

WELLS TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN

2016



PREPARED BY THE WELLS TOWNSHIP PLANNING
COMMISSION

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VICE-CHAIRMAN: PETER BRUCE

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ASSISTANCE BY THE CENTRAL UPPER PENINSULA PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT REGIONAL COMMISSION
(CUPPAD)

At a regular meeting of the **Wells Township Planning Commission** on September 19, 2016 at 7:30pm, the following motion was offered:

Moved by Steve Wileski and seconded by Peter Bruce to adopt the following resolution:

Resolution #
Wells Township Master Plan Adoption

WHEREAS, The Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, provides that the Planning Commission may prepare a Master Plan and accompanying maps for use as a guide for development within Wells Township; and

WHEREAS the Planning Commission notified each municipality contiguous to Wells Township, the Marquette County Planning Commission, each public utility company and railroad company owning or operating a public utility or railroad within the Wells Township, and other agencies for purposes of notification, of its intent to adopt a Master Plan and accompanying maps; and

WHEREAS, The Planning Commission encouraged public participation during the planning process via regular Planning Commission meetings and a community survey; and

WHEREAS, The proposed Master Plan and accompanying maps were submitted to the Wells Township Board, who authorized distribution of the proposed Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, The proposed Master Plan and accompanying maps were distributed to each municipality contiguous to Wells Township, the Marquette County Planning Commission, each public utility company and railroad company owning or operating a public utility or railroad within the Wells Township, and other agencies who responded to the notice of intent for purposes of notification, for review and comment; and

WHEREAS, The plan was presented to the public at a public hearing held on September 19, 2016, before the Planning Commission, and the Planning Commission recommended adoption of the Master Plan and accompanying maps by the Wells Township Board.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, The Wells Township Planning Commission hereby approves and adopts the Master Plan, together with all maps attached to and contained herein, as per the requirements of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008.

Roll call vote:

	YES	NO
<u>Jane L. Hardy</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Mike Brown</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>David A. Dymek</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Jeff Bricker</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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MOTION CARRIED.

I certify that the above is a true and complete copy of a resolution passed by the Wells Township Planning Commission at a meeting on 9-14-16.

By: Jane L. Hardy
Wells Township Planning Commission Chair

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER ONE MAPS	3
CHAPTER TWO – DEMOGRAPHICS AND ECONOMICS	4
POPULATION	4
AGE, EDUCATION, RACE, AND DISABILITY	5
INCOME & LABOR FORCE	6
HOUSING	10
CHAPTER THREE – COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION	11
UTILITIES, WATER, SOLID WASTE	11
SCHOOLS & LIBRARIES	11
MEDICAL FACILITIES, LAW ENFORCEMENT /EMERGENCY RESPONSE	12
TOWNSHIP FACILITIES	13
TRANSPORTATION	15
TOPOGRAPHY, SOILS, GEOLOGY/BEDROCK, SURFACE WATER	17
RECREATION, WILDLIFE, AND PROTECTED SPECIES	17
CHAPTER THREE MAPS	20
CHAPTER FOUR – CURRENT LAND USE/LAND COVER	29
CHAPTER FOUR MAPS	30
CHAPTER FIVE – FUTURE LAND USE AND ZONING PLAN	33
EXISTING ZONING DISTRICTS AND DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS	34
FUTURE LAND USE/ZONING PLAN	36
ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS	39
RECOMMENDED DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS	39
CHAPTER SIX – GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	40
MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION CONCLUSION	41
APPENDIX A: SURVEY INFORMATION, PUBLIC COMMENT, NOTIFICATION DOCUMENTATION	42

CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION

The Wells Township Master Plan is a document intended to aid in future development and growth within the Township, provide a basis for the Township Zoning Ordinance, and define the visions and wishes of the government and its people for the next 20 years. Major elements discussed in this document include: population and demographics, community facilities and services, recreation, transportation, natural features and land use. After addressing the question “where are we now?” the next step is determining “where do we want to go in the future?” To answer the question, the Planning Commission has developed goals based on the Township’s needs that became evident as existing conditions were documented. This Master Plan addresses the issues of present conditions and the Township’s needs and desired future conditions, while also providing a means to achieve future development goals and objectives. It is important to note that the Master Plan is not a Zoning Ordinance, nor it is law or an ordinance. It is a long range policy guide for future development of the Township and should be used as a planning tool.

Authority to Plan

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Michigan Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended), authorizes units of government to plan, create Planning Commissions, and regulate and subdivide land. The act permits and mandates the Planning Commission to create and adopt a Master Plan. The Master Plan is the basis for land use regulations and zoning. For units of government that have and enforce zoning, that zoning must be based on a plan. The purpose of this Master Plan is to guide future development towards more economic and efficient use of the land; promote public health, safety, and the general welfare; and provide for adequate transportation systems and infrastructure, public utilities, and recreation.

In preparing the Master Plan, the Township is authorized to: Conduct studies, investigations, and surveys relative to economic, social, and physical development of the Township; Formulate plans and make recommendations for the most effective economic, social and physical development of the Township; Cooperate with all departments of state and federal governments and other public agencies; and consult with adjacent units of government.

The Planning Process

The last Master Plan was adopted in 2000, and was referenced as a policy plan at that time. The Township Zoning Ordinance was originally adopted in 1996 and amended in 2005 and 2011.

A public input survey was mailed to all property owners (and offered online) in October 2015 (460 surveys). A total of 34 responses were received – a 7.3% response. This result provides an 80% confidence level and 10% margin of error. The confidence level is the probability that the sample size accurately reflects the opinions of the population. The industry standard is 95%. The margin of error is the percentage that the total population’s responses may deviate from the sample’s responses. A public input meeting was held on May 16 2016 to allow the public to review the draft plan, maps, future land use, etc. and discuss issues with CUPPAD and the Planning Commission.

Township Background and Brief History

Wells Township is located in the very southern portion of Marquette County, in the Central U.P. It borders three Counties: Delta and Menominee to the south and Dickinson to the west. The Township is very rural in nature and covers 155 square miles (99,200 acres). The City of Marquette is approximately 40 miles north and the City of Escanaba is approximately 30 miles to the south.

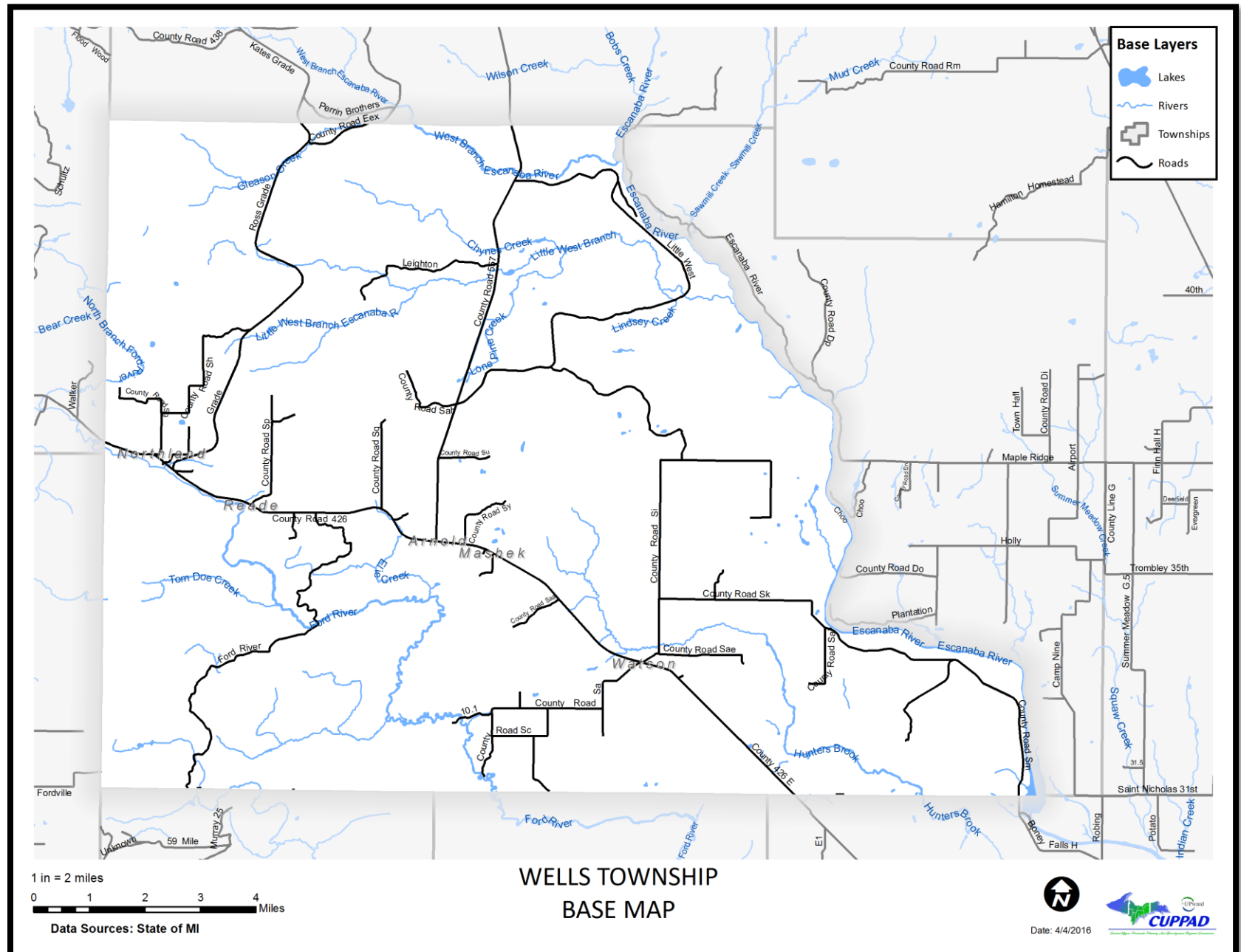
Wells Township was officially organized in 1903 from land belonging to Forsyth Township. Boundaries changed in 1909 as areas of Wells Township lying within T43N, R25W east of the Escanaba River became part of Turin Township and areas within T42N, R24W west of the Escanaba River were detached from Turin Township to become part of Wells. Early homesteaders in the area maintained a livelihood by farming and cutting timber. Logging camps were operating in the area in the mid-1850s, northeast of Watson. Oxen were used to deliver supplies to the camps via a tote road that started in the Cornell area – known today as the Boney Falls Road. The Escanaba and Lake Superior Railroad constructed a station in Watson in 1899, which opened up the area for settlement. Railroad expansion allowed for stations to be developed in Mashek, Reade, Northland, Ross, and Gleason. Northland was founded in 1897 by the Wolverine Cedar & Lumber Company, in anticipation of the expanding railroad.

George Mashek and his partner, Ed Arnold, owned a logging camp at Watson in the area of the present Jaeger house. In 1908, a store, boarding house, warehouse and saloon were established. Mashek's general store included a post office area which opened in 1909. Since a downstate community was already using Watson for a post office name, the name Arnold was substituted. Those living in the Watson area received their mail through the Arnold Post Office, Watson, Michigan. In 1935, the post office was relocated to the store at the corner of CR 426 and CR 557. Over the years, the term "Arnold Post Office" has become the name associated with the place originally known as Mashek. Following the height of the logging era, people who settled in the area made their livelihoods principally by farming. Most farming was done on a small scale supplemented with animals, gardens, and timber cutting.

Today, like it was then, distance continues to be an issue for Township residents. Opportunities that once existed for workers in the logging industry are much fewer due to the new methods and advanced mechanization now employed. Small-scale farming is not feasible as a means of making a living in today's world. While the methods, capital requirements, and overall business economics of logging and agriculture have changed, both continue to be major economic factors in the Township.



CHAPTER ONE MAPS

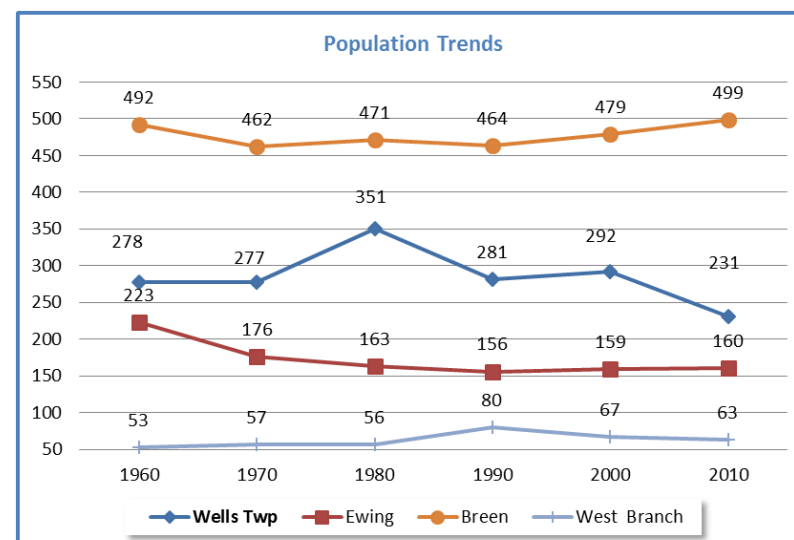
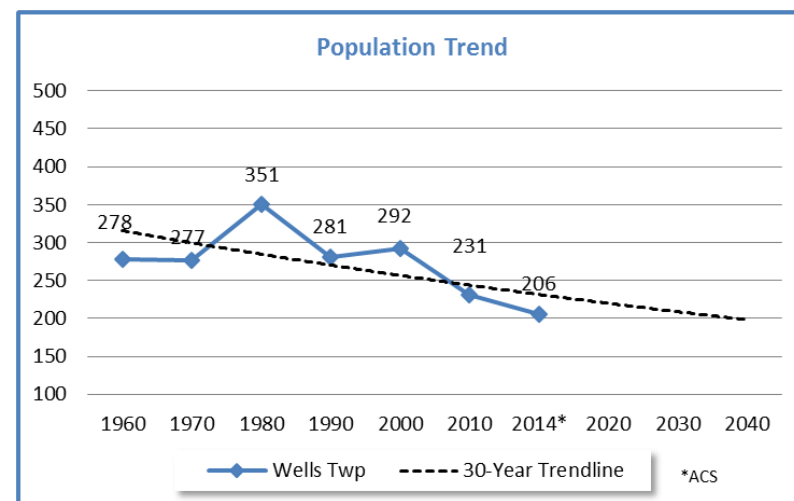


CHAPTER TWO – DEMOGRAPHICS AND ECONOMICS

Comparing historical data is useful in identifying patterns and trends that may affect a community's approach to land use, economic development, and other general issues. Throughout this document, two sources may be used for demographic and economic figures – the 2010 Census, and the 2014 American Community Survey (ACS). The Census is a decennial census mandated under the United States Constitution and is a population-based survey. The ACS is a mandatory, ongoing statistical survey that samples a small percentage of the population every year. It is meant to be a replacement of the decennial census' long-form survey. The data is a rolling update and measures changes in social and economic characteristics. However, in most rural areas, the ACS comes with a margin of error – the higher the margin of error, the less accurate the data may be due to the sampling size of the area. **In very rural areas like Wells Township, the margin of error is considerably high and ACS data should be viewed with that in mind. Census and ACS figures provide estimates as a guide and tool.**

Population

As of the 2010 Census, the population of Wells Township was 231. The 2014 ACS estimates the population at 206 (+/-55 persons). The population trend since 1960 is shown in the chart to the right. Overall, the Township population has remained fairly steady, with the only jump in 1980. The chart below contains a 30-year trendline – this is an estimate of future trends based on a mathematical formula and the past population data. The trendline helps forecast any future trends. In the case of Wells Township, the trend appears to show a small decline over the next thirty years - if current trends continue. The trends for several surrounding Townships is shown at the right. These Townships are also very rural in nature, and follow similar patterns to Wells Township. Ewing Township, in Marquette County, experienced a large decrease between 1960 and 1970, but has since seen very minor increases and decreases. Similarly, Breen Township, in Dickinson County, has also seen minor increases and decreases over the fifty-year span. West Branch Township, also in Marquette County, has remained fairly steady other than a small increase in 1990.



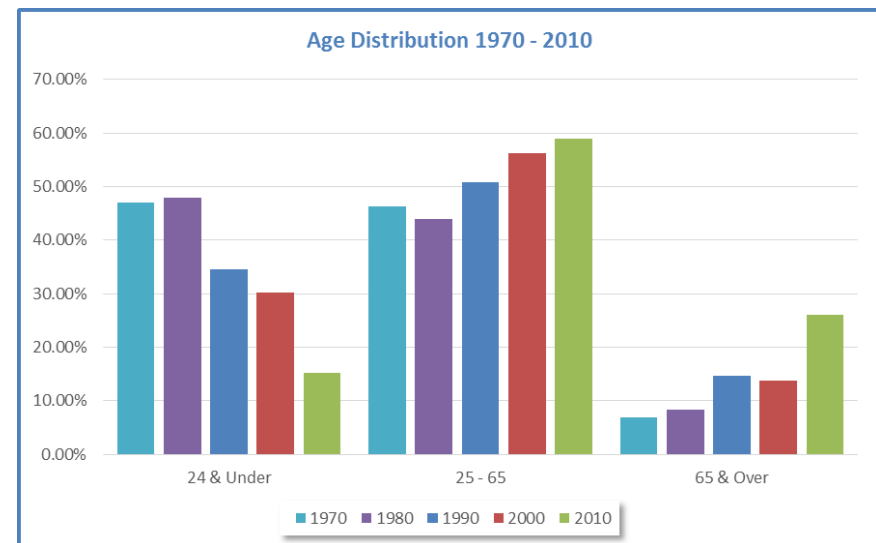
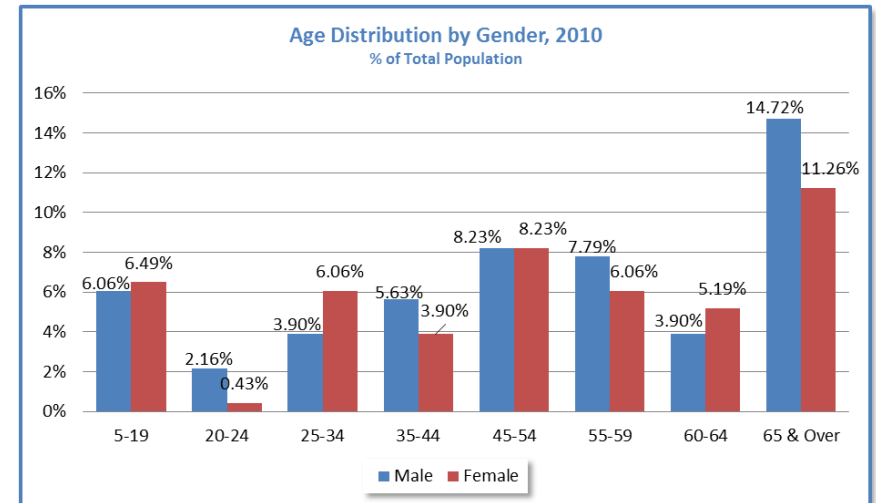
Age, Education, Race, and Disability

In order to determine the needs of the population, the Township needs to understand which population age groups are increasing and which are not. The term “Baby Boomers” is often used to describe those born between 1946 and 1964, post-World War II. Baby Boomers represent 26.4% of the United States population, as of the 2010 Census. “Gen Xers” were the generation born roughly between 1965 and 1976 – as of the 2010 Census, this group represents 20% of the Nation’s population. According to the 2010 Census, the median age of Wells Township was 53.9, a considerable increase from the 2000 Census, which was 40 years. The 2013 ACS puts the median age at 52.2 (+/-7.2 years).

Age distribution by gender from the 2010 Census is shown in figure 2-3. Those 65 and over represent the largest age group within the Township, followed by those 45-54. A higher number of males exist in the 20-24 and 65 & over age groups, while females are higher in the 25-34 age group. The age group distribution since 1970 for Wells Township can be seen in Figure 2-4. The trend is that of a dramatic drop in those 24 and younger, with a growing number in those 65 and older. Those aged 25-65 has seen a steady rise since 1970.

For the population 25 years and over, ACS figures show 63.9% are high school graduates, 14.8% have some college with no degree, 5.3% have an associate’s degree, 6.5% have a bachelor’s degree, and 2.4% have a graduate degree. Two of the largest employers in the County are health care and education - both of which require advanced training or degrees. The trend is growing in which employers that may not have required advanced training in the past, now seek employees with post-high school education. Many employers seek to locate in areas that have a highly-trained workforce.

