



Master Plan 2040

Adopted _____

Acknowledgments

We extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed their time, expertise, and insights into the development of this plan. Special thanks go to our dedicated team members, visionary leaders, supportive stakeholders, and the vibrant community whose invaluable input has shaped Casco Township's vision.

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1.0 Introduction

The Casco Township Master Plan will serve as a guide for the future development of the Township. The document is intended to provide residents, property owners, and businesses a reasonable expectation of the future development and growth envisioned for the Community and will provide a basis for Township investments in infrastructure and other township necessities to attain that vision.

The Master Plan will be the basis for Township officials in land use, development, farmland preservation, and capital improvement decisions and will serve as the legal foundation for the Zoning Ordinance. Any future amendments to Zoning will need to be based on this Plan.

1.1 History of Planning in Casco Township

Casco Township has been administering Planning and Zoning for nearly 50 years. During that time, the township has adopted three (3) Master Plans. The most recent plan was adopted in 2012 and was intended to serve the community for 10 years. This plan was an update to the initial 2005 Master Plan and included different sections on topics including farm preservation, density, utilities, and more. Since then, events have occurred on the local, regional, and national levels that reframe how the Township will approach its Master Plan Update.



Casco Township also has a very active Parks and Recreation Commission, and they have developed a separate Parks and Recreation Plan. The Parks and Recreation plan was last updated in 2012 and allowed the Township to be eligible for Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) grant funding from the 2012-2016 time period. This plan will need to be updated in order to be eligible for any funding for current Parks and Recreation priorities.

In creating this plan, the Master Plans and Parks and Recreation Plans of neighboring communities were consulted when determining the content and implementation of this plan. Allegan County has a couple of documents that could impact the townships. The County Parks and Recreation Plan identifies the improvements that will be initiated by the County for its facilities. Allegan County will be adopting a new plan in 2025 to serve the County through 2029. One of the projects identified in the new plan is the Blue Star Linear Trail connecting South Haven with Holland through Casco Township. Coordinating with Allegan County may be beneficial to the Township as they look to improve their Parks and Recreation facilities.

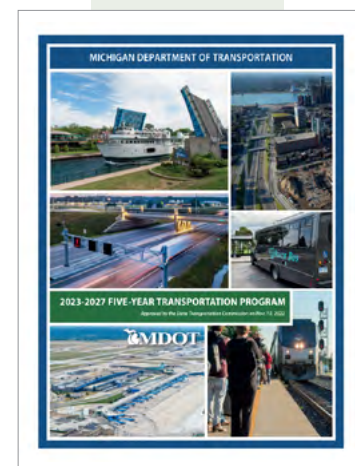
In addition the Parks and Recreation Plan, Allegan County has also adopted a Capital Improvement Plan and A County Strategic Plan. A Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) provides a framework for documenting long-range strategies for each significant County-owned asset. It also presents a framework for developing a long-term financial plan to ensure the County can sustain its assets while maintaining financial stability. Though reviewed and updated each year, this plan forecasts capital projects and expenditures for the next 15+ years. Every 5 years, the plan undergoes review and reprioritization culminating in a new 15-year forecast window. The 2023 strategic plan outlines the mission, vision, values, goals, strategic priorities, objectives, tasks, and measurements that the County will use as guidelines for decision-making for the next five years.

The Township must also review any Planning documents from the communities that abut its borders to ensure that community planning efforts coordinate with the adopted plans of the neighboring jurisdictions. For Casco Township, the neighboring communities are: Ganges Township to the north, Lee Township to the east, and Geneva Township, South Haven Township and the City of South Haven to the south. Neither Geneva nor Lee Townships have existing Master Plans, while Ganges Twp adopted a new plan in 2023, South Haven Twp in 2024, and the City of South Haven in 2018. Of these, coordination with the City of South Haven is most imperative since the densest development in the Township is adjacent or near the City boundary.

The State of Michigan also promotes planning through its Regional Planning Commissions. Allegan County is included in Region 8, the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission (WMRPC). The WMRPC is a valuable resource to the Township, as it undertakes planning in several fields including transportation, economic development, land use, and recreation. It acts as a regional forum to share ideas and develop regional solutions to problems and issues such as the Blue Star Linear Trail.

Additionally, the State of Michigan and the WMRPC have a variety of documents that contribute to Casco Township's decision-making. These include:

- » **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (2022).** The Economic Development Strategy acts as a guidebook for the region for its economic and community development in five year increments and prioritizes the funding of economic development projects within the region based on the plan. Any Economic Development or infrastructure projects that will potentially need additional funding will need to be shared with the County so that they are included in future versions of the Strategy.
- » **Michigan's Statewide Housing Plan (2022).** This statewide housing plan serves as Michigan's first housing plan. It acknowledges Michigan's challenges, but also its assets. It frames how Michigan creates housing stability for all residents through data, education, programming, investment, collaboration, inclusion, and equitable processes. Based on this plan, the State has made housing a mandatory component of all new Master Plans.
- » **Michigan Department of Transportation 5-Year Transportation Program (2024).** The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Five-Year Transportation Program (5YTP) is a state-required document that presents a high-level overview of planned investments in transportation programs and projects over five years. Produced annually, each 5YTP overlaps across a four-year interval, while adding a fifth year of projects. This document provides information on revenues, investments, performance measures, and projects for the five years spanning 2023-2027. The 5YTP covers all components of the transportation network for which MDOT is responsible. This includes highways, bridges, bus, rail, aviation, marine, and active transportation.



1.2 Components of the Master Plan

This Master Plan incorporates a planning process that is inclusive of the input of the community, its stakeholders, and municipal leadership, developed to provide insight into the future of the Township and a road map to achieve its vision. This Plan aims to garner the collective experiences and realities of residents and consolidate the community opinion and observations into a digestible and comprehensive plan to guide Casco Township forward.

This inclusive planning process includes the collection of data from the community, stakeholders, and Township officials by reviewing existing plans and studies, holding community meetings and events, and developing a measurable action plan. This inclusive and robust public planning process was necessary in order to craft a plan that is representative of the community and where its implementation will be supported in the coming years.

The following summary describes what each of the Chapters in this plan will include.



Chapter 2: The Community Profile dives into the Township's physical development pattern and offers a contextual demographic analysis, comparing the community to the larger region and the State of Michigan. An inventory of existing land use is also presented. This background information was analyzed to identify important characteristics, changes, and trends occurring in Casco Township.

Chapter 3: Natural Systems is a continuation of existing conditions within the Township but with an emphasis on the natural environment. Maps and data presented in this chapter help inform the Township on how it should move forward with environmental and land use policy, alternative energy, and the impacts of climate change.

**Chapter 4: Transportation,**

Infrastructure & Mobility focuses on the functionality of Casco Township. This chapter acts as a “check-up” to understand the overall health of the Township, helping understand the bones and circulatory systems that support the well-being of the Township.

Chapter 5: The Zoning Plan

describes the public engagement process and summarizes the input the Township received. The Future Land Use Map, Housing Plan, and Zoning Plan are also detailed in Chapter 5, which specifies the intent and location of where various types of future development can be accommodated within the community. This describes how and why of the remainder of Chapter 5. Using the gathered input, the remainder of the Zoning Plan examines the commentary received and establishes Casco Township’s vision and goals.

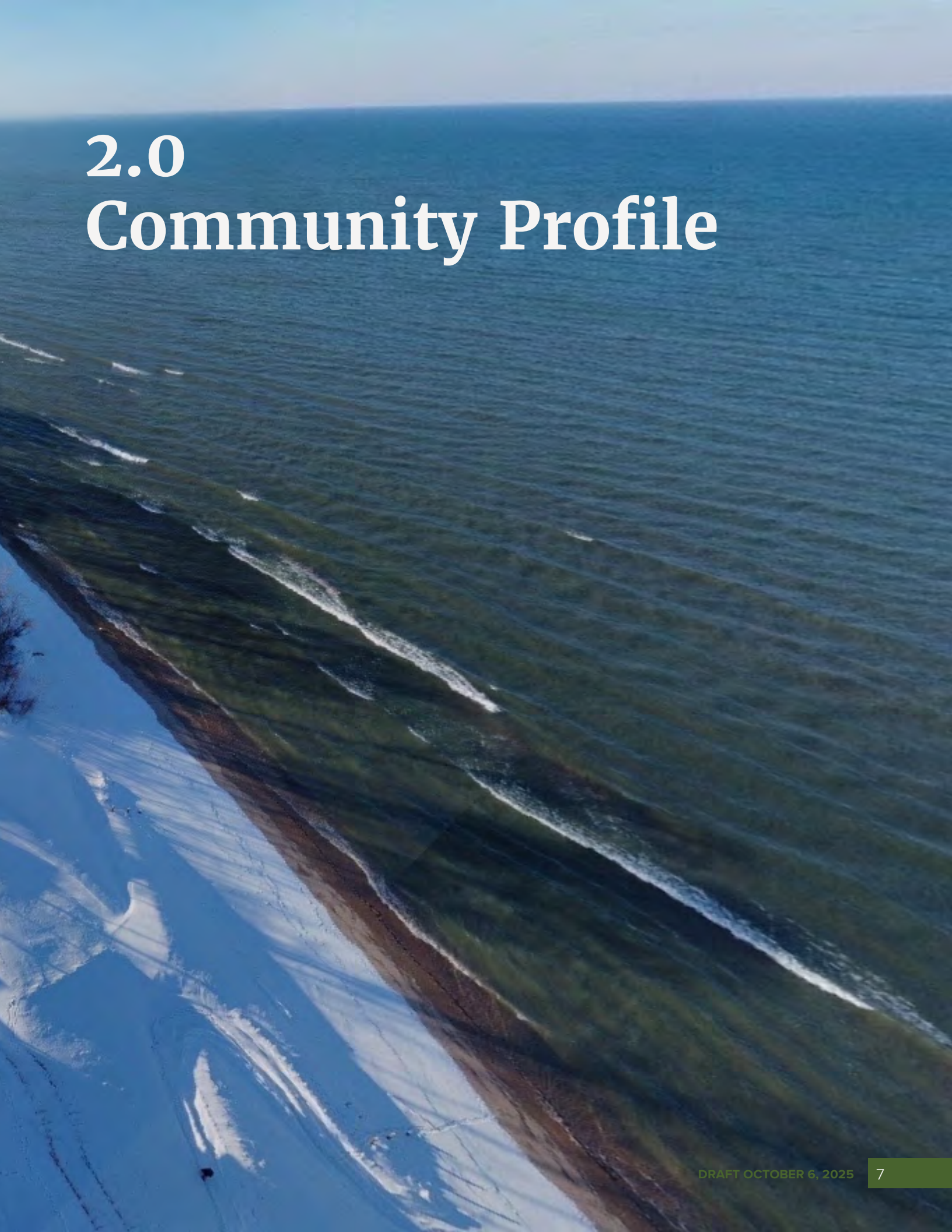
Chapter 6: Action Plan.

