vast majority of the township is either forested or covered with natural growth. Agricultural (planted/cultivated) fields are somewhat common in the eastern half of the township, while forests dominate the western half. There are also wetlands sprinkled throughout the landscape, especially near surface water features.

**Table 22**

Land Cover Distribution 1992				
Category		Acres	Mi <sup>2</sup>	%
Development		515.979	0.806	2.26%
Planted/Cultivated		5070.557	7.923	22.21%
Herbaceous Upland		2492.400	3.894	10.92%
Shrubland		116.834	0.183	0.51%
Forest		10947.699	17.106	47.95%
Wetland		3269.902	5.109	14.32%
Water		417.029	0.652	1.83%
Barren		0.087	0.0001	0.00%

*Statistics derived from National Land Cover Dataset (USGS, 1992) data obtained from the Michigan Center for Geographic Information*

The majority of the developed land is confined to the southeastern corner of the township near Hesperia and M-20, and also around the various lakes that pepper the township’s landscape. This development is primarily residential with some commercial. Of the 1,322 housing units in the township in 2000, 11.8% (156) were built between 1990 and 2000.

Map 10 – Land Cover circa 1992, was derived from the National Land Cover Dataset (NLCD) published by the United States Geological Survey (USGS) in 1999. The data represents conditions in the early 1990's and is displayed on the map by 30-meter pixel detail. The USGS states that this data is most accurate when viewed at the state or multi-state level (rather than the township level). Therefore, it is important to note that this map is very general and should not be consulted for site-specific land cover analysis. This map does, however, accurately reveal that much of the area is dominated by natural land cover, and that the more developed portions of the area are located primarily in the southeast along highway M-20. Definitions of the NLCD Land Cover Classifications are listed below.

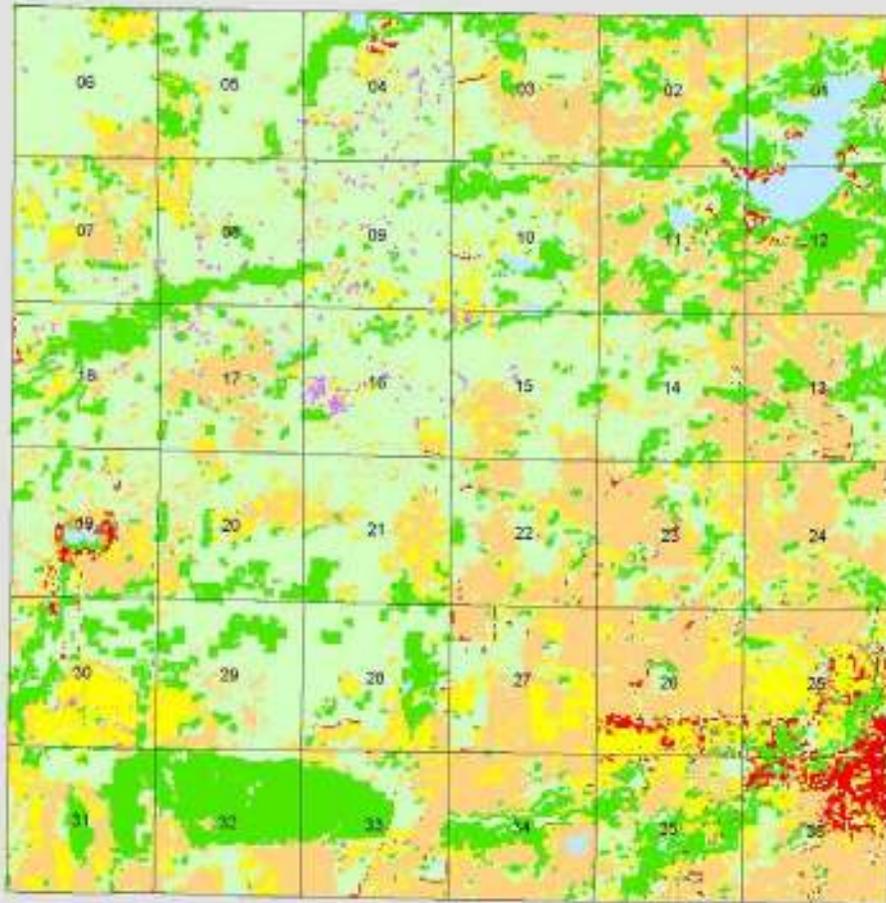
**Table 23**

<b>NLCD Land Cover Classification Definitions</b>	
<b>Developed</b>	Areas characterized by high percentage (approximately 30% or greater) of constructed material (e.g. asphalt, concrete, buildings, etc.).
<b>Herbaceous Upland</b>	Upland areas characterized by natural or semi-natural herbaceous vegetation; herbaceous vegetation accounts for 75-100 percent of the cover.
<b>Herbaceous Planted/Cultivated</b>	Areas characterized by herbaceous vegetation that has been planted or is intensively managed for the production of food, feed, or fiber; or is maintained in developed settings for specific purposes. Herbaceous vegetation accounts for 75-100 percent of the cover.
<b>Shrubland</b>	Areas characterized by natural or semi-natural woody vegetations with aerial stems, generally less than 6 meters tall with individuals or clumps not touching to interlocking. Both evergreen and deciduous species of true shrubs, young trees, and trees or shrubs that are small or stunted because of environmental conditions.
<b>Vegetated/ Natural Forest Upland</b>	Areas characterized by tree cover (natural or semi-natural woody vegetation, generally greater than 6 meters tall); Tree canopy accounts for 25 to 100 percent of the cover.
<b>Wetlands</b>	Areas where the soil or substrate is periodically saturated with or covered with water.
<b>Barren</b>	Areas characterized by bare rock, gravel, sand, silt, clay, or other earthen material, with little or no green vegetation present regardless of its inherent ability to support life. Vegetation, if present, is more widely spaced and scrubby than that in the green vegetated categories; lichen cover may be extensive.

*Source: National Land Cover Dataset (USGS, 1992)*

Map 11

Newfield Township  
LAND COVER circa 1992



0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

-  Developed
-  Herbaceous Planted/ Cultivated
-  Herbaceous Upland
-  Shrubland
-  Vegetated; Natural Forest Upland
-  Wetland
-  Open Water
-  Barren
-  Township Sections

Map created in July 2008 by:  
**WMSRDC**  
WEST MICHIGAN SHORELINE  
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Data Source:  
National Land Cover Dataset (USGS, 1992)

Note:  
This map is intended for general planning  
purposes only.

## Chapter 7: Development Strategy

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One must obtain a thorough understanding of a community in order to establish an appropriate development strategy for its future. The previous chapters of this document describe the township's history, demographics, infrastructure, and physical geography. However, one critical component to the analysis of Newfield Township has yet to be addressed: public opinion. It is described in the "Township Visions" section below. The information presented therein is then synthesized with the information from previous chapters of this document to form the final section of this chapter, "Goals and Objectives."

### Township Visions

In order to develop an effective master plan, the needs and desires of the citizens must be carefully considered. To help develop the visions and goals included in this chapter, the following efforts were made to seek public input from township residents.

A special public meeting was held at the township hall on June 10, 2008 at 7:00 PM in order to gather input from interested citizens regarding the development of the Newfield Township Master Plan and the future direction of the township. A total of 42 people attended the meeting. This exceptional turnout can be partly attributed to actions taken by a number of concerned township citizens who volunteered their time to organize a free community picnic, which preceded the meeting. The picnic was made possible through generous donations by local businesses and individuals. In addition to the picnic, township officials published a notice of this hearing in the Oceana Herald-Journal and promoted the hearing at the township's spring trash day.

During the meeting, a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis exercise was conducted by staff from WMSRDC. In addition, a total of twenty-three citizens completed and submitted public input forms, which were distributed by township officials prior to June 10. Attendees of the meeting were divided into eight groups and each group was asked to discuss and list strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats facing Newfield Township. Each group subsequently reported their results to the entire room. These responses were recorded and combined into the "Newfield Township SWOT Analysis Report" which has been included in Appendix C of this plan.

A **SWOT Analysis** is a highly effective method of identifying **Strengths** and **Weaknesses** (existing conditions) as well as **Opportunities** and **Threats** (future conditions). This kind of exercise assists in the process of identifying and focusing on important issues within a community.

The SWOT activity revealed a number of issues facing the township and produced many alternative solutions to address those issues. For example, concern was expressed about the flight of youth and young adults from within the community. Therefore, the township will be challenged with providing a desirable community environment that retains and attracts youth and young adults, while concurrently maintaining and protecting its rural character. Additionally, concerns about a lack of employment opportunities within the community will present similar challenges. Input such as this provided valuable Newfield Township perspectives, and strongly influenced the Goals and Objectives found in the following section.

## **Goals and Objectives**

The following goals and objectives are intended to describe a desirable end state or condition of the township within the next 20 to 25 years. They are intentionally general but are all attainable through a proactive and collaborative community effort. The objectives tend to be more specific and may be viewed as milestones used in the process to achieve the larger goal. Although the goals and objectives were not listed in a significant order, they have been organized under the following six subject areas: Natural Resources & Environment; Local Economy; Area Infrastructure; Services, Safety & Quality of Life; Recreational Opportunities; and Local Government & Civic Involvement.

### **Natural Resources & Environment**

**GOAL:** Strive to preserve and protect the unique quality of natural resources and environmental assets found in Newfield Township.

- Work with property owners, as well as local, state, and federal environmental groups, to steward the cherished rivers and lakes in Newfield Township. Where necessary, help establish local environmental groups to assist in the effort.
- Establish best land use practices that will maintain the township's natural beauty and open space, as well as protect the abundant wildlife.
- Coordinate efforts with local farmers, Oceana County, as well as state and federal agencies to establish farmland protection opportunities and incentives to maintain the township's agricultural base.
- Establish a relationship with local, state, and federal environmental agencies to protect against water pollution, as well as weeds and invasive species in the township's lakes and rivers, in addition to maintaining water quality standards.
- Continually work with state and federal agencies regarding the maintenance of the township's treasured forestlands.