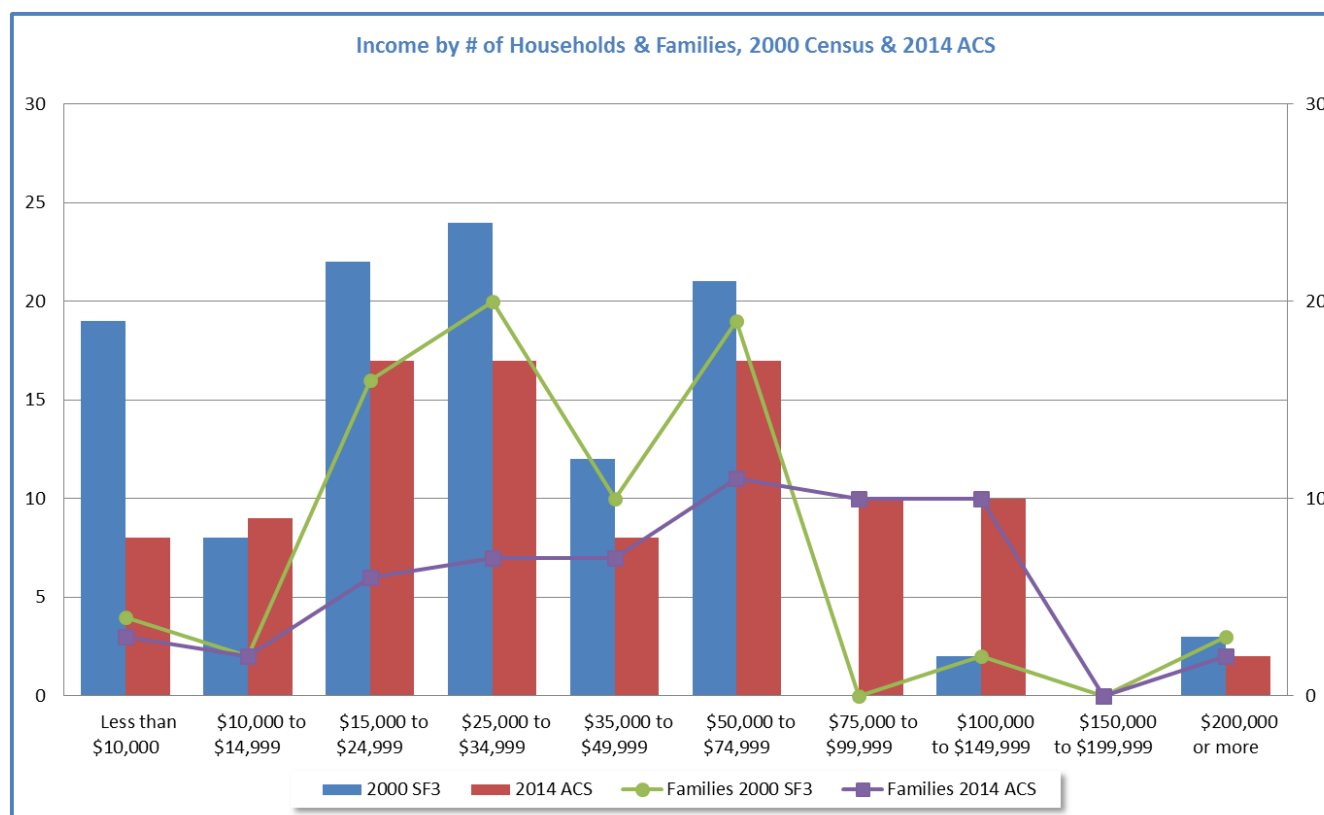
The 2014 ACS shows that 11% of the population 18 to 64 has a disability (ambulatory difficulty is number one in this age group), and that 97% of the population is White and 3% a mix of Black, American Indian, and multiple races.



Income & Labor Force

Examination of local income figures and trends helps determine that amount of local “wealth” that is available locally. Income figures are currently available through the 2014 American Community Survey (ACS) sample data. This data does have a margin of error associated with it. The 2000 Census included income data, and is used as comparison in this analysis. The median household income in the Township, in 2014 dollars, is \$34,167 while the median family income, again in 2014 dollars, is \$61,667. The following chart provides an analysis on both the number of households in each income category (bar graph) and the families in each category (line graph), for both the 2000 Census and the 2014 ACS. A household consists of all the people who occupy a housing unit, collectively. The chart below provides a visual comparison for the changes in household income versus the changes in family income.

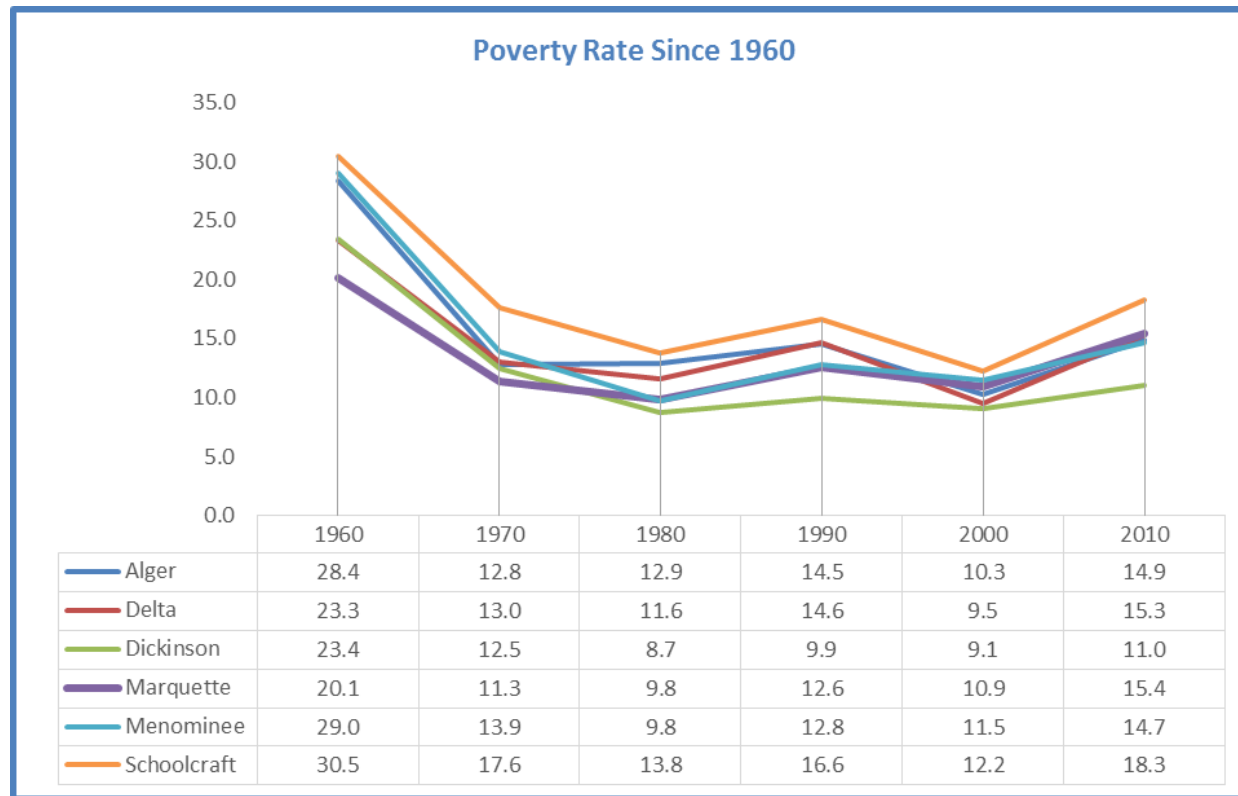
Between the 2000 Census and the 2014 ACS estimate, there were significant changes in several household income categories: less than \$10,000; \$15,000 to \$24,999; and \$75,000 to \$99,999. The largest change was seen in the \$75,000 to \$99,999 – a jump from 0 in 2000 to 10 in 2014. Family income had increases in those greater than \$75,000 in 2014. However, the margin of error with the 2014 ACS income figures is high enough that these changes may not be as significant as the data shows.



Another factor in examining income is the poverty rate. Poverty is defined as the state in which a person or household lacks a usual or acceptable amount of money or possessions; those in poverty are considered very poor. The poverty rate is the threshold or minimum level of income deemed adequate. This rate is typically adjusted annually. Poverty levels are determined by the United States Bureau of the Census based on a complex formula that includes 48 different thresholds that vary by family size, number of children within the family and the age of the householder.

County-level poverty rates from past Census' are shown below. In the Central U.P., Schoolcraft County has historically had the highest poverty rate of the six Counties. Since 1980, Marquette and Menominee Counties have had similar poverty rates, while Dickinson has had the lowest.

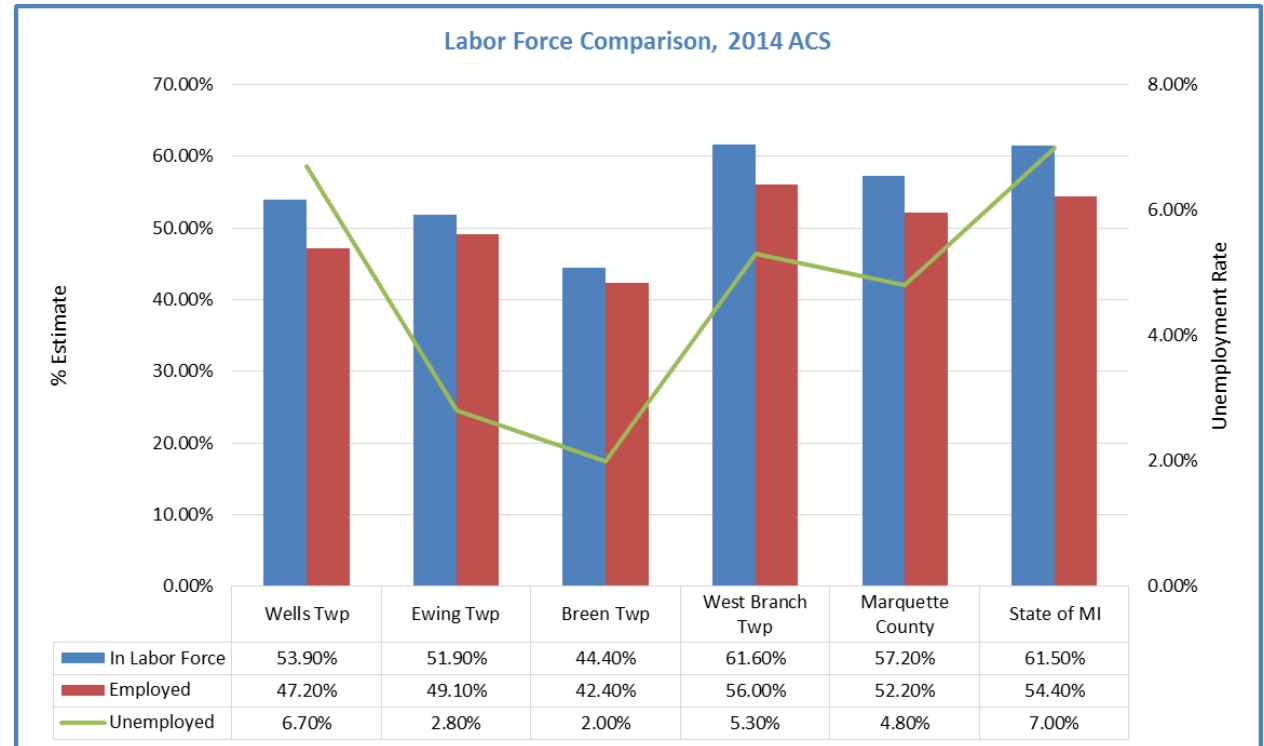
ACS figures from 2013 estimate 33 persons of the 227 estimated Township population is below the poverty level – 14%. In comparison, ACS estimates 10,597 persons, or 16.8%, of the 63,023 estimated County population are below the poverty level.



The following table references households in the 2014 ACS, showing a breakdown of the types of household income – earnings, social security, and retirement – and the mean dollar amounts of those sources of income. It also provides a breakdown of supplemental security income, public assistance, and food stamp assistance. It should be noted that Social Security Income is different than Supplemental Security Income. The Social Security benefit programs are “entitlement” programs. This means that workers, employers and the self-employed pay for the benefits with their Social Security taxes. The taxes that are collected are put into special trust funds and benefactors qualify for these benefits based on work history. The amount of the benefit is based on earnings. SSI is a needs-based program for people with limited income and resources. Resources are assets or things that are owned. The program is paid for by general tax revenues -- not from the Social Security trust funds.

Figure 2-6 compares labor force figures for the Township with surrounding Townships, the County, and the State. The percentage of those in the labor force (of those 16 years and older) is higher in Wells Township than Ewing and Breen Townships, but lower than the County, West Branch Township, and the State of Michigan. Only the State of MI is higher than Wells Township with the percentage of the labor force unemployed.

2014 ACS Households	Estimate
With earnings	54
Mean earnings (dollars)	\$63,576
With Social Security	47
Mean Social Security income (dollars)	\$17,283
With retirement income	25
Mean retirement income (dollars)	\$15,988
With Supplemental Security Income	8
Mean Supplemental Security Income (dollars)	\$11,500
With cash public assistance income	1
Mean cash public assistance income (dollars)	\$1,500
With Food Stamp/SNAP benefits in the past 12 months	11



ACS figures show that the population over 16 is 210 persons, and that 56.2% (118) are in the labor force while 47.6% (99) are employed. According to 2013 data from the Census¹, 81 workers were *employed within* but *lived outside* the Township, while 63 workers *lived within* but *worked outside* of the Township.

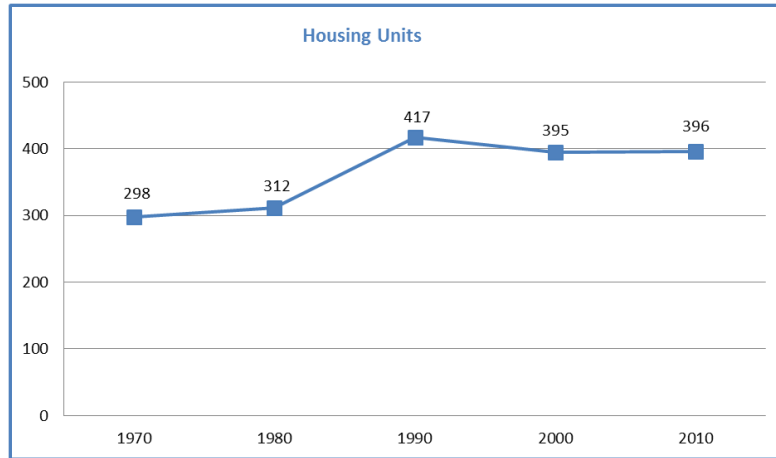
Outflow Job Characteristics (All Jobs)			Inflow Job Characteristics (All Jobs)		
Residents that go outside Twp. for work	Count	Share	Non-residents that come into the Twp. for work	Count	Share
External Jobs Filled by Residents	63	100.0%	Internal Jobs Filled by Outside Workers	81	100.0%
Workers Aged 29 or younger	14	22.2%	Workers Aged 29 or younger	7	8.6%
Workers Aged 30 to 54	27	42.9%	Workers Aged 30 to 54	60	74.1%
Workers Aged 55 or older	22	34.9%	Workers Aged 55 or older	14	17.3%
Workers Earning \$1,250 per month or less	19	30.2%	Workers Earning \$1,250 per month or less	11	13.6%
Workers Earning \$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	23	36.5%	Workers Earning \$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	19	23.5%
Workers Earning More than \$3,333 per month	21	33.3%	Workers Earning More than \$3,333 per month	51	63.0%
Workers in the "Goods Producing" Industry Class	8	12.7%	Workers in the "Goods Producing" Industry Class	7	8.6%
Workers in the "Trade, Transportation, and Utilities" Industry Class	15	23.8%	Workers in the "Trade, Transportation, and Utilities" Industry Class	70	86.4%
Workers in the "All Other Services" Industry Class	40	63.5%	Workers in the "All Other Services" Industry Class	4	4.9%

Viewing the chart above of 2014 ACS estimates, the majority of those from the Township working outside the Township are those in the 30 to 54 age group, make between \$1,251 to \$3,333 per month, and primarily work in the Other Services industry. By comparison, those that live outside the Township and work within the Township are those in the 30 to 54 age group, make more than \$3,333 per month, and are primarily in the Trade, Transportation, and Utilities industry (given the economics of the Township, these are most likely jobs in the logging/timber and electric utilities areas).

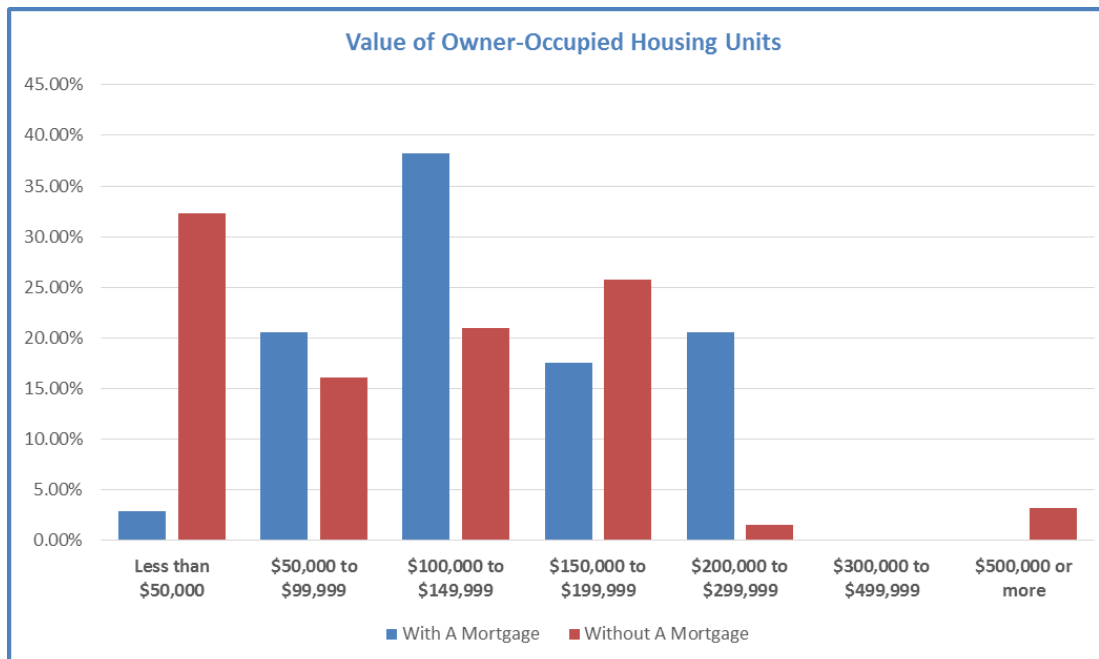
¹ <http://onthemap.ces.census.gov/>

Housing

Housing is a fundamental factor when planning for a community's future – housing values, seasonal housing, housing trends – are all things that should be considered. The Census uses two ways to describe housing – housing units and households. A **household** includes all the persons who occupy a housing unit. People not living in households are classified as living in group quarters. The 2010 Census shows that the Township has 120 total households, of which 69 are family households. A **housing unit** is a house, an apartment, a mobile home or trailer, occupied as separate living quarters



or, if vacant, intended for occupancy as separate living quarters. Separate living quarters are those in which the occupants live separately from any other people in the building and which have direct access from outside the building or through a common hall. Both occupied and vacant housing units are included in the housing unit inventory. The chart to the left shows the trend of housing units within the Township. Since 1970, Wells Township has seen an increase in housing units, especially between 1980 and 1990. The 2010 Census data shows that of the 396 housing units within the Township, 120 were occupied and 276 were vacant – 270 of those 276 were seasonal or recreational use. The 68% of seasonal/recreational housing units in Wells Township is slightly higher than the 63.9% for Marquette County. Of the occupied housing units within the Township, 98% are owner-occupied, while only 2% are renter-occupied.



When considering housing, the value of that housing stock helps to better understand the quality of housing in the area. The chart to the left shows the value of owner-occupied housing, both with and without mortgages. The largest number of those with a mortgage is in the \$100,000 - \$149,000 group, while the largest number of those without a mortgage is in the less than \$50,000 group.

The largest source of State Equalized Value (SEV) in the Township has been residential, historically at 60%+.

Chapter Three – Community Description

A look at Township Services, Infrastructure, Recreation, and Natural Resources

Utilities, Water, Solid Waste

Electric service within the Township is provided by Alger Delta Cooperative. An Enbridge gas pipeline runs through the Township, although no gas service is provided. Solid waste is managed by Watson Disposal. Watson Disposal also provides recycling service for customers, free to residential customers.

Township residents rely on private wells for drinking water and on-site septic systems, both of which are regulated by the Marquette County Health Department under the Superior Environmental Health Code. Wells for facilities serving the public, such as motels, fall under regulations of the Federal and State Safe Drinking Water Acts, where isolation distances, minimum yield and water quality testing requirements are more stringent than for a private residential well. Permits for residential and commercial wells are issued by the Health Department. The Wells and Water Table map on page 20 shows wells and the water table depth.

Important determinants for siting a septic system are soil types, water table, and steepness of slopes. In areas with clay soils, steep slopes and small lots, siting and maintaining septic systems can pose problems. Per the Health Code, sewer lines from buildings shall be located a minimum of ten feet (10') from all water wells. Septic tanks or vaulted privies shall be located a minimum of fifty feet (50') from residential wells; seventy five feet (75') from Type IIb non-community and Type III water supplies, and two hundred feet (200') from Type IIa and community water supplies; ten feet (10') from property lines; five feet (5') from foundation walls; five feet (5') from building footing drains, storm drains and/or other subsoil drains; ten feet (10') from water lines; ten feet (10') from steep embankments or drop-offs; and seventy-five feet (75') from lakes, streams or other surface water impoundments. These restrictions are subject to change with the Health Code. More information in septic and well siting can be found in the County Health Code.

