

**Berrien Township  
Community Park,  
Recreation, Open Space  
and Greenway Plan  
*2025-2030***



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## **PURPOSE OF THE PLAN**

Community recreation plans serve a number of purposes. They guide local decision-making regarding recreational opportunities for five years. A thorough plan for a community's recreational facilities contributes greatly to the vitality of that community. Completion of a recreation plan also establishes five-year eligibility for recreation grants administered through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Berrien Township has undertaken this Plan in an effort to:

- Produce a coordinated recreation plan for the community;
- Assess the recreation facilities and programs of Berrien Township, including barrier-free compliance;
- Identify recreation deficiencies for the residents of Berrien Township and for visitors;
- Determine a course of action for the St. Joseph River corridor within the Township;
- Establish a course of action for the Township Board for the next five years;
- Solicit input from the public and from Berrien Springs Public Schools regarding recreation in Berrien Township; and
- Prioritize recreation improvements and acquisitions and identify potential funding sources.

The Berrien Township Board contracted with the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission, the regional planning agency serving Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren counties, to guide the Township through the planning process. After a series of meetings, a community survey, and a public hearing, the Berrien Township Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plan was completed. The result is a five-year plan that reflects the desire of the community to guide them in meeting the recreation needs and wants of schoolchildren, young adults, middle-aged and older citizens.

# COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

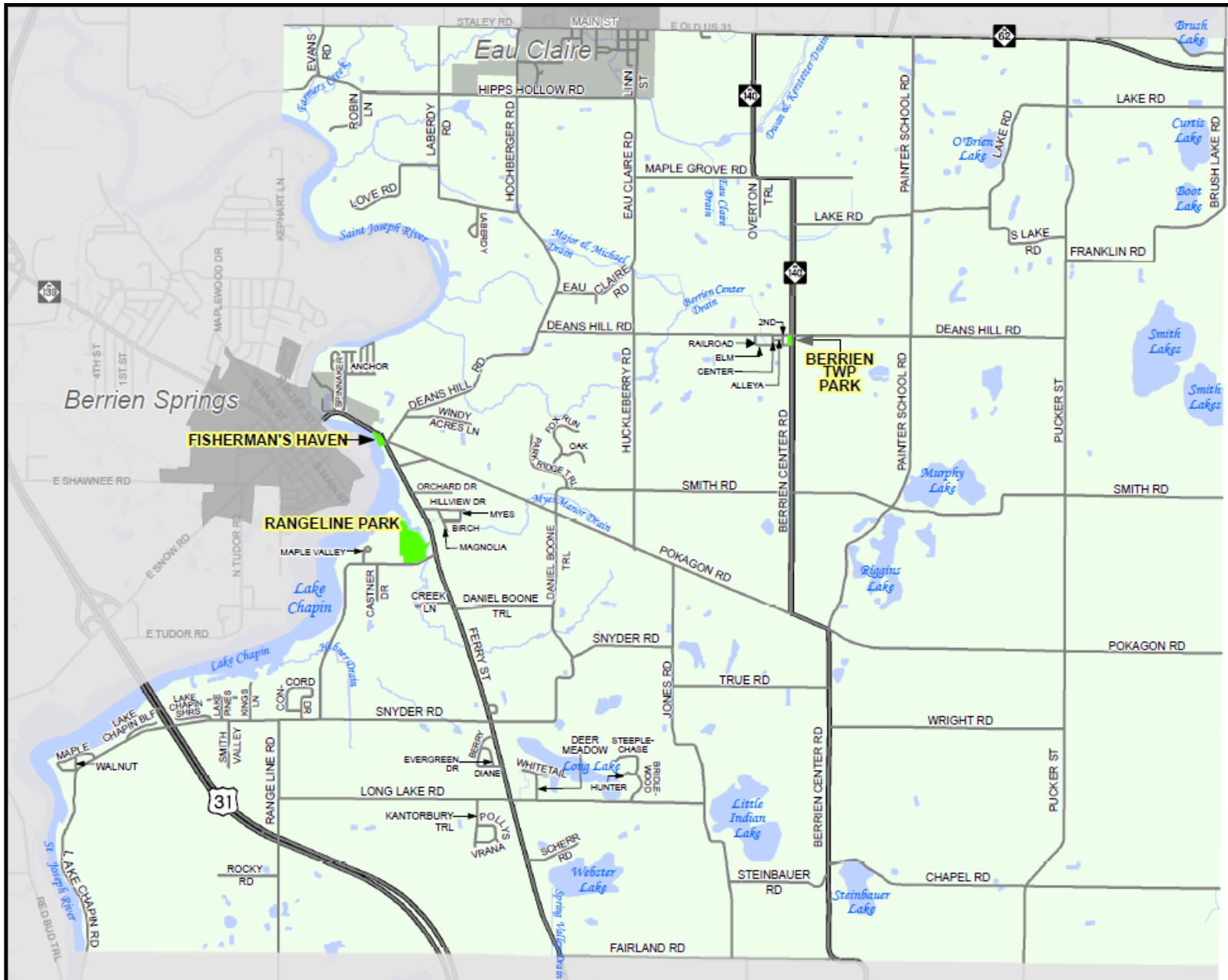
## *Physical Characteristics*

### **Location**

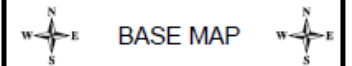
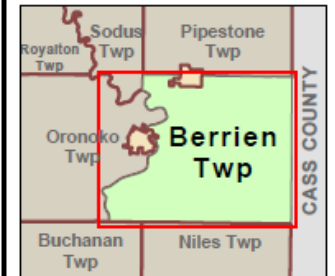
Berrien Township is located in southwest Lower Michigan, in the southeast portion of Berrien County. Pipestone Township is to the north, Niles Township to the south, Pokagon Township (Cass County) to the east and Oronoko and Sodus Townships to the west. The St. Joseph River is the dividing line between Berrien and Oronoko Townships. The village of Eau Claire is partially within Berrien Township.

**Berrien Center** is an unincorporated community within the township on M-140 about 10 miles north of Niles and just a few miles east of Berrien Springs. A post office with the name Berrien Centre opened April 28, 1857. The name changed to Berrien Center in 1893. According to the United States Census Bureau, the township has a total area of 36.8 square miles (95.3 km<sup>2</sup>), of which 35.1 square miles (90.8 km<sup>2</sup>) is land and 1.7 square miles (4.4 km<sup>2</sup>), or 4.66%, is water.

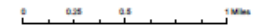
M139 (old US 31) cuts across the southwest corner of the township and M-140 runs north and south through the center of the township. Berrien Township is only two hours from the Chicago area, while cities such as South Bend, Niles, and Kalamazoo are less than one hour away. The Lake Michigan coastline and the Twin Cities of St. Joseph and Benton Harbor are only approximately 15 miles from Berrien Township.



### BERRIEN TOWNSHIP



- Berrien Township
- Berrien Township Park
- Lake, River, Stream & Drain



Sources  
 Base Layers: Michigan Geographic Framework v14a.  
 Drain: Berrien County GIS, 2013  
 Parks: Southwest Michigan Planning Commission, 2015



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 June 12, 2015

## History

Berrien Township was one of the earliest township settlements in Berrien County. The settlement began in 1827 when the John Johnson family, originally from Southern Indiana, settled on 80 acres. The density of the wilderness in which the early settlers lived is best shown by an incident that happened to one of them, Michael Hand. Michael went out one morning to shoot a squirrel for breakfast. Just a few rods from his house, he found a large breakfast -- a deer. While trying to drag the deer home, he became lost. A snowfall also added to his distress. After an hour of hopeless wandering, he shouted for help. His wife soon arrived on the scene showing that he had not been far from home at anytime and had been moving in a bewildered circle.

In April of 1832 Calvin Britain, the legislative representative from Berrien County, petitioned for the organization of Berrien Township from a portion of Niles Township. The first official election was held on April 1, 1833, at the tavern of Pitt Brown, who was immediately elected Supervisor of the Township. The number of settlers increased rapidly after 1840.

In 1847 the County Board of Supervisors passed a resolution instructing the Superintendents of the Poor to purchase land in Berrien Township for the establishment of a poor farm. Almost 200 acres were bought for a mere \$1,220. The Poor Farm was totally destroyed by fire in 1867 but was rebuilt in 1869-1870. This Poor Farm operation continued well into the twentieth century and eventually evolved into the Berrien General Hospital Center that is now Southwestern Medical Clinic. Today these 200 acres continue to serve Berrien County with many facilities located there including Love Creek Nature Center and the Berrien County Juvenile Center.

An important historical note is that this area lies along the Great Sauk Trail, a trail-waterway extending from Montreal to New Orleans. "Wolf's Prairie" was 1,000 acre prairie that existed before settlement and is now developed as Berrien Springs.

Berrien Township covers the unincorporated community of Berrien Center and part of incorporated Eau Claire Village. The Township has always been a home to rural dwellers and fruit and vegetable farmers. It is proud of its status quo. This friendly community enjoys a low crime rate and a reasonable increase in population. Although the residents do not encourage large industrial developments, they welcome that which will enhance the area. It is a good place for families who seek the peacefulness, friendliness, and quiet that such a community provides.

## Topography

Over 10,000 years ago glaciers advanced southward from Canada and covered Berrien County. Because this glaciation was so extensive, the landscape was heavily impacted. Evidence of this includes the variations in relief in the Berrien Springs area as well as the large numbers of lakes, streams, and wetlands. The St. Joseph River forms the border between Oronoko Charter and Berrien Townships. Berrien Township is characterized by an extremely hummocky terrain with topographic highs of over 750 feet above sea level and lows of approximately 650 feet above sea level.

## Climate

Lake Michigan has a great effect on the climate of Berrien County. The lake is responsible for keeping Berrien County cooler in the spring and summer and warmer in the fall and winter. This results in a growing season that is approximately 170 days.



The average temperature is 27°F in the winter with an average daily minimum temperature of 20°F. In the summer, the average temperature is 70°F and the average daily maximum temperature is 81°F. The total annual precipitation is 36 inches with 56% falling from April thru September. The average seasonal snowfall is 67 inches, with an average of 61 days that have at least 1 inch or more of snow on the ground. In the summer the average amount of sunshine is 67% and in the winter the average amount is 37%.

## Soils

The soils in the area are also the result of glaciers; therefore, soil types vary widely in texture, permeability, stability, composition and other characteristics throughout the community. There are four major soil associations in the Berrien Springs area. The table below gives the name and general characteristics of these soil associations. Soils in the area are fairly well suited for construction purposes as well as agricultural uses. Most of the Berrien Springs area is comprised of the Riddles-Crosier Oshtemo Association. An area of the Coloma-Spinks-Oshtemo Association is located in southeast Berrien Township. It should be noted that these are just generalizations of the soil in and around Berrien Springs and are meant to provide a broad understanding of the soil conditions. To determine the suitability and soil conditions of a particular site, further investigation would be needed.



### Soil Associations

Name	General Characteristics
Coloma-Spinks-Oshtemo	Well-drained soils with a moderately rapid permeability. Generally located on moraines, till plains, and outwash plains.
Riddles-Crosier-Oshtemo	Somewhat poorly drained soils located on till plains and moraines. Permeability is moderately slow.

Source: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service, Soil Survey of Berrien County, Michigan, 1980.

## Water Resources

The area as well as all of Berrien County is blessed with an abundance of freshwater lakes, rivers and streams. There are 12 inland lakes in Berrien Township along with Lake Chapin/St. Joseph River. Just south of M139 (Old US 31) the St. Joseph River is impounded by a dam resulting in the formation of Lake Chapin. There are also many small streams and drains that flow into the St. Joseph River. All of Berrien Township is within the St. Joseph River Watershed, which means all the land in the Township drains to the St. Joseph River.



Overall, Berrien County possesses 42 miles of Lake Michigan coastline and 86 inland lakes. This bounty of freshwater serves as a haven for wildlife and is a valuable recreational resource.