### **Local Economy**

**GOAL:** Promote economic development that encourages employment opportunities, business attraction, workforce training, and entrepreneurialism within the area.

- Create an inviting atmosphere to attract small business and industry to the area through partnerships with the Village of Hesperia, Oceana County Economic Development Corporation, and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation.
- Continue a relationship with the Village of Hesperia and the Oceana County Economic Development Corporation to increase employment opportunities in the area.

- Encourage partnerships with Hesperia Public Schools, Muskegon Community College, and West Shore Community College to continually train and educate the local workforce.
- Promote the advantages of entrepreneurial training and education offered within the area.

## Area Infrastructure

**GOAL:** Continually strive to improve the area's infrastructure.

- Create a working relationship with the Oceana County Road Commission to assist in the repair and maintenance of the roads in Newfield Township.
- Develop a strategy with the Oceana County Road Commission to replace and improve the signage of roads within the township.
- Create a strategy to continually work with local utilities in order to improve access to high speed internet service, cell phone service, and cable television service.
- Support the Council on Aging busses for seniors.

## Services, Safety & Quality of Life

**GOAL:** Maintain a strong sense of community and high quality of life in Newfield Township.

- Continually work with and promote the community assets of the Hesperia Community Library and Hesperia School District.
- Support the established emergency services assets of the Newfield area including the County and Village Police, Hesperia Area Fire Department and Ambulance services.
- Establish and promote a senior center for local residents to utilize.
- Encourage the development of affordable homes within Newfield Township.
- Encourage residents to promote a sense of community pride through the cleanup and maintenance of their homes and property.
- Establish development standards that will maintain the areas small town atmosphere.
- Assist in the promotion of local festivals and community activities.
- Support the work and assistance of area churches in the community.

## Recreational Opportunities

**GOAL:** Encourage and promote the abundant recreational opportunities found in Newfield Township.

- Explore opportunities to develop a youth athletic field/complex within the township.
- Establish relationships with area convention and visitors bureaus in addition to other local and state tourism agencies in order to promote the abundant recreational assets found in Newfield Township including fishing, canoeing, and hunting.
- Encourage the development of camping facilities as well as hiking and biking trails within the township.
- Develop a community recreation plan to identify recreational goals and objectives for Newfield Township.
- Promote the recreational opportunities available at Oxbow Park.

## Local Government & Civic Involvement

**GOAL:** Strive to sustain a strong proactive and community oriented township government structure.

- Continually encourage and provide opportunities for recycling activities within the township.
- Develop and enforce a reasonable junk ordinance for Newfield Township.
- Encourage community awareness and communication within the township by creating a Newfield Township Newsletter.
- Create a platform to encourage intergovernmental cooperation and local government collaboration within the area.
- Maintain the coordination of the Newfield Township bi-annual Clean Up/Junk Day.
- Encourage the establishment or coordination of a volunteer community beautification day.
- Explore the possibility of developing a Habitat for Humanity project within the township or coordinating volunteer home improvement assistance to residents in need.

# Chapter 8: Implementation

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## Future Land Use

A future land use map requires a synthesis of all the information included in a master plan and results in a map that generally depicts the various types of recommended land uses and their locations in the community. The map is accompanied by text explaining the “district” or “categories” used on the map. These “categories” describe the character of the land use as well as their relation, if any, to the zoning districts dictated by the Newfield Township Zoning Ordinance.

A master plan and a zoning ordinance are separate, yet closely related. The master plan and future land use map are designed to provide the community with a glimpse of where they desire the community to head, and a zoning ordinance and map provide the means to arrive at this point. The future land use map should not be confused with the zoning map, which is a current mechanism for shaping development. The future land use map is intended to serve as a guide for land use decisions over a longer period of time.

A zoning ordinance is the legal arm of a master plan. It is the most frequently used and effective regulatory tool to implement a master plan, as it regulates land use. Changes to a zoning ordinance or zoning map are the primary tools available to change the regulations affecting land or how the land may be used. The master plan and map can be utilized to guide what zoning changes will occur and where they will occur. For example, rezoning requests are often required to be consistent with the master plan’s designations as they identify the community’s desires for the future.

The word “district” is often used in both kinds of documents; however, the term must be used carefully. On the one hand, using similar terms for the various land use designations is one way to demonstrate the relationship between the two documents, and it helps to avoid confusion and translation difficulties. On the other hand, it is important to realize that a future land use map and a zoning map are NOT necessarily the same thing.

The use of a term such as “high density residential” does not necessarily translate into specific numbers in terms of lot sizes and other elements of zoning. In some cases, a designated district on a future land use map might not “convert” into a particular zoning district at all, but rather should be utilized as a philosophical guide for the flexible interpretation of other zones. However, future land use map categories may generally correspond to zoning districts with some overlap to allow for site conditions.

With assistance from a special Newfield Township planning committee, ten general future land use categories have been identified for the township. These districts were developed as a result of the analysis of current land uses, physical and environmental suitability, the existence of or ability to provide services, and compatibility with goals and objectives identified in the plan. These land uses include:

- Civic & Institutional
- Cluster Housing
- Commercial
- Commercial Entertainment
- Light Industrial
- Mobile Home
- Neighborhood Residential
- Open Space Conservation
- Park/Public Access
- Rural

## **Future Land Use Category Descriptions**

### **Civic & Institutional**

The Civic & Institutional category includes facilities dedicated to things such as health care, government, education, transportation, and emergency services (fire, ambulance, police, etc.). Also included in this district are school district and township owned properties, which may also be available for recreational use.

This district does not correspond with any zoning districts in the Newfield Township Zoning Ordinance.

### **Cluster Housing**

The Cluster Housing category is intended to provide a location within the township for the development of a residential subdivision. The purpose of cluster development is to protect open space by allowing any number of units allowed for a parcel independent of any minimum lot size. This allows flexibility in the arrangement of units within the development. Open spaces remaining outside the arrangement of units may be used for agricultural preservation, natural habitat preservation, or for exclusive use by residents.

This district, situated at the intersection of 192<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and M-20, corresponds to the C-3 zoning district of the Newfield Township Zoning Ordinance.

### **Commercial**

The Commercial category is intended to include retail, office, and service establishments to serve local and regional markets. Any developments shall be compatible and harmonious with adjacent surroundings. The preservation of environmentally sensitive areas, important open space, and natural corridors should be encouraged.

This district generally corresponds to the C-1 zoning district of the Newfield Township Zoning Ordinance. Areas designated for commercial development are located along M-120 south of Hesperia, and M-20 from Riverview Road to west of 184<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

### **Commercial Entertainment**

The Commercial Entertainment category is intended to provide a location within the township for the development of business oriented towards adult entertainment. Any developments shall be compatible and harmonious with adjacent surroundings. The preservation of environmentally sensitive areas, important open space, and natural corridors should be encouraged.

This district, situated in the far northwest corner of the township, corresponds to the C-2 zoning district of the Newfield Township Zoning Ordinance. Its location is intentionally situated in an isolated location, away from current and future commercial and residential development.

### **Light Industrial**

The Light Industrial category is intended to expand and improve employment opportunities within the township. Light industrial processes exist without causing nuisance to nearby properties and the general public. Research and development businesses should be promoted as traditional industry wanes and the knowledge economy increases. These areas should have access to major transportation routes and municipal water and wastewater services.

This district, which is located to the southeast of the White River and to the southwest of Hesperia, does not correspond with a zoning district of the Newfield Township Zoning Ordinance. This area is not currently serviced by municipal water and wastewater services; however it is within close proximity to existing infrastructure, and may be connected in the future.

### **Mobile/ Manufactured Home**

In the interest of promoting the greatest possible diversity of housing types, the future land use map includes an area for mobile/manufactured homes. Due to the potential for higher density within mobile home developments, they must be located on soils which have the greatest capacity to support habitation or have access to municipal water and wastewater services. In addition, mobile home developments must be located on higher capacity roadways, be near existing concentrations of population and services, and near major roadways.

This district, which is located to the south of the White River and to the southwest of Hesperia, does not correspond with a zoning district of the Newfield Township Zoning Ordinance. This area is not currently serviced by municipal water and wastewater services; however it is within close proximity to existing infrastructure, and may be connected in the future.

### **Neighborhood Residential**

The Neighborhood Residential category provides for a higher density of housing options than the Rural category. Residential developments should be guided towards these areas in order to preserve rural, undeveloped, and open areas of the township. These areas could include single family, manufactured, and multi-family units. Multi-unit development should be serviced by public infrastructure including water and wastewater, and should have convenient access to regional transportation networks. Where public wastewater is not available, cluster or shared septic systems may be an option.

This district generally corresponds to the R-1 zoning district of the Newfield Township Zoning Ordinance. Neighborhood Residential areas include residential nodes that surround many of the township's lakes as well as much of the southeastern quarter of the township.

### **Open Space Conservation**

The Open Space Conservation category includes areas designated for the protection of sensitive and valued natural features such as forests and shorelands. Use of these areas should be reserved for non-motorized outdoor recreation. Development should be limited to park facilities. State and federally owned lands within the township are included in this category.

This district is most prevalent in the western half of the township where areas of the Manistee National Forest are found. All areas within 100 feet from all waters' edge are also included in this district; which corresponds to the waterfront area setbacks described under the R-1 zoning district of the Newfield Township Zoning Ordinance.

**Park/Public Access**

The Park/Public Access category is intended to increase recreation opportunities in the township through improved access to the township's natural resources.

Many of the designated park or access locations are situated where road-ends meet lakes. This district does not correspond with a zoning district of the Newfield Township Zoning Ordinance.