This document concludes with a plan for the implementation of the identified goals and objectives. The Action Plan details short-, mid-, and long-term action plans, offering a checklist of what projects, policies, and efforts are to be accomplished through the life of this plan.

Plan Completion & Adoption

On _____, the Planning Commission formally recommended to the Casco Township Board of Trustees that the draft plan be released to the public for 63 days of review. The Township provided notices to all adjacent municipalities, utility agencies, regional planning bodies, and local stakeholders. The Township Board then authorized the release of the draft Plan at their regular meeting on _____. The draft Plan was available at the Clerk’s office on the Township’s website from _____ to _____. On _____ the Planning Commission held a public hearing on the final Plan. Following the public hearing, the Commission voted to adopt the Plan.





2.0 Community Profile

2.1 History and Evolution of Casco Township

Michigan's archaeological record generally begins after the glaciers receded about 12,000 years ago. Around this time, it is thought that human habitation started to move east on the North American continent. Mound Builders were the first Native Americans in Allegan County. The Ottawa, Miami, and Potawatomi arrived permanently or seasonally by the 1600s.



The first permanent settlers moved to the area around 1830, resulting in the clearing of dense forest areas and the expansion of agricultural land. By 1900, logging and farming had removed most of the deciduous and conifer forests. Fruit production started in the 1880s and became more prevalent after the forests were cleared. Fruit production remains but has declined with the loss of processors.

At the turn of the 20th century the Lake Michigan shoreline began to witness the development of seasonal homes. This seasonal housing development and farming have remained the mainstay of Casco Township. Farming has included fruit and field crop production. The Township has grown to about 2,000 residences.

Most tourism businesses, industries, and commercial activities are concentrated near the southern border of Casco Township, close to the City of South Haven. I-96 and US-31 are along the Township's western border and provide convenient access for the Township. Unlike many other communities in the State of Michigan, the construction of freeways during the 1960's and 1970's did not lead to significant development in Casco Township.

Today, the community remains primarily agricultural and forested east of the Blue Star Memorial Highway with seasonal residences west of the highway to Lake Michigan.





T. JOHNSTON R. M. JOHNSTON

T. Johnston & Co.

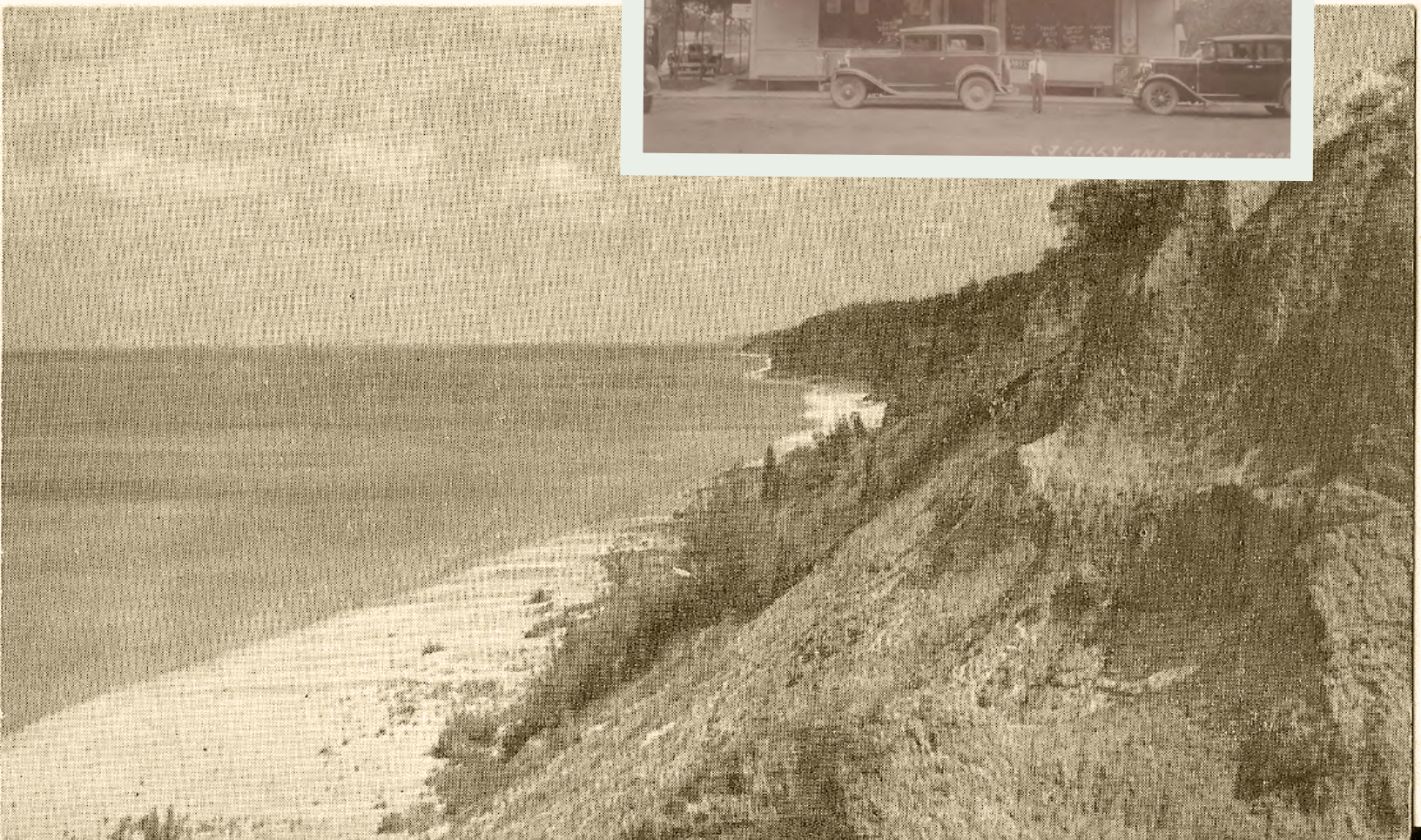
DEALERS IN
Dry Goods, Groceries and Notions
HAWKHEAD, MICH.

P. O., South Haven R. F. D. No. 6 Local and Long Distance Phones

Not the Biggest Assortment, but the BEST

And with all due respect for the Diety, Our Motto is:
In God we trust, all others cash,
We do this way to avoid a smash,
For the man who trusts soon comes to sorrow,
So its cash today and trust tomorrow.

"Talking It Over."