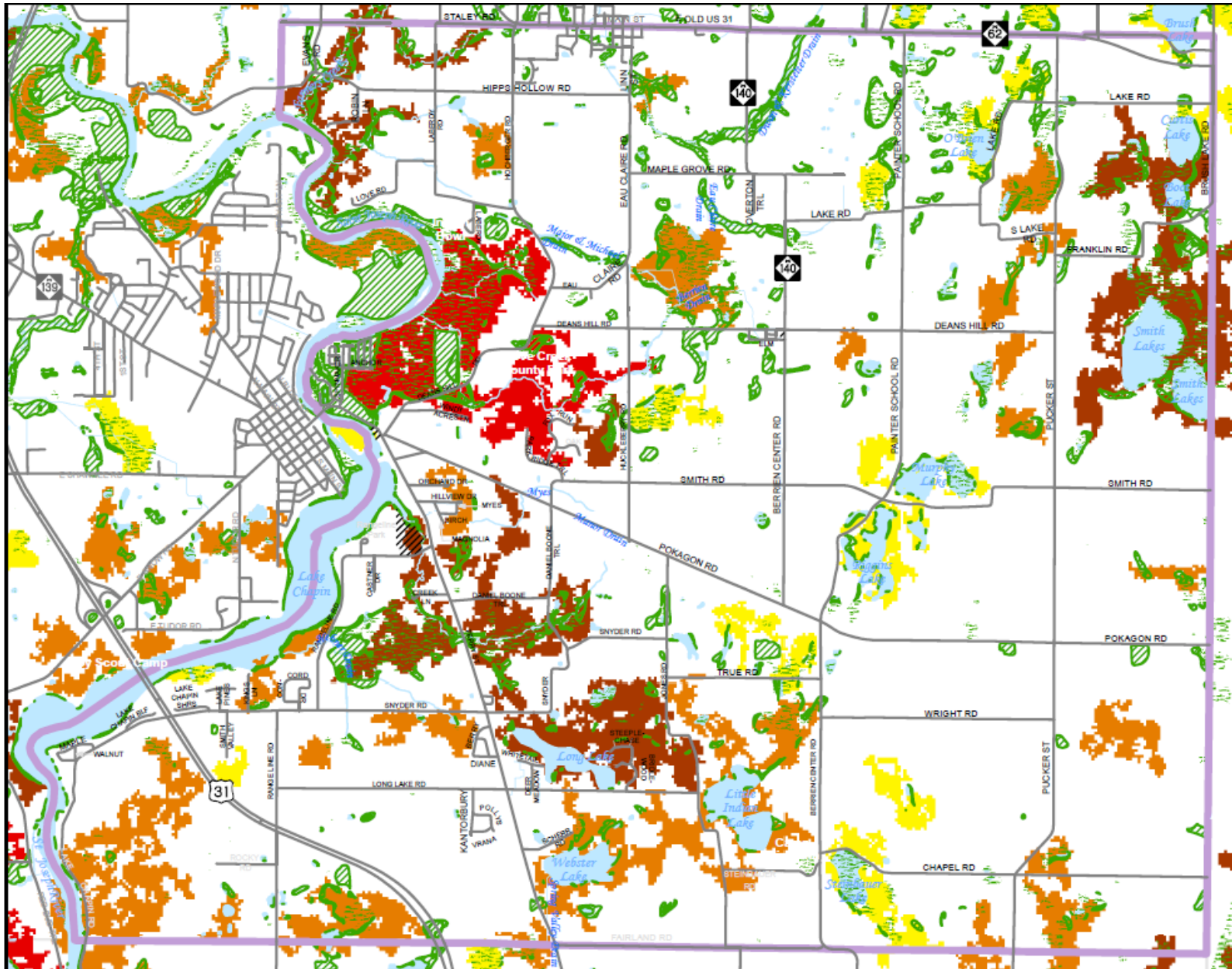
Wetlands play a key role in environmental quality and are quite common throughout the Berrien Springs area. They act as filters for lakes and rivers. Wetlands offer a natural system for minimizing sedimentation and nutrient laden runoff into the St. Joseph River and inland lakes. They help in flood prevention and supply key habitat areas for wildlife to thrive. Preservation of wetlands and marshes is not only extremely important to the future of the St. Joseph River and Lake Chapin, but ultimately, to the Berrien Township area itself.

There is a major wetland complex along the St. Joseph River in Berrien Township called the Indian Bowl. This area is extremely important for wildlife and protecting the St. Joseph River. There are also many intact wetlands surrounding several of the inland lakes and small drains/streams in the Township. Protecting these wetlands is imperative to protect the water quality of these lakes and streams. Any development should be sensitive to the wetlands as these areas provide such important functions to the community (maintaining water quality, mitigating flooding, etc.). The map on the following page shows detail of the existing and lost wetlands and other important conservation areas in the Township.

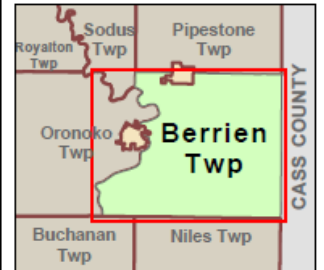
<b>Wetlands in Berrien Township</b>	
<b>Existing Wetlands</b>	2,657.35 Acres
<b>Drained or Filled Wetlands (potential restoration areas)</b>	761.17 Acres

Groundwater is the source of drinking water through private wells for Township residents.





## BERRIEN TOWNSHIP



- Berrien Township Park
- Berrien Township

### POTENTIAL CONSERVATION AREAS (PCA)\* RANK

- Highest
- Higher
- High
- Medium

\*Potential Conservation Areas (PCA) are defined as places on the landscape dominated by native vegetation that have various levels of potential for harboring high quality natural areas and unique natural features.

- Wetlands
- Potential Wetland Restoration Area\*\*

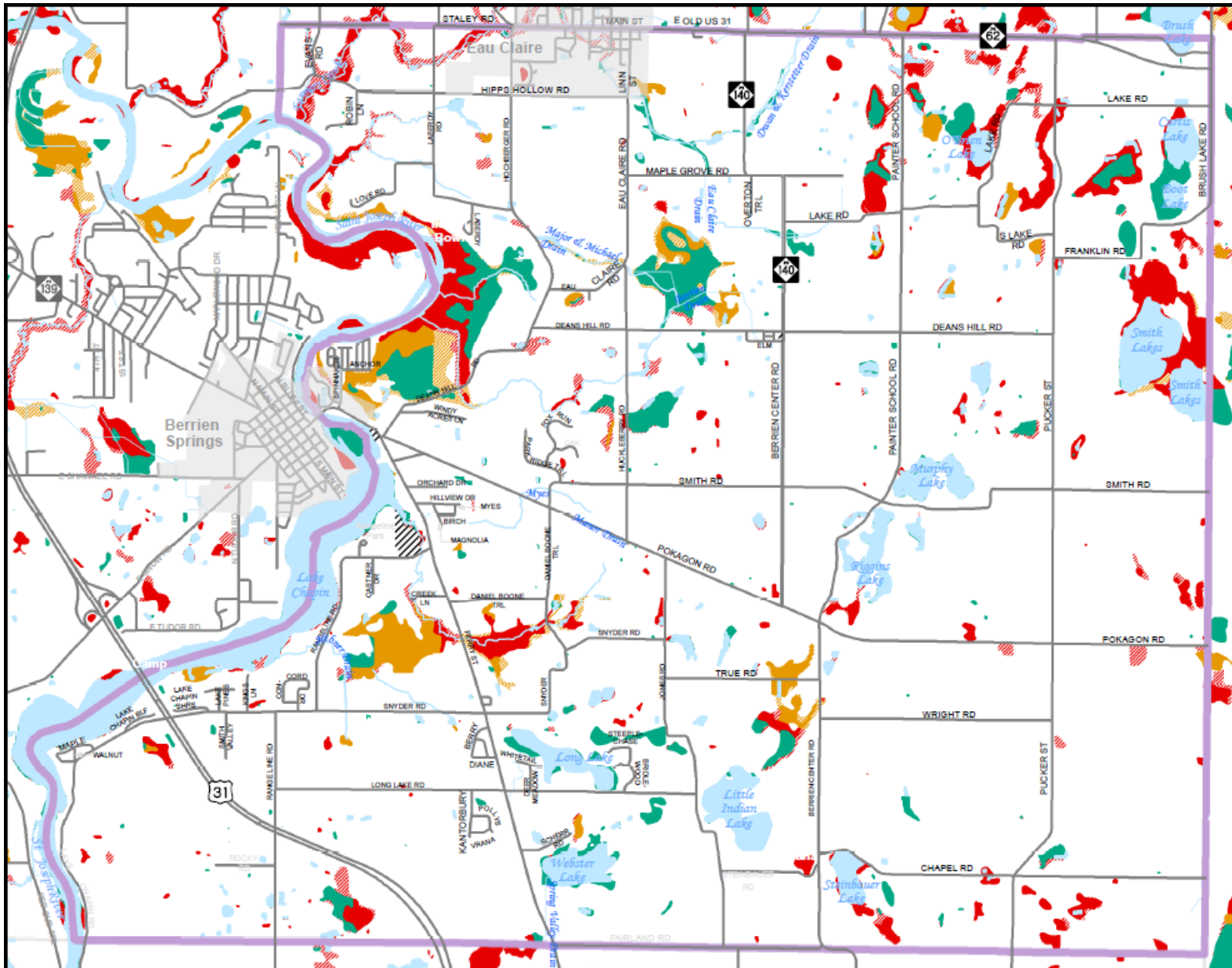
\*\*Areas likely to have conditions suitable for wetland restoration efforts.

0 0.25 0.5 1 Mile

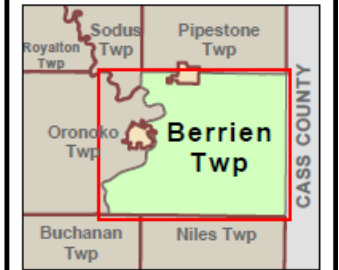
Sources  
 Base Layers: Michigan Geographic Framework v14a  
 Wetlands: MI Department of Environmental Quality, 2005  
 Potential Wetland Restorations Areas: MI Department of Environmental Quality, 2007  
 PCA: Michigan Natural Features Inventory, 2007  
[http://www.swmpc.org/downloads/growgreen/GL\\_fnaireport.pdf](http://www.swmpc.org/downloads/growgreen/GL_fnaireport.pdf)

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Southwest Michigan Planning Commission  
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## BERRIEN TOWNSHIP



- Berrien Township Park
- Berrien Township

### Wetland Functional Assessment

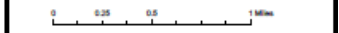
#### SEDIMENT RETENTION

- Existing Wetlands**
- High Significance
- Medium Significance
- Lost Wetland**
- High Significance
- Medium Significance

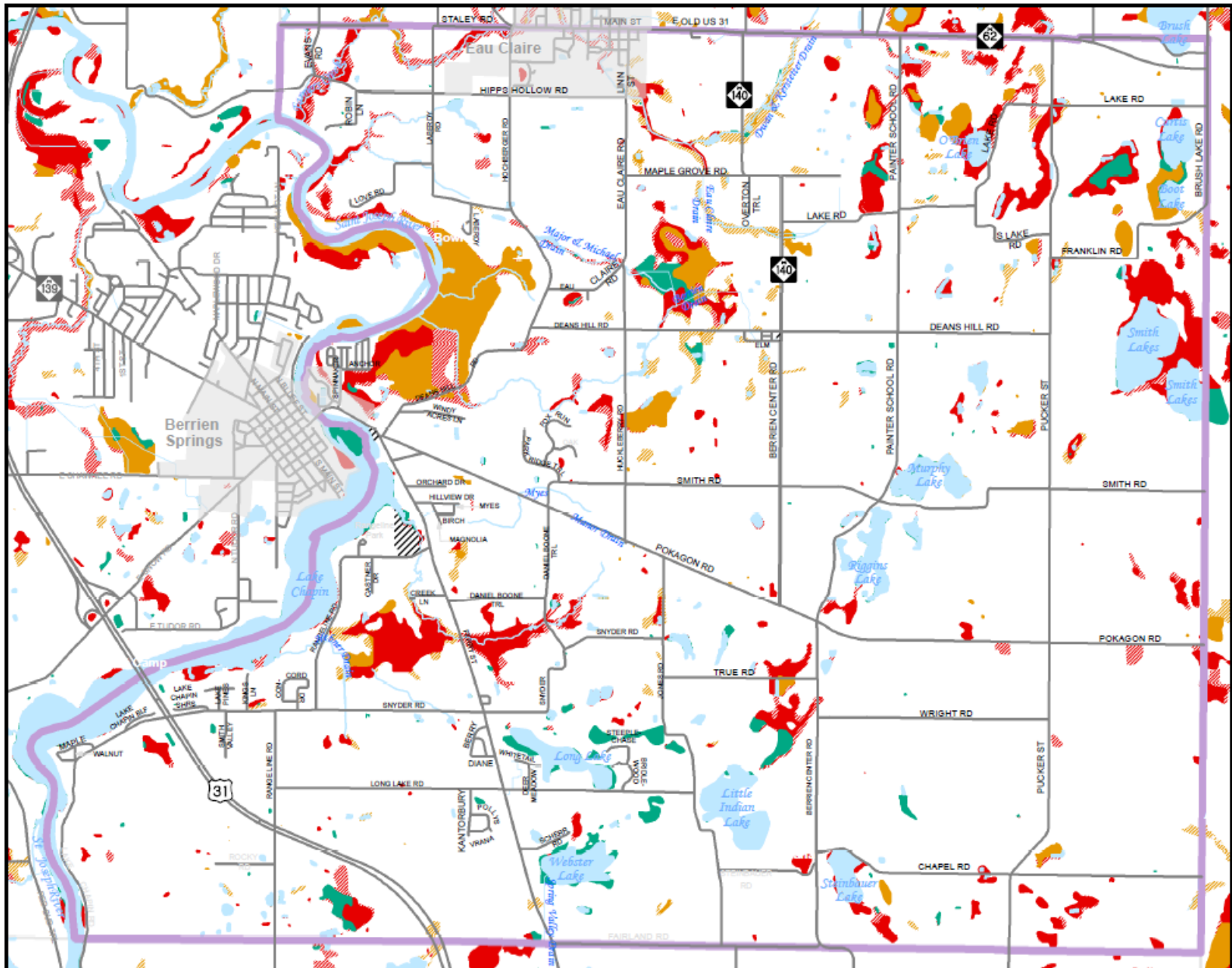
Wetland Functional Assessment rates wetlands according to its ability to perform specific ecological functions. This map shows wetlands that function at a high level to store sediment and other particulate matter.