Schools & Libraries

Kindergarten through 8th grade students are housed in the Wells Township School in Arnold. District students attend high school at the Gwinn Area Community Schools. Enrollment at the Township School the past five years is as follows: 2014-2015, 13 students; 2013-2014, 9 students; 2012-2013, 12 students; 2011-2012, 15 students; 2010-2011, 15 students.

The 8,500 square foot school was constructed in 1958 and includes a gymnasium, which also serves as a cafeteria, and four classrooms. An area has been devoted for library purposes and is open to the public throughout the year. A garage was constructed in 1987 to store the district's bus fleet (3) and is located adjacent to the school building. The garage is a 2,700 square foot facility.

Wells Township residents have access to the Peter White Library in Marquette, and libraries in Gladstone and Escanaba. A library is also available at the Wells Township School. The Escanaba Public Library provides library cards for those outside the service area for \$35. The Peter White Library issues library cards to those in the service area free of charge, which includes Wells Township.

Medical Facilities, Law Enforcement /Emergency Response

Fire Protection

The Fire Department was organized on August 8, 1979, and chartered January 5, 1980. Currently the Fire Department consists² of four (4) trained and state certified volunteer fire fighters. Mutual Aid Agreements are in force with the surrounding townships of Forsyth, Richmond, Cornell (Delta County), West Branch (Dickinson County), Harris (Menominee County), and the Michigan DNR Fire Division. Fire call charges are not assessed and volunteer fire fighters receive a small compensation for duties. Funding from taxes are used for fire calls, and the Township also covers the cost of trainings.

Township-owned firefighting equipment includes the following:

- 1989 Ford L9000 - 1,000-gallon pumper
- 1989 International Eagle 9370 – 3,000-gallon tanker
- 1995 International 4x4 – 1,500-gallon tanker
- 1991 Ford F350 4x4

In addition, the Township has a 1985 Chevrolet 4x4 brush truck available.

Insurance ratings are determined by the Insurance Service Office Commercial Risk, Inc., using the Grading Schedule of Municipal Fire Protection. Gradings obtained under the schedule are used throughout the United States in establishing base rates for fire insurance. While ISO does not presume to dictate a community's level of fire protection, its findings are the recognized norm for assessing fire protection adequacy. Factors such as equipment, alarm systems, water supply, fire prevention programs, building construction and distance of potential hazard areas are considered in establishing a rating. Those areas within 5 road miles of the Township fire department are given a Class 9 rating. Class 10 applies to properties located more than 5 road miles from the responding fire department. There are no hydrants within the Township. The rating schedule ranges from the greatest level of protection designated as Class 1 to the least protection, Class 10.

Hospitals/Health Care/Emergency Medical Services

The largest hospital in the Region is the UP Health System - Marquette, which serves as a regional medical center. A medical staff of more than 200 doctors works as a team with its more than 1,800 employees in caring for approximately 9,000 inpatients and more than 350,000 outpatients per year. As a 307-bed tertiary care hospital, UP Health System – Marquette receives patients from across the UP and provides care in 65 specialties and subspecialties.

² Three (3) fire fighters are in training as of the writing of this plan.

OSF St. Francis Hospital in Escanaba, employs over 700 individuals with more than 100 physicians, physician assistants and nurse practitioners on staff. The facility offers a variety of primary care and specialty care services.

A broad range of medical and dental specialties are available in both the Marquette and Escanaba areas. The nearest physicians are located in the community of Gwinn. Home health care services are available through several service providers. Advanced Medical Technicians are available from neighboring Forsyth Township and Emergency Medical Services through Rampart Ambulance, a service of U.P. Health System in Marquette. An emergency helicopter service, provided by Valley Med Flight, provides the County-area with air medical transportation. Wells Township has been in discussions to have a landing site near the Township Hall.

Law Enforcement

The Michigan State Police Post located in Gladstone and the Marquette County Sheriff's Department provide protection for Township residents. The Sheriff's Department operates an 80 bed jail on Baraga Avenue in the City of Marquette. The 80-bed jail may also house up to 10 federal inmates. The three-story facility has blocks on each floor where the inmates are classified based on the severity of their crimes. The staff operates with the philosophy of maintaining the highest level of security, while providing a constitutionally safe and healthy environment for the inmates and staff.

Central dispatch for the County's 911 system is provided through the Michigan State Police in Negaunee.

Township Facilities

Community Building

Construction of the 50' by 80' (4,000 square feet) Community Building was completed in 1980 and meets barrier-free requirements. Township Board and other Township bodies conduct their meetings in this facility and it is used as the polling place for elections. In addition to the area used by Township officers and for meetings, the facility contains a kitchen area and large room used for banquets, receptions, reunions, etc. A covered walkway serves as the entrance to this portion of the building. Restrooms within the building are accessible.

Fire Hall

The present 54' by 60' (3,300 square feet) Fire Hall was constructed in 1988 and meets barrier-free requirements. The structure has sufficient capacity to house 5 units and contains a meeting/training room, office and restroom.



Recreation Facilities

Township recreational facilities are located at the Township complex in Arnold adjoining the Wells Township School. A 1,200 square foot outdoor community swimming pool was opened in 1973. The pool depth ranges from 3 feet to 9 feet. An adjacent wading pool is provided for young children. A 20' by 40' (800 square feet) pool building provides changing, shower and bathroom facilities. An appointed pool manager manages pool operations while the Township Board oversees pool operations. A grade-level 40' by 80' pavilion, constructed in 1994, is located adjacent to the Township Hall. The pavilion surface is flooded in the winter to provide a covered outside ice rink for area residents. Barrier-free vaulted toilets are located near the pavilion. Double tennis courts were constructed in 1975 and are presently in poor condition. The Township has received DNR funding twice – a Land and Water Grant and a Michigan Bond Fund award. The court improvements were done in 2001, and funding for a pavilion was granted in 1990. A baseball field, developed through community volunteer efforts, is located on school district property.

Cemeteries

The Riverview Cemetery in Northland was established in 1905 and includes 2.0 acres. Forest Home Cemetery in Watson was established in 1916 and includes 4.84 acres. Cemetery records are maintained by the Township Clerk. Sale of cemetery plots is also a function of the Township Clerk. Normal cemetery maintenance is completed by Township seasonal employees. Plot excavation is arranged by plot owners.

Administration

Wells Township currently has a 5-member Township Board, 5-member Planning Commission, 3-member Zoning Board of Appeals, and a 3-member Board of Review.

Other Services

Liquor inspections are completed by the County Sheriff's office. Building permits are issued by the Marquette County Resource Management/Development Department, Building Codes Division. Zoning permits are issued by the Zoning Administrator consistent with the Township Zoning Ordinance. Property assessments are completed by the Township Assessor who has attained requisite certification from the State of Michigan.



Transportation

Moving goods, services, and people is another important factor in determining future development of a community. Having transportation options, as well as things like quality roads, plays a role in business and commercial development.

County Road System

The Marquette County Road Commission is the agency responsible for maintenance, snow removal and improvements of roads within the Township. Because no state highways run through the Township, residents and visitors rely on the local County road system for travel. In accordance with Public Act 51, the Marquette County Road Commission designates roads as primary or local. The Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) National Functional Class (NFC) classifies a road based on the type of service the road is intended to provide. Roads are classified in one of three general categories; arterial, collector, and local. Wells Township contains major collector and local roads.

Collector roads generally serve intra-county traffic, and typically travel distances are shorter than on arterial routes. Consequently, more moderate speeds may be typical. Major collector roads should: (1) Provide service to any county seat not on an arterial route, to the larger towns not directly served by the higher systems, and to other traffic generators of equivalent intra-county importance, such as consolidated schools, shipping points, county parks, important agricultural areas, etc.; (2) link these places with nearby larger towns or cities, or with routes of higher classification; and (3) serve the more important intra-county travel corridors.

The purpose of the local road system is to primarily provide access to adjacent lands and service travel over relatively short distances as compared to collectors or other higher systems. Using State of Michigan road data, Wells Township contains a total of 106.38 miles of road: county major collector roads account for about thirty miles (26.5%); county local roads account for almost forty miles (35.48%); and just over forty miles (37.93%) of road are classified as "not a certified public road", meaning they are typically private drives or a road that is not typically open to public traffic. The NFC map on page 21 shows the road network for the Township, and classifies roads by National Function Class (NFC).

The Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) is the total volume of traffic for a specific roadway. The AADT is a way to determine how "busy" a road is. The AADT can be used to determine how much maintenance a roadway needs or if enforcement of speed limits needs to be increased. AADT can also be a factor in roadway funding. The Michigan Department of Transportation performs traffic counts on both State Highway systems and local systems, typically in coordination with the Regional Planning Organizations. The traffic count map on page 22 shows the most current AADT counts within the Township. In comparison with other highways in the area - M-69 near LaBranche has an AADT of 620, and M-35 near Rock has an AADT of 1,600. Maple Ridge Road, a connector between Rock and Watson, has an AADT of 251.

Current Road Conditions – PASER System

The Marquette County Road Commission utilizes the Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) system for assessing the condition of federal-aid eligible paved roads in the County. The PASER map at the end of this chapter shows the latest PASER ratings for the Township.

PASER is a visual pavement survey method developed by the University of Wisconsin to evaluate surface road conditions. A rating scale of 1-10 (1 being a failed paved road, 10 being a newly paved road) is used to evaluate the surface distress of the pavement based on pavement material and types of deterioration present. The ratings are then grouped into three categories based on the type of work required; Routine Maintenance (8-10), Capital Preventive Maintenance (5-7), and Structural Improvement (1-4).

- Routine Maintenance includes regularly scheduled preventative treatments such as drainage clearing, shoulder grading, and crack sealing.
- Capital Preventive Maintenance consists of planned treatments applied to existing roadways to hinder further deterioration, such as a sealcoat, thin overlay, or crack sealing.
- Roads rated as needing Structural Improvement are those in need of a re-construct to improve the structural integrity of the pavement, such as a thick overlay or a mill & fill.



In Wells Township, roads needing structural improvements include most of County Road 426 (except from Watson to CR 557) and County Road Si. Roads needing capital preventative maintenance include County Road 426 from Watson to CR 557 and the northern portion of County Road Si. The PASER map on page 23 shows current PASER ratings for the Township. ***Poor road conditions were the most commented issue on the community input survey – residents and taxpayers see road repairs and improvements as a very high priority for the Township and County, as well as road-related maintenance (ditches, grass mowing, etc.)***

Other Transportation

Public transportation in the area is provided by Marquette's MarqTran and Delta County's DATA services. MarqTran has regular routes and schedules in the Marquette, Ishpeming/Negaunee, and Gwinn areas. Service is provided via 9 fixed routes Monday – Saturday, door to door service 7 days a week and 2 deviated fixed routes. Senior citizens (60 years or older), students (K thru 12 & college students with a valid school ID) and people with disabilities ride for half fare. Preschool children ride free of charge with a paying adult. ***Although MarqTran states County-wide service, the community survey and public comments at meetings suggests Wells Township is underserved and getting MarqTran to come to Wells Township has proven to be difficult.***

DATA (Delta Area Transit Authority) has regular routes in Escanaba and Gladstone – rural riders need to make special arrangements. Greyhound Lines provides bus service and has regular schedules in Escanaba and Marquette, with optional stops in Gladstone, Gwinn, Powers/Spalding, and Stephenson. Air travel is provided by Sawyer International Airport at the former K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base, and at the Delta County Airport in Escanaba. Rail lines in the area are now entirely used for the transport of goods through the region. The Escanaba & Lake Superior Railroad (E&LS) is headquartered in Wells and operates over 235 miles of operating rail as of 2005 (up from the 65 miles that was purchased in 1978). A 208 mile mainline runs along Lake Superior, while two branches run from Stiles Junction, WI to Oconto Falls, WI and from Crivitz, WI to Marinette, WI/Menominee, MI.

Topography, Soils, Geology/Bedrock, Surface Water

The bedrock of Wells Township consists of sedimentary rocks that were formed during the Paleozoic Era, about 400 to 500 million years ago. The Paleozoic rocks that underlie the Township include sandstone, limestone, and dolomite of the Cambrian and Ordovician Periods.

Wells Township contains approximately seventy (70) types of soil, according to SSURGO soil data. Because of the high number of soil types and the difficulty displaying those soils on a map, a generalized soil map is on page 24. Grouping soils in general groups provides a broad understanding of the soil types in an area. Generally, the Township contains sandy loams and some areas of organically-rich soils.

The topography of Wells Township is a gradual rise in elevation from the SE corner to the NW corner, as shown on the map on page 25. The Township has very few areas with steep slopes (greater than 10%).

The largest surface water features in the Township are the West Branch of the Escanaba River and the Ford River. Several miles' worth of creeks and smaller rivers also traverse the Township. There are numerous small lakes scattered around the Township, but nothing larger than a few acres.

Recreation, Wildlife, and Protected Species

The Township contains a large amount of State land, which can be used by the public for recreation. Approximately 25 miles of snowmobile trail runs north-south through the Township. The Township does not contain any DNR designated hiking, ski, or motorcycle trails. A newly opened ORV Trail (10.25 miles) enters the Township in the southwestern corner to Arnold. An ORV trail is also planned from Arnold to Gwinn and should be opened by the end of 2017. Wells Township also participates in the County's ORV Ordinance, which regulates ORV traffic along County roads.

Responses from the Township survey were mixed about motorized and non-motorized trail development – 48% supported and 16% opposed motorized trail development, while 38% supported and 22% opposed non-motorized trail development. With the vast amount of State land in the Township, it's recommended the Township work with and communicate with the MDNR to continue trail development on State lands and work with private landowners on any areas that are significant (such as crossings, etc.) With the increased use of ORVs, the MDNR has shown its dedication to regional and local motorized trail development by opening new trails in the Township. Smaller, localized non-motorized trails in the Township would provide opportunities for residents and tourists. The recreation and regional recreation maps on pages 27 and 28 show the current recreational opportunities in the Township and surrounding areas.

The only major recreational facility is at the Township Hall complex, which is described in more detail under Township Facilities earlier in this chapter. Marquette County maintains several County-owned facilities around the County, but no County-owned facilities are present within Wells Township. The City of Marquette provides the bulk of recreational opportunities in the County, as well as the Cities of Escanaba and Gladstone, both in neighboring Delta County. A small rustic campground at Boney Falls (Escanaba River) is privately owned, but offered to area residents and visitors.

The Michigan Natural Features Inventory provides a listing of rare and endangered species by County. Marquette County has 70 different plant and animal species listed under the MNFI. Because of the sensitivity of specific locations of these species, the MNFI has created the Biological Rarity Index, which provides a ranking (high, moderate, low) of finding a rare or endangered species in a certain location. This rarity map is shown on page 26 and shows the locations of these areas and their risk probability.

Sites of Environmental Contamination

Part 213 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (1994 PA 451, as amended) regulates underground storage tanks in Michigan. The Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) maintains a database of closed & active underground storage tanks (UST). There are currently three (3) sites within Wells Township that had or have underground storage tanks: Jaeger's IGA – Closed UST, Tank Removed; Lapalmes Country Corner – Open UST; Northland Bar & Hotel – Closed UST, Tank Removed. The site of Lapalmes Country Corner had three tanks previously removed (closed), and has one tank in use. All three sites have had leaks reported on site – only the Northland site has a status of closed. The other two sites remain open.

Per the Michigan DEQ, remedial action of a contaminated site can occur in several ways. Currently, the owners of the property at the time a leak occurred are ultimately responsible for cleanup of a contaminated site. However, if the property is either in foreclosure or another party is interested in purchasing the site (but does not want to be responsible for cleanup), the DEQ allows for a Baseline Environmental Assessment (BEA) to be performed at the property to determine what contamination, if any, exists at the site. A properly conducted BEA allows the property to be acquired or for an individual to begin operating a facility without being held liable for existing contamination. BEAs are used to gather enough information about the property being transferred so existing contamination can be distinguished from any possible new releases that might occur after the new owner or operator takes over the property. More information about BEAs is available from the MDEQ.

Clean and Affordable Energy

One of the biggest issues facing the Upper Peninsula is energy – the cost of energy, the reliability of energy, and the future of energy. Energy discussions in recent years has slightly shifted from a traditional thought of “alternative” energy to clean and affordable energy starting with energy generation, the electrical grid, transmission, etc. Energy options such as wind, solar, biomass, and geothermal are becoming more affordable and more viable. However, energy policy at the State and Federal level are changing, and clean and affordable energy is somewhat of an unknown.

Energy infrastructure in Michigan is vastly different between the Upper and Lower Peninsulas. More than 90% of all electric energy in the Lower Peninsula is supplied by just two utilities (Consumers and DTE). In contrast, U.P. is serviced by four privately owned utilities (UPPCO, WE, WPS and XCEL), three rural electric co-ops (OCREA, Alger-Delta and Cloverland) and 13 small municipal utilities. Their service areas are overlapping and non-contiguous, with no clear demarcation at municipal or county boundaries. While the control and ownership of some utilities in the region has undergone change, the service areas have remained largely intact in recent history.

Historically, electric generation in the U.P. began with small site-specific coal-based power plants built near and in support of mining activity in the region³. Sized adequate to the needs of local mining activity, such generation facilities weren’t meant to serve as large independent ‘utility scale’ power plants. As mining activity ceased, many of these generation facilities have either closed down, or have been forced to continue to operate in order to maintain grid reliability in the region⁴.

In Wells Township, this plan recommends the Township be open to allowing various forms of small-scale energy options and generation. The Township already has a substantial substation present off County Road 426. As electrical transmission and distribution become more critical, the Township should take steps to work with utilities to improve the energy situation as much as possible.

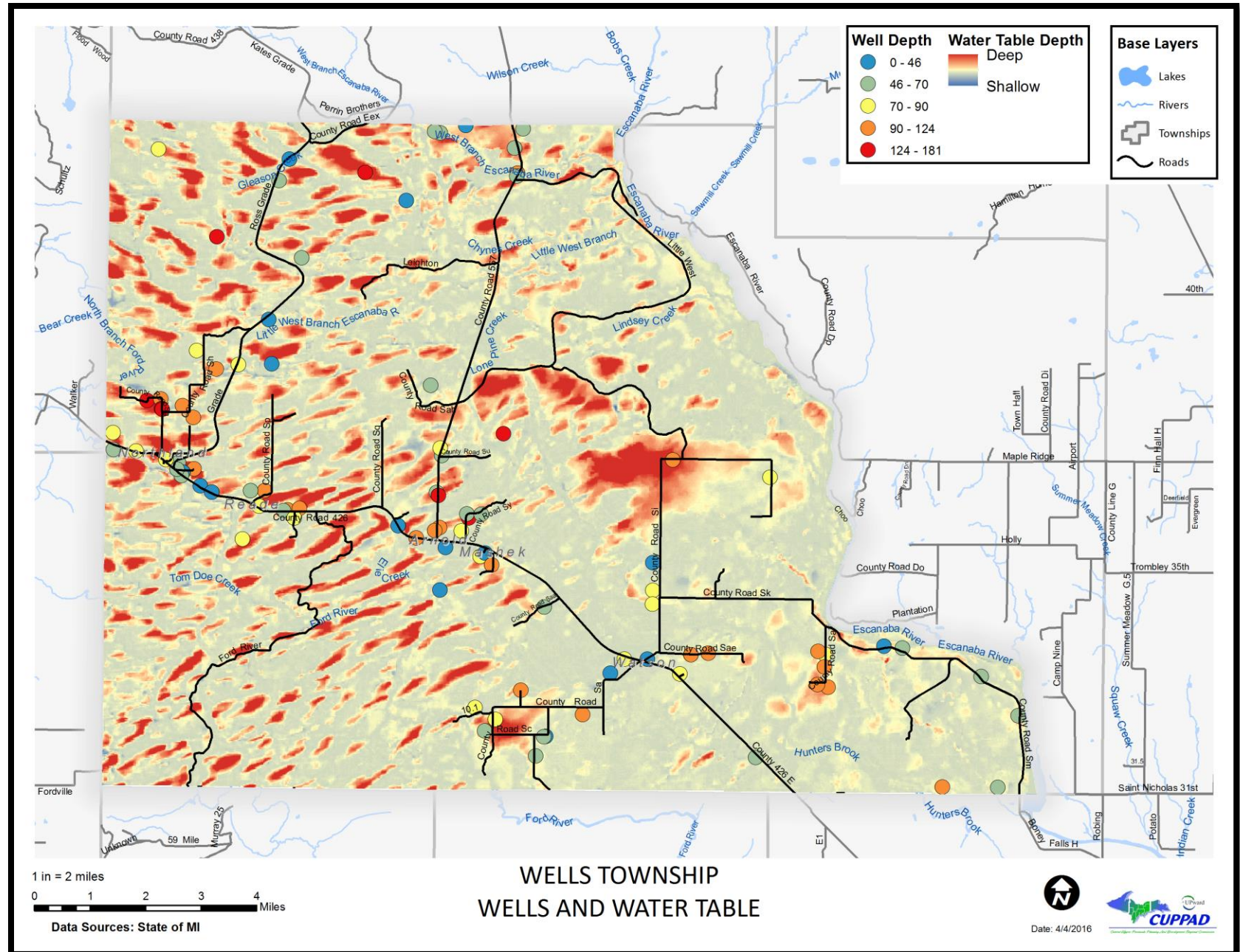
According to NREL data as compiled by CUPPAD, the Township’s wind power potential is classified as “poor”. The Township’s annual average daily total solar resource (AADTSR) is 3.75 – 3.85 MW hours/m²/day (averaged over surface cells of 10 km in size)⁵.