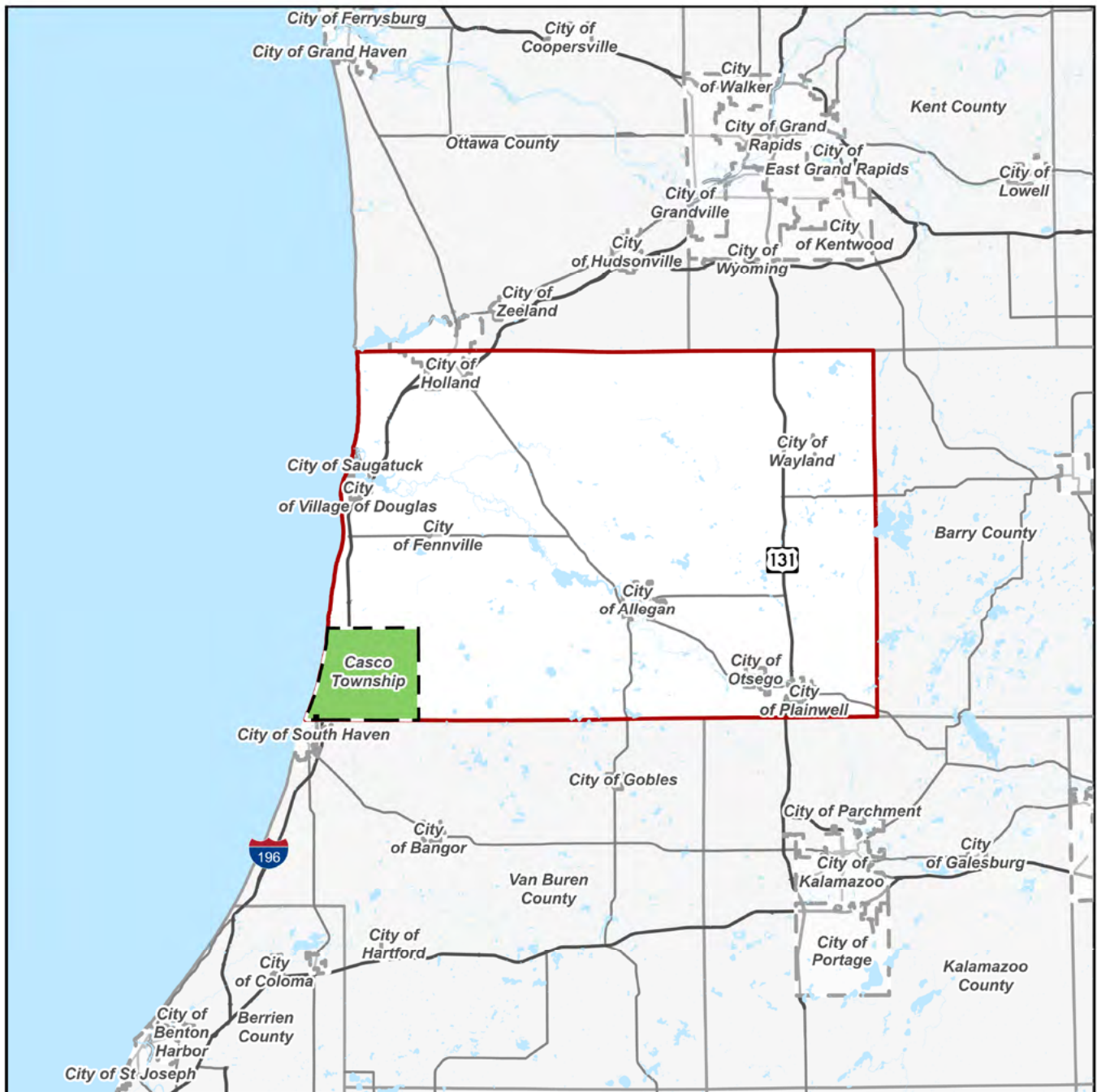
2.2 Regional Context

Casco appeals to many, as it is a rural and agricultural community and a vacation and retirement home community. Although the Township has two major branches of the Black River and several small lakes, the Township's seasonal housing is primarily found along the bluffs and beaches of Lake Michigan. The remaining households are located in small clusters on the west side of I-196 and scattered in the rural and agricultural portion of the Township, east of the freeway.



Regionally, the township is located in southwest corner of Allegan County. The City of South Haven is immediately south of Casco Township on Lake Michigan. South Haven has a permanent population of 3,960, p and an additional 15,000 visitors during the summertime. The county seat is located in the City of Allegan, which is located 20 miles to the east. The closest urban centers serving Casco Township are the City of Holland, approximately 20 miles to the north, St. Joseph/Benton Harbor, 26 miles southwest; Kalamazoo, 45 miles east; and Grand Rapids, 59 miles northeast.

The I-196/US-31 freeway follows the coastline along Lake Michigan throughout its north-south corridor in the township. There are two interchanges in Casco Township; one in the north at 109th Avenue and one in the south at North Shore Drive. There is no other State or Federal highway in the township. County primary roads include Blue Star Memorial Highway, 66th Street, 109th Avenue, 102nd Avenue, 60th street south of 109th Ave, 62nd Street north of 109th Ave, and North Shore Drive/72nd Street/103rd Avenue.



MAP 1. Regional Location

Casco Township, Allegan County, MI

August 11, 2025

LEGEND

- Casco Township
- Allegan County
- Cities

0 0.5 1.0
MILES



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a. Data Source: Allegan County 2024. McKenna 2024



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2.3 Existing Land Use

Knowledge of current land usage provides a basis to consider the compatibility of new land development and a valuable reference tool for the day-to-day problems associated with land management and the provision of public services.

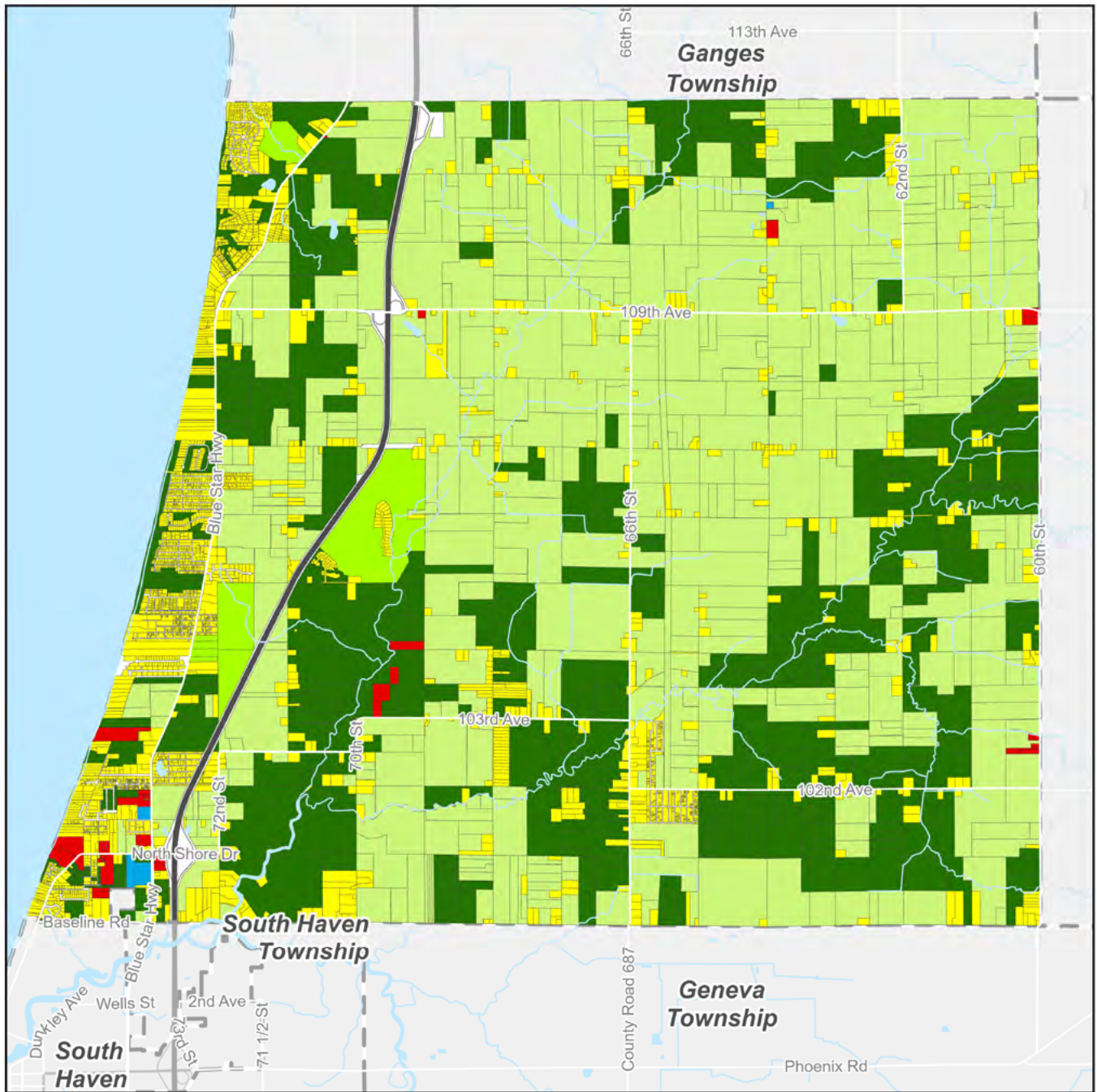


The Existing Land Use map, Map 2, provides an inventory of the land uses within the community. It is a crucial source of background information used to develop the future land use plan, analyzed in further portions of this Plan. The existing land use map is designed to show the general land use patterns and relationships. It is important to note that it represents a snapshot in time and, therefore, is not intended to be precise in every detail. Existing land use categories should not be confused with zoning because they do not indicate nonconforming uses, undeveloped land, or other factors. Further, Existing Land Use descriptors can be generalized to show agricultural, commercial, forest, public, recreation, and residential categories.

The current land use map shows that to the east of Blue Star Memorial Highway lies rural and undeveloped land, the more intensive land uses are situated west of the highway. The developments in this area include single-family homes, recreational vehicle parks, and campgrounds. There is limited commercial use around the North Shore Drive and Blue Star Highway intersection, with scattered sites along the Blue Star corridor.

Upon examining the accompanying map, it is evident that Casco Township is primarily rural, with agricultural, forest, and open lands being the three largest land uses in the township.

The following section outlines, in more detail, the location of land cover types and their characteristics within Casco Township. Existing land cover types were divided into distinct categories to analyze the township's development pattern. This analysis will help to define the specific areas within the Township that are planned to be preserved or enhanced throughout this Plan. The analysis was conducted using ESRI aerial imagery and software (ArcPro) as the means of initial analysis.