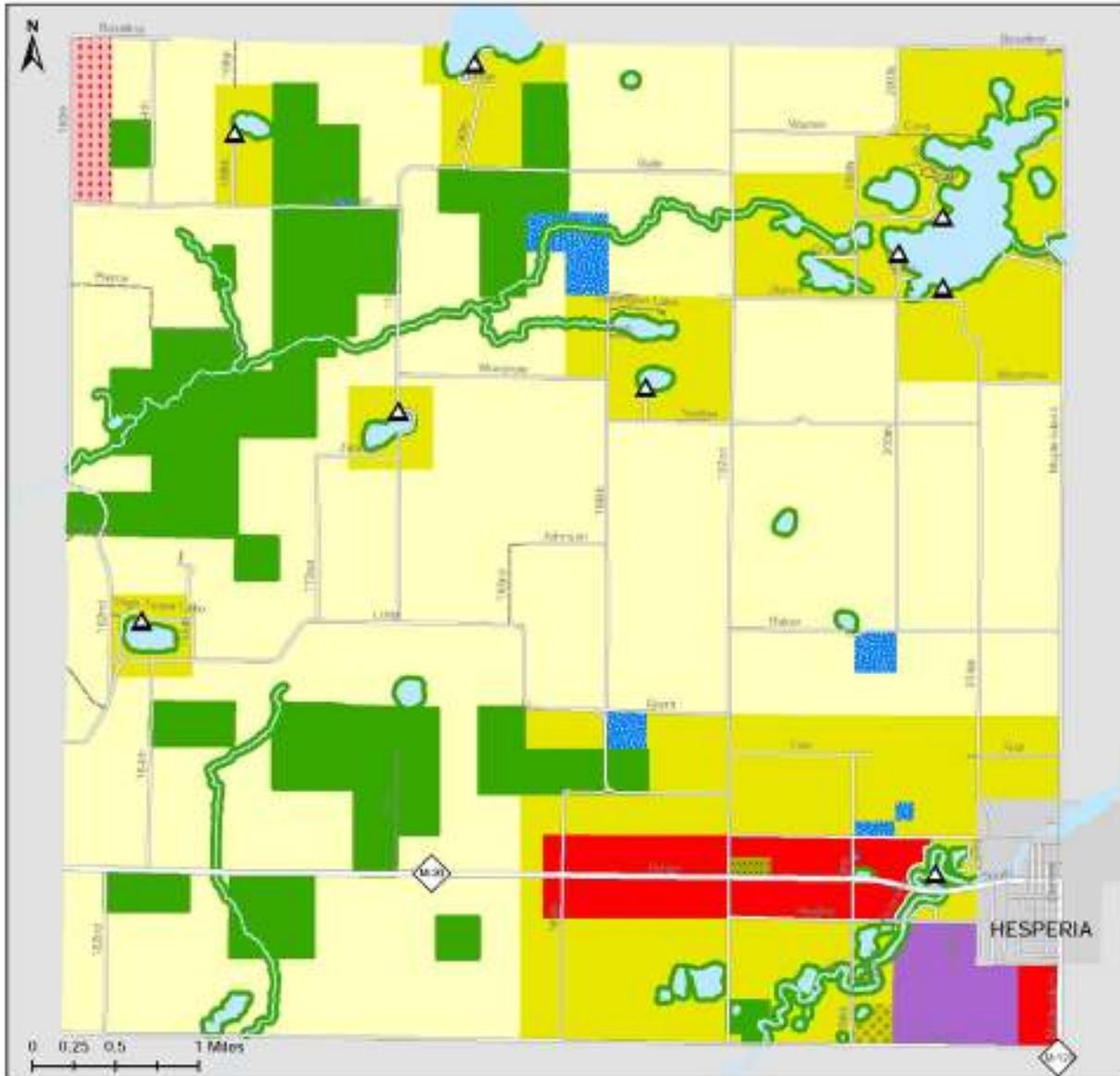
**Rural**

The Rural category is intended to preserve the character of the community. The preservation of agriculture, environmentally sensitive areas, as well as natural corridors shall be encouraged. Permissible land uses shall consist of agricultural activities, single family housing on large lots, and undeveloped land. Housing sites should be restricted to locations with soils suitable to on-site septic systems.

This district generally corresponds to the AR-1 zoning district of the Newfield Township Zoning Ordinance, and is the most common land use on the future land use map.

Map 12

### Newfield Township FUTURE LAND USE



- |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Rural                    | Commercial               |
| Neighborhood Residential | Commercial Entertainment |
| Mobile Home              | Light Industrial         |
| Cluster Housing          | Civic/Institutional      |
| Conservation             | Surface Water            |
|                          | Park/Public Access       |

Map created in November 2008 by:  
**WMSRDC**  
WEST MICHIGAN SHORELINE  
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Data Source:  
Michigan Center for Geographic Information

Note:  
This map is intended for general planning  
purposes only.

## **Planning Implementation Tools & Techniques**

The ultimate goal of planning, of course, is implementation. Implementing the ideas generated through the planning process is the culmination of the analysis, goal setting, and interaction activities, which took place during the creation of the Master Plan. This portion of the Plan is designed to guide the community in taking the actions necessary to achieve its goals and objectives.

The Plan is intended to be a working document that provides township decision makers with information on the goals desired by the community. The Plan should be consulted whenever policy issues arise, especially those relating to land use. Additionally, when the visions of the township change or advance, the Plan should be updated accordingly.

Successful implementation requires a dedicated effort on the part of the Newfield Township Planning Commission, Township Board, and the community at large. It is essential that each member of the Planning Commission and Township Board understands the Plan, knows his/her own role as it relates to the Plan, and promotes implementation of the Plan.

The goals and objectives of the Newfield Township Master Plan can be implemented through the use of the following described tools and techniques that are available to the township. The list of tools and techniques is certainly not exhaustive, and some items on it are more applicable to the township than others. Many of the tools and techniques can be used for multiple purposes by the township to achieve its goals and objectives, even though they are listed under specific headings.

### **Zoning Ordinance**

A zoning ordinance is the primary regulatory tool used to implement master plans. Following the adoption of the Plan, the township should complete an internal inventory and review its priorities. It should then amend the Newfield Township Zoning Ordinance as appropriate. This will ensure that the zoning ordinance will be consistent with the approved Master Plan.

### **Land Division Act**

Townships are authorized to regulate and control the subdivision of land within their jurisdictions pursuant to Public Act 591 of 1996, the Land Division Act (formerly known as P.A. 288 of 1967, the Subdivision Control Act). Amended in 1997, this act gave a township with a land division ordinance more control over how land could be divided and lessened state controls. The act governed the division of existing parcels, called "parent parcels," as identified by the state.

A township can have an important voice in the design and layout of subdivisions and can set uniform standards for streets and roads, utilities, and other improvements with the utilization of a local land division control ordinance. The land division ordinance can reference all other township ordinances and require conformance with them. Conformance with the zoning ordinance and the insertion of land division design standards while updating the ordinance offers control over density.

### **Planned Unit Development (PUD)**

The planned unit development concept is utilized by many communities to encourage innovative and imaginative project design. As a development type, it

permits flexibility in site design and usage. It allows buildings to be clustered by mixing types, or by combining housing with ancillary uses such as neighborhood shopping. It allows for better design and arrangement of open space and the retention of such natural features as forests, slope, and floodplains. As a regulatory tool, it allows variation in many of the traditional controls related to density, setback, use and open space.

### **Open Space Preservation**

A variation on the PUD theme is an Open Space Preservation district. In this type of district, or in a residential district with this feature, developers are encouraged to set aside open space in perpetuity in exchange for flexibility on the part of the township with respect to zoning requirements. Open space conservation is important because open space needs to be planned and provided for prior to complete development occurring.

Key characteristics of an Open Space Preservation District/Overlay, when combined with elements of the PUD concept or Site Condominium concept, include:

- Flexibility in the design of a development.
- Lot size restrictions in traditional zoning are converted to density limitations where the unit of measurement is the entire project, not the individual lot.
- Allowance for slightly greater density than normal zoning, in most cases, *as an incentive*.
- Buffering/open space in the development is *in exchange* for flexibility on the part of the township, so the alternative (i.e. traditional zoning) must be fairly rigid, more restrictive, and strictly enforced.
- The developer saves money through lower up-front costs for infrastructure, and tends to make more profit through higher initial sales price and greater sales volume.

Open Space Zoning allows the developer to have some additional units to market, in exchange for the promise to set aside a portion of the development as open space in perpetuity.

### **Growth Management**

“Growth management refers to the systematic attempt, by a community, to guide the type, rate, location, timing, public cost of, and often the quality and character of land re-development” (Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Michigan Coastal Management Program). Growth management must be, first and foremost, well integrated into the planning and zoning process. As an overview, there are several possible avenues to explore when considering a growth management strategy. Among them are:

*Purchase of Development Rights.* In this scenario, the township directly remunerates the land owner in return for exclusive rights to develop the property as the township sees fit or to preserve it. The rights may also be sold to yet another property owner who can (or will) develop the land as the township wishes. The land owner participates voluntarily, still owns the land, and can use or sell the land for specified purposes, such as farming or hunting.

Once a Purchase of Development Rights agreement is made, a usually permanent deed restriction is placed on the property which limits the type of development that may take place on the land. A legally binding guarantee is thus achieved to ensure that the parcel will remain as it is or be developed only as wished. The deed restriction can also be referred to as a conservation easement.

*Transfer of Development Rights.* Although not authorized by statute for use between jurisdictions in Michigan, this technique has been used successfully elsewhere. It is a variation on the above, except a trade is made between two or more parcels. It essentially is a method for protecting land by transferring the “right to develop” from one area (sending) and giving it to another area (receiving). A consensus must be reached on where the public wishes to preserve low density or open space and where it will allow for increases in development densities.

“Receiving” areas generally have streets, public water and sewer, and other improvements or the improvements are such that they can be extended a short distance without extensive cost. The costs of purchasing the easements are recovered from the developers who receive building “bonuses” according to the values agreed upon. As with Purchase of Development Rights, the owner of the preserved site participates voluntarily and retains existing use rights while receiving compensation for the development value of the land.

*Concurrency.* This is a situation in which the township ties development ( i.e. density and type) to established bench marks regarding public service (i.e. water, sewer, roadway capacity, police, fire, educational and others) to control development. No development can occur in a given area until the benchmarks are met, either by the township or the developer. This method also requires a carefully laid out capital improvements plan to be fully effective.

*Development Agreements.* This would operate much like a contract/site plan review process combined. It would cover a fixed period in time, and would identify specific elements of development covered. It would offer assurances for both sides that planning could take place and there would be no changing of the rules in the middle of the game.