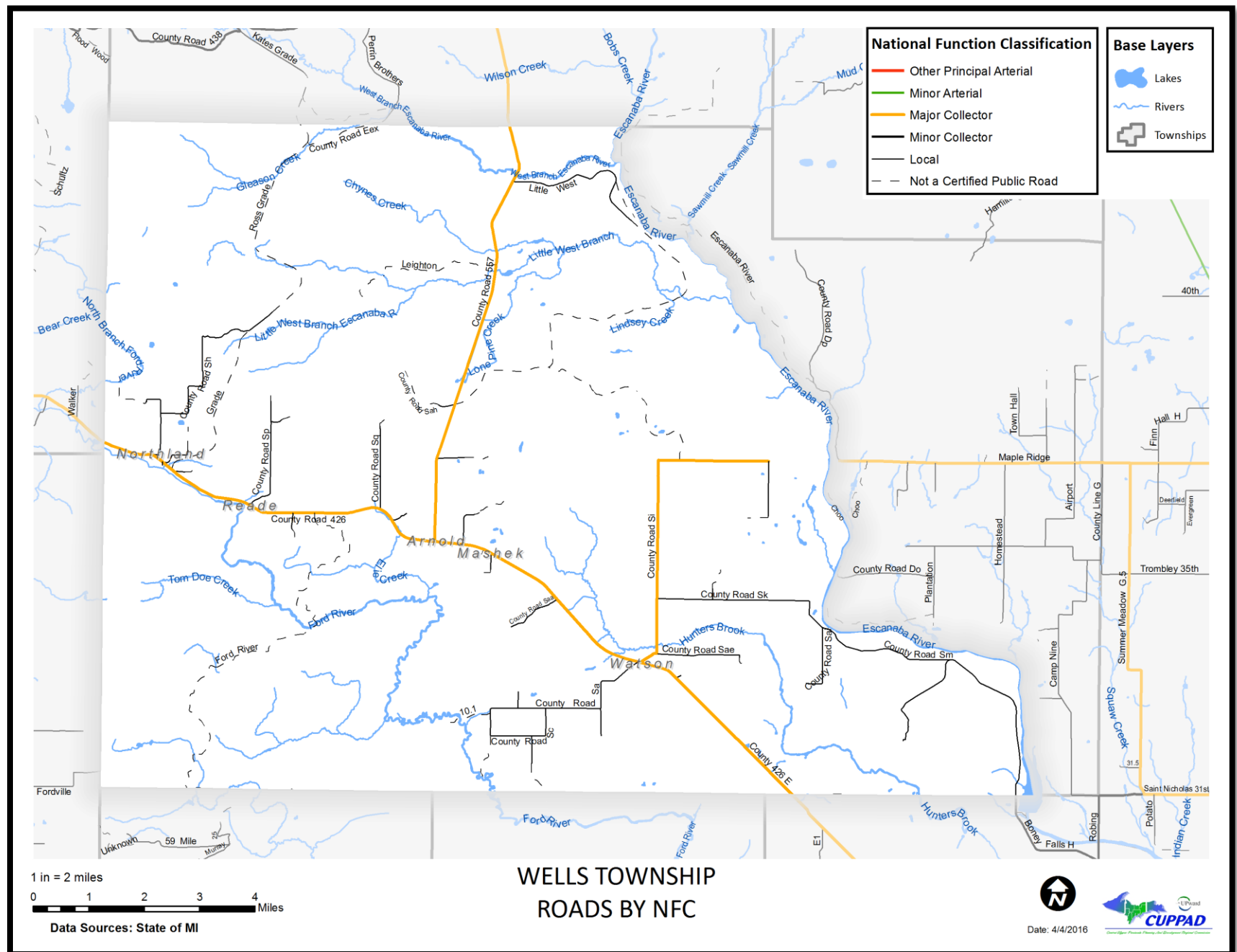
³ http://www.michigan.gov/documents/energy/ETF_Policy_Position_long_419056_7.pdf

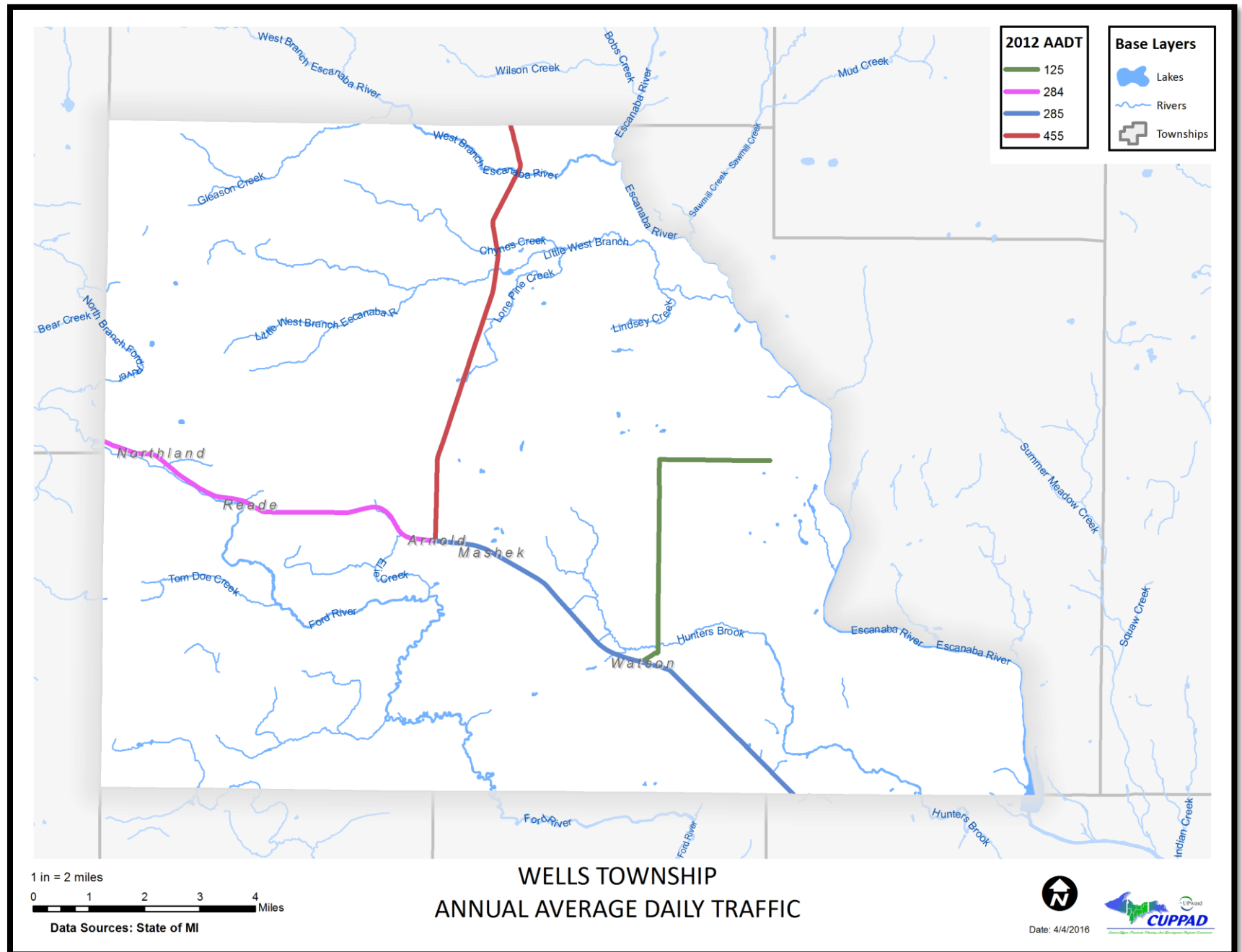
⁴ <http://www.ferc.gov/whats-new/comm-meet/2015/091715/E-7.pdf>

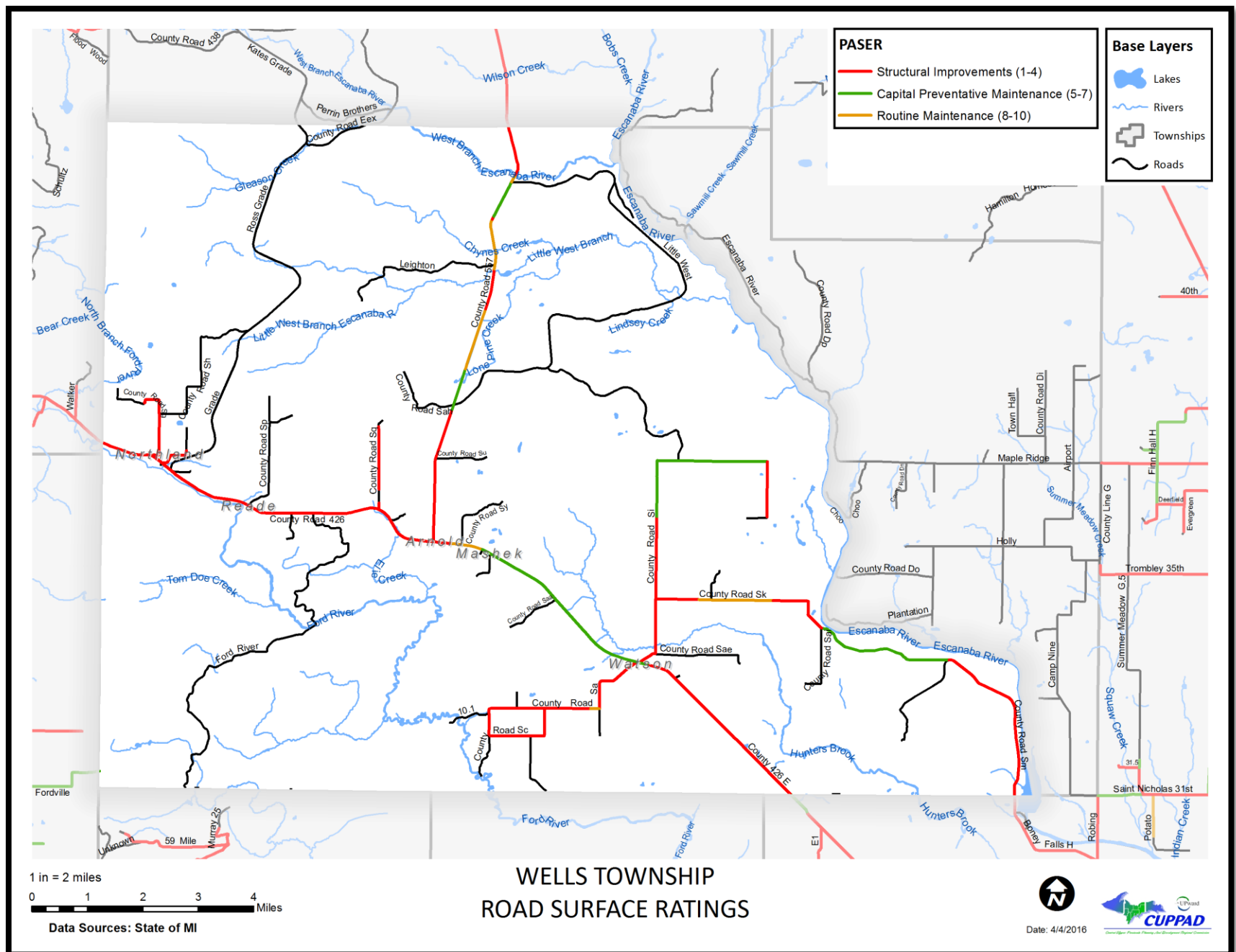
⁵ <https://cuppadd.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Viewer/index.html?appid=f43318857bab4dd8bb0bc401fda95b38>