MAP 2. Existing Land Use

Casco Township, Allegan County, MI

May 30, 2025

LEGEND (NOT ZONING)

- Agriculture
- Residential
- Commercial
- Public
- Recreation
- Forest

0 0.5 1.0
MILES



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a. Data Source: McKenna 2025

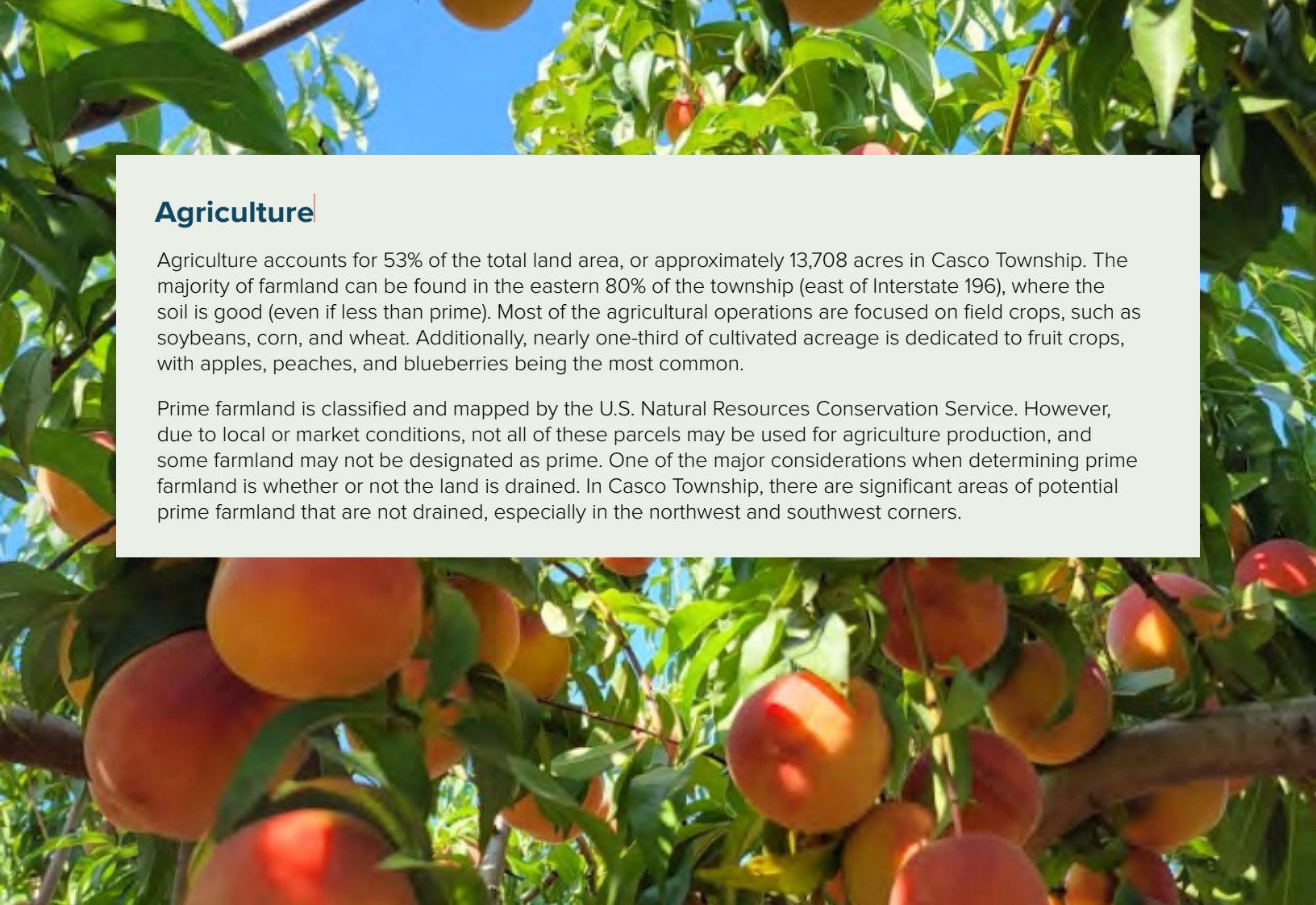


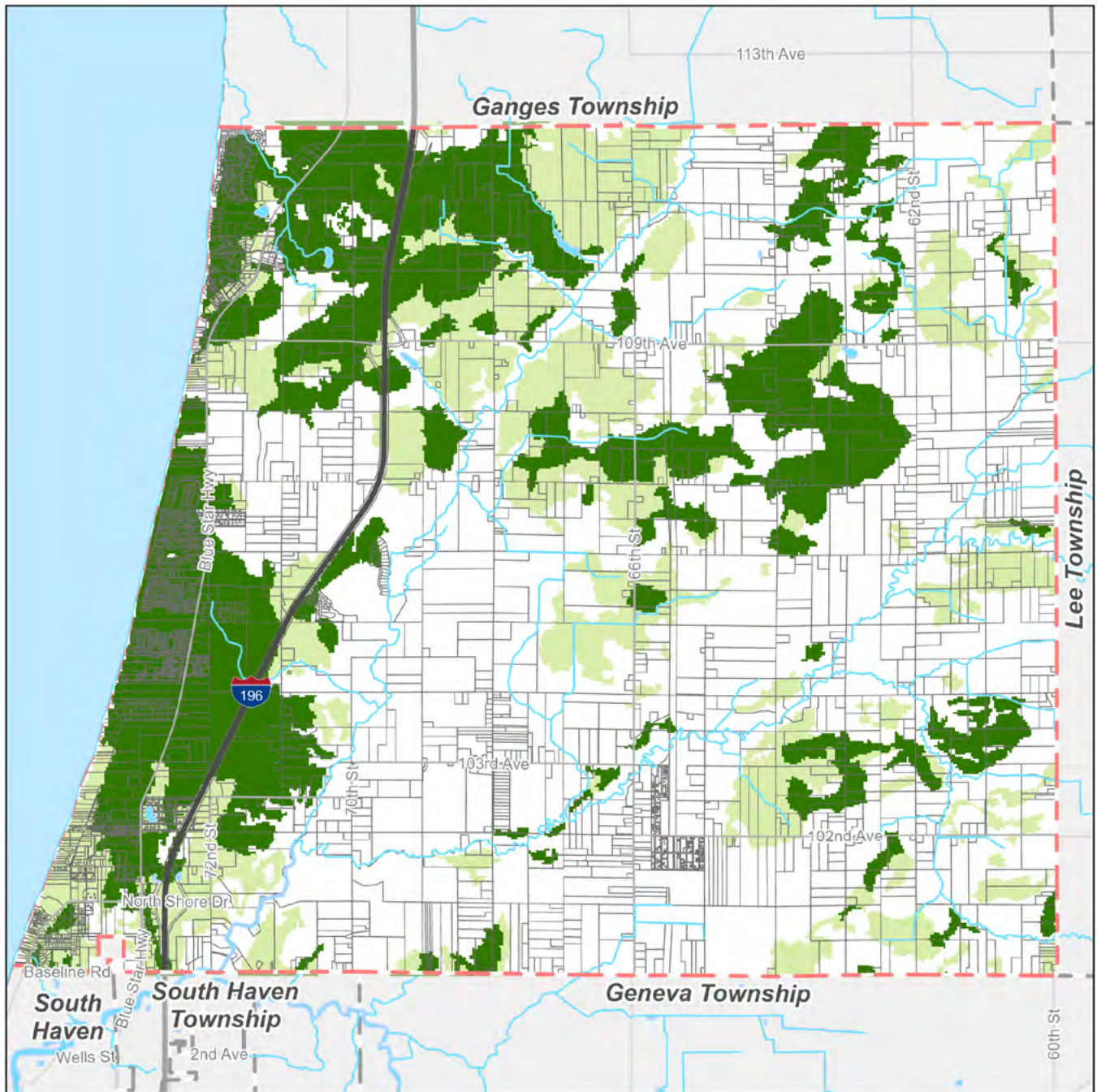
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Agriculture

Agriculture accounts for 53% of the total land area, or approximately 13,708 acres in Casco Township. The majority of farmland can be found in the eastern 80% of the township (east of Interstate 196), where the soil is good (even if less than prime). Most of the agricultural operations are focused on field crops, such as soybeans, corn, and wheat. Additionally, nearly one-third of cultivated acreage is dedicated to fruit crops, with apples, peaches, and blueberries being the most common.

Prime farmland is classified and mapped by the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service. However, due to local or market conditions, not all of these parcels may be used for agriculture production, and some farmland may not be designated as prime. One of the major considerations when determining prime farmland is whether or not the land is drained. In Casco Township, there are significant areas of potential prime farmland that are not drained, especially in the northwest and southwest corners.