*Regional Impact Coordination.* In a larger sense, this concept amounts to a specific agreement to involve other jurisdictions in any development which has a “regional impact.” One way to implement such coordination is through the establishment of a joint planning commission (JPC), as enabled by the State of Michigan’s Joint Municipal Planning Act PA 226 of 2003.

The State of Michigan has taken another step by making it mandatory that amendments to a community’s master plan be submitted, for review and comment, to all bordering jurisdictions, the acting regional planning commission, and ultimately the County. While presently these comments have no regulatory implications, this legislation is the first step in working towards a collaborative effort amongst bordering municipalities encouraging similar land uses on adjacent parcels.

### **Capital Improvements Program**

A Capital Improvements Program (CIP) is a fiscal plan outlining the means for the township to finance selected projects requiring capital, either on a short-term or long-range basis. The CIP thus sets priorities for future development. Projects typically included are public facilities such as township halls and parks, land improvements, roads, bridges, acquisitions, utilities, planning projects, etc.

### **Dedicated Millage**

A dedicated millage can be used to generate revenues for a specific purpose and, in so doing, can implement recommendations of the Master Plan. For example, a dedicated millage could be used to establish a land acquisition fund, a bike path fund, or a conservation easement program. All of these would be useful tools for promoting open space preservation.

Although acquisition of land by a governmental unit provides the greatest level of land use control, it is also the most expensive. In addition to acquisition costs, purchase removes property from the tax rolls and decreases property tax revenues.

### **Conservation Easements**

The Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act of 1974 provides for dedication of a conservation easement to a public entity while the Conservation and Historic Preservation Easement Act of 1980 gives a third party, such as a land trust, the right to receive and the resulting responsibility to enforce an easement. Conservation easements are voluntary legal agreements between landowners and a land conservancy or government agency and are distinct property rights that may be sold or donated separately from other rights.

Conservation easements are effective for preserving sensitive lands, providing public access along rivers or greenways, and allowing property owners to consider land stewardship while they continue to live on their land. They permanently limit development of the property in order to protect the conservation values of the land. The landowner continues to bear all costs and liabilities related to ownership and maintenance of the property.

The relationship between Purchase of Development Rights and conservation easements is close and the terms are often used interchangeably. However, conservation easements can be both sold or donated. When a land owner sells the development rights for less than their full value, it is called a “bargain sale.” Bargain sales and donations can reduce income, inheritance, and property taxes while providing cash for needed purposes when meeting the necessary requirements.

### **Land Conservancy**

While property owners can voluntarily donate or sell land or easements in the interest of conserving natural resources or natural features, and perhaps qualify for income, estate and property tax benefits, private land trusts can facilitate a resource protection program by use of a variety of land acquisition and conservation techniques.

For instance, The Land Conservancy of West Michigan (LCWM) “protects lands that contribute to the distinctive character and quality of life in West Michigan; lands that are important for their values as habitat for native plants and animals, as centers for study and quiet recreation, and as elements of scenic beauty and rural character.

LCWM offers positive, non-regulatory solutions to disappearing open space that benefit landowners and local communities.”

LCWM acquires natural land through donation or “bargain sale” purchase of high priority land for the purpose of creating nature preserves that are open to the public. It also assists with conservation easements and works with developers to construct easements for open space design. Finally, LCWM assists local governments with identifying important natural areas, preserving lands, creating community parks, and writing grant applications for project funding.

## Chapter 9: Recommendations

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Newfield Township contains an abundance of natural resources in the form of lakes, rivers, forests, and agriculture. These attributes, along with the township's access to major transportation routes and its close proximity to regional services and employment, have combined to create a desirable environment to live and play. This is reflected in the township's increasing population trends and forecasts for future growth.

Protection of the township's valued resources will become paramount to the preservation of its rural and natural character. It will be increasingly important to reference this document when making recommendations regarding development and land use decisions. If utilized properly, this plan will provide a central vision from which township officials can make decisions. Additionally, the township should continually revisit the visions, goals, and objectives identified in this document, and prioritize those of greatest and most timely importance, to ensure the plan's relevance and usefulness.

The township, by adopting the Newfield Township Master Plan and Future Land Use Map, is preparing itself to manage its growth. Prior to the completion of this document, the township did not have such a document. It is therefore important for the township to review the Newfield Township Zoning Ordinance, and make appropriate adjustments so that it reflects the goals and objectives contained within this document.

As previously stated, the goal of any plan is to combine the needs and desires of the citizenry with the suitability and capability of the land for sustaining those uses, according to the ability and desire of the municipality to provide public services throughout the jurisdiction. Careful consideration must be given to the preservation of the township's unique resources as well.

Recognition of impending development pressures associated with future population increases helps to highlight the importance of proactive growth management, preserving natural resources, and maintaining the rural and recreational character of the township. Objectives for growth management include on-going education on growth management techniques, utilization of those techniques, and inclusion of environmental and infrastructure considerations in development decisions. Objectives for preserving natural resources include those that focus on building partnerships; while objectives for promoting existing resources for recreational purposes include the expansion of recreational uses and the adoption of a Community Recreation Plan.

As mentioned early in this document, many Newfield Township residents revere the Village of Hesperia as the center of their community. It is reasonable to consider that many residents of other communities surrounding Hesperia share the same sentiment. Consequently, many of the township's goals and objectives may be shared by these other communities as well; and in some cases, may be more feasible to achieve by the greater Hesperia community as a whole. While only appropriate under certain circumstances, municipal collaboration is a viable option to improve standard of living through the provision of more and/or better quality services. One example already being implemented in the area is the Hesperia Area Fire Authority. Potential collaborations could include a shared parks system or facility, and municipal services such as water and wastewater.

## Chapter 10: Conclusion

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The changes envisioned in this master plan will occur as a result of cumulative private and public decisions about such things as opening a business, locating a residential development, and installing a public park. The inner-workings of investments by private actors and individual entrepreneurs, as well as development decisions by public and quasi-public agencies, bring about physical changes to an area.

If properly used, this master plan can guide government about where public development should go and why. It can give potential investors a general sense of where the community would prefer residential and commercial development to be located. In short, the purpose of a comprehensive development plan is to offer guidance to any and all actors whose decisions affect land. In more particular terms, this plan offers several professional suggestions for achieving commonly held aspirations for the community's future development.

The master plan provides a clear vision for Newfield Township's future growth and development. It describes, through the Future Land Use Map, where various types of future land uses (i.e. development) should be located. It also provides guidance as to the form, characteristics, and appearance that are desired for future development. However, the vision embodied by the master plan is but a step in making those visions a reality.

Beyond this plan awaits the need for a commitment by the township to dedicate the necessary resources for review of the master plan at a minimum of every five years. This will enable the Newfield Township Planning Commission to track progress of implementation, while taking the pulse of the community to determine whether the goals are still appropriate and if additional goals should be added.

The Newfield Township Master Plan should be consulted regularly as it is a guide for land use decisions, and should be updated accordingly as the local situation warrants. It is important to note that change is inevitable, and managing that change will be the key to Newfield Township's success in the management of development and the desired build-out of the township.



## Appendix A

### Public Notices and Plan Approval Process

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#### Notice of Intent to Plan

Mailed to the following neighbor communities on May 21, 2008:

Newaygo County Planning Commission  
Oceana County Planning Commission  
Village of Hesperia  
Beaver Township  
Dayton Township  
Denver Township

Elbridge Township  
Ferry Township  
Greenwood Township  
Leavitt Township  
Otto Township

May 21, 2008

Ms. Jean Pease, Chairperson  
Oceana County Planning Commission  
3475 S. 154<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Hesperia, MI 49421

Dear Ms. Pease,

On behalf of the Newfield Township Board of Trustees, I would like to advise you that Newfield Township with assistance from the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission has started the process of developing a Township Master Plan. It is anticipated that this plan will act as the Township's official Master Plan once completed and adopted. We are requesting your cooperation and comment during this process.

A public meeting has been scheduled for 7:00 PM on Tuesday, June 10 at the Newfield Township Hall located at 3890 South 198<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The purpose of the meeting is to gather community input for the Master Plan.

A draft document is expected to be completed by February 2009. At that time, a copy of the draft document will be submitted to you for your review and comment. We look forward to receiving your input regarding the Newfield Township Master Plan.

If you have any questions regarding the Newfield Township Master Plan, please contact me at (231) 722-7878 extension 18 or at [ekuhn@wmsrdc.org](mailto:ekuhn@wmsrdc.org). Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Erin Kuhn  
Program Manager

**Public Notice**

Published in the Oceana Herald-Journal on May 29, 2008

NOTICE OF TOWNSHIP MEETING REGARDING  
NEWFIELD TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN

Please be advised that Newfield Township, with the assistance of the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission (WMSRDC), will hold a Town Meeting on Tuesday, June 10, 2008 to receive public input for the Newfield Township Master Plan. The meeting will take place at 7:00 PM at the Newfield Township Hall located at 3890 South 198th Avenue, Hesperia, MI 49421. The meeting is open to the public, and everyone with an interest in the future direction of Newfield Township is encouraged to attend the meeting. Citizen participation in this process is essential. Prior to the meeting, an informal barbeque for adults will be held at the Township Hall beginning at 6 PM.

Written comments may also be submitted by June 6, 2008 to the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission, P.O. Box 387, Muskegon, MI. 49443 or via electronic mail at [wmsrdc@wmsrdc.org](mailto:wmsrdc@wmsrdc.org). If there are any questions, please contact Ms. Erin Kuhn, Program Manager, at (231) 722-7878, extension 18 or at [ekuhn@wmsrdc.org](mailto:ekuhn@wmsrdc.org).