- Current Wetland\*

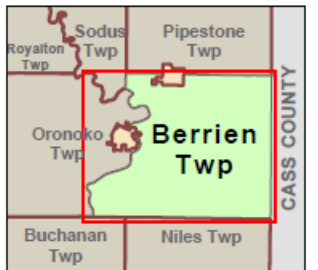
\*All other existing wetland that are not shown in the Wetland Functional Assessment for Sediment Retention



Sources:  
 Base Layers: Michigan Geographic Framework v14a  
 Wetlands: MI Department of Environmental Quality, 2012  
[http://www.swmpc.org/downloads/growgreen/GL\\_fnaireport.pdf](http://www.swmpc.org/downloads/growgreen/GL_fnaireport.pdf)  
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### BERRIEN TOWNSHIP



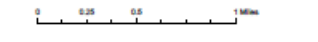
- Berrien Township Park
- Berrien Township

#### Wetland Functional Assessment NUTRIENT TRANSFORMATION

- Existing Wetlands
- High Significance
  - Medium Significance
- Lost Wetland
- High Significance
  - Medium Significance

Wetland Functional Assessment rates wetlands according to its ability to perform specific ecological functions. This map shows wetlands that perform at a high level to transform and capture nutrients which lessens run-off of nutrients to rivers, lakes, & streams.

- Current Wetland\*
- \*All other existing wetland that are not shown in the Wetland Functional Assessment for Nutrient Transformation



Sources  
 Base Layers: Michigan Geographic Framework v14a  
 Wetlands: MI Department of Environmental Quality, 2012  
[http://www.swmpc.org/downloads/growgreen/GI\\_finalreport.pdf](http://www.swmpc.org/downloads/growgreen/GI_finalreport.pdf)  
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## Vegetation, Wildlife and Fish

As indicated in the maps above, there are many high ranking conservation areas in Berrien Township. The wealth and diversity of natural resources found in and around Berrien Township provide excellent opportunities for recreation. Vegetation in the area varies greatly depending mainly on land use. Forested areas can easily be found with a large variety of different species of hard and softwood trees including Beech, Ash, Maple, Oak, Hickory, Red and White Pines as well as many others. Many factors influence the types of vegetation that are found in an area. Examples of these factors are soil types, availability of water, history of land use, logging and slope.



Wildlife and fish in the region are equally as diverse as that of the vegetation. White-tailed deer are frequently seen and are a popular game species for many hunters. This area is also a major migratory route for a large variety of songbirds and waterfowl and is a popular destination for bird watchers. The St. Joseph River is a popular area for sport fishermen. Lakes in the area are also excellent fishing spots for bass and bluegill.








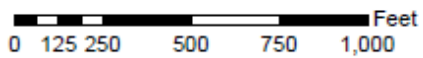
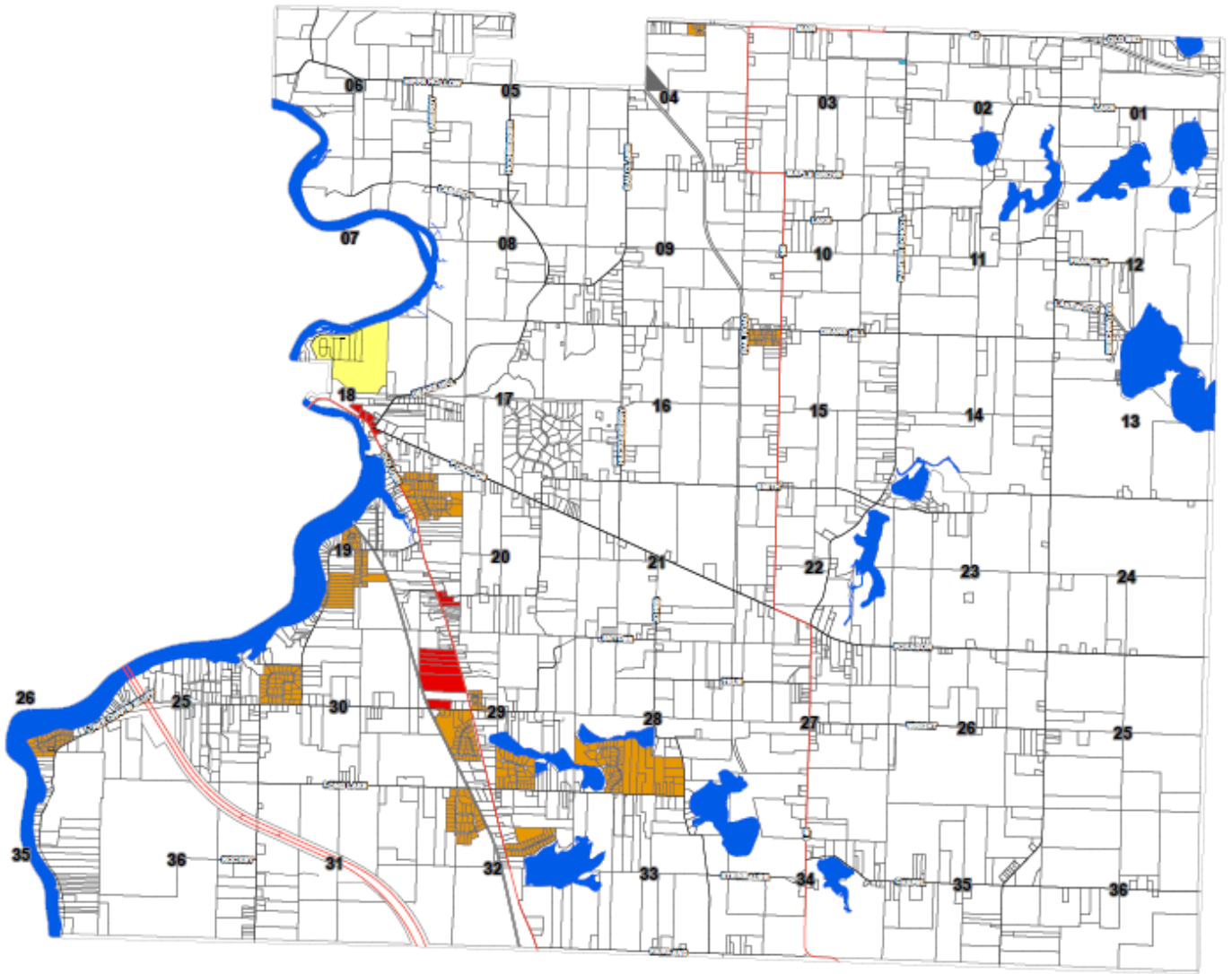
## Land Use/Zoning

The location of Berrien Township, as well as its natural features, has contributed greatly to the way in which it has evolved and been developed. The residential sections are located in areas that can take advantage of the natural beauty of rivers, streams, and lakes in the area while the business districts are strategically positioned on or near major transportation routes. The predominant land use is agricultural. Orchards, vineyards and farming activities are throughout the area. There are 2,033 housing units in Berrien Township; of that number 1,779 are occupied housing units according to the 2010 U.S. Census Bureau. Areas designated for light industrial use and limited and/or general manufacturing are limited to a section to the southeast of Village of Eau Claire in the northern area of Berrien Township.

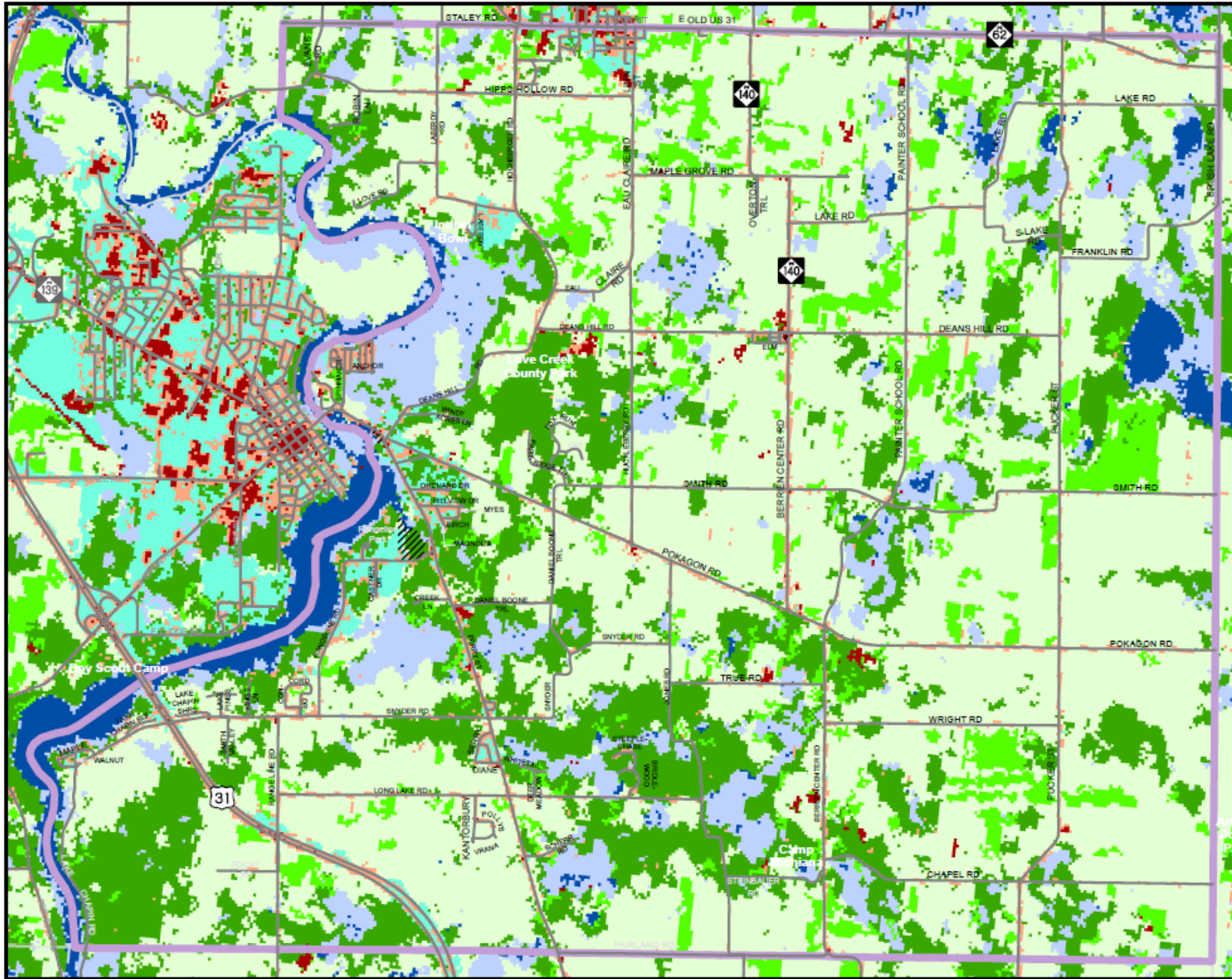
Currently the land cover in Berrien Township is mostly in agriculture, cultivated crop or pasture/hay (62%). About 32% of the Township is in natural areas – forest, wetlands and water. Only about 5% of the Township is developed.