MAP 3. USDA Prime Farmland Soils

Casco Township, Allegan County, MI

May 12, 2024

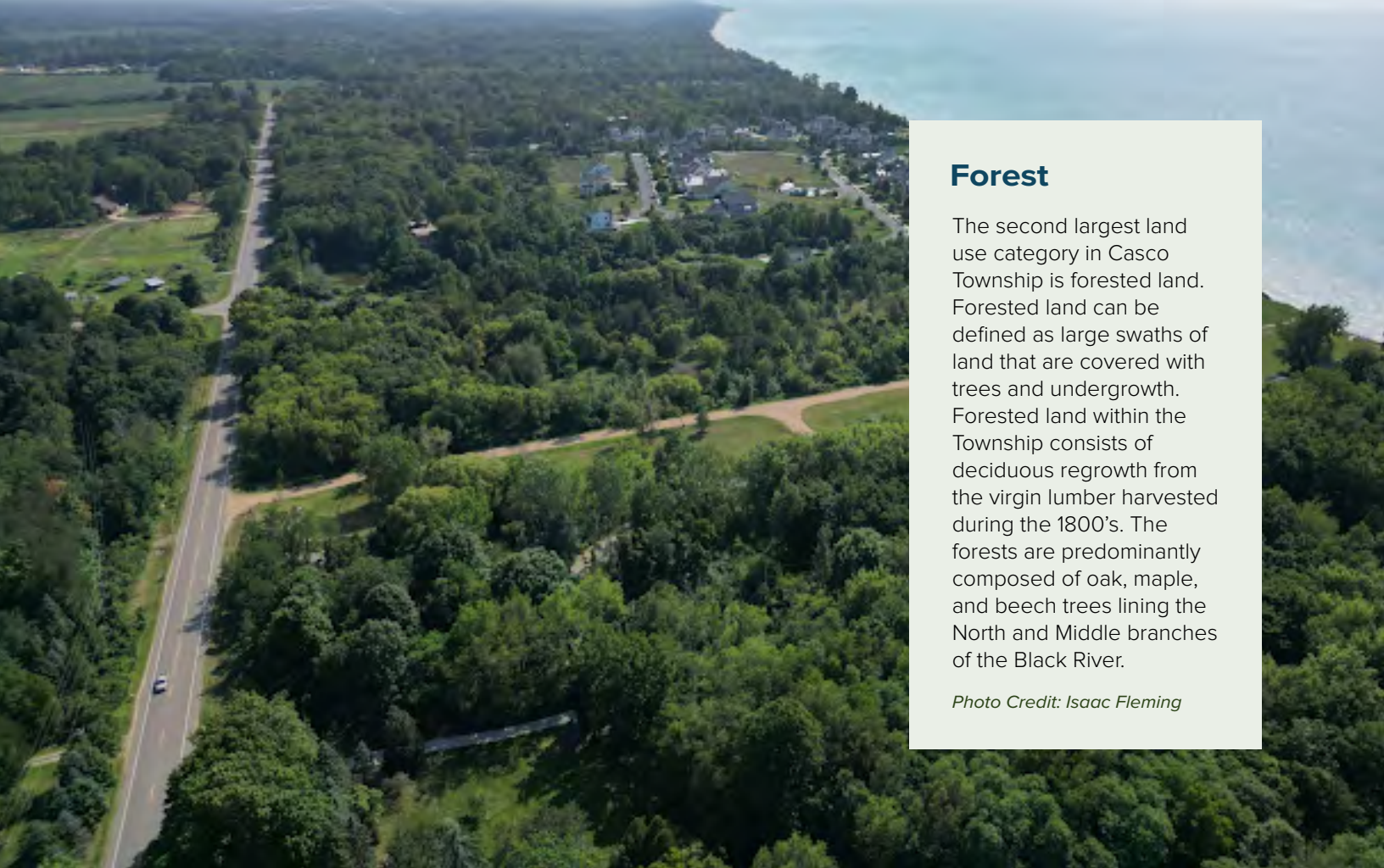
LEGEND

- Prime Farmland
- Farmland of Local Importance



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a. Data Source: Allegan County 2024. USDA Soil Survey Geographic Database (SSURGO) 2024. McKenna 2025





Forest

The second largest land use category in Casco Township is forested land. Forested land can be defined as large swaths of land that are covered with trees and undergrowth. Forested land within the Township consists of deciduous regrowth from the virgin lumber harvested during the 1800's. The forests are predominantly composed of oak, maple, and beech trees lining the North and Middle branches of the Black River.

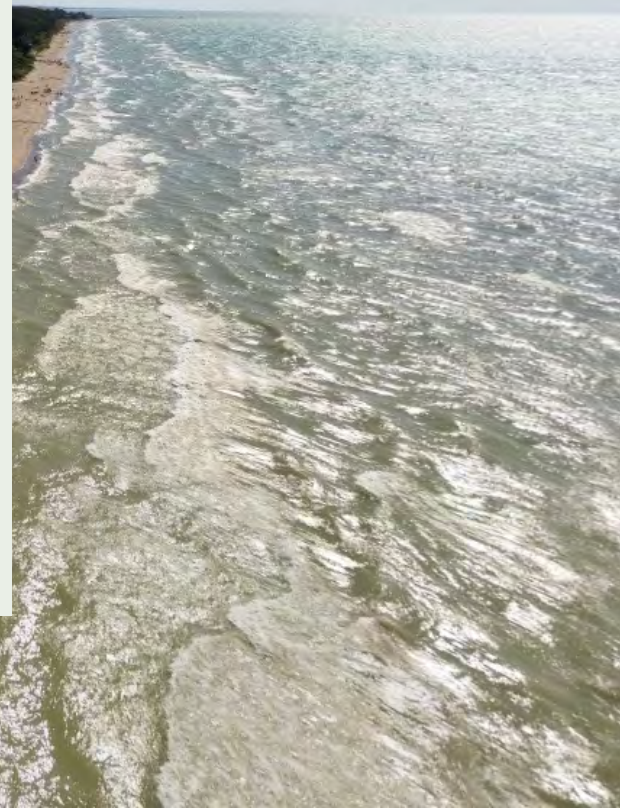
Photo Credit: Isaac Fleming

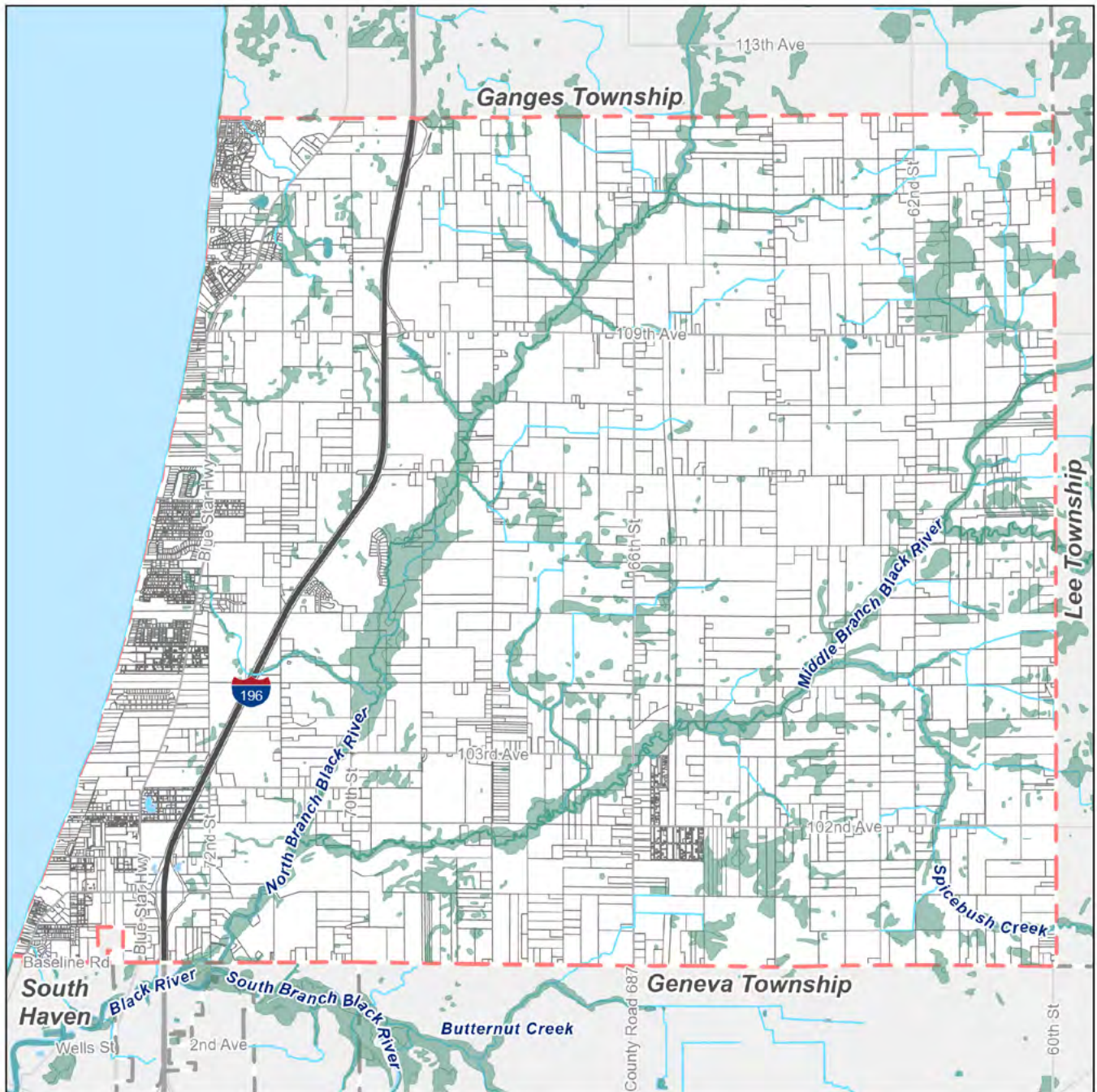
Water Bodies & Wetlands

Lake Michigan is located along the western border of the Township and is the largest water body within/bordering the Township. Besides Lake Michigan, the Township itself has minimal bodies of water. Inland water bodies encompass only a small portion of the area, specifically 0.19% covering 46.35 acres, excluding Lake Michigan. The lakes present are small, uninhabited, and relatively shallow. Rivers in the area are the North and Middle Branches of the Black River, flanked by a buffer of trees on both banks. The river corridors remain relatively undeveloped.