**Public Notice**

Published in the Oceana Herald-Journal on December 4<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, 2008

NOTICE OF PUBLIC VIEWING REGARDING  
NEWFIELD TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN

Please be advised Newfield Township with the assistance of the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission (WMSRDC), will hold a public viewing period between Friday, January 2, 2009 and Friday, January 16, 2009 to review the draft Newfield Township Master Plan. This viewing is open to the public and anyone with an interest in the Newfield Township Master Plan is encouraged to attend and review the document. The viewings will take place at the Hesperia Public Library located at 80 S. Division Street, Hesperia, MI 49421 between the hours of 10:00 AM and 7:00 PM Monday through Thursday, Friday 10:00 AM and 5:00 PM, and Saturday 10:00 AM and 3:00 PM.

Following the viewing period, a Public Meeting will be held to receive comments on the Newfield Township Master Plan. The Public Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 21, 2009 at the Newfield Township Hall, at 7:00 PM.

Written comments may also be submitted by Friday, January 16, 2009 to the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission, 316 Morris Avenue, Suite 340, P.O. Box 387, Muskegon, Michigan 49443 or via electronic mail at [ekuhn@wmsrdc.org](mailto:ekuhn@wmsrdc.org). If there are any questions, please contact Ms. Erin Kuhn, Program Manager, WMSRDC, (231) 722-7878 (extension 18).

Newfield Township Planning Commission

Hearing for Master Plan  
Minutes for Jan. 21, 2009

Planning Commission members present: Bill Myers, Bernice Salisbury, Tami Ballantyne, and Jay Peasley.  
Others present: Walter Salisbury, Ed Kolbe, Gail Eitinear, Nick Beyers, and Erin Kuhn and Stephen Carlson from WMSRDC.

Meeting was called to order by 7:05 pm by Bernice Salisbury, acting chairman/secretary upon the resignation of former chairman Jack Adams for the purpose of reviewing the changes made to the proposed draft of the master plan for Newfield Township prepared by WMSRDC.

Following a roll call with the above-mentioned members present, a motion to approve the agenda was made by Bill Myers and a second by Jay Peasley. All approved. The minutes from the meeting of July 24, 2008 were presented with a motion to accept as written by Bill Myers and a second by Tami B. Commission was updated with the fact that even though the wind-tower recommendation was made to the township board for approval for John Millington, Mr. Millington has not met the stipulations set forth and has since changed his mind on going thru with constructing a wind tower on his property.

A list of changes was gone over page by page that WMSRDC has made to the draft copy of the master plan for Newfield Township with an additional mention on page 12 of the Gale Cemetery on Buchanan Road. Two picture substitutions have also been recommended. No comments were submitted from the audience. Bill Myers made a motion, with a second from Jay Peasley to recommend to the township board for their review on Feb 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Bernice will see that each board members gets a copy ASAP for their review before the Feb. meeting and Tami will present the review with a presentation at the Feb. meeting to the township board. Tami will let WMSRDC know if the board approves. Hearing was closed.

The next meeting of the planning commission will be a hearing for the final master plan on May 14, 2009. WMSRDC will be in charge of ( upon approval from the township board ) seeing that a CD copy is presented to

the Hesperia Public Library, County Planning Commission, and adjoining townships, as well as village of Hesperia for their review. They are also responsible for publishing the hearing and the viewing prior to the May 14<sup>th</sup> hearing date.

Acting chairman called for an election of officers for the planning commission for the coming year. It was made known that Jeff Balkema wishes to resign from the commission because of family obligations. Upon his resignation in writing, the township board will need to appoint another new member to the planning commission. A motion was made by Bill and a second from Tami to elect Bernice as chairman/secretary for the coming year and also another motion was made by same to elect Jay as vice chairman for same position for the coming year. A roll call vote approved both motions.

The official meetings of the planning commission for 2009 are as follows:  
Jan. 21 Public comments on draft of master plan, election of officers  
May 14 Public hearing for final approval of master plan  
August 27 Discuss wording changes to the current zoning ordinance to coincide with the planning commission instead of the zoning board.  
Nov. 19 Final approval of changes for submission to township board..

Public comments included a comment from Nick Beyers that he represented ALFA Wind Towers and would be working with the township on any future wind tower business that may come his way.

Bernice made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8 pm with a second by Bill.

## Newfield Township Regular Board Meeting

Tuesday, February 17, 2009

### Newfield Township Hall

The regular monthly meeting of the Newfield Township Board was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Supervisor Mike Booher. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present. Roll call was as follows: Mike Booher – present, Edward Kolbe – present, Tami Ballantyne – present, Liz Nordin – present, Joanna David – present. All members were present.

Motion by Nordin, seconded by Ballantyne, to accept the agenda as amended. David – yes, Kolbe – yes, Booher – yes, Ballantyne – yes. Approved.

The minutes from the January 20, 2009 regular board meeting were viewed. Motion by Ballantyne, seconded by Booher, to accept the minutes as printed. Nordin – yes, Kolbe – yes, Ballantyne – yes, David – yes. Approved.

Motion by Nordin, seconded by Mike Booher, to amend the budget as follows: Increase Township Board (101) by \$4500.00 to \$10,500 and decrease un-allocated (696) by \$4,500.00 to \$4,736.00. Kolbe – yes, Booher – yes, Ballantyne – yes; David – yes; Nordin – yes. Approved.

Motion by Ballantyne, seconded by Booher, to pay February bills from General Fund in the amount of \$10,052.87 with checks numbered 9809 thru 9865. Booher – yes, David – yes, Nordin – yes, Kolbe – yes. Approved.

Motion by Kolbe, seconded by Booher, to accept January Treasurer's report as presented. The cash balance stated is \$273,624.46. Ballantyne – yes; David – yes; Kolbe – yes; Booher – yes. Approved.

The Supervisor reported about disposal of old televisions. Bob Pinder from Newaygo County Recycling gave an update on recycling and the need for financial support.

Motion by Ballantyne, seconded by Booher, to accept the Master Plan as amended. David – yes; Nordin – yes; Kolbe – yes; Booher – yes; Ballantyne – yes. Approved.

Motion by Ballantyne, seconded by Booher, to appoint Jamie McGahan to complete Jeff Balkema's term on the Planning Commission. That term expires 1 – 4 – 2011. Nordin – yes; Kolbe – yes –; Booher – yes; Ballantyne – yes; David – yes. Approved.

Motion by Kolbe, seconded by Booher, to appoint Tami Ballantyne as the Township Board Member representative to the Planning Commission. The term expires 1 – 4 – 2013. Kolbe – yes; Booher – yes; Ballantyne – yes; David – yes; David – yes. Approved.

Motion by Kolbe, seconded by Ballantyne, to appoint Gale Eitniear as Newfield Township's Liaison to the Oceana County Road Commission. Booher – yes; Ballantyne – yes; David – yes; Nordin – yes; Kolbe – yes. Approved.

Motion by Nordin, seconded by Ballantyne, to hold a public hearing on the proposed budget at the March 17, 2009 Township meeting. Ballantyne – yes; David – yes; Nordin – yes; Kolbe – yes; Booher – yes. Approved.

Ballantyne and Kolbe gave an update about information they have received about the phone system at the township hall.

Motion by Nordin, seconded by Booher, to increase the Treasurer's salary by \$2,500.00 to \$13,200.00 annually beginning April 1, 2009. David – yes; Nordin – yes; Kolbe – no; Booher – yes; Ballantyne – abstained. Approved 3 – 1.

Motion by David, seconded by Booher to have Jim Pearson purchase a 24" bucket for the Backhoe at a cost of \$644.00 and a propane heater and fan for the cemetery building for an approximate cost of \$325.00. Nordin – yes; Kolbe – yes; Booher – yes; Ballantyne – yes; David – yes. Approved.

Ballantyne and Kolbe will obtain prices for computers and software for the treasurer and clerk.

Motion by Nordin, seconded by David to spend up to \$2000.00 on 2 computers and a printer. Kolbe – yes; Booher – yes; Ballantyne – yes; David – yes; Nordin – yes. Approved.

Decided to hold a work session on Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2009 to discuss proposed cemetery changes.

Fire Board report was that all is well.

The Sexton reported that insulation has been installed in the ceiling of the cemetery building.

Citizens asked about the budget hearing, money paid to the treasurer, the privacy policy.

The Supervisor adjourned the meeting at 8:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Edward Kolbe, Jr.

Newfield Township Clerk

Original Draft: 02/18/2009

**Public Notice**

Published in the Oceana Herald-Journal on April 30<sup>th</sup> and May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2009

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING  
NEWFIELD TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN

Please be advised that the Newfield Township Planning Commission, with the assistance of the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission (WMSRDC), will hold a Public Hearing on Thursday, May 14, 2009 to receive public comments for the Newfield Township Master Plan. The meeting will take place at 7:00 PM at the Newfield Township Hall located at 3890 198<sup>th</sup> Ave, Hesperia, Michigan 49421. The meeting is open to the public. Individuals with an interest in the future direction of Newfield Township are encouraged to attend.

A draft copy of the new Master Plan is on public display at the Hesperia Library. This copy may be reviewed during normal library hours, prior to the May 14 hearing. Additionally, copies of the new Master Plan will be available for review at the hearing.

If you cannot make it to the meeting, written comments may be submitted by Friday, May 8, 2009 to the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission, P.O. Box 387, Muskegon, Michigan 49443 or via electronic mail at [wmsrdc@wmsrdc.org](mailto:wmsrdc@wmsrdc.org). If there are any questions, please contact Ms. Erin Kuhn, Program Manager, at (231) 722-7878, extension 18 or at [ekuhn@wmsrdc.org](mailto:ekuhn@wmsrdc.org).

Newfield Township Planning Commission

Hearing for Master Plan  
Minutes for May 14, 2009

Planning Commission members present: Bill Myers, Tami Ballantyne, Jamie Mc Gahan, Bill Myers, Jay Peasley and Bernice Salisbury.

Others present were: Walter Salisbury, Zoning Administrator, Stephen Carlson from WMSRDC, Darlington Lake residents, and Representative for Bob Forbes fireworks event.

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Bernice Salisbury. Roll call taken with all present. The agenda was approved with a motion by Bill and a second from Tami. All members accepted. The minutes from the January 21, 2009 meeting were approved with a motion by Bill and a second from Tami. All Members approved.