Land Cover/Use	Acres	Percent of Total
High & Medium Intensity Developed	76	0.3%
Low Intensity Developed	879	3.7%
Developed Open Space	274	1.2%
Cultivated Crops	12883	54.8%
Pasture/Hay/Grassland	1721	7.3%
Forest	4831	20.6%
Wetland	2221	9.5%
Water	622	2.6%

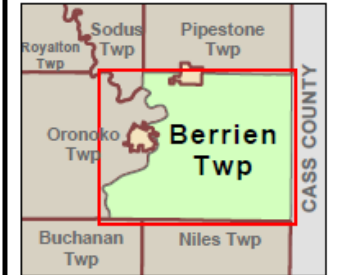
Legend	
<b>ZONING</b>	
	A-R Agricultural-Residential
	C-1 Commercial
	R-1 Residential
	I Industrial
	M-H Mobile Homes





**Berrien Township**  
**"Official Zoning Map"**











## BERRIEN TOWNSHIP



-  Berrien Township Park
-  Berrien Township

### LAND COVER/LAND USE

-  High & Medium Intensity Developed
-  Low Intensity Developed
-  Developed Open Space
-  Cultivated Crops
-  Pasture/Hay/Grassland
-  Forest
-  Wetland
-  Water



Sources  
 Base Layers: Michigan Geographic Framework v14a  
 Land Use/Cover: Western Great Lakes C-CAP 2010  
 Land Cover Data, NOAA's Ocean Service, Coastal Services Center (CSC), 2012

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July 03, 2015  
 Southwest Michigan Planning Commission  
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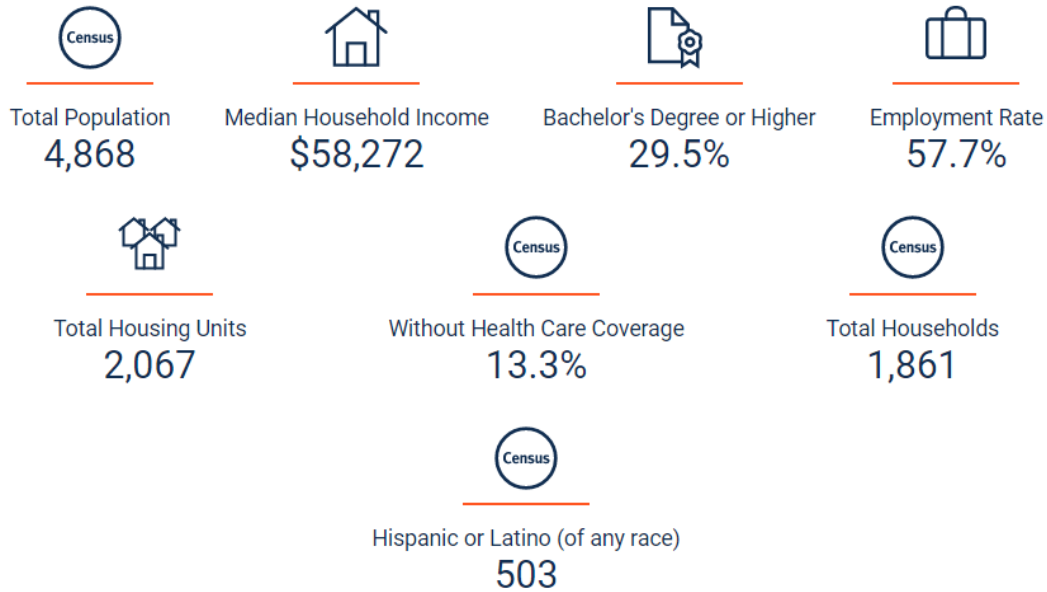
## **Transportation**

Berrien Township is located within close proximity to many major transportation routes that provide easy access to large urban areas. US-31 is the major road that runs through Berrien Township connecting them to Niles and South Bend to the south and Benton Harbor/St. Joseph to the northwest.

Berrien Township is located about 10 miles southeast of Interstate 94, which connects the major metropolitan centers of Detroit and Chicago. Detroit is located 200 miles to the east and Chicago is 100 miles to the southwest. Rail service is also available; Amtrak provides service daily to Chicago from St. Joseph and Niles.

Air travel in the area is most easily accessed at the South Bend Regional Airport. Other options for commercial travel include airports in Kalamazoo, Grand Rapids, Lansing, Chicago and Detroit, which are all within 200 miles of Berrien Springs. The Jerry Tyler Memorial Airport in Niles as well as the Southwest Michigan Regional Airport in Benton Harbor service private airplanes and jets. Andrew's University has an airport that is utilized by visitors and people of the University and the greater Berrien Springs Area.

## Social Characteristics



## Population

A number of social and economic factors impact the growth or decline in the area. Any substantial change in the number of residents in the area will have a direct impact on the recreation facilities, needs and perceptions of the area.

**Table 1: Population of Berrien Township and surrounding area**

Municipality	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	% Change 2010-2020
<b>Berrien Township</b>	<b>4,875</b>	<b>5,191</b>	<b>5,075</b>	<b>5,084</b>	<b>4,868</b>	<b>-4.2%</b>
Village of Berrien Springs	2,042	1,927	1,862	1,800	1,910	6.1%
Oronoko Charter Township	10,761	9,819	9,843	9,193	9,226	0.4%
Sodus Township	2,260	2,065	2,139	1,932	1,995	3.3%
Eau Claire Village	573	494	656	625	552	11.7%

Source: US Census



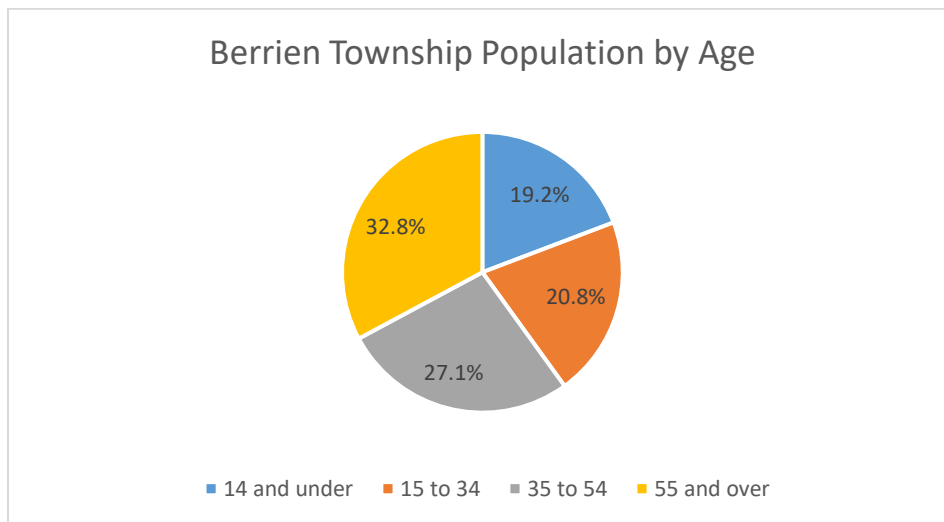
## Age

In 2019, for Berrien Township, the median age was 43.2 years old. A trend that is expected for the future of the Area is a growth in the number of persons 55 and over. The aging of the “Baby Boomers” coupled with the fact that people are living longer; it is likely that a growth in this population will continue in Berrien Township and the surrounding areas in the coming years.

**Table 2: 2019 Population by Age**

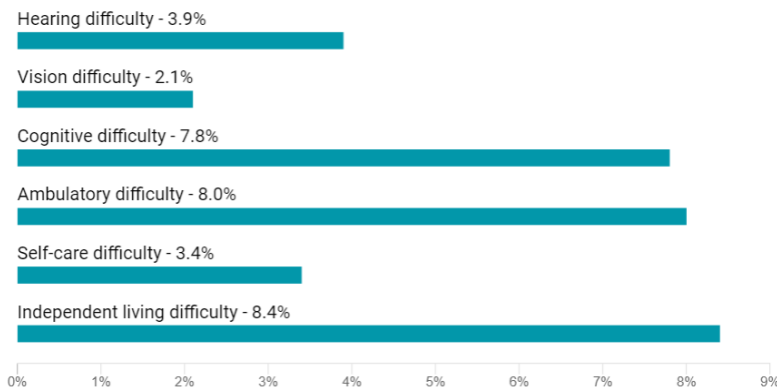
	Age Group	Percent		Age Group	Percent		Age Group	Percent
<b>Village of Berrien Springs</b>	14 and under	17.0	<b>Berrien Township</b>	14 and under	19.2	<b>Oronoko Charter Township</b>	14 and under	12.9
	15 to 34	31.4		15 to 34	20.8		15 to 34	37.0
	35 to 54	25.7		35 to 54	27.1		35 to 54	22.9
	55 and over	25.8		55 and over	32.8		55 and over	27.4

Source: US Census



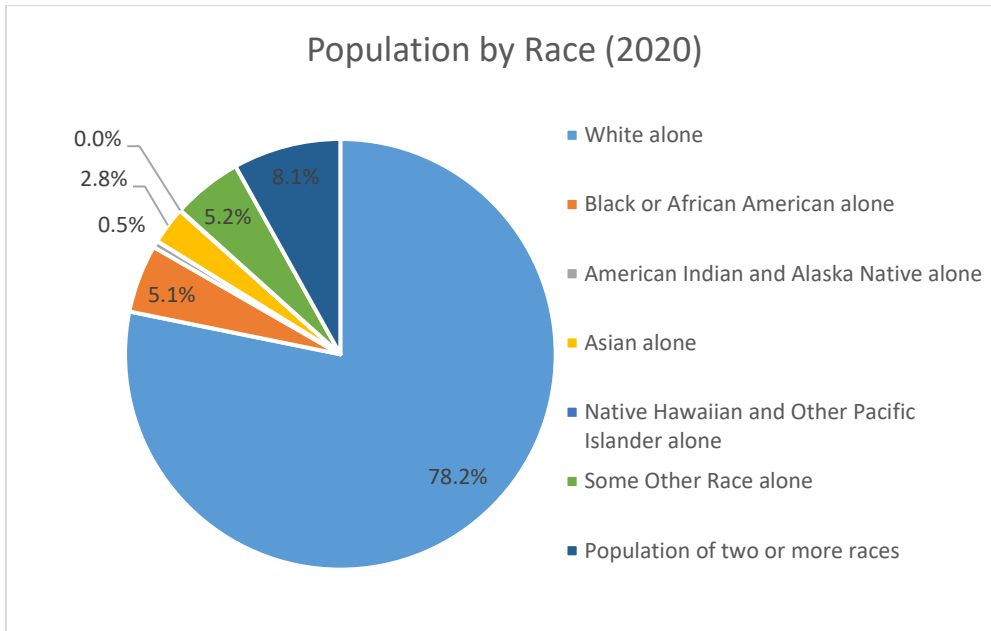
## Persons with Disabilities

According to the 2019 American Community Survey, the population with a disability in Berrien Township is 15.3%.



Source: US Census

## Race

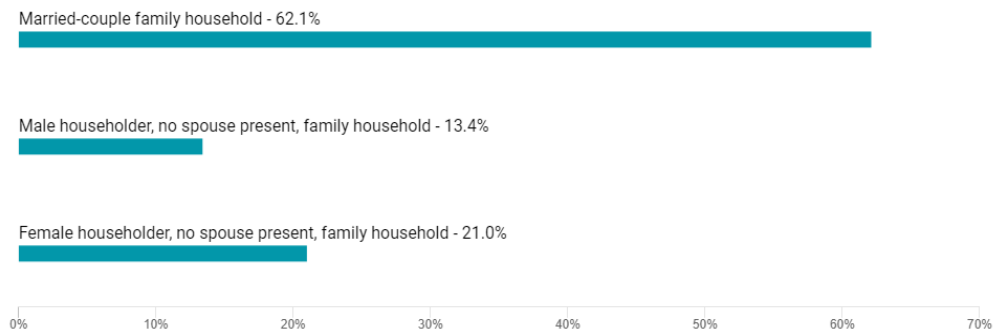


Source: US Census

## Housing

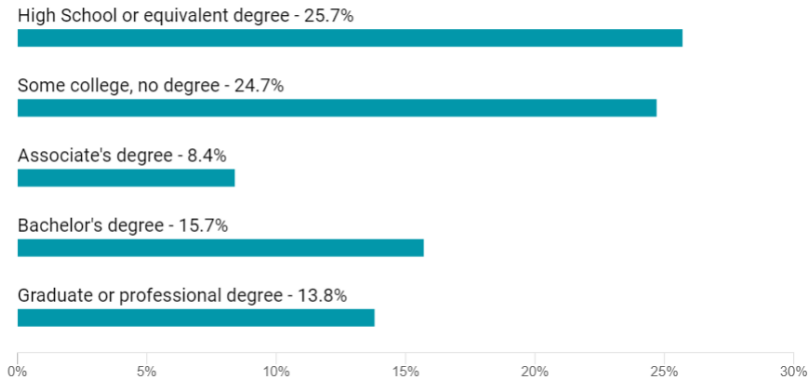
In 2020 there were 1,861 households in Berrien Township, 62.1% of them being married-couple family households. The total number of housing units stood at 2,067 of which 1,817 were occupied (250 vacant). The majority of housing units were owner-occupied (76.4%) with renters making up 23.6%. The average family size was 3.11 persons. The largest age category in Berrien Township is 55 years and older. This could be interpreted to mean that there are more “empty nesters” in Berrien Township who may have interests in more leisure time activities in the future. Overall, the strong family base in and around the community is a contributing factor to the types of housing that are present.