Wetlands are defined by groundwater levels, topography, soil composition, and vegetation. The portion of land designated as wetlands is relatively modest, comprising less than 2% of the total area within the Township. These wetlands are primarily dispersed in various pockets along the tributaries of the North and Middle Branches of the Black River, with the most significant concentration located in the northeast corner of the Township.

Photo Credit: Scott Reinemann





MAP 4. Wetlands

Casco Township, Allegan County, MI

May 12, 2024

LEGEND

- Water Features
- Wetlands



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a. Data Source: Allegan County 2024. McKenna 2025



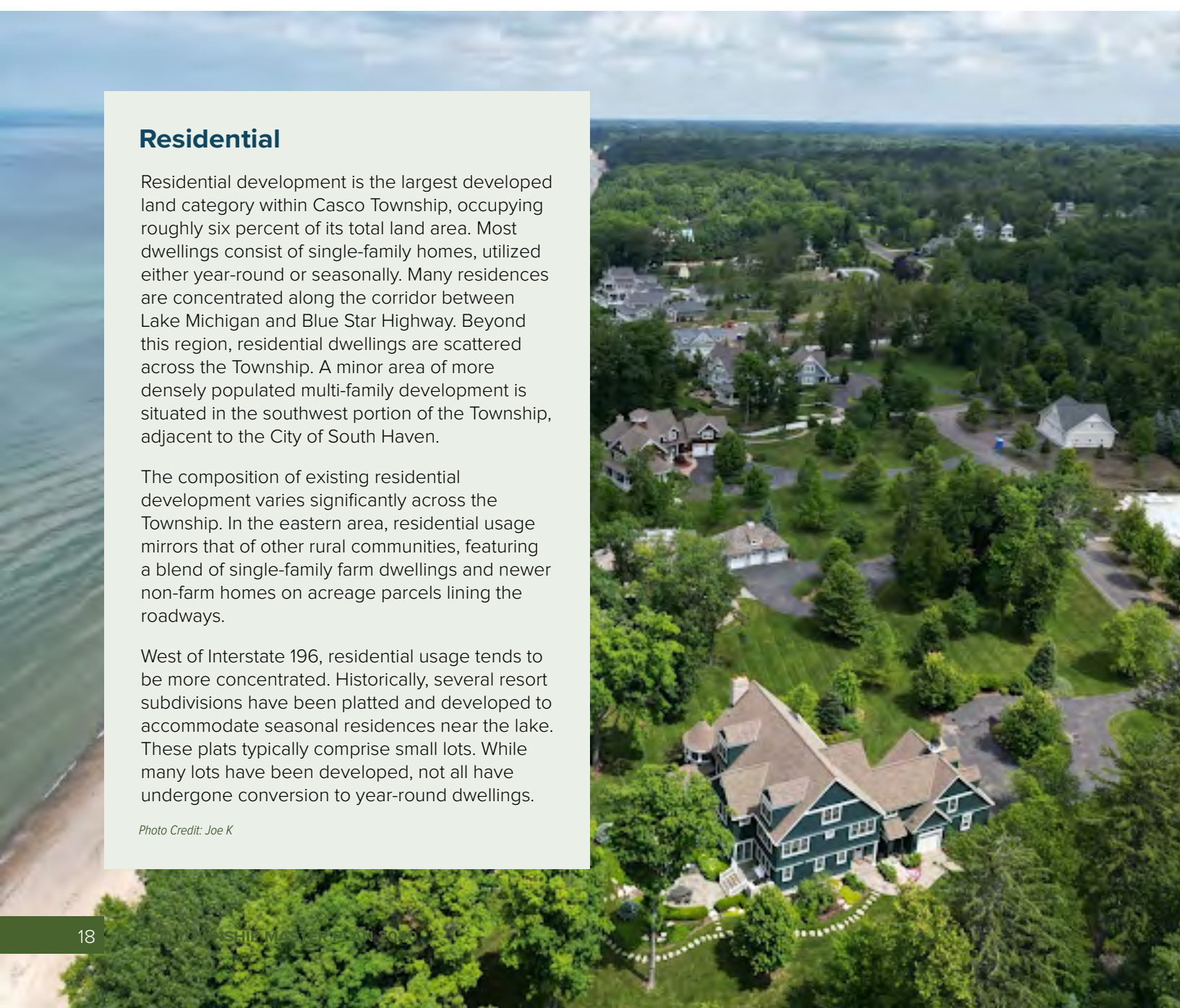
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Open Land

The open land category comprises nearly 6% of the land area in the township. The open land category is primarily vacant properties such as fields and meadows that are not in active use. Most are former farmlands on marginal soils, soils unusable for agriculture, and former mines and landfills.

*Casco Nature Preserve
(Photo Credit: Tim Lally)*



Residential

Residential development is the largest developed land category within Casco Township, occupying roughly six percent of its total land area. Most dwellings consist of single-family homes, utilized either year-round or seasonally. Many residences are concentrated along the corridor between Lake Michigan and Blue Star Highway. Beyond this region, residential dwellings are scattered across the Township. A minor area of more densely populated multi-family development is situated in the southwest portion of the Township, adjacent to the City of South Haven.

The composition of existing residential development varies significantly across the Township. In the eastern area, residential usage mirrors that of other rural communities, featuring a blend of single-family farm dwellings and newer non-farm homes on acreage parcels lining the roadways.

West of Interstate 196, residential usage tends to be more concentrated. Historically, several resort subdivisions have been platted and developed to accommodate seasonal residences near the lake. These plats typically comprise small lots. While many lots have been developed, not all have undergone conversion to year-round dwellings.

Photo Credit: Joe K

Commercial

Less than 1% of the Township land area is occupied by commercial use. Much of this commercial use is located near the City of South Haven, with proximity to Blue Star Highway & Interstate 196. The availability of public utilities, such as sewer and water limits commercial development.



Industrial

Even smaller than commercial is the tiny Industrial activity that totals only 9 acres or 0.04% of all the land. Some of the land reflects non-industrial uses such as sanitary landfills. From a land use perspective, these industrial operations are generally sited in rural areas and could portend significant land use problems if they were to get larger.

2.4 Demographics

This section of the Plan examines the demographic trends in Casco Township by analyzing data from the U.S. Census Bureau. The analysis offers regional context and comparisons with neighboring communities. Understanding the existing demographic patterns gives insight into what the Township needs to plan for in the future. This section covers population characteristics, age structure and composition, household composition, health, housing, and overall changes to the Township's demographics. The data and trends identified provide a foundation for developing strategies to address the needs of Casco Township residents.



Allegan County Commission on Aging

Population Trends

Municipality	Population (2010)	Population (2020)	Numeric Growth	Growth Rate
Casco Township	2,823	2,796	-27	-1%
Clyde Township	2,084	2,060	-24	-1.2%
Ganges Township	2,530	2,574	+44	+1.7%
Geneva Township	3,573	3,416	-157	-4.4%
Lee Township	4,015	3,805	-210	-5.2%
City of South Haven	4,400	3,960	-440	-10%
South Haven Charter Township	3,983	4,041	+58	+1.5%
Allegan County	111,408	120,502	+9,094	+8.2%
Van Buren County	76,258	75,587	-671	-1%
State of Michigan	9,883,640	10,077,331	+193,691	+2%

Source: 2010 and 2020 Decennial Census

Since 2010, Casco Township has experienced a very slight population decrease. Municipalities nearby in both Allegan and Van Buren Counties have also experienced a slight population decrease. Contrary to this trend, Ganges Township and South Haven Charter Township have experienced slight growth since 2010.

Age Distribution

Similarly to the State of Michigan and the wider United States, Casco Township exhibits an aging demographic profile. A substantial portion of the Township’s population, approximately 32%, falls within the 60 to 74-year age bracket. The median age for Casco is notably higher at 51.8 years compared to the median age of 41.1 years for Allegan County and 40.3 years for the State of Michigan. Given the Township’s status as a vacation and retirement destination, these demographic trends are unsurprising.

With a significant portion of its population comprising senior residents, the Township must prioritize the implementation of effective aging-in-place strategies. Ensuring accessibility for all residents, regardless of age or mobility, is crucial. By focusing on these initiatives, Casco Township can cultivate a supportive and safe environment that enables elderly citizens to maintain their independence and reside comfortably within their homes.