The final hard copy of the Newfield Township Master Plan was presented by Stephen Carlson from the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission. No one present at the hearing had any questions and no questions were presented in writing or from the viewing at the Hesperia Public Library. A motion was made by Bill and a second from Tami to accept this final copy of the Master Plan. A vote indicated that all were in favor. The next step was to present the Master Plan to the Township Board for their approval at their meeting on May 17, 2009.

Public comments from the audience were recognized. Residents from Darlington Lake had a concern with someone living in a motor home with no proper sanitation as well as a resident at the lake having goats that ran freely in the yard with waste etc. seeping into the ground, lake water as well as a foul odor from the situation. Zoning administrator presented the residents with a Potential Violation Complaint Form for them to sign before any further action could be taken. Walt will follow up on this complaint, visit the sites, and follow up with a letter to comply with the zoning ordinance.

Representative for Bob Forbes explained how he handles the Fireworks Application with a State of Michigan Application Form #FM 49 or 51 to meet the state and federal requirement codes along with the adequate

amount of insurance for the protection of the sponsor of the fireworks event. The Planning Commission is recommending to the Township Board for them to make a policy to have the clerk obtain these state furnished applications ( FM 49 and 51) for Newfield Township for those who are applying to have such an event. The planning commission also advises that the Firework Company name both applicant as well as Newfield Township as an additional insured on the Fireworks Company's Insurance Policy. A motion was made by Bill and a second by Jamie to recommend this procedure to the Township Board . The Planning Commission does not deem it necessary to write an additional article to the Zoning Ordinance. All planning commission members voted in favor of this recommendation.

The next meeting of the Planning Commission will be on August 20 to discuss wording changes to the current Zoning Ordinance due to change in name of Planning Commission and other changes due to the changing of inspections for building from the county to a private inspection service.

*changed to  
Aug 27*

Motion was made by Jay and a second by Jamie to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 P.M.

State of Michigan • 27th Judicial Circuit  
Oceana County  
Publication and Notice of Friend of the Court  
Annual Statutory Review  
09-7438-PZ

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**Annual Review of Performance**  
**Record of the Friend of the Court**

Pursuant to Michigan law, the chief circuit judge annually reviews the performance record of the friend of the court. The review will be conducted on or about July 1, 2009. This review is limited by law to the following criteria: whether the friend of the court is guilty of misconduct, neglect of statutory duty, or failure to carry out the written orders of the court relative to a statutory duty; whether the purposes of the Friend of the Court Act are being met; and whether the duties of the friend of the court are being carried out in a manner that reflects the needs of the community. Members of the public may submit written comments to the chief judge relating to these criteria. Send your written comments, with your name and address, to Hon. Anthony A. Montan, 100 State Street, Suite-M10, Hart, MI 49420.

Newfield Township Regular Board Meeting  
Tuesday, May 19, 2009  
Newfield Township

The regular meeting of the Newfield Township Board was called to order at 7:00 p.m by Supervisor, Mike Booher. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present. Roll call was taken with Mike Booher, Edward Kolbe, Tami Ballantyne, Liz Nordin, and Joanna David being all present.

Public Comments were addressed with the floor given to Gale Eitinear who updated the township on the status of the paving of Warren Road and 198<sup>th</sup>. The county has reported that the paving company is conducting a test on the blacktopping materials used on this stretch of road on 198<sup>th</sup>. The west lane has a 15 year life expectancy and the east lane has materials with a 10 year expectancy. The residents using this road should keep their eyes open on the progress of the wear.

Motion by Nordin and a second by Ballantyne to accept the agenda as amended to change the budget. All yes votes and motion carried.

A motion was made by Kolbe and a second from Nordin to increase the Tech Fund Reserve by \$1000 to be taken from the unallocated fund to meet the tech needs needed for the new computer operation. All yes votes were cast and motion was carried.

The minutes from the April 21, 2009 regular board meeting were presented. A motion from Nordin and a second from Booher to accept the minutes as written. All approved.

A motion by Ballantyne and a second by Booher to pay the bills as submitted. May bills from General Fund in the amount of \$19,530.50 with checks numbered 9932 - 9967 were submitted. The treasurer emphasized that a replacement check had to be issued for a check lost in the mail and the bank waived the stop payment fee. Treasurer also alerted the board that an automatic deduction was deducted from the checking account for \$257 for laser checks for the new computer system.

Motion by Kolbe and a second from Nordin to accept the April Treasurer's report as presented. The cash balance stated was \$ 320,201.56. Acceptance of the report was complied with all yes votes.

Supervisor Booher reported on the tree issue at the cemetery. Many of the trees with the bug infestation were not as bad as he originally thought. The trees needing attention will need to be trimmed. Booher will check with the county to see if they will trim those trees.

The current correspondence was reported by Kolbe. A letter from the DEQ with an o.k. for the site plan for building near Taylor Bridge for Richard Predko. MTA dues are also due. Sally Kralej updated the township that first spraying of Campbell Lake would be as soon as the weather warmed up and the weeds started their growing process.

The first item of business was a recommendation by the planning commission from their findings on the fireworks policy. The clerk should obtain the state furnished applications ( FM-49 and 51) for those applying for a firework's event. The fireworks Company also have these state applications which states the information needed for the event. The party that is qualified to set off the fireworks must apply to the township clerk with the following information : proof of qualifications, a copy of their license and proof of insurance with a minimum of \$1 million and with Newfield Township also insured. A motion was made to this affect by Ballantyne and a second from Supervisor Booher. All yes votes were cast.

A request by Oceana Sheriff Farber to extend the current contract with Oceana County Sheriff Department to 12/31/2012 for services to Newfield Township. A motion was made to extend this contract by Nordin and a second by Booher. All votes cast were yes votes.

The final draft of the Newfield Township Master Plan was presented after being accepted by the planning commission at the hearing meeting on May 14, 2009. A motion was made to accept the Master Plan and wait for the final official copy from West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission. A request has been made to Erin Kuhn for the help that the commission offered to furnish us with information about applying for a grant for Newfield Township for DSL availability. Motion to accept was made by Nordin and a second by David. All yes votes were cast and motion carried.

A motion by Ballantyne and a second by Booher to re-appoint Scott DeBrot to a four year term on the Library Board from July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2013. He will

represent Newfield Township. All yes votes were cast with Nordin abstaining from voting.

The following business was conducted in regards to the North County Inspection Services (NCIS) , building inspection services:

Motion 09-05-01 to adopt an ordinance to designate an enforcing agency (NCIS) to discharge the responsibility of Newfield Township for the Michigan Building Codes.

Motion made by Ballantyne and a second from Booher - All yes votes.

Motion 09-05-02 to adopt an ordinance to designate an enforcing agency (NCIS) to discharge the responsibility of Newfield Township for the Michigan Electrical Codes.

Motion made by Ballantyne and a second from Nordin - All yes votes.

Motion 09-05-03 to adopt an ordinance to designate an enforcing agency (NCIS) to discharge the responsibility of Newfield Township for the Michigan Mechanical Codes.

Motion made by Ballantyne and a second from Booher - All yes votes.

Motion 09-05-04 to adopt an ordinance to designate an enforcing agency (NCIS) to discharge the responsibility of Newfield Township for the Michigan Plumbing Codes.

Motion made by Ballantyne and a second from Nordin. All yes votes.

Motion to make the building electrical, mechanical, and plumbing ordinances in effect in 30 days. Motion made by Nordin and a second by Ballantyne with all yes votes cast.

Motion made by Ballantyne and a second by Booher to appoint the following building officials and inspectors for Newfield Township:

Building Officials -Duane Cruzan and Maurice VanNevel

Building Inspectors - Duane Cruzan, Gary Smalligan, Randy Gordon, Tom Berg, and George Dietrich

Electrical Inspectors- Maurice VanNevel, Don Strohpaal, Mike Califf and Tim Chomi.

Mechanical Inspectors- Greg Streichhirsch, Fred Inman and Jim Shereda

Plumbing Inspectors : Fred Inman, Jim Callender and Jim Shereda

Motion carried with all yes votes.

The attached schedule of fees was presented. A motion was made by Nordin and second by Ballantyne to accept these fees. All yes votes were cast.

\*\*\* Attach fee schedule.

A motion was made to adopt the Procedure for the Administration and Enforcement of the Codes.

\*\*\*See the attached document.

Motion made by Nordin and seconded by Booher. All yes votes were cast

A motion was made to adopt the Procedure for the Construction Board of Appeals.

\*\*\* See the attached procedures.

Motion made by Ballantyne and seconded by David. All yes votes were cast.

A motion was made to appoint the Construction Board of Appeals members for a two year term to expire March 31, 2011.

Building - Jim Ballantyne and Michael Arborgast

Electrical- John Hofstee

Mechanical - Randy Paulsen

Plumbing - Scott Moore

Motion made by Nordin and seconded by Kolbe. All yes votes were cast.

Nordin presented Website information from Adam Corley of Digital Core Solutions. He will establish a website with a domain name of Newfield Township. ~~669~~ at a cost of \$15 for the Domain, \$99 for one year, and an approximate 2 hour fee of \$55 per hour for set up. A motion was made by David and a second by Ballantyne to go ahead with the set up. All yes votes were cast.

Treasurer explained that after speaking to the auditor, the amount due the fire department would have to be borrowed from the general fund with board approval. After delinquent taxes were collected, the fire board fund account would be short \$53.32. This amount should be collected from the county by the first of June. The amount owed to the fire department will be approved for paying next month and a new system of handling these procedures will be in place for next year.

Liz Nordin has volunteered to work on job descriptions for all the township paid personnel .

A kitchen area installation was brought up by Ballantyne; but because the state revenue sharing has been cut drastically, she recommended that we postpone this until later.

A visual inspection of road signs was done by Nordin with over 60 Newfield Township intersection road signs that were without proper road signs. It was reported that the county has a list of 8 - 10 signs that will be worked on when more signs are made at the county garage. Any other priority signs that are reported needing replacement will be turned in to the county to be put on the list.