### Household Types



Source: US Census

### Educational Attainment



Source: US Census

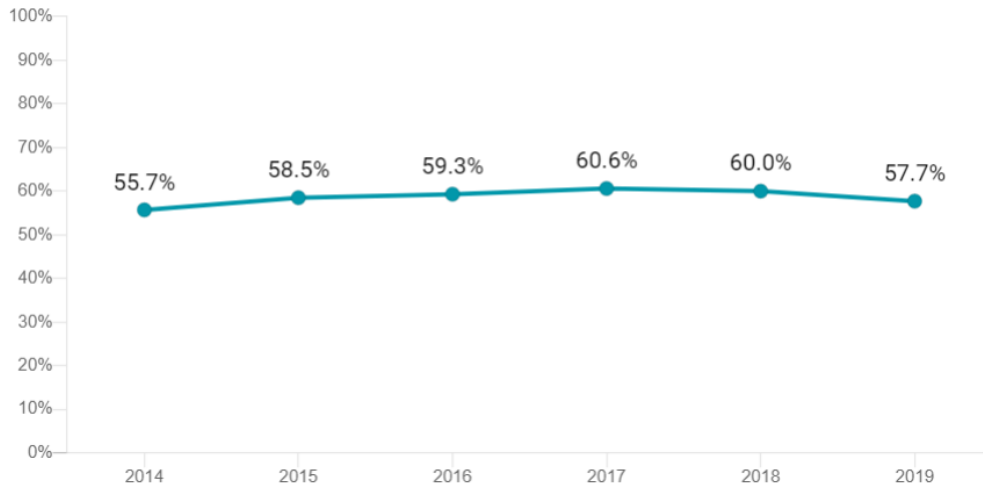
### Income and Employment

**Table 3: Median Household Income 2019**

	<b>Median Household Income</b>	<b>Median Income (Families)</b>	<b>Median Income (Married-couple families)</b>	<b>Median Income (nonfamily households)</b>
<b>Berrien Township</b>	<b>\$58,272</b>	<b>\$78,704</b>	<b>\$86,509</b>	<b>\$26,861</b>
Berrien Springs Village	\$41,307	\$57,303	\$72,083	\$26,181
Oronoko Township	\$44,980	\$58,438	\$63,325	\$24,957
Sodus Township	\$50,313	\$57,617	\$59,961	\$30,781
Eau Claire Village	\$52,250	\$55,469	\$63,056	\$37,188

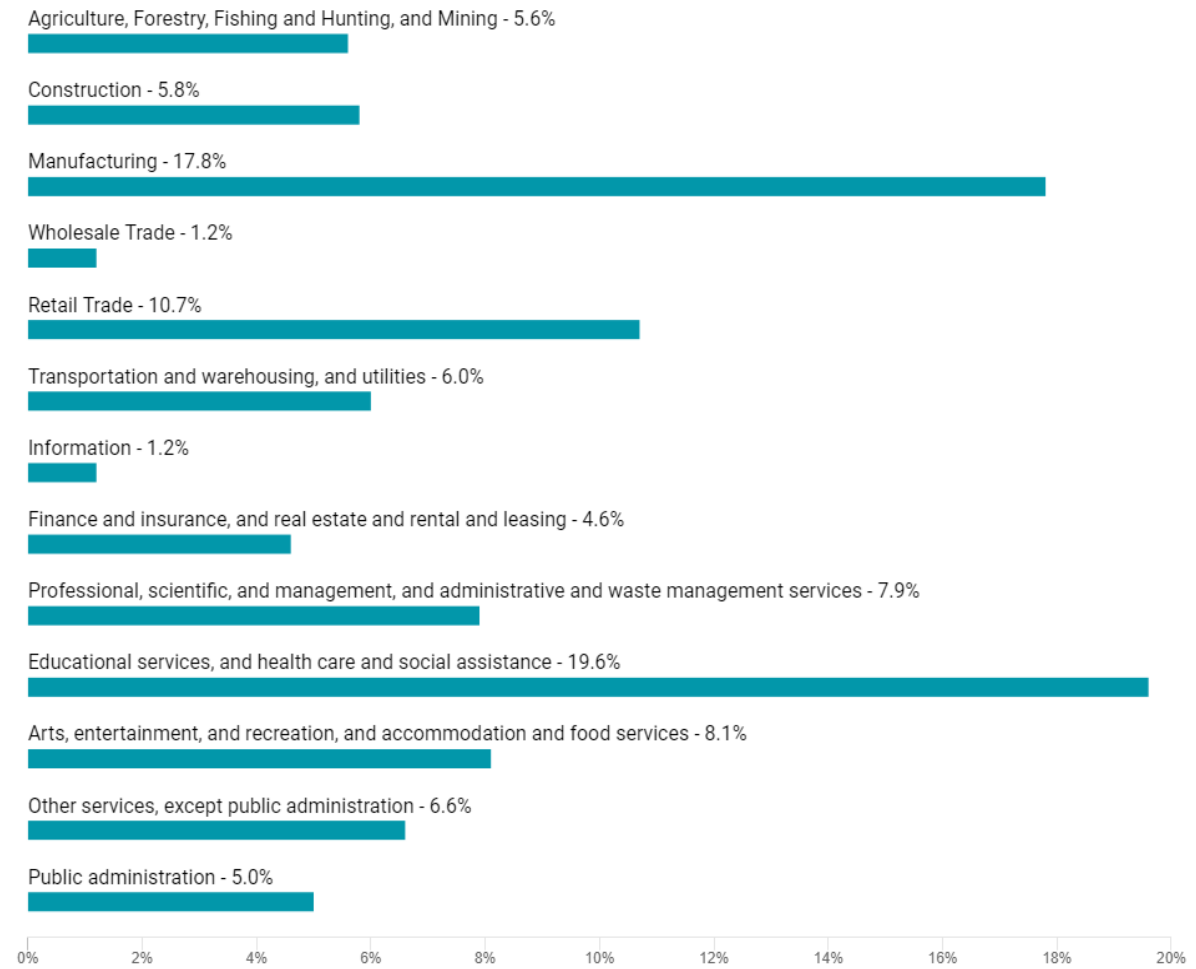
Source: US Census ACS

### Employment Rate (2014 – 2019)



Source: US Census

### Industry for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over



Source: US Census

## Poverty

Table 6: Persons Living in Poverty, 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

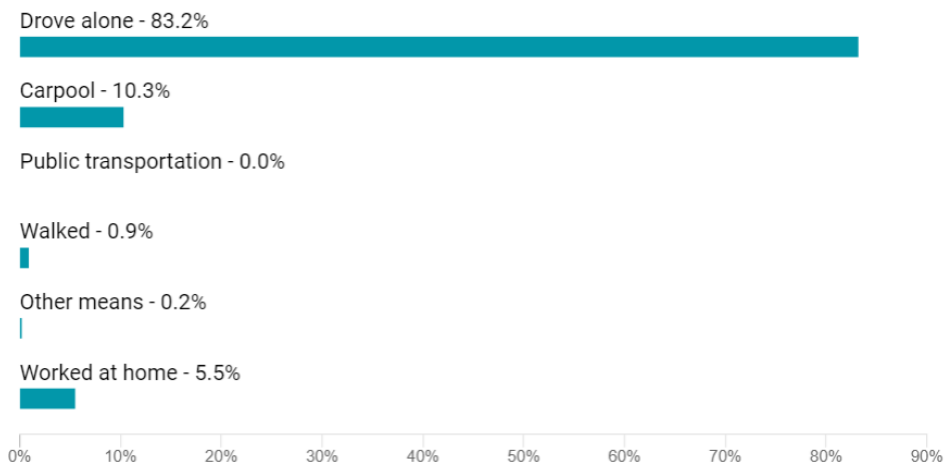
Age	Berrien Township
Under 18 years	28.2%
18 to 64 years	15.0%
65 years and over	5.4%
All ages	16.0%

Source: US Census 2019 American Community Survey 5 year Estimates

## Commuting

The average travel time to work was 24.5 minutes in 2019.

### Means of Transportation to Work (workers 16 and over)



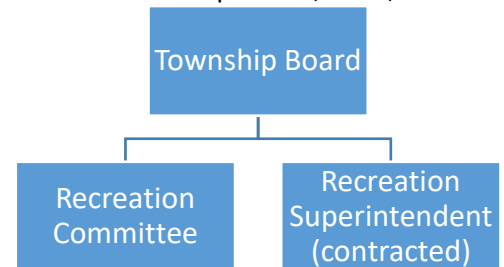
Source: US Census

## ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

Berrien Township is organized under a general law form of government. It provides services, including general government activities, volunteer fire department and recreation. The Township Board sets policy and directs staff actions in fulfillment of those policies. The Township Supervisor is the direct link between the Board and the Township's operations, and is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the Township.

In addition to the supervisor, the township employs a full-time administrative assistant, a deputy clerk, a deputy treasurer and an assessor. The Township Board consists of a supervisor, clerk, treasurer and four (4) trustees.

Berrien Township parks are maintained on a contractual basis. The 2016 budget for park maintenance and recreation activities is \$16,000 for Range Line Park and \$7,000 for Fisherman's Haven. Park maintenance and recreation activities are entirely funded from general tax levies. The Township has a Recreation Committee that is responsible for facilitating the recreation planning process and makes recommendations to the Township Board for improvements and projects.



The communities of Berrien Springs Village, Berrien Township, and Oronoko Charter Township formed a joint recreation board called The Greater Berrien Springs Recreation Board. It is funded by appropriations from each of the entities' annual budgets and supplemented by other income. The Greater Berrien Springs Recreation Board is made up of six/nine representatives with two appointed by each of the townships, the village the school corporation and an at-large representative selected by the Board. Each of the respective governing bodies annually appoints their two representatives to the board.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

This plan is written in fulfillment of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources requirement that an eligible municipality must have a locally adopted 5-year recreation plan in place prior to submission of any application for Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grants. The writing and acceptance of the recreation plan is an important process. It is the community's opportunity to set the priorities of spending money and developing the future facilities and programs to meet their needs.

Berrien Township Parks Committee meetings were held as needed. The committee assisted with the plan development. Community input was also solicited through a survey and discussions between Township officials and the public. The survey was conducted in 2020 as part of the Master Plan update effort. The survey questions and results are provided below. The survey and discussions provided guidance to the Parks Committee for updating the goals and action plan. Lastly a 30 day public comment period and public hearing was held on January 28, 2025.

## Survey Results

List specific improvements you would like to see at area parks:

### Berrien Township Hall Park

recycling bins
Add more flowering shrubs and keep hall parking lot free from weeds.
More mulch
Fence along M140, traffic speed concerns
Fence around play area

### Range Line Park

update equipment
recycling bins
Dog-friendly area; improved trails along river; bathrooms
Disc Golf course
Consistent branding and promotion of township resources
Upgrade equip
Sign at end of Range Line Rd. indicating it's location.
Better access for fishermen
new playground equip, better facilities
Love to see the grant distributed and put Search BPS; District Calendar; Click on Board of Ed Mtg and you will find the link and passcode to use. Great location for further growth!
Cost of pavilion use is prohibitive, gate often locked to cars
It should be named Housner Park for the people that donated the land
Clean up the wooded area and NEVER log that out again. It needs proper management
dog parks for large and small dogs
Improved playground and facilities
Newer playground equipment
Pickleball courts
Add a dog park, lots of dog walking activity on Rangeline. A park would create a sense of community/Meet your neighbors!

### Fisherman's Haven

recycling bins
observation deck for picnic lunches
clean it up
make it look better. Landscaping
Clean it up, make it welcoming, lit, etc.
Improve parking and access for fishermen
Tidy up and fix the sign so we don't look illiterate!
Add lights to the dam, add park benches and/or picnic tables and chairs.
A walking/bicycle cross of M-139 would be helpful to get the park.
A small improved park would be nice.

Better access
Get rid of it costs money and generates no revenue

### Other parks/trail improvements

recycling bins
biking and walk bridge across Lk Chapin from Rangeline Park would be huge asset!
Better signage and trail Improvements to Interurban ROW
Build the trail...and get it over the river - connect along the way and give people a reason to stop along the trail.
Bike and running trails would be a great addition with sign
Rail trail to Niles from Berrien Springs and surrounding areas.
The green space near the river that is fenced off (policeman's park?) would be a lovely park to actually use for recreation!
It's all privately owned I believe, but a trail down the old railroad bed that ran through Berrien Center would be great
Walking and biking trails

### Do you have any specific suggestions that would help the parks listed above be more enjoyable for those with disabilities?

12% responded yes.

walks wide enough for wheelchairs/curb cuts; playground for disabled children

Platforms for fishing?

No parks are friendly for those with disabilities. We need to really focus on accessibility in the future

Accessibility should be taken into consideration and designed for all facilities

### List any other ideas or comments regarding parks, trails, recreation or open space in Berrien Township

Work for twp residents and taxpayers. Keep Twp money (and taxes) at home. Cease allowing B.S. Village and Oronoko Twp to tell Berrien Twp what to do and telling Twp citizens what to do, plus give money to the. They will benefit more than Berrien Twp (they plan it that way). Berrien Twp is better liked when it stays independent, and will be more welcome to potential leaders coming forward.
Improve view/access to Lake Chapin from downtown park
Lots of great space and great people. The need to collaborate and work together amongst the 3 municipalities is essential and has been done very well for many years. A clear plan on how we continue to showcase an amazing community with diverse agriculture, great schools, a world class university, and friendly people.
Advertise and promote highlights and attractions. Create a tourist guide map indicating Air B&B's, running & bike trails, historical farms, cemeteries, Event Venues U-Pick locations.
Any trails/parks would be positive and would be a great addition.
N/A
Fix and update what the Berrien Township has now before you start a new project. Make sure you have the funds to maintain what is now available before you make a new trail or project.
We must participate with the GBSRD and the new Rec Authority. There will not be a large enough group of kids from our Twp to run a program by ourselves. It is an awesome investment in the kids and develops such great community spirit. Brings schools, diverse population groups, and the country folk all together!
The grassed area across the street from the water treatment is fenced, would be nice to have access with picnic area.
Public boat launch.