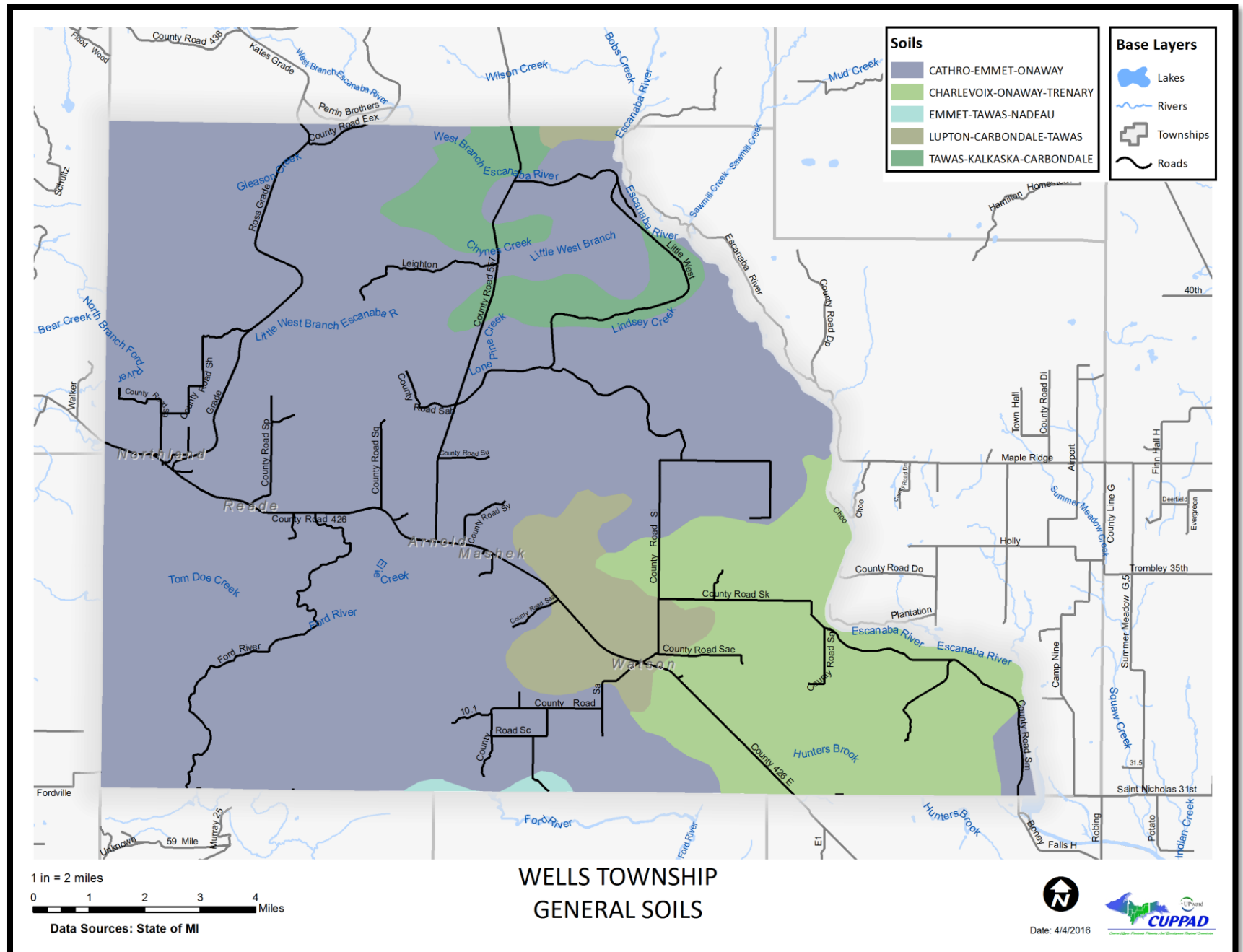
CHAPTER THREE MAPS

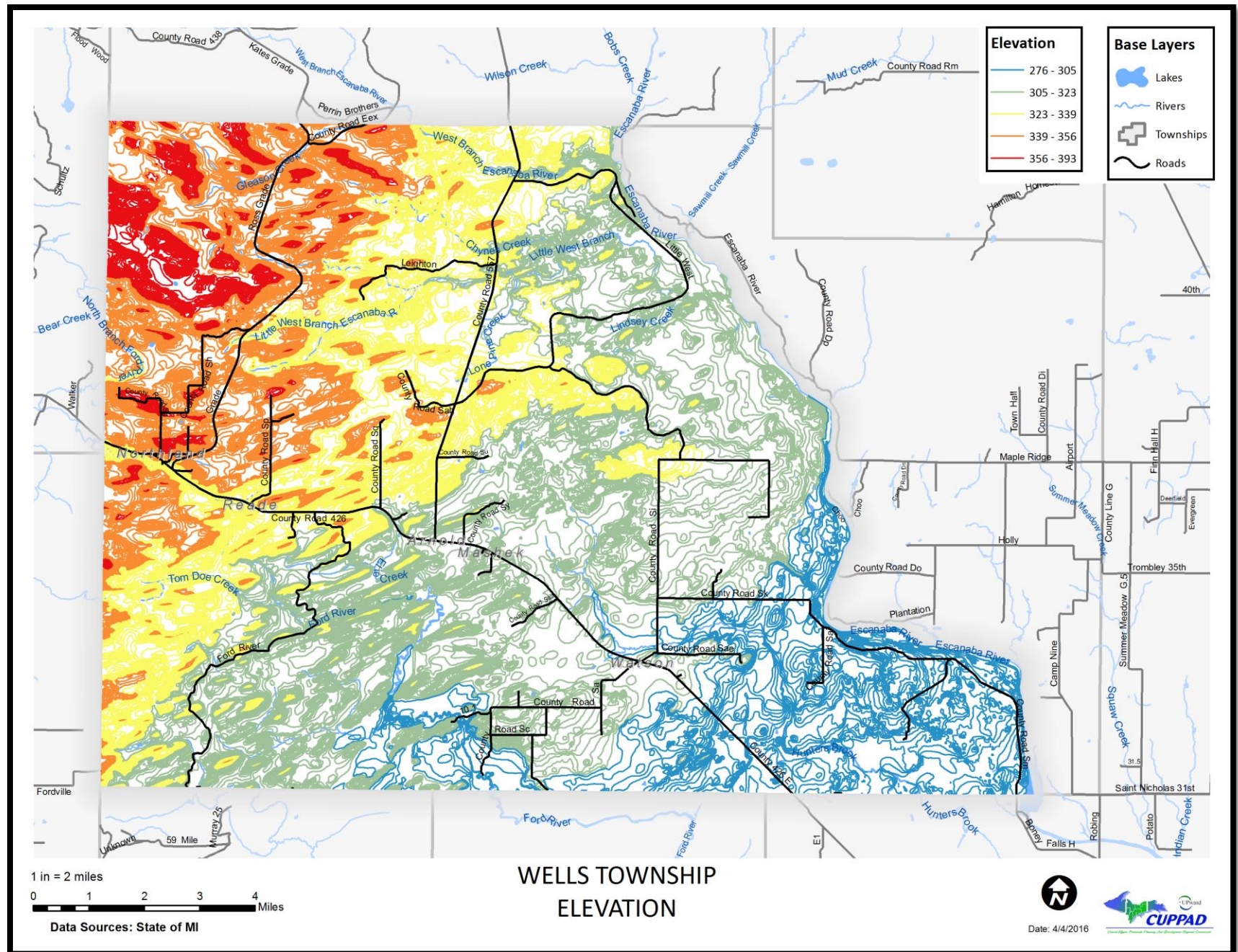


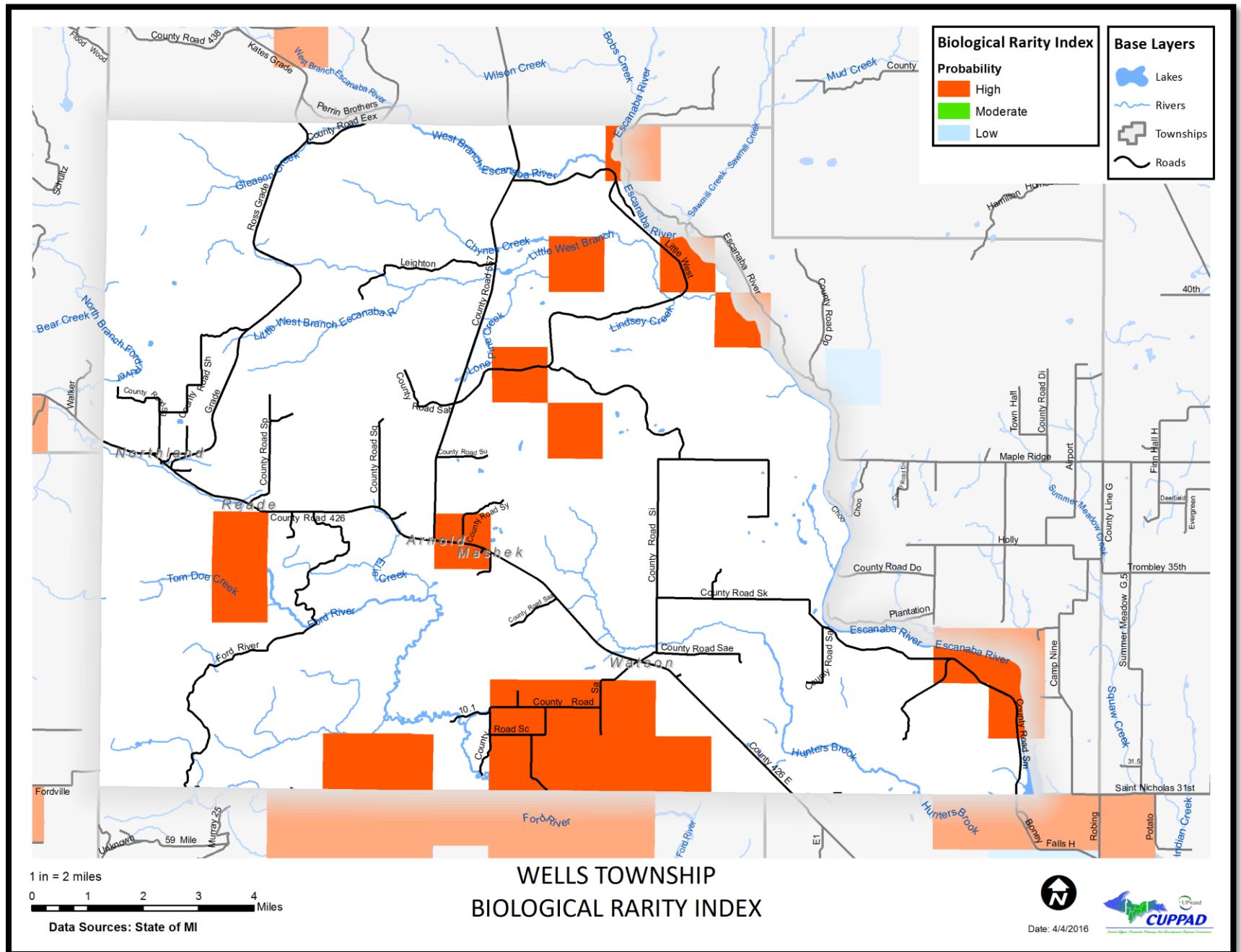


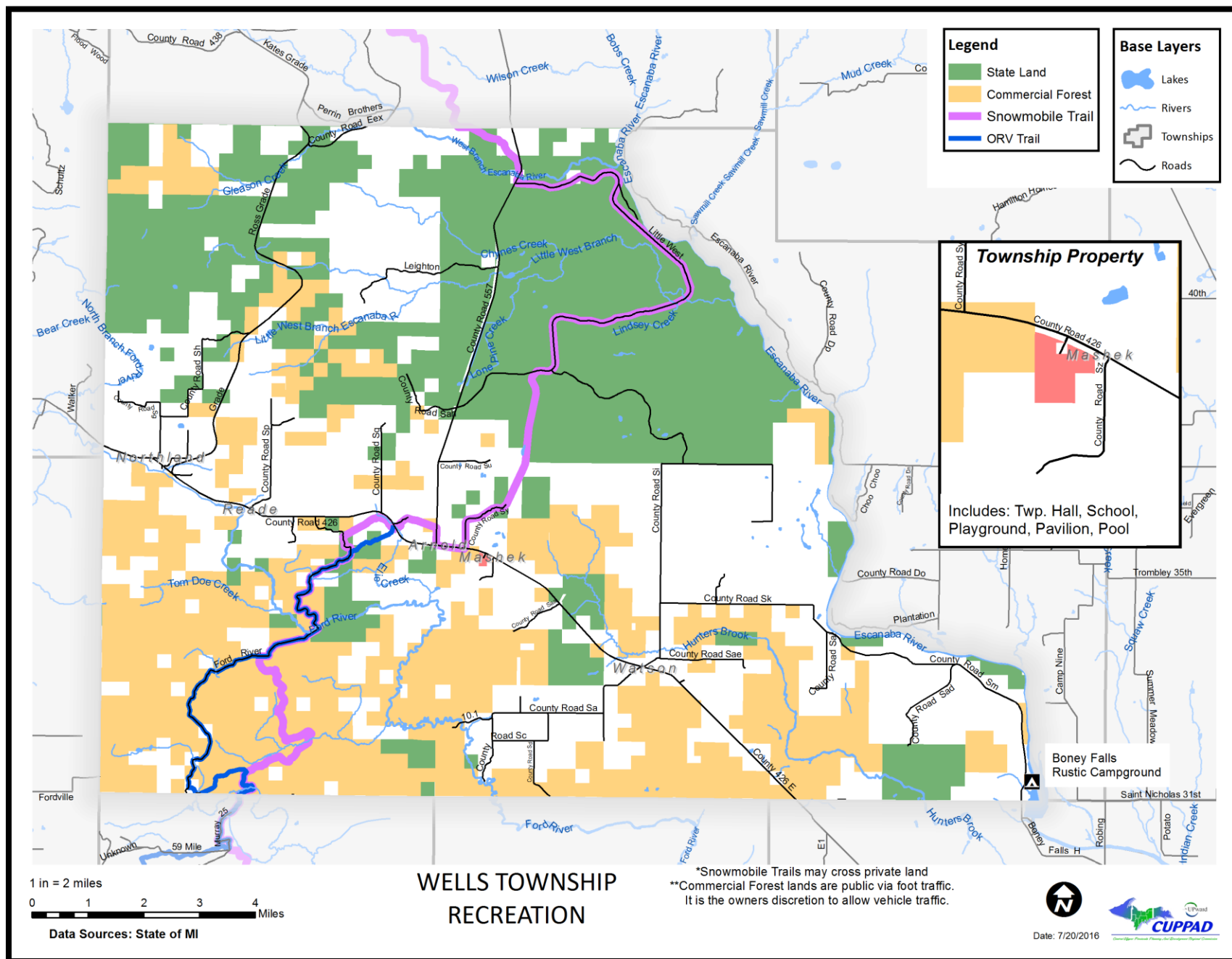


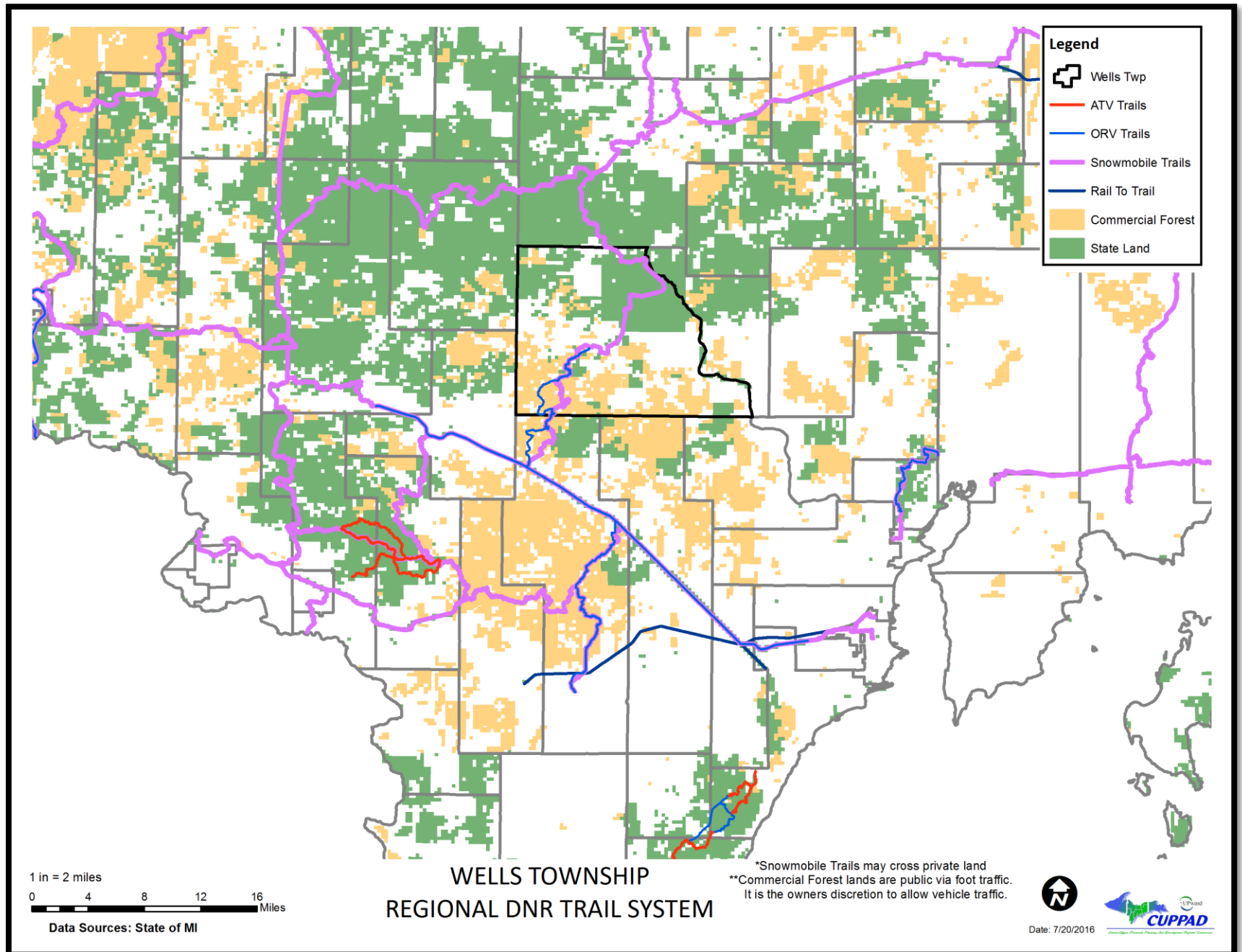












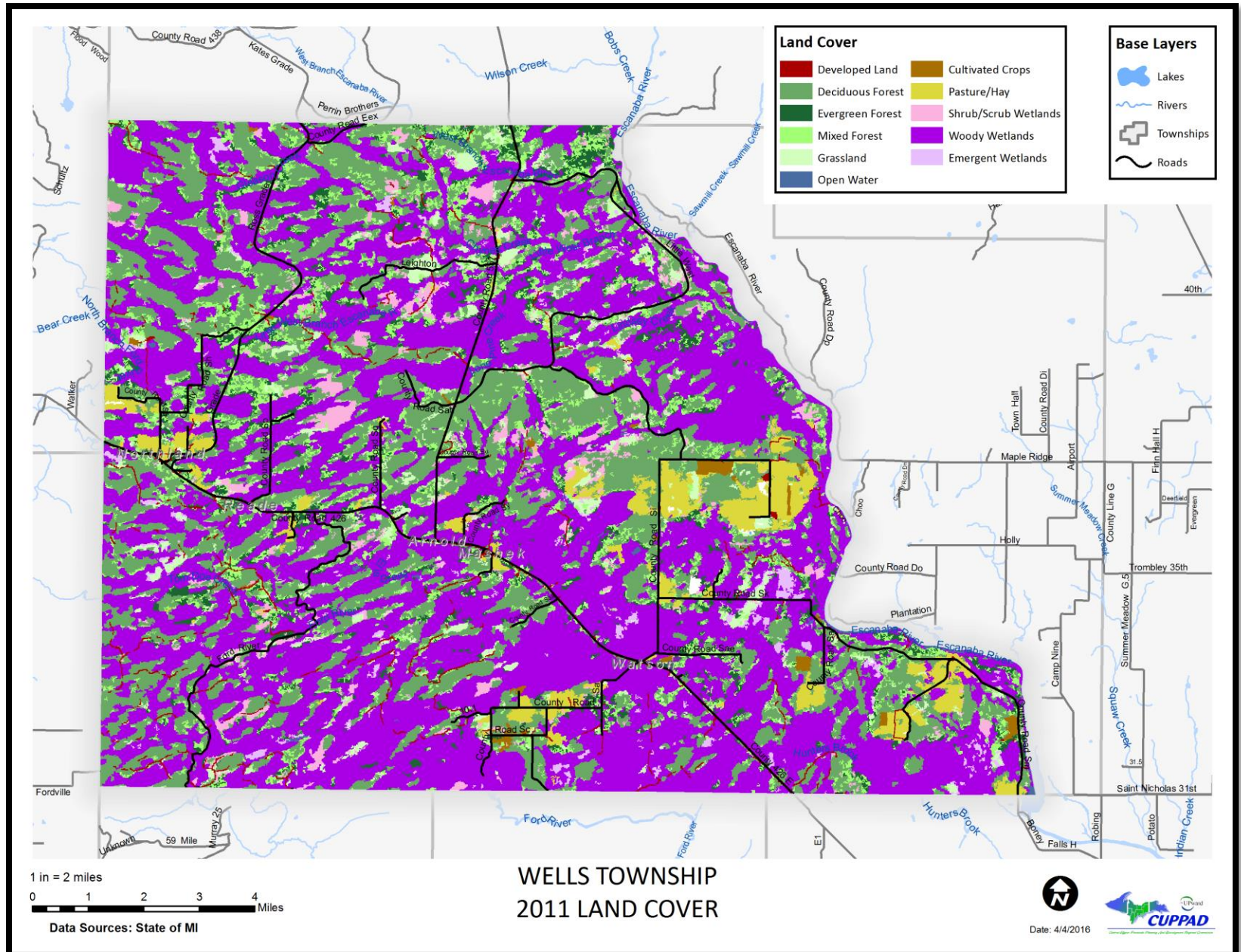
Chapter Four – Current Land Use/Land Cover

Before determining potential future land uses and developing the future land use map, the Township must have an accurate assessment of existing land uses. This process identifies urban built-up land uses along with natural land cover types like forest and wetlands. The following maps show land cover for the Township – one map shows data from the 2011 National Land Cover Dataset, and the other shows general land use for the Township, produced by the Marquette County Resource and Planning Department. The predominant land cover types in the Township include wetlands and forestland, which make up 54% and 36% respectively. Only a small percentage of the Township is considered developed – mostly along County Road 426 and off County Road Sa, south of CR 426. A few scattered areas of “built-up” development are better seen on the generalized land use map. The State of Michigan owns approximately 31,500 acres of land (31.7% of Township’s total acreage), and Commercial Forest covers approximately 28,500 acres (28.7% of Township’s total acreage).

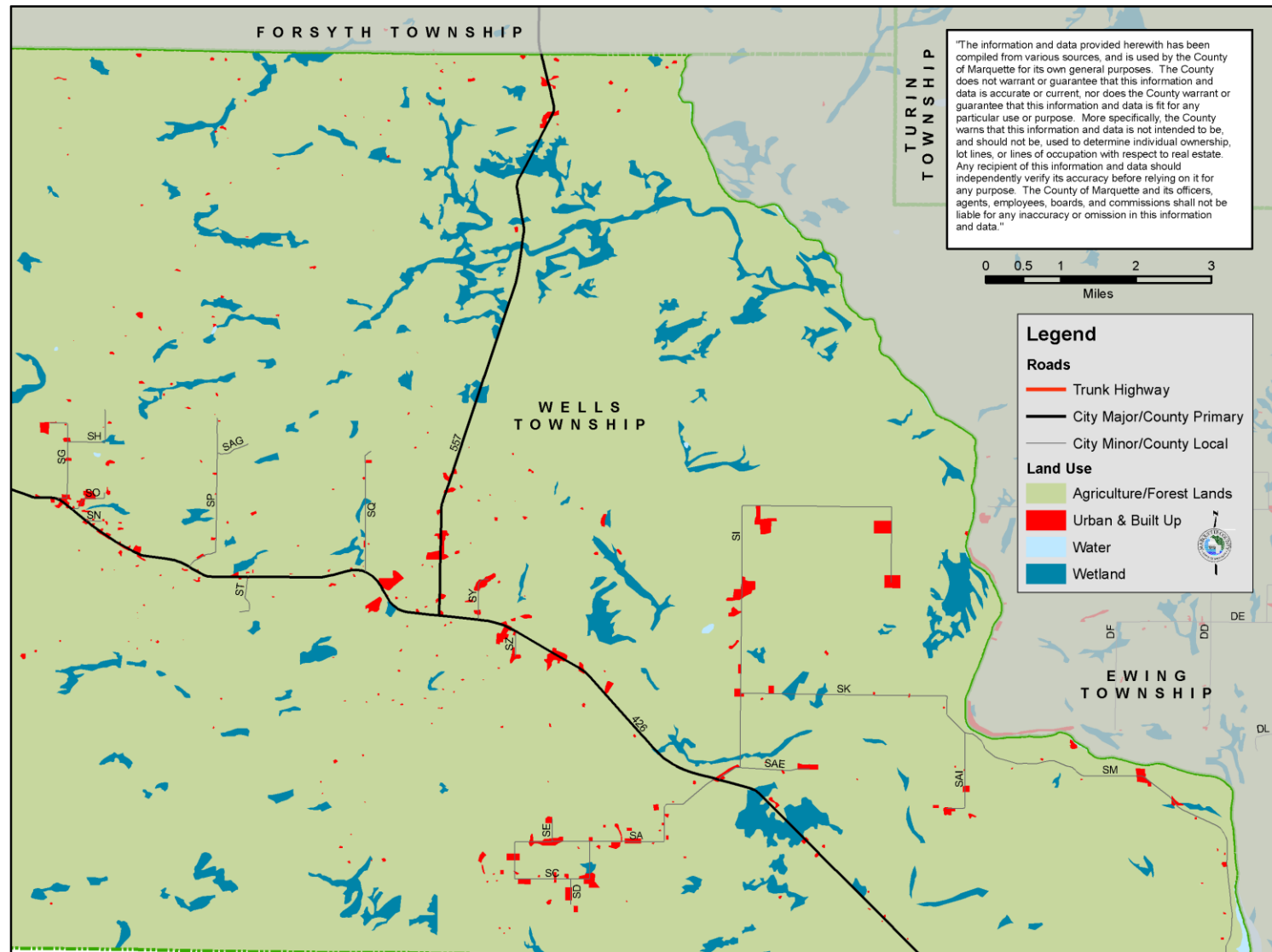
The table below shows the state equalized value (SEV) for properties in Wells Township from 2012 to 2015. The Township is taxed residential by a large margin, while agriculture and timber are second and third.

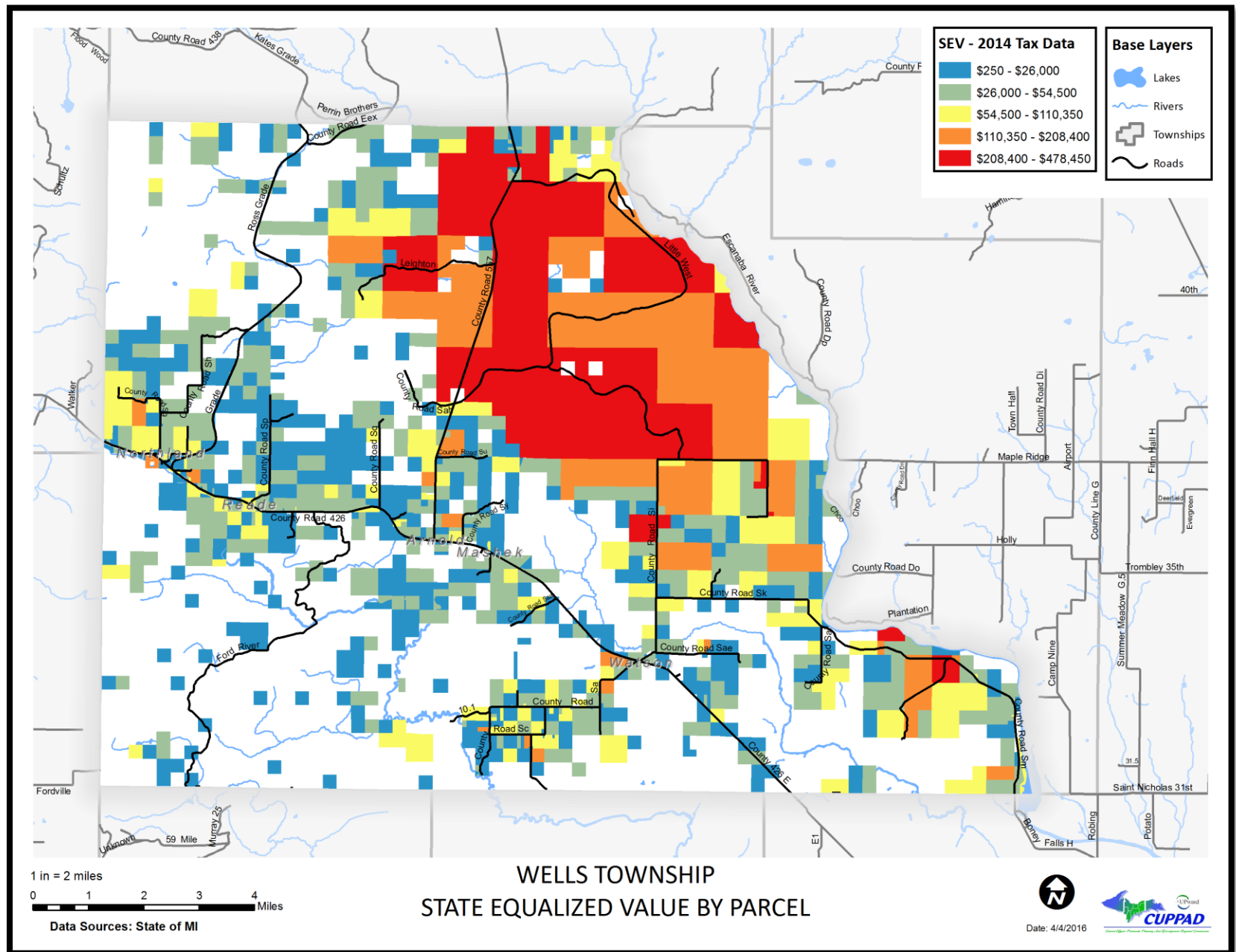
	2012 SEV	2012 % of Total	2013 SEV	2013 % of Total	2014 SEV	2014 % of Total	2015 SEV	2015 % of Total
Agriculture	5,323,650	18.36%	5,464,400	18.66%	6,430,281	20.48%	6,378,750	19.69%
Commercial	131,650	0.45%	230,350	0.79%	222,500	0.71%	222,500	0.69%
Industrial	16,150	0.06%	16,150	0.06%	23,150	0.07%	43,700	0.13%
Residential	17,990,650	62.06%	17,915,300	61.18%	19,117,450	60.88%	19,902,850	61.45%
Forest/Timber	5,529,200	19.07%	5,657,050	19.32%	5,610,900	17.87%	5,840,700	18.03%
Total	28,991,300	100.00%	29,283,250	100.00%	31,404,281	100.00%	32,388,500	100.00%
<i>Source: Dept. of Treasury, MQT County Report</i>								

CHAPTER FOUR MAPS



Wells Township Generalized Land Use 2014





Chapter Five – Future Land Use and Zoning Plan

The final step in completing a Master Plan is to determine the types, location and intensities of development that should occur in the future. Future land use planning establishes the desired amounts and locations of residential, commercial, and industrial development; public facilities; environmental conservation and recreational areas; and changes or improvements to the local transportation system. With the establishment of a Future Land Use Plan, Wells Township intends to ensure that existing land uses can continue; that natural resources such as lakes, wetlands, and forestlands will be protected; and that growth can be accommodated with minimal land use conflicts or negative environmental impacts. While future land uses are difficult to predict, a future land use plan provides a scenario with which Wells Township may use as a guide when considering land use and development decisions.