A motion was made by Nordin and a second by Ballantyne to replace the entrance door knobs with handicap accessible handles as well as the bathroom doors. The pavement sign also must be repainted since the new black top has been laid. A roll call vote cast all yes votes. It was suggested that our maintenance person, Jim Pearson, look into having the knobs replaced as well as obtaining a stencil for the parking lot.

Treasurer, Ballantyne reported that it is now necessary to have DSL installed for the internet so she can download the information from the county for taxes on the township computer. A motion was made by Nordin and a second by Ballantyne to purchase the hook up for DSL for the purpose of tax collection. Motion carried with all yes votes.

Planning commission reported all issues previously covered in the beginning of the meeting.

Al Daniels reported nothing new on the fire board.

Jim Pearson reported a busy month with having the cemetery ready for Memorial Day.

Gale Eitinear made the road report at the beginning of the meeting.

Adjournment was at 9:35 p.m.

## Appendix B

### Soil Association Descriptions

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**Grattan-Covert-Granby Association** – *Nearly level to rolling, excessively drained, moderately well drained, and poorly drained, sandy soils on lake plains and outwash plains*

Grattan soils are on broad plains, Knolls, foot slopes, and back slopes. Covert soils are on broad plains and low knolls. Granby soils are in depressions. Most area of this association are used a woodland. An equipment limitation, seedling mortality, and the hazard of windthrow are the main concerns in managing woodland. The soils are poorly suited to cropland because of soil blowing, seasonal droughtiness, and seasonal wetness.

**Benona-Spinks-Grattan Association** – *Nearly level to very steep, excessively drained and well drained, sandy soils on ground moraines, end moraines, lake plains, and outwash plains*

Benona soils are on broad plains, knolls, back slopes, shoulder slopes, and hillsides. Spinks soils are on broad plains, knolls, back slopes, and shoulder slopes. Grattan soils are on broad plains, back slopes, shoulder slopes, and ridge tops. In most areas this association is fairly well suited to cropland. Soil blowing, seasonal droughtiness, a low content of organic matter, and a limited available water capacity are the major management concerns. Water erosion also is a management concern in the gently rolling and rolling areas. If these soils are used as woodland, and equipment limitation and seedling mortality are the major management concerns. The erosion hazard also is a management concern in the rolling to very steep areas.

**Spinks-Remus-Fern Association** – *Nearly level to steep, well drained, loamy and sandy soils on ground moraines, end moraines, and outwash plains*

Spinks soils are on broad plains, knolls, back slopes, and shoulder slopes. Remus soils are on broad plains, knolls, and back slopes. Fern soils are on broad plains and low knolls. In most areas this association is fairly well suited to cropland. Soil blowing, seasonal droughtiness, a low content of organic matter, and a limited available water capacity are the major management concerns. Water erosion and the slope also are management concerns in the gently rolling to hilly areas. If these soils are used as woodland, an equipment limitation and seedling mortality are the major management concerns. The erosion hazard also is a management concern in the hilly and steep areas.

**Perrinton-Gowdy-Ithaca Association** – *Nearly level to steep, well drained and somewhat poorly drained, loamy and sandy soils on ground moraines and end moraines*

Perrinton and Gowdy soils are on broad plains, Knolls, back slopes, and shoulder slopes. Ithaca soils are on foot slopes and low flats. In most areas this association is fairly well suited to cropland. Soil blowing, water erosion, seasonal wetness, seasonal droughtiness, tilth in the surface layer, and compaction are the major management concerns. If these soils are used a woodland, the erosion hazard and equipment limitation are the major management concerns in the hilly and steep areas. An equipment limitation caused by wetness is a management concern in areas of the Ithaca soils.

# Appendix C

## SWOT Analysis Report

### NEWFIELD TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN

### SWOT ANALYSIS REPORT

#### Purpose of the SWOT Analysis:

A Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis is a highly effective way of identifying Strengths and Weaknesses (existing conditions) and also your Opportunities and Threats (possible future conditions). Carrying out this type of analysis will assist an entity to focus on the areas where it is strong and where the greatest opportunities lie.

To identify various areas in each of these categories, often a series of questions ought to be answered. The following questions were examined:

#### Strengths:

- What are this project's advantages?
- What are Newfield's best attributes?
- How do others view the Newfield area and its existing condition?

#### Weaknesses:

- What are areas for improvement for the Newfield area?
- What types of things/attitudes should be avoided?

#### Opportunities:

- In which areas are the good opportunities facing this project?
- What are the interesting trends that you are aware of?

#### Threats:

- What obstacles does this project face?
- Down the road, who or what will be a force for detriment?

When this analysis is done in a realistic and candid way, it can be very informative – both in terms of pointing out what needs to be done, and in putting various issues into proper perspective.

#### The Newfield Township Master Plan SWOT Analysis:

Newfield Township, Oceana County, Michigan held a public meeting on Tuesday, June 10 at 7:00 PM at the township hall in order to gather input from interested citizens regarding the development of the Newfield Township Master Plan and the future direction of the township. A total of 42 citizens attend the meeting. During the meeting a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis exercise was conducted by staff from the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission. In addition, a total of 23 citizens completed public input forms, which were handed out prior to the June 10<sup>th</sup> meeting and returned to township officials. Attendees of the meeting were divided into eight groups and each group was asked to list Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats facing Newfield Township.

After each group identified their issues, the groups then selected a spokesperson that reported out the issues. These were recorded on eight separate summary sheets with SWOT headings. Listed below are all of the items mentioned during the SWOT Analysis exercise at the public meeting on June 16<sup>th</sup>.

**SWOT Results:**

**Strengths**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Free garbage pickup</li> <li>▪ Athletic fields, parks – open spaces, 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration</li> <li>▪ River – canoeing &amp; tubing, fishing</li> <li>▪ Recycling</li> <li>▪ Library</li> <li>▪ Restaurants</li> <li>▪ Good people – honest &amp; helpful, friendly</li> <li>▪ Natural beauty – lakes, streams, rivers</li> <li>▪ Wildlife – hunting &amp; fishing, bird watching</li> <li>▪ Recycling – 2X year trash day</li> <li>▪ Fire department &amp; ambulance service</li> <li>▪ Road system – mapping</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Recreation – camp grounds</li> <li>▪ Lakes, rivers/outdoor recreation</li> <li>▪ Farmland</li> <li>▪ Schools</li> <li>▪ Rural community/small</li> <li>▪ Local government</li> <li>▪ Natural resources</li> <li>▪ waterways, rivers, state land</li> <li>▪ Agriculture</li> <li>▪ Emergency services – Fire Authority &amp; Ambulance service</li> <li>▪ Neighbor relations/safe neighborhood</li> <li>▪ Good rapport from township leaders</li> <li>▪ Location due to available amenities</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

**Weaknesses**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No senior center</li> <li>▪ Distance from shipping, county seat</li> <li>▪ No junk ordinance</li> <li>▪ No dentist</li> <li>▪ Small businesses are closing</li> <li>▪ Road signs</li> <li>▪ Lack of technology &amp; internet</li> <li>▪ Ability to repair roads</li> <li>▪ No senior activity center</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Youth activities – ball diamonds – recreational facility</li> <li>▪ Lack of employment</li> <li>▪ Roads</li> <li>▪ Lack of high speed internet</li> <li>▪ Nothing to keep our young kids here</li> <li>▪ Lack of industry – job opportunity</li> <li>▪ Community awareness</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

- Lack of enforcement of junk ordinance
- Recreational Facilities
- Road Conditions
- School – no school pride, workers able to come in from street; (subsidies) no background checks working with personnel needs to challenged kids
- Young kids racing Garfield Road
- Poor communication/lack of DSL, Cell phone towers
- Lack of signs – crossing horses, slow down, repairs
- Employment opportunities/create

- investment opportunities with the community
- Technology time warp:DSL
- Roads
- Results from our distance county seat
- Lack of community involvements
- Taxes
- Not get carried away with ordinances or zoning – don't be like Perry Township
- Empty store fronts in village
- Public access to White Lake
- Volunteer fire department
- Distance to hospital
- Abandoned houses and mobile homes
- No cable TV

#### Opportunities

- Senior housing – affordable
- Need jobs
- Technical center
- Going green
- Internet services
- Protect waterways conservation
- DNR & DEQ involvement
- Bike trails – walking trails
- Agriculture specialty farmers market
- Orbow Park
- Bring people to our area
- Develop camp ground
- Recreational facilities
- Advanced technology – Towers, etc.
- Light industry
- Collaboration projects with the village for village improvement
- Bring tech to township
- Better more camping – utilize the current ones

- Increase community rec activities – firm market
- Promote natural resources/tourism
- Improve technology
- Senior activities
- Promoting what we have
- Public input meetings like this surveys like this
- To develop more sense of community – so neighbors know each other – community activities
- Senior living – retirements – settlements – nursing homes
- Good place to raise family
- Good school system
- Safe place to live
- Can be involved in local government
- Access to Lake Michigan

### Threats

- High taxes
- High gas prices – far to go for shopping, etc.
- Foreclosures
- Losing jobs
- Weeds in lake & zebra mussels
- Young people leaving area
- Lack of funds – to continue strengths, fund opportunities, pay for weakness & prevent threats
- High taxes
- Empty houses – people moving
- Future employment
- Lack of farmers
- All levels of government
- People are afraid of change & progress
- Community awareness
- Taxes high, economy poor, some unable to pay
- Employment opportunities – no new money
- Loss the small community, risk of housing development, poor roads
- Money
- Aging population
- Doing nothing
- Opportunities for younger crowd
- Junk ordinance enforceable within reason
- Unreasonable taxes – increased taxes make it unaffordable for st. citizens – to families to remain in homes
- Road conditions
- Fear of change
- Water pollution
- Forest management
- Politics
- No senior playground
- No opportunities or few for young people

Identified below are the results for the 24 write-in responses.