<p>It would be nice to have a paved trail between Range Line Park and going toward Niles. A boat launch into Lake Chapin would be nice also.</p>
<p>Keep working hard on improvements, it will be a long term benefit</p>
<p>I think its terrible that there is no place I can fish Lake Chapin from the bank. None. The main attraction to this area is Lake Chapin, yet unless you own lakefront property, forget it. I will never understand why there aren't few nice places to fish the lake.</p>
<p>As far as parks go I think the board needs to make a trip to Mishawaka Central Park and check out their set up and equipment. obviously none of our parks are that large but, kids would LOVE to have something like this closer to home.</p>
<p>Thank you for considering and exploring improvements!</p>

## RECREATION INVENTORY

### *Berrien Township Parks*

Berrien Township owns the following parks:

Berrien Township Public Facilities	Size	Inventory of Facilities/Equipment
<p><b>Berrien Township Hall Park</b></p> 	<p>&lt; 1 acre</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Outdoor Basketball</li> <li>❖ Playground</li> </ul>
<p><b>Fisherman's Haven</b></p> 	<p>&lt; 1 acre</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Parking lot</li> <li>❖ Fishing access</li> <li>❖ Portable bathroom</li> </ul>
	<p>&lt; 1 acre</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Vacant</li> </ul>

<b>Inter-Urban Easement (Small Parcel Leased from AEP)</b>		
<b>Range Line Park</b> 	19.8 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ 2 Picnic Shelters</li> <li>❖ Outdoor grills</li> <li>❖ Ball Field</li> <li>❖ Swings, Slides, Teeter Totter</li> </ul> 2021 improvements include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Signage</li> <li>❖ Drinking fountain</li> <li>❖ Bike Rack</li> <li>❖ Benches, picnic tables, recycle bin</li> <li>❖ Play equipment, safety surfacing</li> <li>❖ ADA parking spaces, Access path</li> <li>❖ Trail to overlook of St. Joseph River</li> <li>❖ Enclosed pavilion and restrooms</li> </ul>

***Barrier-Free Compliance Status***

Berrien Township is committed to meeting the needs of all residents and visitors. Attention will be given to projects that will enable easier and safer access to all recreational venues.

The MDNR Guidelines require that a barrier free ranking be given to each facility for assessing its accessibility to persons with disabilities. The assessment considers the accessibility of both the facilities themselves as well as the access routes to them.

The following system, provided by the MDNR Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans (1/27/2006) was used:

1 = none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines

2 = some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines

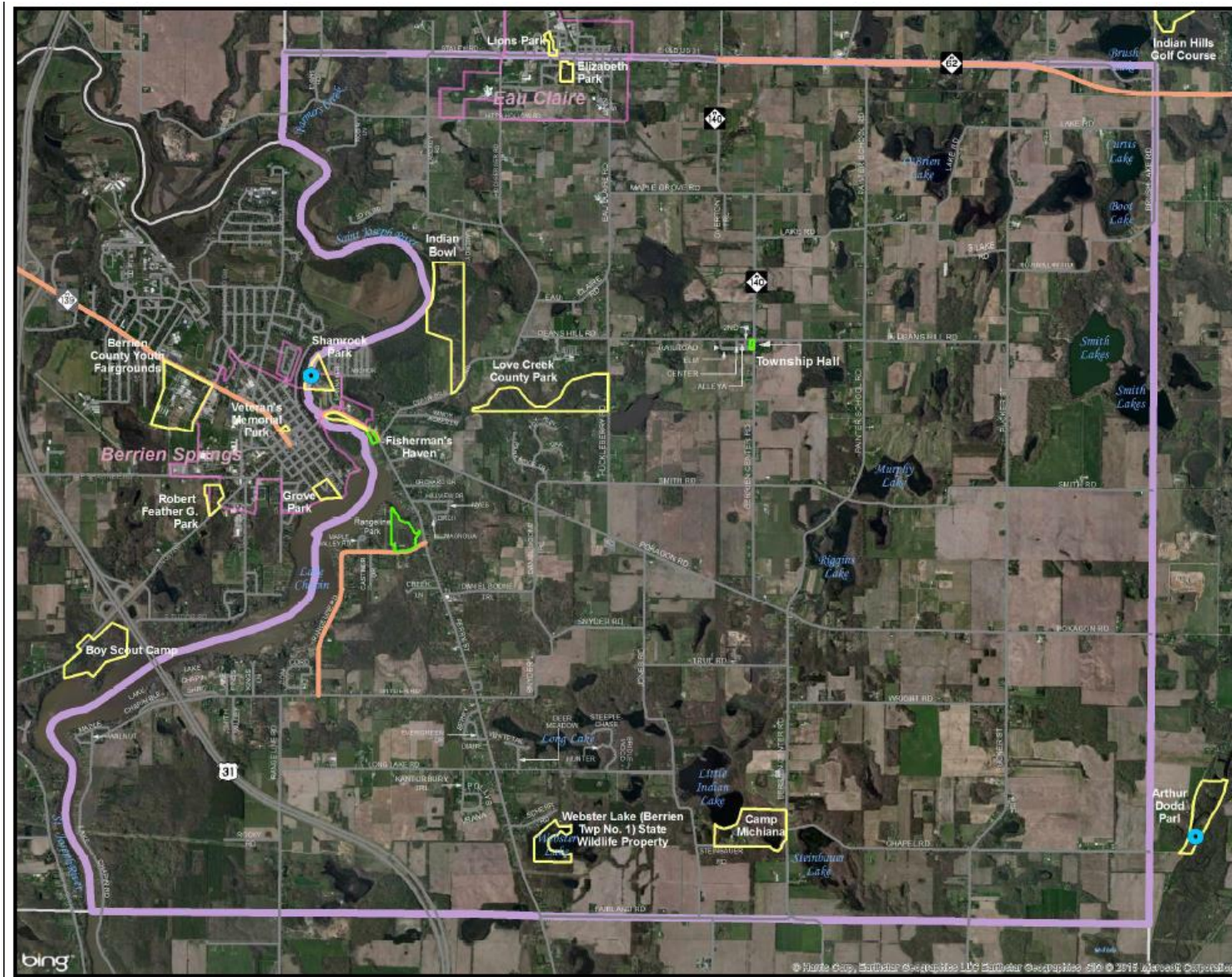
3 = most of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines

4 = the entire park meets accessibility guidelines

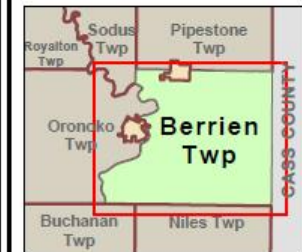
5 = the entire park was developed/renovated using the principals of universal design

The three parks under the jurisdiction of Berrien Township are in need of upgrades to meet accessibility guidelines. All future park improvements will include accessibility upgrades and more emphasis on universal design principles.

<b>Park</b>	<b>Accessibility Rating</b>
Berrien Township Park	3
Fisherman's Haven	2
Range Line Park	2



### BERRIEN TOWNSHIP



- Berrien Township
  - Village
- PARKS AND RECREATIONAL AREAS**
- All Other Park Areas
  - Berrien Township Park
  - Public Access
  - Road with 4-ft Wide Shoulders
- 0 0.25 0.5 1 Mile

Sources:  
 Base Layers: Michigan Geographic Framework v14a.  
 Park: Southwest Michigan Planning Commission, 2012



The use of this map is for general reference purposes. It is not a legal document.

July 07, 2015

Southwest Michigan Planning Commission  
 www.swmpc.org

Fig02\_Park

The following is a list of other public and private recreation facilities located within Berrien Township.

<b>County Parks within Berrien Township</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Inventory of Facilities/Equipment</b>
Love Creek Co. Park Preserve	217 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ New Interpretive Center</li> <li>❖ 2 Fulltime Naturalists</li> <li>❖ 6 miles of Hiking Trails</li> <li>❖ 6 miles of Ski Trails</li> <li>❖ Warming Shelter</li> <li>❖ Modern Restrooms</li> </ul>

<b>Private Facilities within Berrien Township</b>	<b>Inventory of Facilities/Equipment</b>
Five Pines Campground	❖ Camping facilities
Michiana Christian Camp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Camping</li> <li>❖ Pool</li> <li>❖ Paintball</li> </ul>
Five Pines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Swimming Pool</li> <li>❖ 3 Tennis Courts</li> <li>❖ Sand Volleyball Court</li> <li>❖ Family Cottages</li> <li>❖ Boating</li> <li>❖ Snow Tubing</li> </ul>

***Surrounding Communities Inventory***

The following is a list of public recreation facilities in surrounding communities.

<b>Oronoko Charter Township Public Facilities</b>	<b>Inventory of Facilities/Equipment</b>
Robert Feather Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Swings/Slides</li> <li>❖ Monkey Bars</li> <li>❖ 2 Picnic Shelters</li> <li>❖ Ball Field</li> </ul>
<b>Private Facilities within Oronoko Township</b>	<b>Inventory of Facilities/Equipment</b>
Camp Betz Boy Scout Calumet Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Camping</li> <li>❖ Outdoor activities</li> </ul>
<b>Berrien Springs Public Facilities</b>	<b>Inventory of Facilities/Equipment</b>
Wolf's Prairie Park/Grove Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Picnic Shelter</li> <li>❖ Restrooms</li> <li>❖ Children's Play Structure</li> <li>❖ Swings</li> <li>❖ Slides</li> </ul>
Memorial Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Swings/Slide</li> <li>❖ Picnic Table</li> <li>❖ Sitting Area</li> <li>❖ Flower Garden</li> </ul>

Policeman's Memorial Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Green Space</li> <li>❖ Viewing Area</li> </ul>
Rotary Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Undeveloped</li> </ul>
Shamrock Park (Located in Berrien Twp.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Campsites</li> <li>❖ Rental Cabins</li> <li>❖ Restrooms</li> <li>❖ Pavilion</li> <li>❖ Boat Launch</li> </ul>
<b>Private Facilities within Berrien Springs</b>	<b>Inventory of Facilities/Equipment</b>
Berrien Springs Boat Club (Lake Chapin)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ 2 Boat Launch Ramps</li> <li>❖ Picnic tables</li> <li>❖ Outdoor grills</li> <li>❖ Swings</li> </ul>
<b>Eau Claire Village Public Facilities</b>	<b>Inventory of Facilities/Equipment</b>
Elizabeth Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Pavilion/ Picnic tables</li> <li>❖ Playground</li> <li>❖ Grills</li> <li>❖ Restrooms</li> <li>❖ Baseball Field</li> </ul>
Veteran's Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Pavilion</li> <li>❖ Picnic area</li> </ul>

<b>Cass County Parks</b>	<b>Inventory of Facilities/Equipment</b>
Arthur Dodd Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Playground</li> <li>❖ Horseshoe pits</li> <li>❖ Volleyball court</li> <li>❖ Picnic area</li> <li>❖ Canoe/kayak landing</li> <li>❖ Fishing (cold water trout fishing)</li> <li>❖ Rustic Restroom</li> <li>❖ Hiking trails (one mile)</li> <li>❖ Rental Cabins</li> </ul>

## ***Water Trails***

### St. Joseph River Water Trail

The St. Joseph River Water Trail is about 40 miles from Niles to St. Joseph (Lake Michigan). There are dams at Niles, Buchanan and Berrien Springs to portage.