The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (MZEA), as amended, requires in Section 203 (1) that zoning be based on a plan. Similarly, Section 33 (2) (d) of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA), as amended, sets forth the purpose for developing a zoning plan. This Chapter includes the Zoning Plan, which is intended to guide the implementation of and future changes to the Township Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Plan describes:

- the purpose, general location, and general uses allowed for each existing and proposed zoning district;
- the differences between future land use categories on the Future Land Use Map and the existing and proposed zoning districts;
- a recommendation of dimensional standards for existing and proposed zoning districts
- the existing zoning map and future land use map

The relationship between the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance is often misunderstood. The Master Plan is a guide for land use for the future; the Zoning Ordinance regulates the use of land in the present. The Master Plan is not a binding, legal document; the Zoning Ordinance is a law that must be followed by the community's residents and others wishing to develop or do business in the Township. The future land use recommended for an area may be the same as the existing zoning for that area, while in some cases the future land use recommended is different from the existing zoning. The Future Land Use Map does not change the existing zoning in an area. A property owner must use the property as it is currently zoned.

The Future Land Use Map reflects the assumption that land use patterns in Wells Township will continue to be heavily influenced by recreation and forestry management, with the potential for some small business or home-based businesses. Potential updates to the Wells Township Zoning Ordinance are discussed throughout this chapter. These changes can be pursued as the need or opportunity presents itself. The Planning Commission can identify major policies it wishes to implement and begin to work on the corresponding zoning changes at the same time.

Existing Zoning Districts and Dimensional Standards

The current Wells Township Zoning Ordinance, last updated in 2011, lists 11 zoning districts which are briefly described below.

R: Residential

Intended for quiet neighborhoods for single-family and two-family dwellings. Accessory uses permitted include items such as garages, sheds, swimming pools, woodsheds, etc.

RR-2: Rural Residential

Intended as a transition zone between dense residential and sparsely developed rural, agriculture, and forested areas. Permitted uses include single-family dwellings and traditional agriculture on land 20 acres or greater.

LS/R: Lake Shore/River

Intended to preserve residential and recreational uses for areas with frontage on lakes and rivers. Permitted uses include single-family dwellings and recreational structures. Accessory uses permitted include those of Residential.

RS-1: Recreational Structure

Intended for recreational or seasonal developments, such as cabins, cottages, camps, hunting camps, or similar recreation/seasonal purposes.

RS-10: Recreational Structure Ten

Same as RS-1 with minimum ten acre tracts of land.

AP-20: Agriculture Production

Intended to preserve agricultural productivity of crops and animal-raising, as well as forestry and mineral extraction. Permitted uses include single-family dwellings, light agriculture, mineral extraction, and timber harvesting.

RP-10: Resource Production Ten

Intended to maintain low density rural areas with a wide range of uses including forestry, agriculture, natural resources, and recreation.

RP-20: Resource Production Twenty

Same as RP-10 but with minimum 20 acre tracts of land.

TP-40: Timber Production

Intended to preserve and maintain tracts of land for timber production and mining.

TD: Town Development

Intended for residential, retail/service establishments, and certain governmental uses – designed for a mix of residential and retail uses.

I: Industrial

Intended for manufacturing, assembling, fabricating, processing, storage, mineral extraction, and other commercial activities.

The following table lists the existing schedule of regulations in the current Township Zoning Ordinance.

District	Min. Lot Size (sq. ft.)	Min. Lot Width (sq. ft.)	Front Setback	Side Setback	Rear Setback	Max. Height (feet)
R	20,000 (.459 Acres)	100	30	10	35	30
RR-2	2 Acres	300	30	30	30	30
LS/R	20,000 (.459 Acres)	100	30	10	30	30
RS-1	1 Acre	150	30	10	30	30
RS-10	10 Acres	300	30	30	30	30
AP-20	20 Acres	30	10	30		
RP-10	10 Acres	300	30	30	30	30
RP-20	20 Acres	470	30	30	30	30
TP-40	40 Acres	660	30	30	30	30
TD	20,000 (.459 Acres)	100	30	10	35	30
I	1 Acre	150	40		20	

Future Land Use/Zoning Plan

The Future Land Use Map is not the same as the Zoning Map, either in the legal sense or in its purpose. A land use map is a graphic representation of how land is physically being used, or will be used. The future land use map is general in nature and acts as a guide as to where and to what level future zoning should be permitted. The zoning map is a graphic representation of the boundaries for which zoning regulations have been adopted by Wells Township. The Future Land Use Map, along with its associated descriptions for future land use classifications, makes up the Future Land Use Plan. The Future Land Use Map should serve as a guide for making decisions on the rezoning of land.

The following table shows the relationship between the general Future Land Use Categories created as part of the planning process, the existing zoning districts, and proposed zoning districts. ***This plan recommends combining and/or eliminating several zoning districts to simplify Township zoning and allow for more flexibility in future development.***

Future Land Use Categories and Associated Zoning Districts		
Future Land Use Categories	Existing Zoning District(s)	Future Zoning District(s)
Residential	Residential – R	Rural Residential – RR-1
	Rural Residential – RR-2	
Waterfront	Lake Shore/River – LS/R	Water Development Overlay – WDO-1
Resource & Production	Agriculture Production – AP-20	Agriculture & Resource Production – ARP-1
	Resource Production – RP-10,RP-20	
	Timber Production – TP-40	
	Recreational Structure – RS-1,RS-10	
Mixed Use	Town Development - TD	Rural Development – RD-1
Industrial	Industrial - I	Industrial – I-1

Future Land Use Categories

The Wells Township Planning Commission, with public input and assistance from EUPRPDC, has developed the following future land use recommendations for the Township. Note that **Residential, Waterfront, and Industrial** are not on the current map and are reserved for future changes to this plan. These future land use categories are consistent with surrounding Townships.

Residential

Intended for residential development as a primary use, such as one-family or two-family dwellings. However, realizing the rural nature of the Township and the goal of the Township to encourage more development, residential areas would also include home-based business as a permitted use. Accessory structures would include typical residential-based items such as sheds, barns, garages, etc.

Waterfront

Intended to guide development along inland lakes and major river systems within the Township. This primarily would include the Escanaba River and Ford River systems. The primary use in this category would be single-family homes and recreation-based structures (camps, cabins, etc.). Waterfront areas would have smaller lot sizes. Other uses, setbacks, and other regulations in the Township Zoning Ordinance should be reviewed and revised to allow future development while being mindful of over-development, shoreline erosion, and floodplains. *This is being recommended as a possible overlay district in the revised zoning ordinance, which would still allow uses of the underlying zoning district (presumably Agriculture & Resource Production) while applying further regulations to protect the shoreline.*

Resource & Production

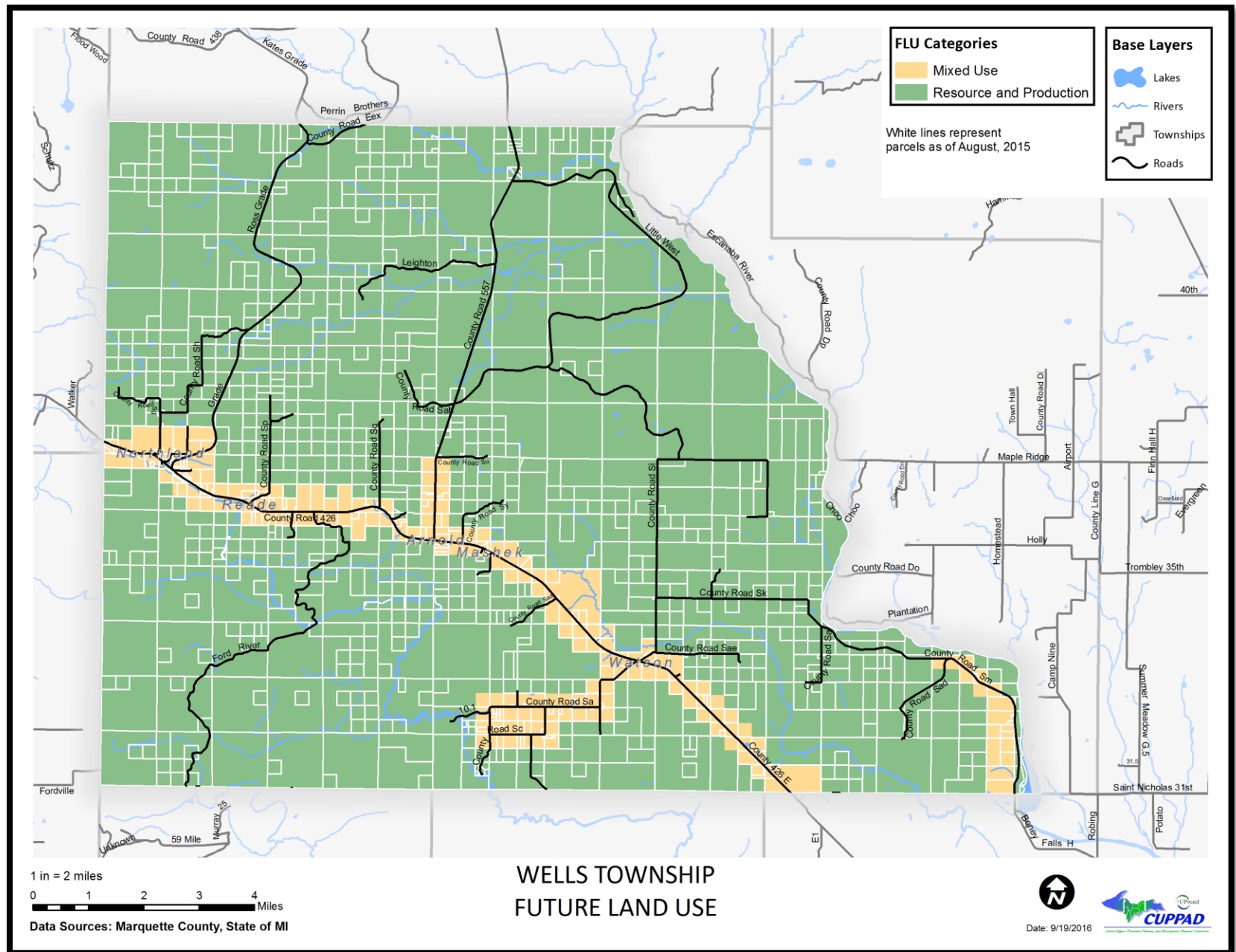
Intended to provide low-density development while maintaining a peaceful, rural atmosphere with large tracts of land. The primary uses in this category include single-family dwellings on larger lots (10 acres minimum), cabins, farms and farm dwellings, recreational dwellings and structures, timber harvesting and mining activities. Other uses by special permit could include large recreational facilities such as golf courses, off-road/race tracks, gun clubs, hunting clubs, resorts/lodges, etc.

Mixed Use

Intended to allow for the co-existence of residential and small-scale retail and commercial business that are compatible with residential use. These types of retail and commercial services could include uses such as bars/taverns/restaurants, equipment sales, automotive repair, convenience stores, etc. Commercial uses should only operate during normal business hours and have minimal traffic impact. Home occupations are also included in this category as permitted uses.

Industrial

Intended for manufacturing, assembling, fabricating, and processing businesses, storage, mineral extraction, and other commercial activities which may require larger sites and isolation from many kinds of other land uses and to make provisions for commercial uses necessary to service the immediate needs of an industrial area.



Zoning Recommendations

Because this plan recommends several land-use changes and other measures related to encouraging development and improving the quality of life in Wells Township, there are changes to the Zoning Ordinance that should be made to make it fully consistent with the Future Land Use Plan.

Priority Recommendations

- Reduce the zoning districts to follow the revised future land use categories. Recommended zoning districts are Rural Residential – RR-1, Agriculture & Resource Production – ARP-1, Rural Development – RD-1, and Industrial – I-1.
- Consider developing a waterfront overlay district (WDO-1) to provide for sound regulation of development along the Escanaba River and Ford River. By developing an overlay district for these river corridors, uses in the underlying district will still be allowed.
- Review non-conforming uses and designation process, site-plan review, enforcement regulations, and setbacks.

Recommended Dimensional Standards

The following table lists a **proposed** schedule of regulations for consideration in future updates to the Township Zoning Ordinance. The table below is not definite and could change in future zoning revisions. The figures below are just a guide and are based on review of surrounding jurisdictions' zoning ordinances and input from the Planning Commission. The official schedule of regulations in the most recently approved zoning ordinance will have additional restrictions and footnotes. The table below should not be used or confused with the official zoning requirements.

District	Min. Lot Size (sq. ft.)	Min. Lot Width (ft.)	Front Setback (ft.)	Side Setback (ft.)	Rear Setback (ft.)	Max Bldg. Height (ft.)
Rural Residential RR-1	2 acres	200	15	15	15	30
Agriculture & Resource Production ARP-1	5 acres	N/A	25	15	15	40
Rural Development RD-1	1 acre	50	10	10	10	30
Industrial I-1	5 acres	250	50	30	30	N/A

Chapter Six – Goals and Objectives

Part of the Master Plan process includes developing a set of goals and objectives that meet and satisfy the desires and wishes of Wells Township and its residents. After reviewing the community input surveys, discussing issues with residents at the public meeting, and considering existing and future conditions of the Township, the Planning Commission established the following Goals and Objectives. These goals and objectives will provide guidance to the Wells Township Planning Commission and Township Board.

Community & Economic Development

Goal: Expand and improve the economic base within the Township, allowing a varied mix of uses and businesses to encourage growth and development.

Objectives:

- Encourage home occupations as permitted uses and support existing businesses within the Township through local planning and zoning practices. Update the zoning ordinance to provide more flexibility in future development.
- Realizing that motorized recreation is a recently growing economic factor, work towards improving motorized access travel through the Township (snowmobile, four-wheelers, side-by-sides) and also work to develop destinations for these users (such as rest stops, parks, etc.)
- Ensure a basic property maintenance code is in affect and properly enforced to ensure properties are properly maintained to encourage future growth and development.
- Explore the possibility of campsites, local trail systems, and other localized efforts that may encourage visitors to stay in the area.

Natural Resources & Recreation

Goal: Support wide-ranging development and preservation of the Township's natural resources, recognizing that natural resources are an important economic base to the Township.

Objectives:

- Update the zoning ordinance to develop an overlay district for the Escanaba River and Ford River corridors. This overlay district would still allow underlying uses be permitted, with some additional regulations to protect the river corridors.
- Collaborate with the State of Michigan to develop recreational trails (both motorized and non-motorized) on State land within the Township.
- In a cooperative effort, work with local snowmobile clubs, MDNR, County Road Commission, MDOT and County Law Enforcement to continue the maintenance of a regional snowmobile network through the Township.
- Work cooperatively with the Conservation District and area groups to preserve and enhance the quality of the Escanaba and Ford river systems.
- Work with the MDNR and commercial forest land owners to ensure sound timber management practices are being performed within the Township; attend annual MDNR public meetings to review and provide input on timber cuts in forest management units within the Township.

Community Facilities and Services

Goal: Provide, maintain, and improve the quality and efficiency of community facilities and services in a cost-effective manner.

Objectives:

- Continue to encourage cooperation with neighboring Townships
- Support local and regional efforts to expand internet and cellular services by working with Marquette County, CUPPAD, ConnectMI, and local providers to increase these services within the Township.
- Work with the Marquette County Solid Waste Management Authority and local providers to improve recycling services within the Township.
- Work with the Marquette County Sheriff Department and Michigan State Police to improve law enforcement services within the Township, or explore possible agreements with Delta and Menominee Counties to have service expanded into Wells Township.
- Work with the Marquette County Road Commission to find solutions to improve the quality of the local road system, emphasizing that quality roads are a factor in the local economy and quality of life of taxpayers and residents.
- Continue to support the local fire department and emergency responders.

Master Plan Implementation Conclusion

Planning is intended to guide the forces of change in ways that encourage desirable outcomes while striking an appropriate balance with development and preservation. The Michigan Planning Enabling Act requires that the Master Plan must be reviewed at least every five years to determine if updates are needed. It is strongly recommended that this Master Plan be reviewed annually, and changes be made as necessary to maintain its use as a reliable planning tool.

As the developers and most frequent users of this document, the Wells Township Planning Commission will be responsible for reviewing the recommendations and progress of the Plan. An outdated Master Plan that is not frequently reviewed can diminish the decision making process. Therefore, it is recommended the Planning Commission conduct an annual review of the Master Plan and amend it as appropriate.

The Wells Township Planning Commission is required to develop an annual report for the Wells Township Board. The Planning Commission should also consider developing a priority listing of projects and assigning actions to various bodies of the Township in order to progress items identified within this plan.

Appendix A: Survey Information, Public Comment, Notification Documentation

SURVEY NOTICE

WELLS TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS COMMUNITY INPUT NEEDED

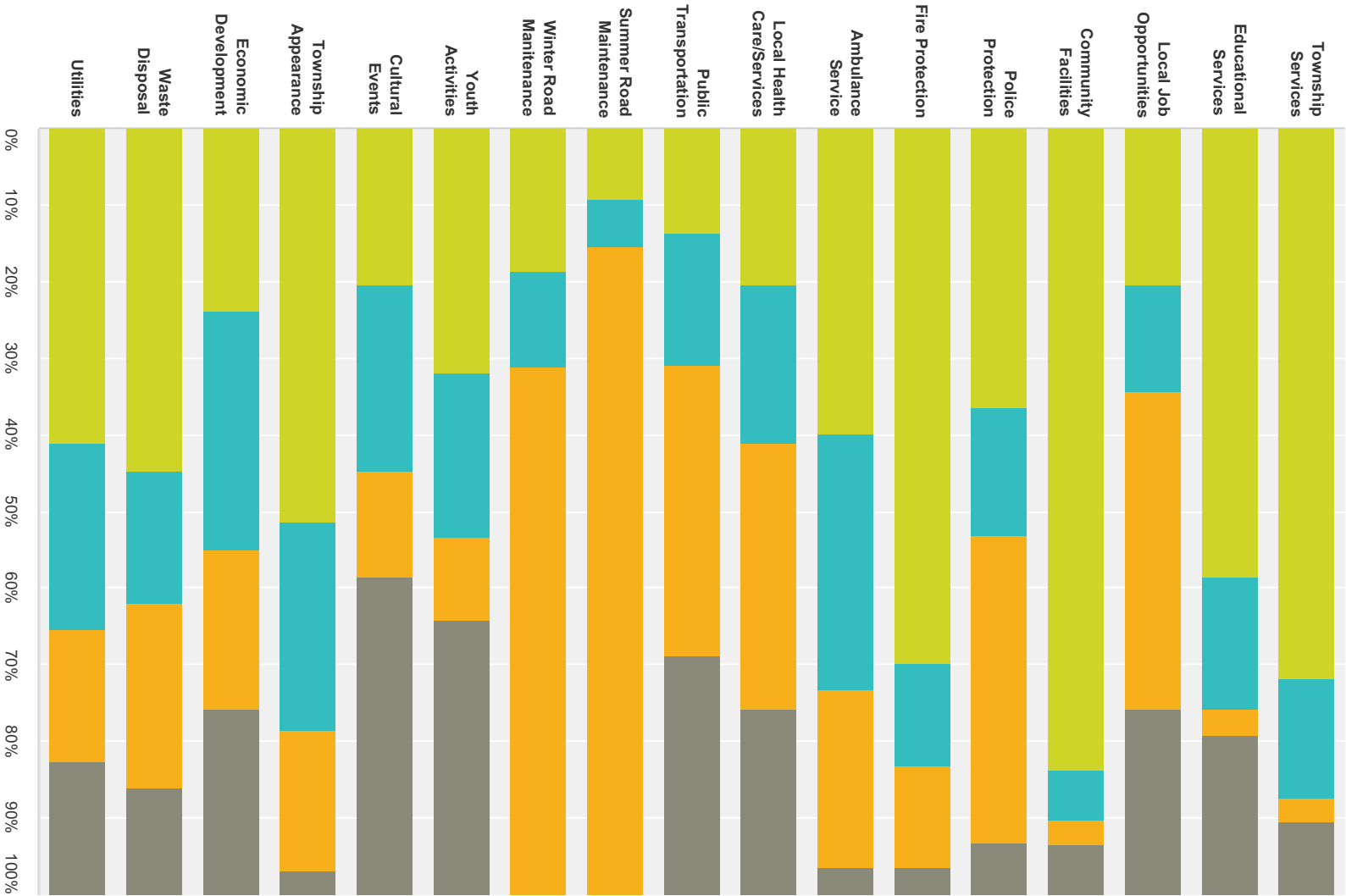
The Wells Township Planning Commission has initiated work on updating the Township Master Plan. The Master Plan is a non-legal document that provides a vision and goal for the future of the Township. As part of the planning process, the Planning Commission is seeking public input through a community survey. Copies of the survey are available at the Township Hall or can be completed online at **bit.ly/wellstwpmp**. Input from residents and taxpayers is an important part of the planning process. Hardcopies can be returned to the Township Hall or mailed to CUPPAD at the address below. Please complete surveys by **October 30th**. The Township Planning Commission will also be holding a public input meeting once a draft plan is completed. Once a date is established, notice will be provided.