### Strengths

- Natural resources
- Outdoor activities
- Small town atmosphere/feeling
- Friendliness of most people
- Lakes and rivers
- Friendliness
- Wildlife
- 4<sup>th</sup> of July
- Good Zoning Ordinances
- Proper usage of local parks, lakes & river areas
- Library
- Choice of churches
- Good roads
- Clean up days
- Fishing fest
- Quietness
- Nature
- People
- Small community with rural atmosphere
- Family oriented area
- Lakes & rivers recreation
- Family connections
- Agriculture/Tourism
- Library & education

- We work well together and we help when we need to
- Junk-day
- Quiet living
- Good school system
- Lots of lakes for fishing
- Nice township hall
- Quiet, slower pace life style
- People know their neighbors & are there to help if needed
- Great people who appear to want to do the right thing – ready to work on this project and come up with ideas and a plan.

- Dedicated board
- Reasonable condition homes/structures
- Fire department, library, school, ambulance service
- 4<sup>th</sup> of July Fun Fest, Fall fishing contest.
- Agriculture: specialty crops
- Location
- Natural beauty
- No subdivisions
- Retirement community
- Dog rabies shot days

#### Weaknesses

- Lack of job opportunities
- Allowing single wide mobile homes to be placed on land
- Lack of high speed internet
- Lack of interest in township affairs.
- Infrastructure – internet, cell phone
- Poor roads
- No communications – no newsletter with local government/tax payers
- No local newspaper
- Unethical board members and trustees
- Unfair property assessments
- No biking/hiking trails
- No teen centers
- Joint working together with village on growth/development
- Road patching
- No center for seniors
- Need more information on area activities
- Signs – slowdown horse crossing/blind area

- Police
- Nothing for the children to do
- No pole vault for our truck team for our school
- Failure to uphold ordinances – buildings in particular (housing)
- Lack of residential tax base
- Technology
- Lack of business
- Lack of involvement from residents
- Technology for kids
- Too many people have no respect of our natural resources – its sad to see how our town is dirtied by people – mainly on the river.
- No high speed internet
- Convenient hours for paying taxes
- Not enforcing trash laws on people's property
- County-townships working together for equality of tax funds
- Roads need repair
- Lack of good cell phone access
- Empty stores on main street

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- Non drivable vehicles in yards
- Poor conditions of county roads (Gale Road)
- Lack of restaurants
- Appraisal system of property
- Turmoil on the board
- Roads getting bad
- Low incomes
- Lack of education – some choose not to graduate or go on
- Need bike trails from Heesperia to Walkersville good for visitors & hikers
- People who do not like change and don't feel anyone should tell them how to take care of their property

- Junk in yards
- Internet service in rural area cell phone service
- Enforcement of junk ordinance
- Big city people wanting the amenities of the city
- Catering to the wealthy few rather than the average person
- No consistence on property tax assessment – to much favoritism shown as -discrimination!!
- Trash & junk
- Out of sync township board has to be changed
- Road repair

### **Opportunities**

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- Offer incentives to attract business
- Parks
- Promote tourism
- We need camping
- We need organized senior citizen programs
- We need good recreational program
- We need organized health fitness program
- Recreation
- Fishing/hunting
- Place to go for learning – Library
- Senior Center (activities)
- Volunteer community to help repair poor & handicapped & deserving individuals
- Habitat for humanity new home
- Extreme make over for special deserving family
- Growth increase for village
- Parks – tell people about it
- Township own campground

- Better "shopping" or quaint shops – specialty stores
- Preserve lakes & rivers
- Preserve open land
- Promote tourism camping, canoeing, etc.
- Newsletters – involve residents
- Growth for business
- Bring in better technology
- We should have clean up day where we gather as a group and clean our town and then have a big picnic.
- Township junk days (clean up) for residents
- Large natural settings – room to breath & kids play
- River/fishing/hunting area to use for pleasure
- Excellent school
- Scrap metal prices are high as people are encouraged to haul in their junk (treasure) at this time.
- Tourist, hunting, fishing, camping areas

- Small business
- Marketing your own product
- Confined livestock facilities
- Few/very few

- Citizens have to create their own
- Increase junk ordinances wording

### Threats

- Lack of job opportunities
- Apparent lack of pride in property appearances
- The attitude of some, that all progress & growth is bad
- Empty houses – become ghost town
- High taxes
- No economical senior housing
- No disaster warning system
- No job opportunities for young people
- Senior housing not available
- Mosquito & tent caterpillar infestation
- Crime/mark-ins
- Garfield Road – speed very high, young kids racing cars
- Housing development behind my house
- Wasting our taxes on school funding (by over kill on our library) when it could have been used on our school academics
- Over populated
- Growth – population or industry
- Inability to earn living
- Families moving out
- Same people making all the decisions
- No supervision of lakes & rivers
- Certain members that serve on the township board

- We need work on potholes and fallen roads
- Tax assessor lack of communication
- Junk in yards
- Distance people must go to work
- Unkept property/trash not appealing to potential land owners
- Lack of road maintenance
- Property taxes should be based on the income in Oceana County not Wayne County
- New residents who don't want to comply with local rules and regulations
- Lost of open ground farm land
- Money to maintain roads
- Your people leaving area, causing decrease in enrollment in our schools
- Township board
- Assessor that is a habitual liar
- Subdivisions
- To much favoritism to the few by township board
- High property taxes
- High land values
- Less revenue sharing
- The economy and people's inability to afford to keep their places cleaned up

**Other Comments:**

- Just right.
- I think it should be the same as the zoning is. For all the work that was done on zoning it would be a big waste to change it all now.
- We enjoy the atmosphere here so we can kick back from our busy schedules and enjoy the lake (Melvern) and our cottage & friends here.
- It is a good thing it is an election year. I have heard things going on with the township board that isn't fair.
- We need high-speed internet in this area.
- Only need one clean-up per year
- We need to all work together so we can have a great township
- Campbell lake misinformation in Oceana County Visitors Guide

**What do you like about the current community/conditions in Newfield Township?**

- Quiet rural life
- Access to beautiful natural resources (river, parks, campgrounds)
- "Reasonable" taxes
- Recycling program
- Ambulance/Fire service
- Library Service
- We are able to offer ambulance service, fire protection and local government in our township.
- Not over populated
- Friendliness of many of the residents and sense of belonging
- The interest in improving the overall plan for the future of the township (i.e. Master Plan) and a movement toward enforcement of a junk authority to get rid of much of the blight.
- Peaceful, friendly, good services for rural area: fire, ambulance, township clean up days, recycle.
- Many miles of hard surface road (some need repair)
- Need cemeteries.
- Citizens that show interest in community we have space.
- 

**What don't you like about the current community/conditions in Newfield Township, or what would you like changed?**

- A junk ordinance that can be enforced
- Street signs that can be read
- We need access to high speed internet services. We are being left behind!
- Improved (repaired) roads
- High speed internet availability
- Better cell phone reception (a tower)

- Would like an enforceable junk authority
- Don't appreciate an assessor that is a habitual liar
- Lack of communication – too many things happen that are over with before anyone finds out about them due to poor communication here
- We need stronger enforcement of junk ordinance – there are too many places in the township that have unsightly trash strewn across the landscape detracting from the beauty and in many cases causing potential pollution of the ground water, etc.
- Lack of communication towers (i.e. cell and internet)
- Many of our young people leave area
- Create interest to get more citizens involved
- Internet service & cell phone service

**How would you like to shape the future community/conditions in Newfield Township?**

- Actively involve as many residents as possible to address problems and concerns.
- Bring employment into the township
- Lean toward more in-home businesses because we are so rural.
- Hopefully it will be left as is
- Better communication capabilities i.e. internet access towers or broadband cell phone towers.
- We need a township paper or newsletter at least annually if not twice a year or quarterly. This is important.
- Maintain the agricultural zones (larger parcel size) and residential zones so that there is a place for "green space" and farming operations without interference of residences too close.
- Would like to see either broadband communication through high speed phone lines or a tower for wireless internet installed for our area. This is very needed in Newfield Township – internet services important! @1
- Improve enforcement on junk ordinance
- Protect water quality & environment
- Improve internet service

**What three things will shape your community over the next ten years?**

- Affordability
- Undeveloped natural settings
- No subdivisions
- Financing from the State of Michigan
- Less density around our lakes and streams
- We will have to start looking at better ways for sewage disposal
- The general economy
- Awareness of environmental problems and the willingness to do something to improve or reverse those problems

- Leadership at the township and county level must be able to address current problems & concerns of the residents and have the foresight to plan for possible concerns/problems in the future
- Access to internet other than dial up is #1. The other means thru the TV Satellite companies are not acceptable – we need DSL or a tower placed here or broadband connection – the phone company only connects high speed 2 miles from the village and the township is larger than that.
- Junk enforcement? Co-operation with an authority

**What is it that you value most for yourself, your family, and your community?**

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- A safe community
- A “green” environment
- Access to technology which allows us to keep up with the rest of the world
- Free access to local lakes & the White River
- Clean air and water
- Security
- Affordability
- Natural home settings
- Decent school system
- Feeling of safety because you know so many of your neighbors
- A quiet, friendly, comfortable place to live and work
- Affordable, peaceful, lots of room, natural beauty, outdoor activities, wildlife

**What do you want the local landscape and natural resources base to be like in thirty years?**

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- Preserve the natural beauty of our township
- Eliminate or significantly decrease the number of properties that don't conform to the junk ordinances
- Maintain the quality of our rivers, lakes, and streams
- As good or better than we are now
- No subdivisions
- To be left as natural as possible
- Cleaner & not polluted
- Pretty much like it is now only neater and not polluted
- Protect & maintain

**How do you envision the local economy fitting in to create the quality of life you desire and your vision for the landscape?**

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- I cannot envision that local economy being any different than it is today. There doesn't seem to be any area for growth in our community. It will take some creative thinking to address this problem.

- I believe if our local economy would improve any it would help in having more harmony with our citizens of our township
- Fair
- With better communication capability more business could be closer from houses here and the cost of travel would be less keeping more dollars in the local community

**Next Steps:**

The issues gathered from the SWOT Analysis exercise and write-ins will lead into the formulation of the Newfield Township Master Plan draft goals and objectives. The draft goals and objectives will then be presented to the Newfield Township Planning Committee and Board of Trustees for review and comment. Once finalized, the goals and objectives will be incorporated into the Newfield Township Master Plan.

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