Figure 1. Casco Township Age Distribution

Source: 2022 ACS, 5-Year Estimates

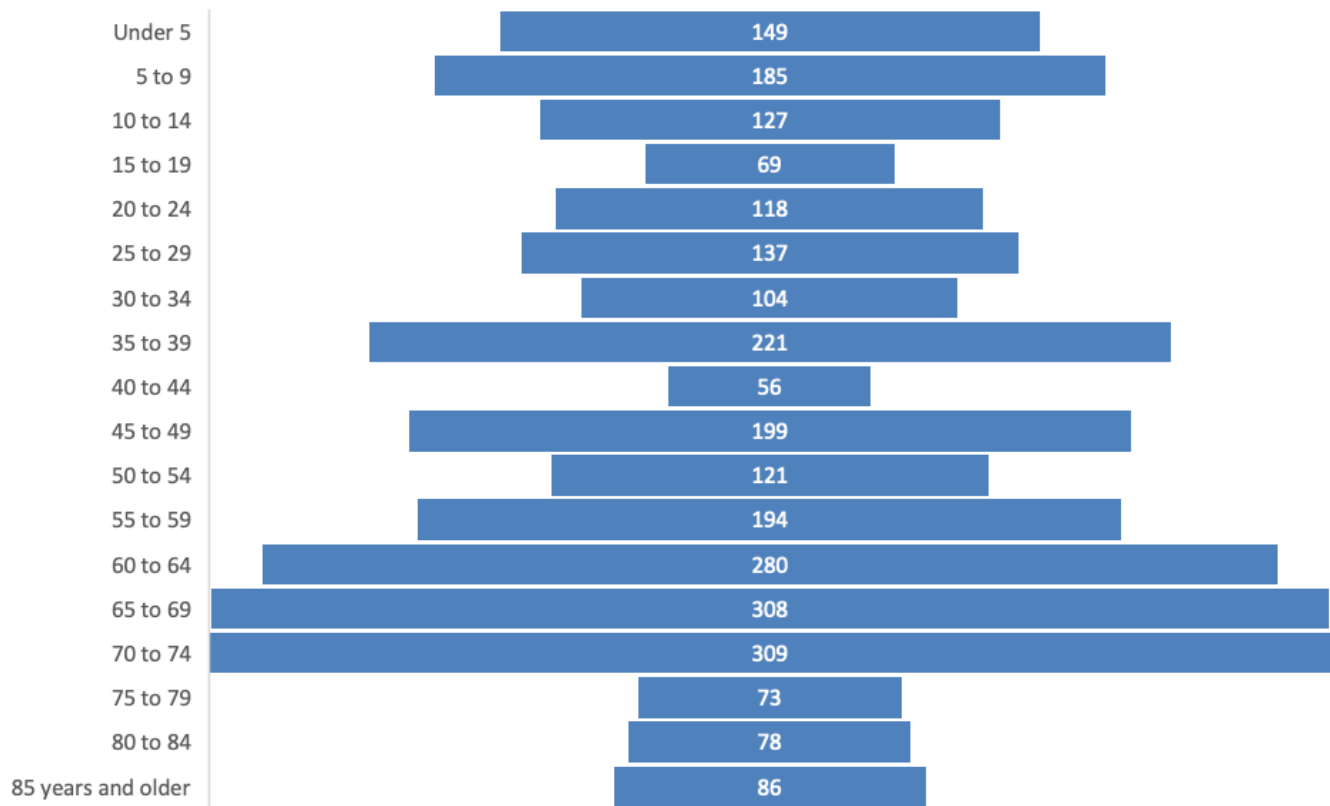


Table 1. Median Age*

Municipality	Median Age
Casco Township	51.8
Clyde Township	40.1
Ganges Township	51.3
Geneva Township	36.8
Lee Township	36.0
City of South Haven	60.8
South Haven Charter Township	51.7
Allegan County	41.1
Van Buren County	42.1
State of Michigan	40.3

*2022 ACS, 5-Year Estimates

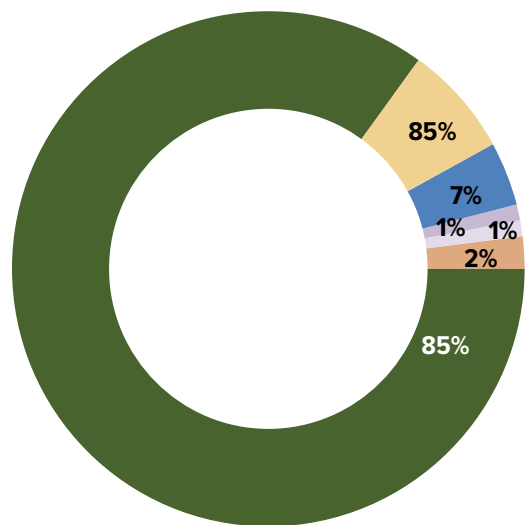
Interestingly enough, Casco Township has the second oldest population in the area, beat only by the City of South Haven, which has a median age of 60.8. Closely behind is South Haven Charter Township and Ganges Township.



Racial and Ethnic Composition

In general, the population of Casco Township is predominantly white, accounting for approximately 85%. The remaining 15% consists mainly of individuals who identify with two or more racial backgrounds. There is minimal representation of black, Native American, or Asian individuals within the population.

Figure 2. Casco Township Racial Composition
Source: 2020 Decennial Census

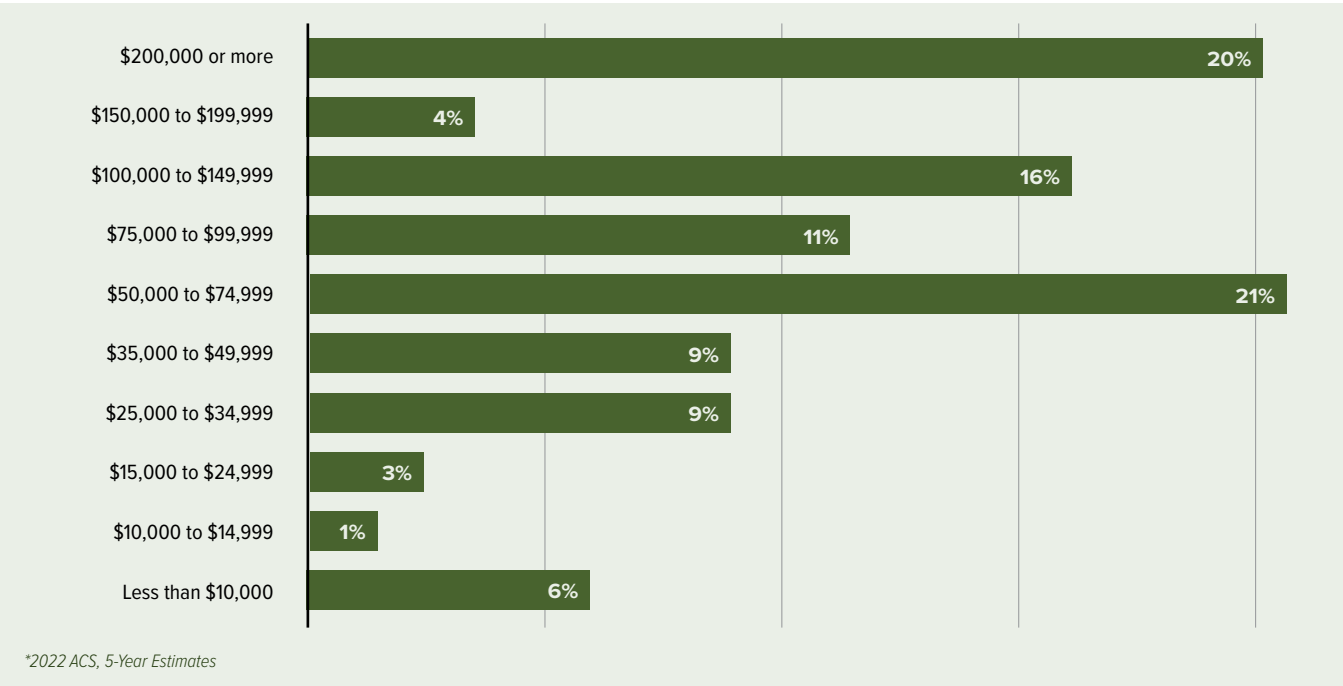


85%	White
7%	Two or More Races
4%	Other
2%	Black
1%	American Indian and Alaska Native
1%	Asian

Economic Status

The majority (72%) of the Township makes \$50,000 or more per year. 40% of the Township's population makes \$100,000 or more per year and 20% of the population makes \$200,000 or more per year. These numbers generally indicate that, in 2024, the population's economic status ranges from middle to upper middle class.

Figure 3. Annual Household Income



Referencing **Table 2**, Casco Township has the highest median income of any surrounding community. In addition, the township's median income is higher than Allegan County, Van Buren County, and the State of Michigan's.