Humboldt Township Master Plan
C/O CUPPAD
2950 College Ave.
Escanaba, MI 49829

SURVEY RESULTS

Q1 How satisfied are you with the following items within the Township?

Answered: 33 Skipped: 1



Satisfied Neutral Not Satisfied No Opinion

	Satisfied	Neutral	Not Satisfied	No Opinion	Total	Weighted Average
Township Services	71.88% 23	15.63% 5	3.13% 1	9.38% 3	32	0.50

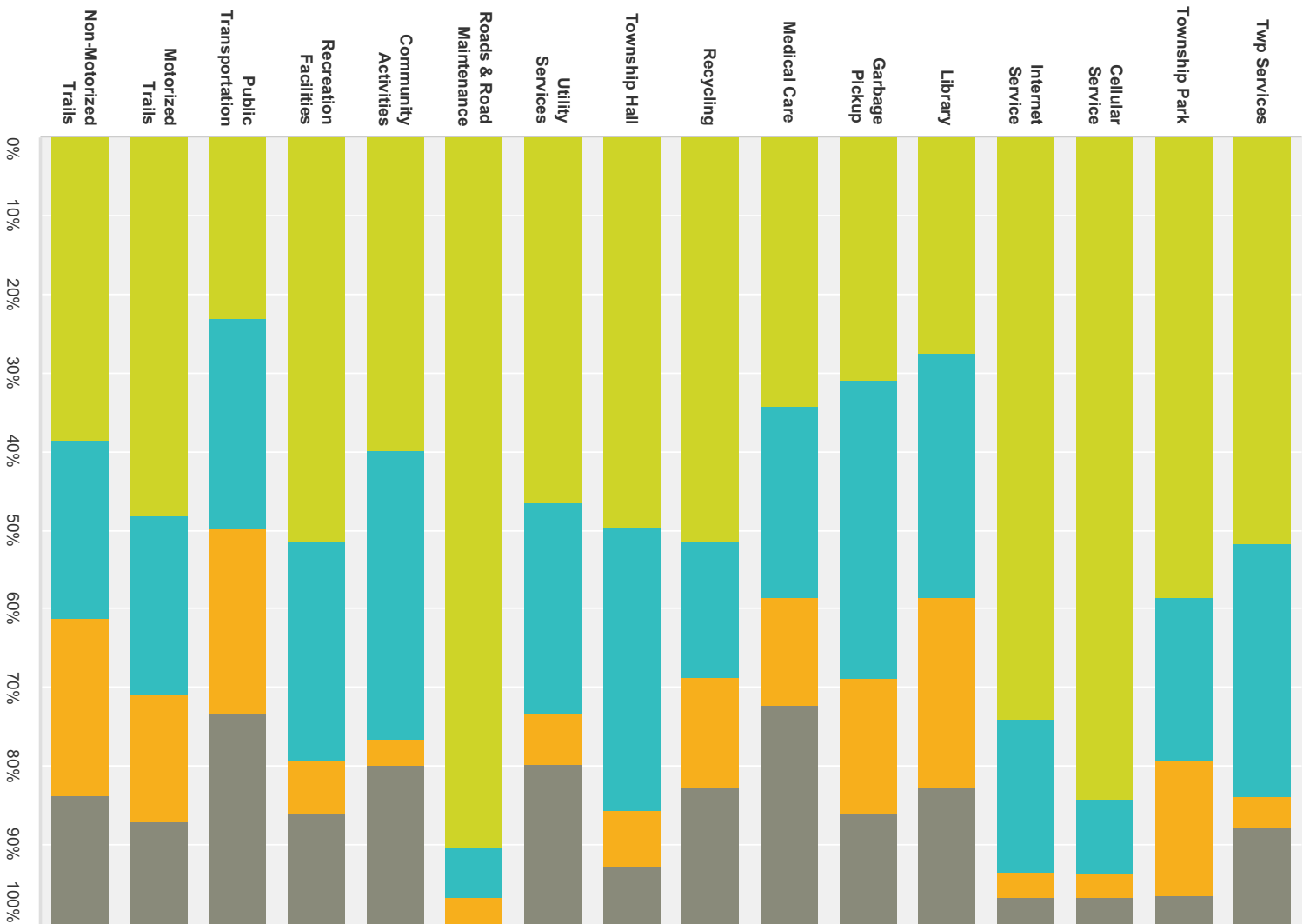
Educational Services	58.62% 17	17.24% 5	3.45% 1	20.69% 6	29	0.86
Local Job Opportunities	20.69% 6	13.79% 4	41.38% 12	24.14% 7	29	1.69
Community Facilities	83.87% 26	6.45% 2	3.23% 1	6.45% 2	31	0.32
Police Protection	36.67% 11	16.67% 5	40.00% 12	6.67% 2	30	1.17
Fire Protection	70.00% 21	13.33% 4	13.33% 4	3.33% 1	30	0.50
Ambulance Service	40.00% 12	33.33% 10	23.33% 7	3.33% 1	30	0.90
Local Health Care/Services	20.69% 6	20.69% 6	34.48% 10	24.14% 7	29	1.62
Public Transportation	13.79% 4	17.24% 5	37.93% 11	31.03% 9	29	1.86
Summer Road Maintenance	9.38% 3	6.25% 2	84.38% 27	0.00% 0	32	1.75
Winter Road Maintenance	18.75% 6	12.50% 4	68.75% 22	0.00% 0	32	1.50
Youth Activities	32.14% 9	21.43% 6	10.71% 3	35.71% 10	28	1.50
Cultural Events	20.69% 6	24.14% 7	13.79% 4	41.38% 12	29	1.76
Township Appearance	51.52% 17	27.27% 9	18.18% 6	3.03% 1	33	0.73
Economic Development	24.14% 7	31.03% 9	20.69% 6	24.14% 7	29	1.45
Waste Disposal	44.83% 13	17.24% 5	24.14% 7	13.79% 4	29	1.07
Utilities	41.38% 12	24.14% 7	17.24% 5	17.24% 5	29	1.10

Q2 Do you have any comments or concerns about your current community as it relates to any of the above items?

Answered: 7 Skipped: 27

Q3 Would you support or oppose the following items (either the improvement of if existing or the development of new if not currently existing) within the Township? These may be funded through local funds, existing tax dollars, donations, grants, or other sources.

Answered: 33 Skipped: 1



Support Neutral Oppose No Opinion

	Support	Neutral	Oppose	No Opinion	Total	Weighted Average
Twp Services	52.00% 13	32.00% 8	4.00% 1	12.00% 3	25	0.76
Township Park	58.62% 17	20.69% 6	17.24% 5	3.45% 1	29	0.66

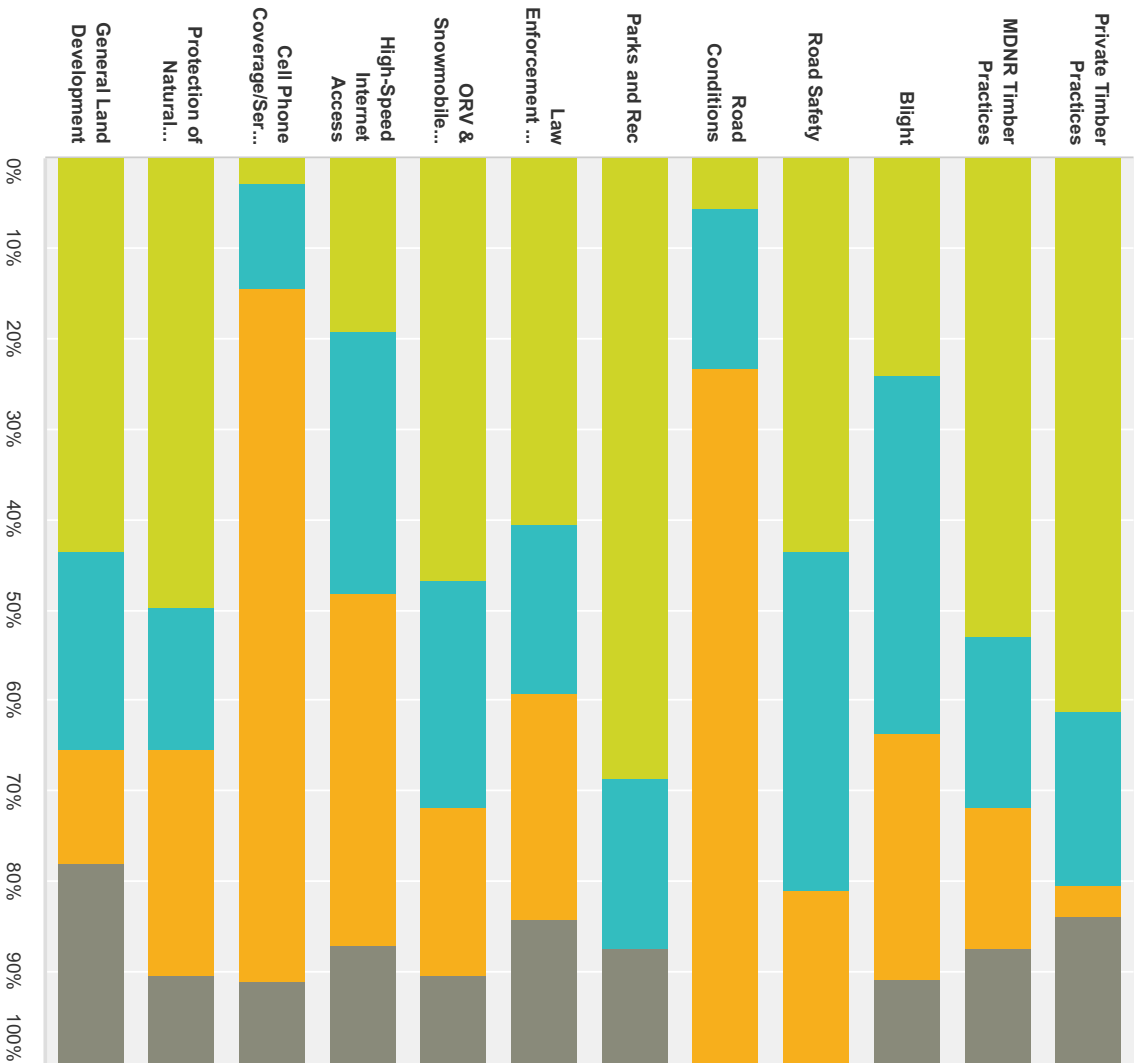
Cellular Service	84.38% 27	9.38% 3	3.13% 1	3.13% 1	32	0.25
Internet Service	74.19% 23	19.35% 6	3.23% 1	3.23% 1	31	0.35
Library	27.59% 8	31.03% 9	24.14% 7	17.24% 5	29	1.31
Garbage Pickup	31.03% 9	37.93% 11	17.24% 5	13.79% 4	29	1.14
Medical Care	34.48% 10	24.14% 7	13.79% 4	27.59% 8	29	1.34
Recycling	51.72% 15	17.24% 5	13.79% 4	17.24% 5	29	0.97
Township Hall	50.00% 14	35.71% 10	7.14% 2	7.14% 2	28	0.71
Utility Services	46.67% 14	26.67% 8	6.67% 2	20.00% 6	30	1.00
Roads & Road Maintenance	90.63% 29	6.25% 2	3.13% 1	0.00% 0	32	0.13
Community Activities	40.00% 12	36.67% 11	3.33% 1	20.00% 6	30	1.03
Recreation Facilities	51.72% 15	27.59% 8	6.90% 2	13.79% 4	29	0.83
Public Transportation	23.33% 7	26.67% 8	23.33% 7	26.67% 8	30	1.53
Motorized Trails	48.39% 15	22.58% 7	16.13% 5	12.90% 4	31	0.94
Non-Motorized Trails	38.71% 12	22.58% 7	22.58% 7	16.13% 5	31	1.16

Q4 Do you have any comments or concerns about any community improvements as it relates to any of the above items?

Answered: 5 Skipped: 29

Q5 Please indicate if you think an item is an issue or not.

Answered: 34 Skipped: 0



Not An Issue Minor Issue Major Issue No Opinion

	Not An Issue	Minor Issue	Major Issue	No Opinion	Total	Weighted Average
Private Timber Practices	61.29% 19	19.35% 6	3.23% 1	16.13% 5	31	0.74
MDNR Timber Practices	53.13% 17	18.75% 6	15.63% 5	12.50% 4	32	0.88
Blight	24.24% 8	39.39% 13	27.27% 9	9.09% 3	33	1.21
Road Safety	43.75% 14	37.50% 12	18.75% 6	0.00% 0	32	0.75
Road Conditions	5.88% 2	17.65% 6	76.47% 26	0.00% 0	34	1.71
Parks and Rec	68.75% 22	18.75% 6	0.00% 0	12.50% 4	32	0.56
Law Enforcement & Response	40.63% 13	18.75% 6	25.00% 8	15.63% 5	32	1.16

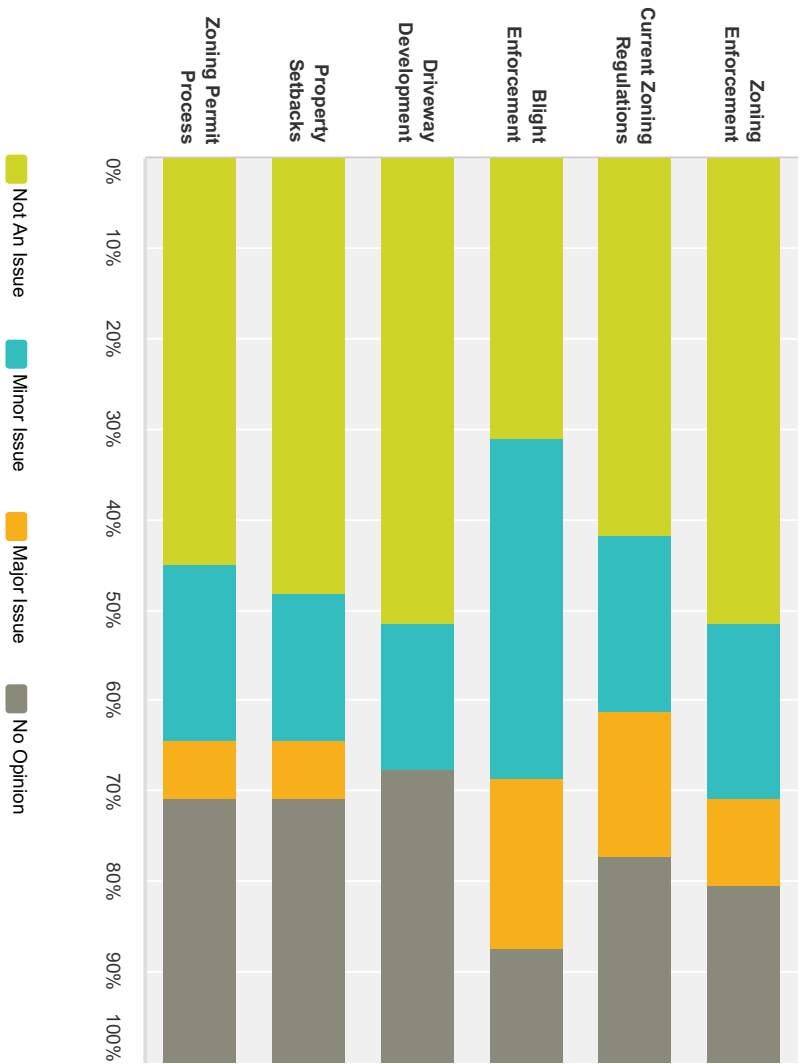
ORV & Snowmobile Traffic	46.88% 15	25.00% 8	18.75% 6	9.38% 3	32	0.91
High-Speed Internet Access	19.35% 6	29.03% 9	38.71% 12	12.90% 4	31	1.45
Cell Phone Coverage/Service	2.94% 1	11.76% 4	76.47% 26	8.82% 3	34	1.91
Protection of Natural Resources	50.00% 16	15.63% 5	25.00% 8	9.38% 3	32	0.94
General Land Development	43.75% 14	21.88% 7	12.50% 4	21.88% 7	32	1.13

Q6 Do you have any comments or concerns about current community issues as it relates to any of the above items?

Answered: 7 Skipped: 27

Q7 Are any of the following zoning items an issue within the Township that should be addressed or reviewed?

Answered: 33 Skipped: 1

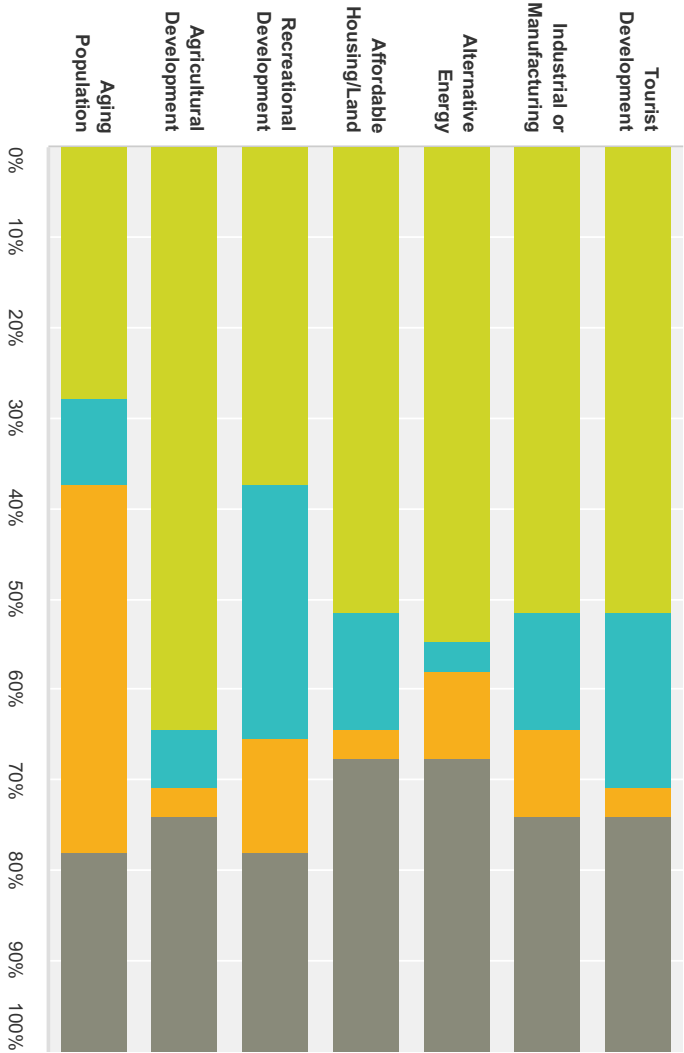


	Not An Issue	Minor Issue	Major Issue	No Opinion	Total	Weighted Average
Zoning Enforcement	51.61% 16	19.35% 6	9.68% 3	19.35% 6	31	0.97

Current Zoning Regulations	41.94% 13	19.35% 6	16.13% 5	22.58% 7	31	1.19
Blight Enforcement	31.25% 10	37.50% 12	18.75% 6	12.50% 4	32	1.13
Driveway Development	51.61% 16	16.13% 5	0.00% 0	32.26% 10	31	1.13
Property Setbacks	48.39% 15	16.13% 5	6.45% 2	29.03% 9	31	1.16
Zoning Permit Process	45.16% 14	19.35% 6	6.45% 2	29.03% 9	31	1.19

Q8 Are any of the following planning/land use items an issue within the Township that should be addressed or reviewed?