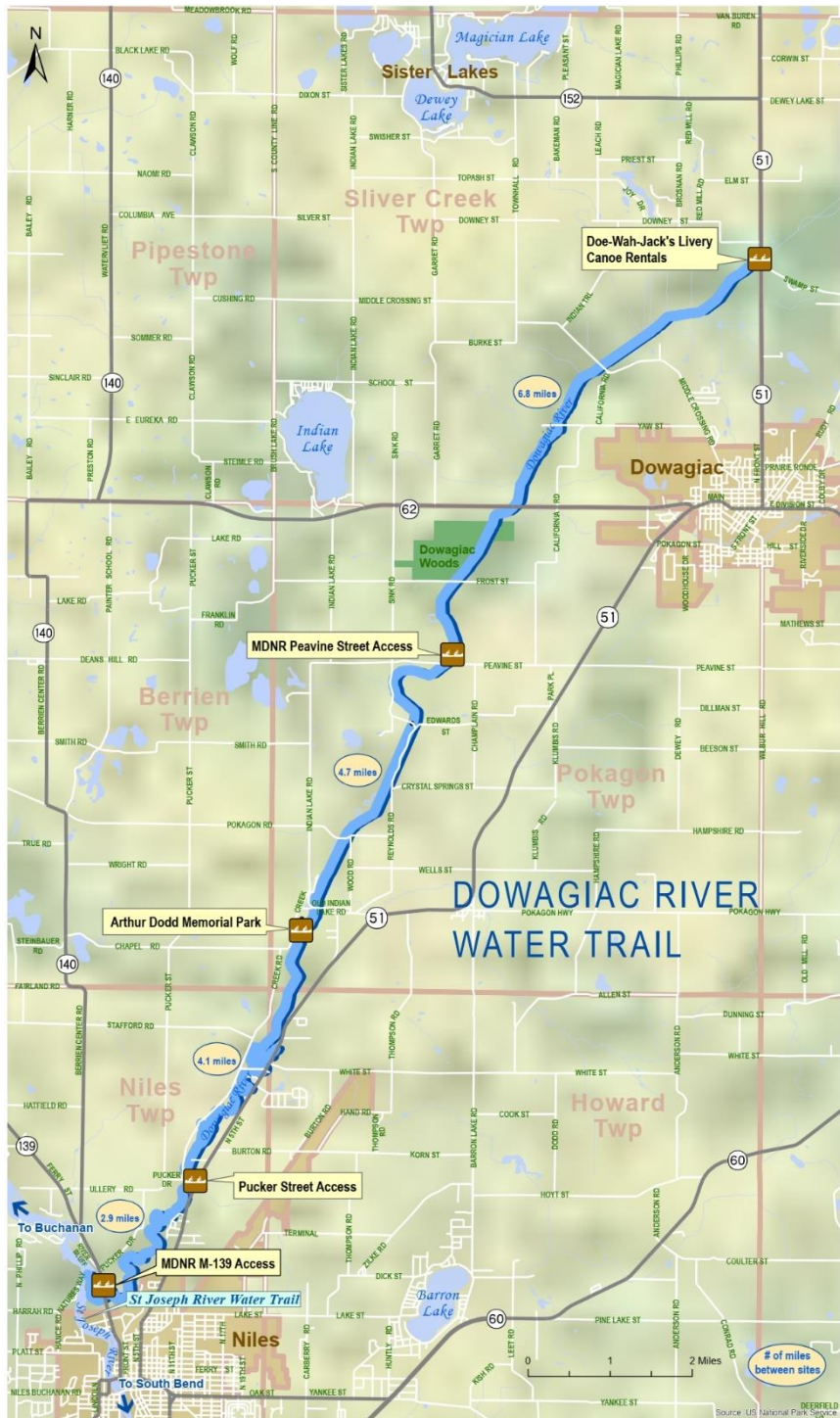
Map: <https://www.michiganwatertrails.org/trail.asp?ait=cv&cid=141>

### Dowagiac River Water Trail

The Dowagiac River is the largest coldwater river system in southern Michigan. The Dowagiac River Water Trail from M-51 to Niles is 19 miles long. The dam at Pucker Street (upstream of Niles

has been removed and the City will be improving the boat launch with grant funds from the MDNR.

Map: <https://www.michiganwatertrails.org/trail.asp?ait=cv&cid=155>





## ***Non-Motorized Network***

As a long-term strategy, the construction of a bicycle/walkway system that connects the parks and points of interest in the Greater Lake Chapin Area fits with the overall desire for a regional non-motorized pathway system throughout the Southwestern Michigan Planning Area. This desire has been expressed in regional strategies, county recreation plans and even in other local 5-year recreation plans.

On-road facilities are part of the roadway design and transportation network. On-road facilities include paved shoulders and bicycle lanes. Minimum widths are based on the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) 1999 standards. Paved shoulders should be at least 4 feet or greater on each side of the roadway. Bicycle lanes should be at least 5 feet or greater on each side of the roadway.

Complete Streets are roadways that are planned and designed to accommodate all transportation modes, including pedestrians and bicyclists. The process of achieving complete streets can involve planning and field surveys to identify where barriers exist to non-motorized travel and addressing those challenges. It often requires new relationships and partnerships between different levels of government to address funding and maintenance agreements between units of government. In a move that will make transportation in Michigan more multi-modal, the House and Senate passed Complete Streets legislation (HB 6151 & HB 6152) in August 2010 that strengthens the lines of communication between road agencies and local units of government regarding transportation projects and takes into consideration the needs of all users.

There are many specific ways to improve non-motorized transportation:

- Add and improve existing sidewalks and crosswalks.
- Correct specific roadway hazards to non-motorized transport (sometimes called “spot improvement” programs).
- Improve non-motorized maintenance.
- Utilize universal design concepts when designing facilities (transportation systems that accommodate people with disabilities and other special needs).
- Include amenities such as bicycle parking, streetscape improvements, street furniture (e.g., benches), and Public Bike Sharing Systems (PBS), which are automated bicycle rental systems designed to provide efficient mobility for short, utilitarian urban trips.
- Increase safety with traffic calming, traffic speed reductions, vehicle restrictions, and road space reallocation.
- Provide safety education, law enforcement, and encouragement programs.
- Address security concerns of pedestrians and cyclists.
- Develop kiosks and multi-modal access guides, which include maps and other information on how to walk and cycle to a particular destination.

Off-road facilities include shared-use paths which accommodate multiple non-motorized users (mainly pedestrians and bicyclists) and minimum 10 foot width (based on AASHTO standards). Shared-use paths frequently follow green spaces, abandoned rail beds, or might be adjacent to natural features like rivers. Due to their separation from vehicular traffic, they provide a popular

alternative means of travel for many types of users. Often, unpaved/unimproved paths are more popular with hikers, mountain bikers, and equestrians and are more often used for recreation and not as much for transportation. Shared-use paths must be at least 10 feet wide. Surface types are either improved (paved or crushed stone) or unimproved.

## **INDIANA + MICHIGAN RIVER VALLEY TRAIL**

The highest priority non-motorized trail in the Township is the proposed expansion of the IN+MI River Valley Trail. The Indiana + Michigan River Valley Trail (I+M RVT) has a proposed expansion that would connect Niles to Berrien Springs. The I+M RVT Trail currently connects Michiana communities with 17 miles of off-road trail, spanning from the Mishawaka Riverwalk to Plym Park and the YMCA in Niles. Plans for the extension to Berrien Springs include using the old interurban rail line and constructing a non-motorized bridge across Lake Chapin, linking the trail to downtown Berrien Springs and potentially extending it to St. Joseph and Benton Harbor.

With Range Line Park as a new trailhead, the extension would bring significant health and economic benefits to Berrien County, providing a safe place for exercise, family activities, commuting, and outdoor enjoyment, while also attracting tourism. The proposed 1,300-foot pedestrian bridge over Lake Chapin aims to reconnect the banks of the St. Joseph River and Lake Chapin, enhancing the regional non-motorized system. This scenic route will facilitate pedestrian and non-motorized travel to downtown Berrien Springs, providing convenient access to local businesses and schools (image below).

The extended I+M RVT Trail would connect several downtowns (Berrien Springs and Niles in Michigan and Roseland, South Bend, and Mishawaka in Indiana), various parks, local businesses, and major universities (Andrews University, Notre Dame, Holy Cross, and Indiana University South Bend), among other attractions. A more in-depth image of this proposed trail is below.

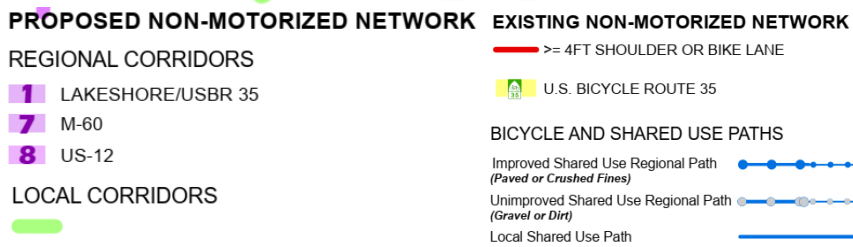
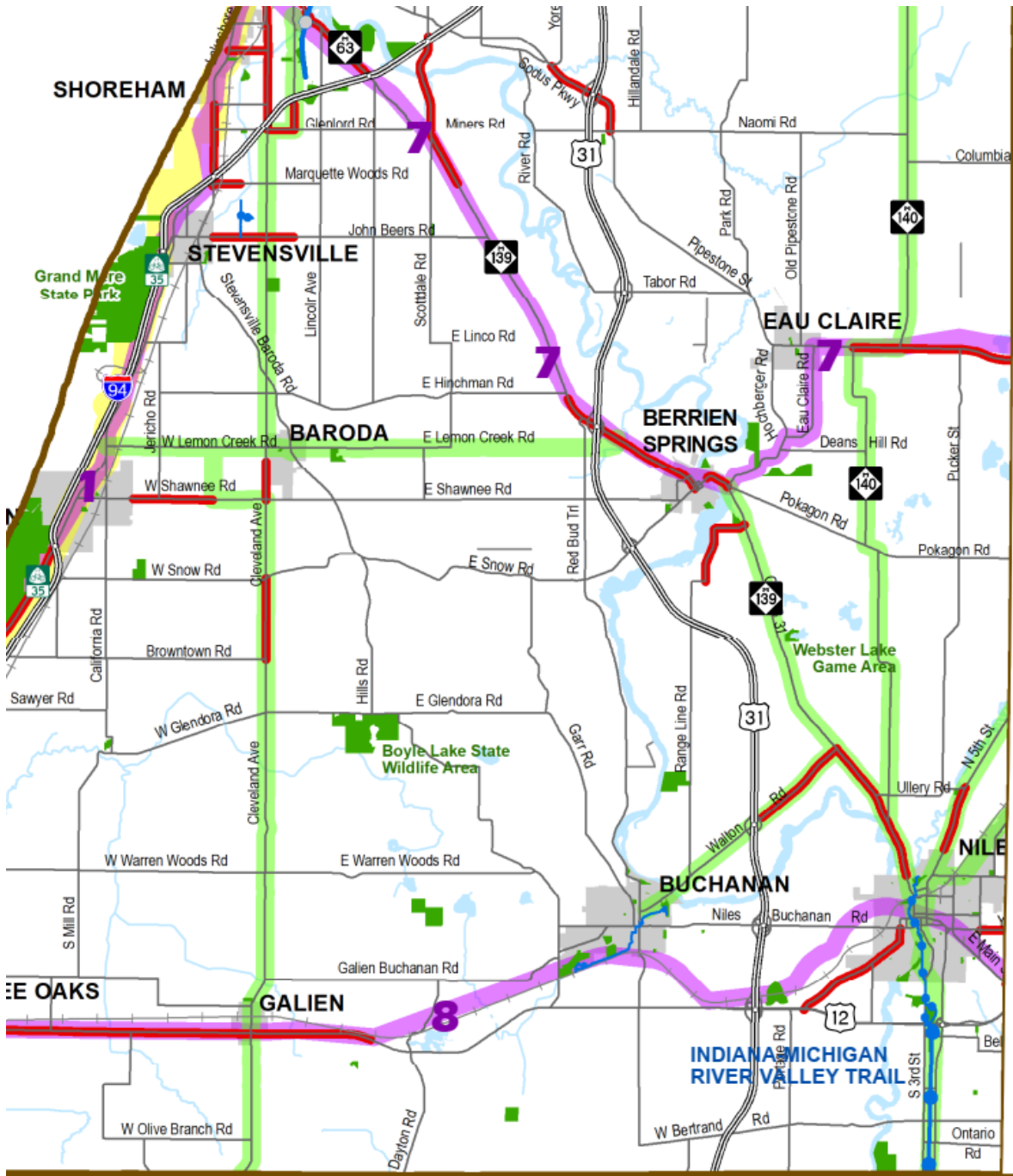




The Southwest Michigan Region Non-motorized Transportation Plan (2020) identified existing on-road and off-road facilities and identified local and regional priorities for non-motorized facilities. The following map shows the existing and proposed on-road and off-road non-motor facilities in and around Berrien Springs.

Several non-motorized facilities are planned in the area. A priority regional route was identified in the southwest plan that would pass through Berrien Springs (#7 pink on map). This corridor start near the lakeshore in St. Joseph in Berrien County and follow M-139 to Berrien Springs. It would head east through Berrien Springs, Dowagiac and Cassopolis along M-62, then connect via M-60 to Three Rivers and Mendon in St. Joseph County, and on to Athens and Union City in Branch County. It would pass through Burlington and Homer in Calhoun County before continuing east beyond the southwest Michigan region.

In Berrien County, a high local priority route was identified that connected St. Joseph to Niles through Berrien. It would most likely follow existing roads, but where possible be an off-road facility (green on map). A portion of this is already proposed as the Indiana + Michigan River Valley Trail Extension as described above.



In addition, these local trail networks are part of the long-term vision for Berrien Township.

**GREATER LAKE CHAPIN AREA TRAIL:**

- Range Line Park – build a path system that loops the park and opens access to Lake Chapin. The path will exit on the park side of Range Line Road and follow the roadway to M139. From there it will head generally North toward Fisherman’s Haven.
- Fisherman’s Haven – continue the non-motorized path along M139 across the bridge into Berrien Springs.
- Follow the North bank of the St. Joseph River through the village park and continue along the riverbank on right of way easements to Grove Park.

**GREATER LAKE CHAPIN BIKE TRAIL:**

- Acquire property or rights of way along the St. Joseph River and Lake Chapin, where available, to keep the walkway close to the water, wherever possible.
- Develop rest points at strategic points of interest or intervals along the bicycle route.

## NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The needs assessment is based on input from the public meeting (pancake breakfast), survey results, input from the steering committee, site visits to existing parks, review of natural resource maps and a thorough analysis of all data collected previously and currently. In order to give an opinion of the adequacies and deficiencies of the recreational facilities in Berrien Township, visits were conducted to physically examine the conditions and surroundings of the established parks. All opinions are based on observations made during these visits. Questions regarding the adequacy of the structures for safety and endurance need to be fully examined by qualified experts.

It is common for people to first think of recreation opportunities in terms of serving the youth of the area. As the population continues to mature, the “baby-boomers” become a significant segment of the population wanting recreation activities and facilities that satisfy their desires for more active lifestyles. In response to the demographic change of increasing numbers of senior citizens as related to recreational planning, the AARP conducted a nationwide study in August 2005 to better understand how baby boomers (ages 41-59) spend their travel and leisure time. Following are the top ten travel planning factors as compiled in this study. This information can be useful when planning for recreational facilities and activities that may be more tourism related.

### **Top Ten Travel Planning Factors**

1. Beautiful scenic place
2. Very relaxing
3. Good weather/climate
4. No schedules to meet
5. Can see and do new things/have different experiences/meet new people
6. Good place for family/children
7. Environment is clean and unspoiled
8. Convenient to get to
9. Ability to gain knowledge of history or other cultures
10. Outdoor adventure

Regardless of the destination when preparing to *travel*, baby-boomers are looking for beautiful scenery, relaxation, good weather, and no pressure of schedules to meet. The study further reveals that baby-boomers typically partake in a number of *leisure activities* which may be either adventurous or experiential. Following are two top ten lists of activities that boomers have participated in over the past 12 months categorized into "adventurous" activities and "experiential" activities.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.aarp.org/research/family/travel/boomer\\_travel.html](http://www.aarp.org/research/family/travel/boomer_travel.html)

### **Top 10 Experiential Activities**

1. Shopping
2. Fine dining
3. Touring scenic byways
4. Casino/riverboat gambling
5. Zoo
6. Gardens
7. Theater/drama
8. National parks touring
9. Festivals, nightclub/stage shows, major sports events
10. Health club/exercise facilities

### **Top 10 Adventure Activities**

1. Fresh or saltwater fishing
2. Escorted or guided tour
3. Biking
4. Hiking/backpacking/rock and mountain climbing
5. Camping (tent)
6. RV camping
7. Motorcycling
8. Horseback riding
9. Snorkeling
10. Whitewater rafting/kayaking

To meet the desires of baby boomers and an aging population, the Township should adopt policies to encourage the preservation of green space and begin planning for the development of interconnected non-motorized paths throughout the area. This may prove to be a most cost effective method of enhancing the Greater Berrien Springs Area and of providing recreation to members of the community.

Below are specific acquisition, facility and promotional needs identified during the planning process.

### **Acquisition Needs**

- Property for enhancing access to the St. Joseph River for fishing and water trail development.
- Property adjacent to existing parks
- Property that contributes to open space areas, connect parks and open space or contain high quality natural features.
- Property that contributes to the development of non-motorized facilities are of particular interest.



**Facility Needs**

- St. Joseph River Water Trail: Canoe/kayak launches, signage, restroom facilities, drinking fountains, parking, fish cleaning stations, dumpsters, camping
- Non-motorized trails and associated amenities

**Promotional Needs**

- Website
- Printed Materials

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

After carefully considering the community's demographic and physical characteristics as well as all other information received through the planning and public input process, the following goals and objectives reflect the vision of Berrien Township's future recreational facilities and programs. Also overall, coordination and communication between and among the Village of Berrien Springs, Berrien Township, Oronoko Charter Township, Eau Claire, Sodus Township, the Berrien Springs School Corporation, and the citizens of the Greater Berrien Springs Area are vital to the success of the parks and recreation improvement efforts.

1. Maintain and promote existing recreational facilities/programs to provide safe and enjoyable opportunities for the community.
  - a. Budget an adequate amount of funds each year for maintenance of parks.
  - b. Provide information about parks and recreation on the Township website.
  - c. Develop and install coordinated entrance and way finding signs for parks.
    - i. Design and install signs with a common logo that reflects the joint recreation and park board and the name of each of the recreation facilities.
    - ii. Place signs along major roadways indicating directions to the parks.
  - d. Keep the Township's 5 year recreation plan up to date.
    - i. Involve the public in recreation planning and implementation.
    - ii. Prioritize recreation improvements and acquisitions, identify potential funding sources and provide for a line item in the Township budget for recreation
2. Coordinate recreation facility and program planning and implementation with surrounding municipalities.
  - a. Continue to actively participate in the Greater Berrien Springs Recreation Board to ensure all recreation activities are coordinated.
  - b. Ensure active communication between boards and councils occurs, especially with planning non-motorized (walking and biking) routes and developing the St. Joseph River Water Trail for paddling.
  - c. Expand the scope of cooperation and coordination among the partners.
  - d. Develop a coordinated calendar of recreation activities and programs.
  - e. Produce a timely programs and activities bulletin for distribution to the residents of the area.
3. Enhance and improve Berrien Township's recreation facilities and programs to meet the needs and desires of the community.
  - a. Ensure intergenerational activities are provided.
  - b. Implement high priority improvements to Fisherman's Haven Park such as improved parking, a walking trail, improved fishing access and playground equipment and medium priority items such as picnic areas, benches and restrooms.

- c. Implement high priority improvements to Range Line Park such as an improved fishing access. Other ideas include a dog park, disc golf and more community events.
  - d. Implement high priority improvements to Township Hall Park such as upgrade and additional playground equipment, improved basketball courts and parking.
  - e. Provide facilities for pickle ball, tennis, basketball and softball/baseball.
4. Develop non-motorized network of shared use paths and bike lanes to connect residential areas, parks, points of interest and nearby communities/downtowns.
    - a. Adopt a Complete Street Policy.
    - b. Work with road commission to add bike lanes or paved shoulders to roads when work is occurring on roadways in the Township.
    - c. Extend the IN-MI River Valley Trail from Niles to Berrien Springs
    - d. Re-establish the Inter-Urban Bridge.
      - i. Reconnect North and South banks of the St. Joseph River/Lake Chapin with a pedestrian, non-motorized bridge over existing piers.
      - ii. Identify mixed-use vendors to offer retail goods and food along or near the new bridge walkway.
  5. Support the enhancement of the St. Joseph River Water Trail.
    - a. Improve portages and access to the St. Joseph River.
    - b. Coordinate with stakeholders and other communities along the St. Joseph River to improve and promote the St. Joseph River Water Trail.
    - c. Ensure water quality is maintained to support use of the River.
  6. Encourage preservation of valuable water and land resources while promoting responsible recreational use.
    - a. Identify open space areas for protection and support efforts to protect high quality natural areas.
    - b. Utilize low impact development techniques to preserve natural features and encourage the infiltration of storm water runoff (rain gardens, native plants, swales, porous pavement, etc).
    - c. Protect and Improve Access to Lake Chapin.
      - i. Provide additional public access points to Lake Chapin.
      - ii. Build a public boat launch for Lake Chapin.
      - iii. Identify and restrict fishing along environmentally sensitive shoreline area(s).
      - iv. Adopt a Land Use Master Plan for Lake Chapin to preserve access and natural features from over-development.
  7. Enhance the Love Creek Area.
    - a. Acquire additional acreage of adjacent properties to preserve “Indian Bowl” wetland.
    - b. Extend proposed walkway from Shamrock Park to Love Creek
  8. Utilize Universal Design Principles when designing and implementing recreation projects

### **Principle 1: Equitable Use**

The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.

Guidelines:

- 1a. Provide the same means of use for all users: identical whenever possible; equivalent when not.
- 1b. Avoid segregating or stigmatizing any users.
- 1c. Provisions for privacy, security, and safety should be equally available to all users.
- 1d. Make the design appealing to all users.

### **Principle 2: Flexibility in Use**

The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.

Guidelines:

- 2a. Provide choice in methods of use.
- 2b. Accommodate right- or left-handed access and use.
- 2c. Facilitate the user's accuracy and precision.
- 2d. Provide adaptability to the user's pace.

### **Principle 3: Simple and Intuitive Use**

Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.

Guidelines:

- 3a. Eliminate unnecessary complexity.
- 3b. Be consistent with user expectations and intuition.
- 3c. Accommodate a wide range of literacy and language skills.
- 3d. Arrange information consistent with its importance.
- 3e. Provide effective prompting and feedback during and after task completion.

### **Principle 4: Perceptible Information**

The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.

Guidelines:

- 4a. Use different modes (pictorial, verbal, tactile) for redundant presentation of essential information.
- 4b. Provide adequate contrast between essential information and its surroundings.
- 4c. Maximize "legibility" of essential information.
- 4d. Differentiate elements in ways that can be described (i.e., make it easy to give instructions or directions).
- 4e. Provide compatibility with a variety of techniques or devices used by people with sensory limitations.

### **Principle 5: Tolerance for Error**

The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.

Guidelines:

- 5a. Arrange elements to minimize hazards and errors: most used elements, most accessible; hazardous elements eliminated, isolated, or shielded.

- 5b. Provide warnings of hazards and errors.
- 5c. Provide fail safe features.
- 5d. Discourage unconscious action in tasks that require vigilance.

**Principle 6: Low Physical Effort**

The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.

Guidelines:

- 6a. Allow user to maintain a neutral body position.
- 6b. Use reasonable operating forces.
- 6c. Minimize repetitive actions.
- 6d. Minimize sustained physical effort.

**Principle 7: Size and Space for Approach and Use**

Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility.

Guidelines:

- 7a. Provide a clear line of sight to important elements for any seated or standing user.
- 7b. Make reach to all components comfortable for any seated or standing user.
- 7c. Accommodate variations in hand and grip size.
- 7d. Provide adequate space for the use of assistive devices or personal assistance.

## ACTION PROGRAM

The Action Program identifies the priority projects to meet the goals and objectives of this plan. Each project or proposed action is listed along with a priority level. With regard to funding sources, it is the intention of Berrien Township to leverage state, federal, and/or private funds with local funds whenever possible. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources offers grants through the Natural Resources Trust Fund and the Passport Program. These grants require at least a 25% local match and are due April 1 of every year. The Michigan Department of Transportation offers grants for trail related projects through the Transportation Alternative Program (TAP).

Project	Priority
<b>Range Line Park</b>	
Develop internal walking trail with connection(s) to Lake Chapin.	Highest
Create focal point of Bike/Walk Trail through Berrien Township, Berrien Springs and Oronoko Charter Township.	Highest
Improve shelter and grills.	Highest
Upgrade playground area and equipment to meet ADA requirements.	Highest
Improve parking lot.	Highest
Add entrance sign (possibly in cooperation with Fire Department).	Highest
Improve fishing habitat at Townsend Creek and St. Joseph River (sediment is accumulating) and improve trail to Lake Chapin (but keep it rustic) and add fishing regulation signage.	Highest
Add bathrooms.	Highest
If available, acquire additional land adjacent to Berrien Township Park for baseball/softball field and sand volleyball and additional access to Lake Chapin.	High
Add dog park.	High
Add disc golf.	Medium
Host events such as an Easter Egg Hunt and pancake breakfasts to increase awareness and use of park.	Medium
Improve parking area and access road from Old U.S. 31.	Highest
Construct pedestrian path through Fisherman's Haven to Policemen's Memorial Park.	Highest
Add playground.	Highest
Designate fishing area(s) along the riverbank.	Highest
Provide waste disposal areas with incentives for usage.	High
Maintain/prune trees.	High
Add picnic area and benches.	High
Add restrooms.	High
Improve basketball courts.	Highest
Move Veteran's Memorial.	Highest
Increase/improve parking.	Highest
Maintain trees/add landscaping.	Highest

Update playground equipment and possibly add a tot playground.	Highest
If available, acquire adjacent properties to preserve "Indian Bowl" wetland.	Highest
Provide additional signage and description of natural preservation areas.	High
Build walkway/bike path from Love Creek Nature Center through Shamrock Park.	High
Secure a lease from AEP and install stairs to provide a portage around the dam to MDNR's access.	Highest
Connect existing parks and open space along the St. Joseph River to Robert Feather Park, the business district of Berrien Springs and Andrews University. This is intended as a non-motorized trail (for walking, jogging, bicycle riding).	Highest
Acquire property or rights of way along the St. Joseph River and Lake Chapin to build a non-motorized path and to better control access to the water.	Highest
Install ADA-compliant multi-use path, seating, and over-looks along the St. Joseph River and Lake Chapin.	Highest
Develop a preliminary plan for a paved and lighted walkway on the west bank of the St. Joseph River.	High
Build bike path connecting Range Line Park with other area parks.	High
Re-establish the Inter Urban Bridge.	Highest
Add Pickle Ball/Tennis Courts (location to be determined).	High

## **Appendix**

### ***Plan Adoption***