Answered: 32 Skipped: 2



Not An Issue Minor Issue Major Issue No Opinion

	Not An Issue	Minor Issue	Major Issue	No Opinion	Total	Weighted Average
Tourist Development	51.61% 16	19.35% 6	3.23% 1	25.81% 8	31	1.03
Industrial or Manufacturing	51.61% 16	12.90% 4	9.68% 3	25.81% 8	31	1.10
Alternative Energy	54.84% 17	3.23% 1	9.68% 3	32.26% 10	31	1.19
Affordable Housing/Land	51.61% 16	12.90% 4	3.23% 1	32.26% 10	31	1.16

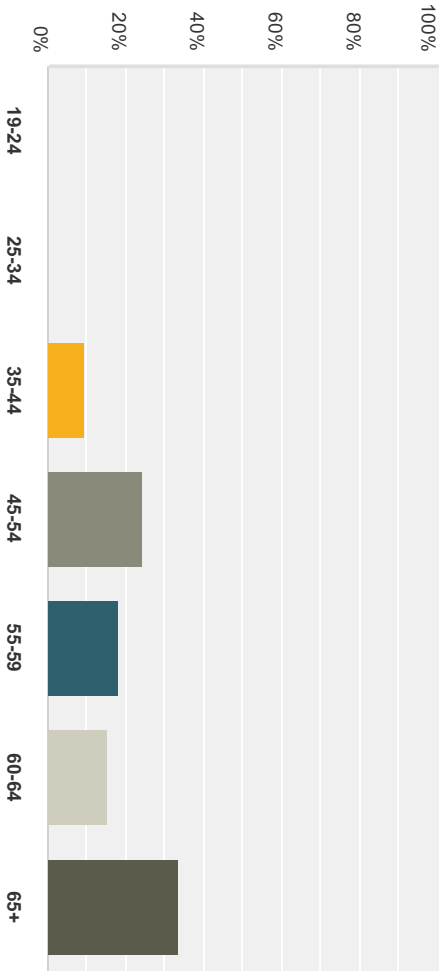
Recreational Development	37.50% 12	28.13% 9	12.50% 4	21.88% 7	32	1.19
Agricultural Development	64.52% 20	6.45% 2	3.23% 1	25.81% 8	31	0.90
Aging Population	28.13% 9	9.38% 3	40.63% 13	21.88% 7	32	1.56

Q9 Do you have any comments or concerns about current planning or zoning within the Township?

Answered: 1 Skipped: 33

Q10 What is your age?

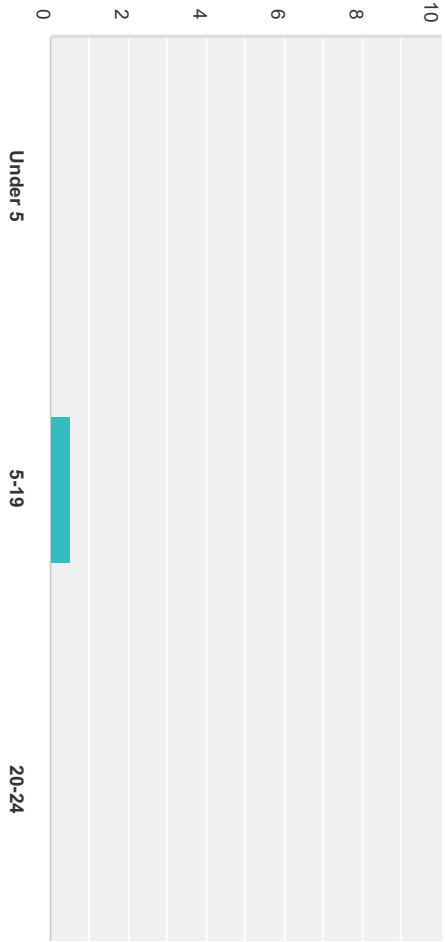
Answered: 33 Skipped: 1



Answer Choices	Responses
19-24	0.00%
25-34	0.00%
35-44	9.09%
45-54	24.24%
55-59	18.18%
60-64	15.15%
65+	33.33%
Total	33

Q11 Do you have any children living at home? If so, please indicate how many in each age group.

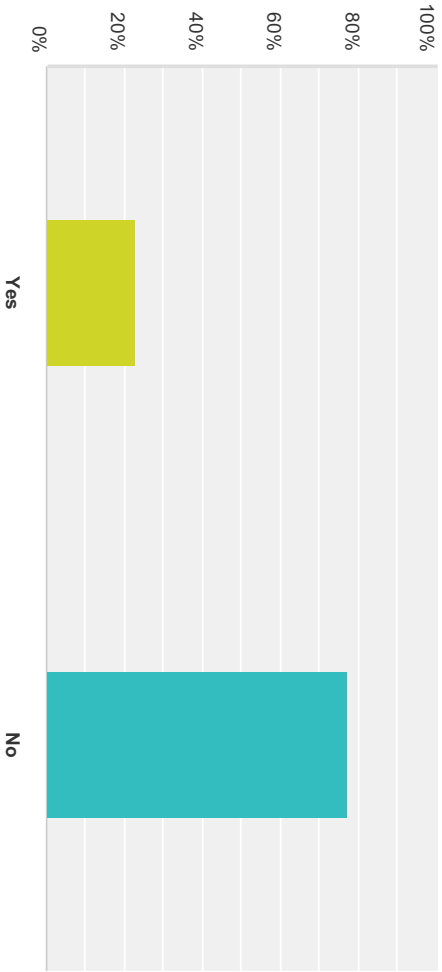
Answered: 7 Skipped: 27



	1	2	3	4+	Total	Weighted Average
Under 5	100.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	1	0.00
5-19	75.00% 3	0.00% 0	25.00% 1	0.00% 0	4	0.50
20-24	100.00% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	2	0.00

Q12 Is anyone in your household (not including yourself) over 65?

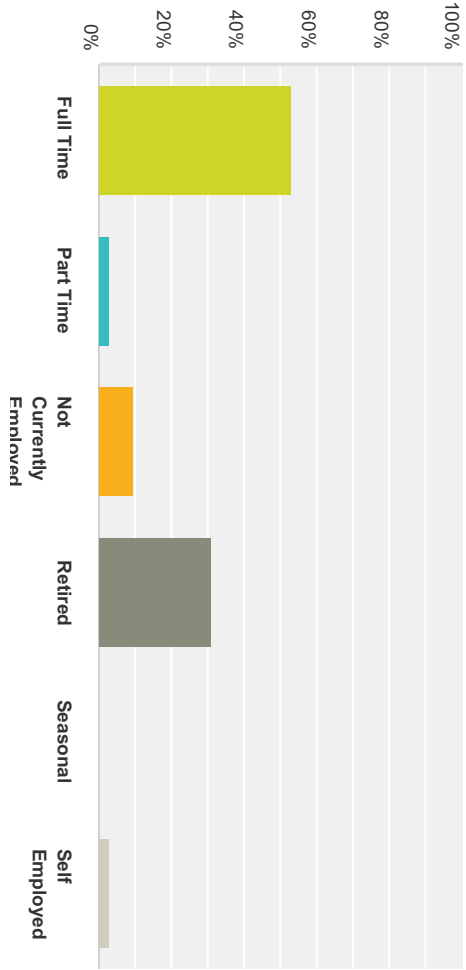
Answered: 31 Skipped: 3



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	22.58%	7
No	77.42%	24
Total		31

Q13 Employment Status

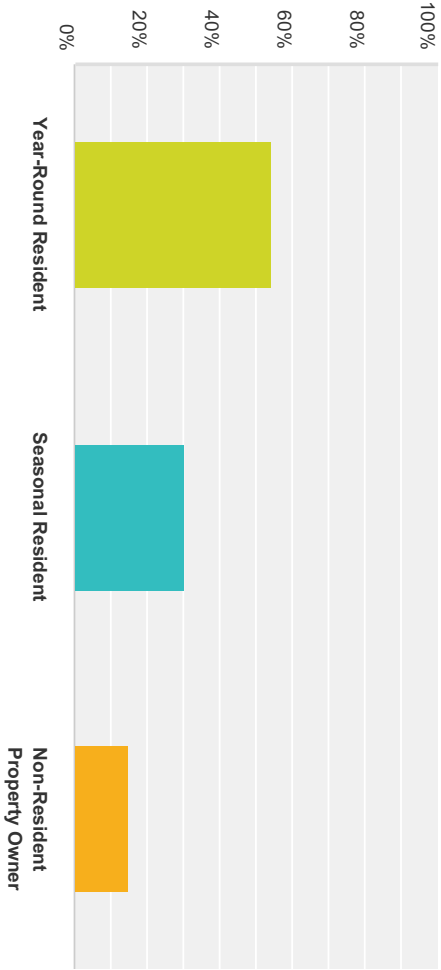
Answered: 32 Skipped: 2



Answer Choices	Responses
Full Time	1753.13%
Part Time	13.13%
Not Currently Employed	39.38%
Retired	1031.25%
Seasonal	00.00%
Self Employed	13.13%
Total	32

Q14 Residence Status

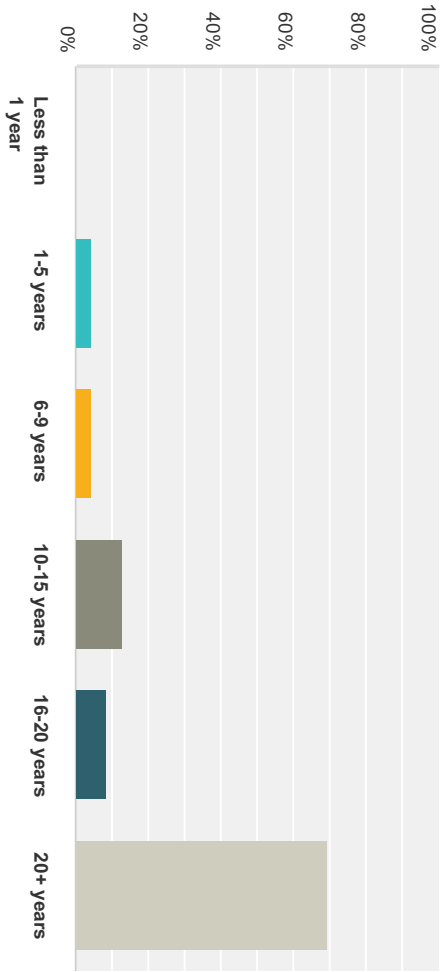
Answered: 33 Skipped: 1



Answer Choices	Responses
Year-Round Resident	1854.55%
Seasonal Resident	1030.30%
Non-Resident Property Owner	515.15%
Total	33

Q15 If resident, how long have you lived in Wells Township?

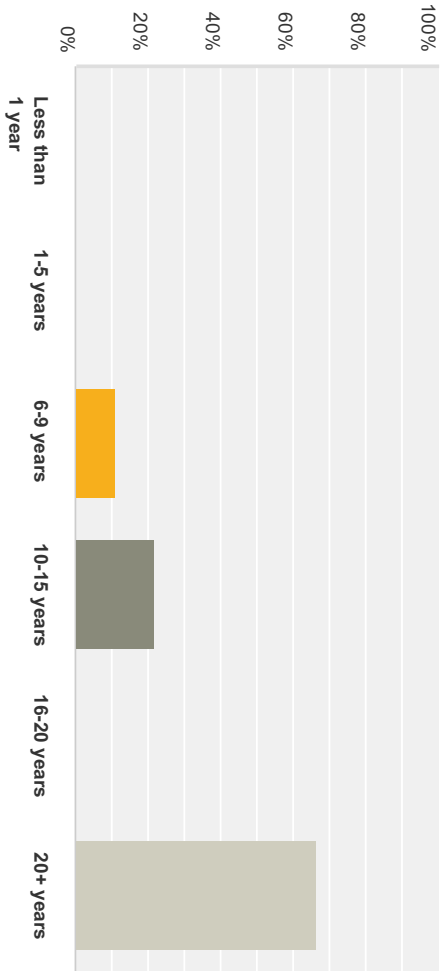
Answered: 23 Skipped: 11



Answer Choices	Responses
Less than 1 year	0.00%
1-5 years	4.35%
6-9 years	4.35%
10-15 years	13.04%
16-20 years	8.70%
20+ years	69.57%
Total	23

Q16 If non-resident property owner, how long have you owned property within the Township?

Answered: 9 Skipped: 25



Answer Choices	Responses	
Less than 1 year	0.00%	0
1-5 years	0.00%	0
6-9 years	11.11%	1
10-15 years	22.22%	2
16-20 years	0.00%	0
20+ years	66.67%	6
Total		9

PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD & PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

NOTICE OF PUBLIC REVIEW REGARDING THE PROPOSED WELLS TOWNSHIP (MQT CO) MASTER PLAN

NOTICE is hereby given that the Wells Township (MQT CO) Master Plan is now under the 63-day review and comment period, pursuant to the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008). Comments can be submitted at the Wells Township Hall or mailed to:

Wells Township Master Plan
C/O CUPPAD
2950 College Ave.
Escanaba, MI 49829

Copies of the draft Master Plan are available at the following locations:

Wells Township Hall – During Posted Business Hours – 38295 Co. Rd. 426, Arnold
CUPPAD Office – During Normal Business Hours – 2950 College Ave., Escanaba
Online at www.cuppad.org under the menu “Current Projects”

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING THE PROPOSED WELLS TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN UPDATE

NOTICE is hereby given that the Wells Township (MQT Co) Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on September 19, 2016 at 7:30pm at the Wells Township Hall located at 38295 Co. Rd. 426 in Arnold.

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location
2500 SQ. FT.
Home On
Lake Superior
100 Acres Land
300' Water Frontage
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REMODELED
3 BDRM 2 BATH
555 Lake Beach Ln.
GREAT HUNTING
& FISHING!!
Excellent deer
population.
\$280,000
555-555-5555
Mountain Sales

Into This:

COMMUNITY
CARAGE SALE
MARQUETTE:
5555 N. Lane Ln.
Sat July 12th
9am-2pm
Sun July 13th
9am-5pm
HUGE SALE

Antiques, Furniture,
Toys, Baby Clothes,
Lawn Mower,
Outhouse, Books,
Videos, Table &
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Queen Bed Frame,
Tools, Chain Saw and
TOO MUCH TO
LIST!!

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Michael L. Morgan, AFIM • Vice President & Fiduciary Manager

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING (CORRECTION)

The Board of County Road Commissioners of Marquette County, Michigan will hold a Public Hearing during their regular Board Meeting on Monday, August 15, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. at the Marquette County Road Commission Administrative Office located at 1610 N. Second Street, Ishpeming, MI 49849.

The purpose of the public hearing is to discuss and hear public comment on a petition for abandonment of County Road LAB, T46N, R29W, Section 7, Republic Township, Michigan. The petitioner has requested abandonment of County Road LAB in its entirety.

Minutes for the above meeting will be filed and available for public use at the Road Commission Office during normal operating hours.

MARQUETTE COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION

NOTICE OF PUBLIC REVIEW REGARDING THE PROPOSED WELLS TOWNSHIP (MQT CO) MASTER PLAN

NOTICE is hereby given that the Wells Township (MQT CO) Master Plan is now under the 63-day review and comment period, pursuant to the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008). Comments can be submitted at the Wells Township Hall or mailed to:

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426, Arnold

CUPPAD Office - During Normal Business Hours - 2950 College Ave.,
Escanaba

Online at www.cuppad.org under the menu "Current Projects"

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING THE PROPOSED WELLS
TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN UPDATE

NOTICE is hereby given that the Wells Township (MQT Co) Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on September 19, 2016 at 7:30pm at the Wells Township Hall located at 38295 Co. Rd. 426 in Arnold.

6/13
[Signature]

COMMENTS AND CHANGES TO DRAFT

Comments Received on the Wells Township Master Plan

Received comment from Michigan DNR on July 18 in regard to ORV trail expansion. Comments incorporated into plan.

Received comments from Marquette County Planning Commission on September 13 in regard to minimum lot sizes in forested and agricultural areas. Concern was that recommended lot sizes for these areas was too small – generally across Marquette County these areas have a minimum lot size of 20-40 acres. County PC recommended either increasing minimum lot size in these areas or adding a new FLU category and associated zoning district for these areas.

Summary of changes to Draft Wells Township Master Plan

Changes by CUPPAD:

Page 14 – adjusted dates on cemetery establishments per information from Lenore Usher.

Page 17 – added comment from MDNR in regards to ORV trail in southwestern portion of Township and possible new trail from Arnold to Gwinn.

Page 27 and 28 – updated Recreation and Regional Recreation maps to reflect new ORV trails

Updated references to maps throughout document to state page number rather than “map at end of chapter”



County of Marquette

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT/DEVELOPMENT DEPT.

PLANNING DIVISION

234 W BARAGA AVENUE • MARQUETTE, MI 49855

Phone 906.225-8198
Fax 906.225-8203
www.co.marquette.mi.us

September 8, 2016

Mr. Robert Therrian
38295 Co. Rd. 426
Arnold, MI 49819

Dear Mr. Therrian

Pursuant to Section 125.3841 Public Act 33 of 2008 (the Michigan Planning Enabling Act), the Well Township Planning Commission has forwarded a draft master plan to the Marquette County Planning Commission for review and comment.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONTIGUOUS TOWNSHIPS

Contiguous units of government in Marquette County include Forsyth Township and Ewing Township. Contiguous counties include Menominee, Delta, and Dickinson. The draft master plan seems to be generally consistent with the master plans of those units of government.

CONSISTENCY WITH THE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The proposed Wells Township Master Plan appears largely consistent with the Marquette County Comprehensive Plan.

- Land Use – This topic predominantly falls under the chapters 5 & 6, the current land use and future land use chapters. The current land use chapter discusses and provides data on SEV, land cover, and generalized land use. Future land use and the zoning plan suggests reducing zoning districts from 11 current districts to 5 future districts. It also provides zoning recommendations and a recommended dimensional standards chart for each of the future districts.
- Transportation – The draft plan discusses MDOT's Annual Average Daily Traffic and the PASER road rating system. The plan further identifies that, through surveys and public input sessions, Wells Township residents commented most on poor road conditions. Resident input also suggested Wells Township is underserved by MarqTran. An objective identified in the goals chapter of the draft plan is to work with the Marquette County Road Commission to find solutions to improve the quality of the local road system.
- Community Facilities & Services – The Township's services and infrastructure are addressed in the Community Description chapter of the draft plan. These include utilities, water, solid waste, schools, libraries, medical facilities, law enforcement, emergency response, and township facilities. The goal associated with community facilities and services as noted in the draft plan is "Provide, maintain, and improve the quality and efficiency of community facilities and services in a cost-effective manner."
- Housing – The housing chapter provides Census data on number of housing units and value of owner occupied housing units.

- **Recreation** – Non-motorized and motorized trails are discussed in this section of the draft plan. Resident provided mixed responses regarding development of both trail types. A park and community pool are located at the Township complex adjoining the Wells Township School. It is also noted there is a large amount of state land located within the Township. Preserving and protecting the Escanaba and Ford River corridors is identified as an objective plan as well as collaboration with the State for trail development on State owned lands.
- **Sustainability and the Environment** – Sites of environmental contamination and clean and affordable energy are discussed in the Community Description chapter of the draft plan. Three sites with underground storage tanks are identified in the plan. The plan addresses energy issues in the Upper Peninsula and recommends that the Township be open to allowing various form of small-scale energy options and generation.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

The Plan is well put together and condensed which enhances readability. It is notable that the plan addresses energy issues and also that the plan recommends simplifying and reducing zoning districts. However, the Commission highly recommends that the dimensional standards chart relating to the future land use districts be revised to include lots requiring a larger minimum than 5 acres. Across the County, forestry and agriculture districts generally require 20-40 acre lot minimum. If necessary, the Commission would recommend expanding to a 6th district requiring larger minimum sizes.

The Marquette County Planning Commission voted unanimously in support of the *Well Township Master Plan 2016*.

Thank you for the opportunity to review your draft Master Plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Charles Bergdahl', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Charles Bergdahl, Secretary
Marquette County Planning Commission

Cc: Nathan Fazer, CUPPAD
& Wells Township Planning Commission

Nathan Fazer

From: Yesney, Ronald (DNR)
Sent: Monday, July 18, 2016 3:56 PM
To: nfazer@cuppad.org
Cc: Dahlstrom, Kristi (DNR); Katona, Robert (DNR)
Subject: RE: Wells Township Master Plan

Nathan:

It should be noted that the recreational activity of ORV riding is growing. We are expanding riding opportunities in Wells Twp.

A new ORV route has been established from Powers to Arnold. That is open now. We also have an approved route from Arnold to Gwinn, which will likely open within the next year.

These new State designated ORV routes will expand recreational opportunities for residents and bring more people through Wells Twp for economic opportunity.

This is likely worth mentioning in the master plan.

Ron

*Ron Yesney
Michigan DNR
Upper Peninsula Trails Coordinator
1990 US-41 South
Marquette, MI 49855
yesney@michigan.gov
906-228-6561 Telephone
906-236-2602 Cell*

From: Dahlstrom, Kristi (DNR)
Sent: Monday, July 18, 2016 3:36 PM
To: Yesney, Ronald (DNR); Katona, Robert (DNR); Thompson, Eric (DNR); Chingwa, Celeste (DNR)
Cc: Albright, Craig (DNR)
Subject: FW: Wells Township Master Plan

Forwarding this to you as it pertains to mentions of your divisions/areas of expertise in their Master Plan. Thank you!



Kristi Dahlstrom
Senior Executive Management Assistant to:
Stacy Welling Haughey, Upper Peninsula Regional Coordinator
Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Marquette Customer Service Center