Table 2. Median Household Income in the Last 12 Months

Municipality	Median Household Income
Casco Township	\$80,000
Clyde Township	\$53,958
Ganges Township	\$69,500
Geneva Township	\$70,521
Lee Township	\$53,958
City of South Haven	\$63,014
South Haven Charter Township	\$48,393
Allegan County	\$75,901
Van Buren County	\$60,182
State of Michigan	\$66,986

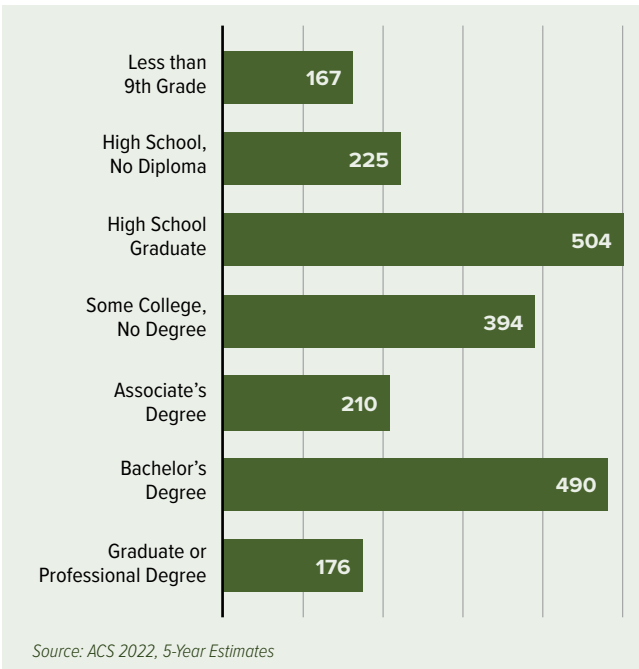
Source: 2022 ACS, 5-Year Estimates

A higher median household income in Casco Township indicates that its residents enjoy greater economic stability. This stability encompasses various aspects such as increased disposable income, better access to quality healthcare, improved educational opportunities, enhanced housing options, and a higher standard of living. Additionally, it suggests that the community may have more resources available for savings, investment, and overall financial security.

Educational Attainment

Understanding the educational attainment of the township can help identify economic development opportunities aligned with local skills, determine the demand for social services, inform workforce development strategies, guide resource allocation, and influence the overall quality of life.

Figure 4. Education (25 Years and Older)



30% of the Township’s residents hold a high school diploma or lower, while the remaining 70% have completed some college coursework or attained higher educational qualifications. In general, the Township is well-educated.



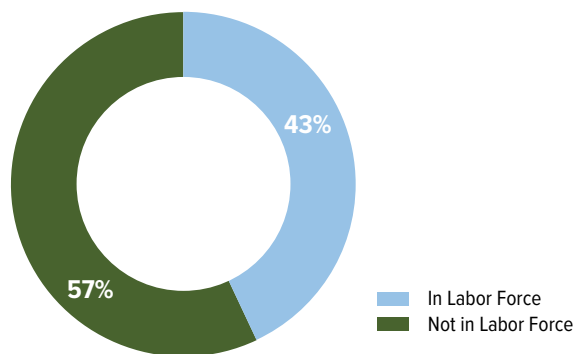
Photo Credit: South Haven Public Schools



Employment

Comprehending the employment patterns within the population is crucial for formulating policies and fostering opportunities in key sectors within the Township, as well as striving to attract desired industries.

Figure 5. Population 16 Years and Over*
Source: ACS 2022, 5-Year Estimates

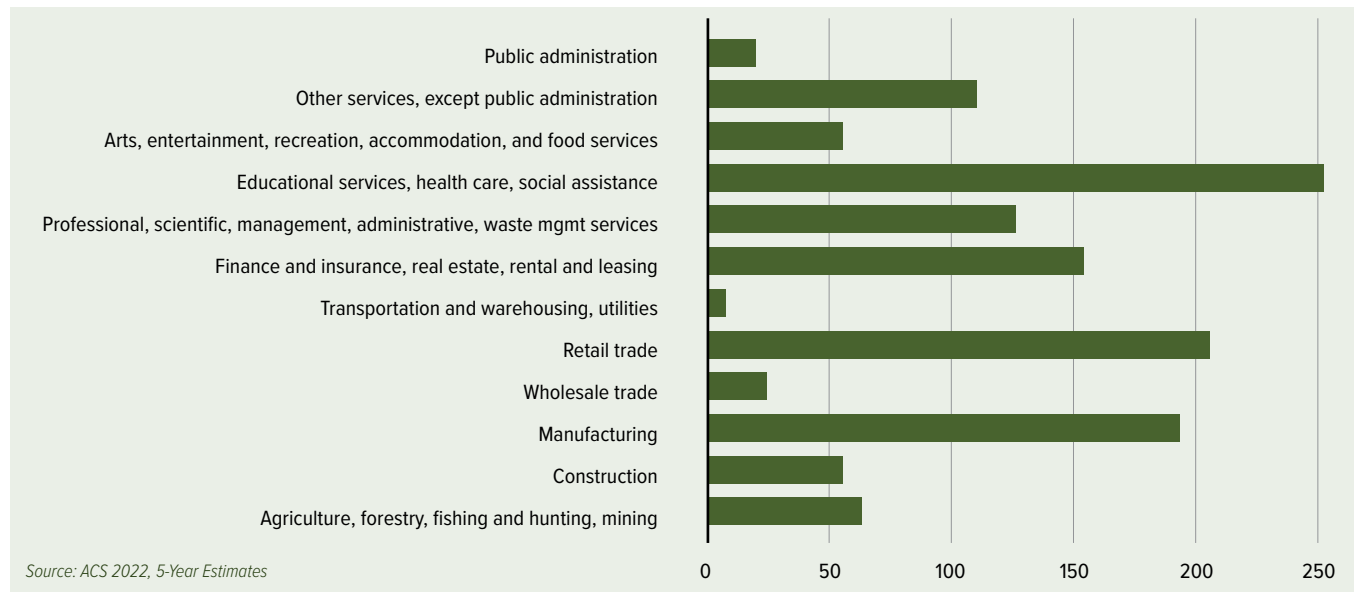


84% of Casco’s inhabitants are of working age (aged 16 or above). Nevertheless, only 59.6% of the population eligible for work participates in the labor force. This occurrence is predictable, given that a significant portion of the population is at retirement age.



Palisades Nuclear Power Plant, Covert, MI.
Photo Credit: Breakthrough Media

Figure 6. Employed by Industry*



As depicted in **Figure 6**, the workforce in Casco Township is diversified, encompassing both white-collar and blue-collar occupations. The predominant occupations of Casco residents are in educational services, healthcare, and social assistance.

Table 3 highlights that the majority of commuters travel to work independently.

Table 3. Commuting to Work

Commuting Method	Number of People
Car, truck, van – drove alone	890
Car, truck, van – carpoolled	74
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	11
Walked	31
Other Means	0
Worked from home	246
Total	1,252

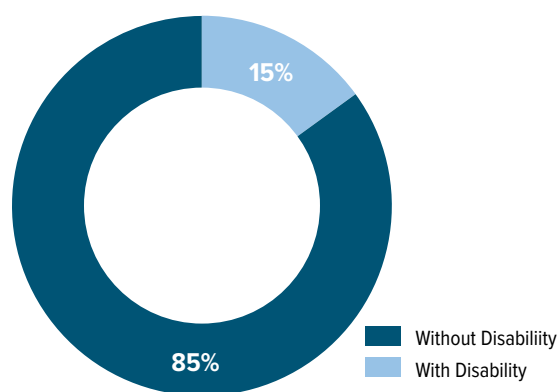
Source: ACS 2022 (5-Year Estimates)

Health

By understanding the health profile of the community, the Master Plan can address specific health needs, increase accessibility, reduce healthcare disparities, promote healthy behaviors, and improve overall well-being, fostering a resilient and thriving community.

Disability

Figure 7. Percentage of Casco Population with a Disability
Source: ACS 2022, 5-Year Estimates



15% of Casco Township’s population lives with a disability, which is common for communities that have a significant senior population like Casco Township.

Table 4 breaks down the population by disability. Based on the 2022 American Community Survey, it is estimated that the most common disability is ambulatory, followed by independent living difficulties. These disabilities are common for populations with an aging population.

Table 4. Population by Disability

Disability Type	Number of Persons with Disability
With a hearing difficulty	169
With a vision difficulty	13
With a cognitive difficulty	171
With an ambulatory difficulty	311
With a self-care difficulty	192
With an independent living difficulty	262

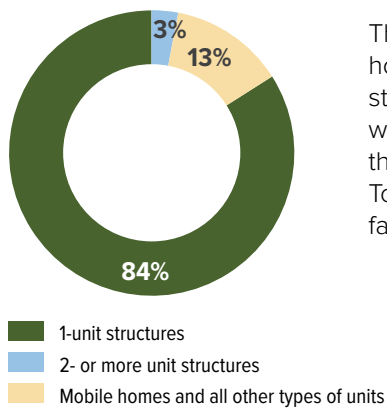
Source: 2022 ACS (5-Year Estimates)

Housing

Housing demographics provide insights into the current and future housing needs of a community. Housing data informs decisions related to zoning, land use, and infrastructure development to ensure the availability of affordable, accessible, and sustainable housing options for residents of all ages and income levels.

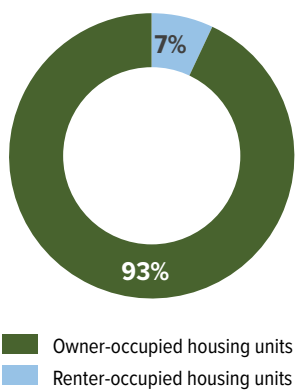
According to the 2020 Decennial Census, Casco Township comprises a total of 1,979 housing units. Among these, an estimated 813 units, constituting around 41%, are believed to be vacant. This pattern is anticipated given that Casco serves as a retirement and vacation home community, with some residences being seasonally occupied. In other communities, a large proportion of vacant houses may bring concern of blight. However, due to the nature of Casco, this is not a significant concern.

Figure 8. Units in Structure
Source: 2022 ACS, 5-Year Estimates



The majority of housing units are 1-unit structures, which aligns with the fact that most of the housing units in the Township are single-family houses.

Figure 9. Housing Tenure
Source: 2022 ACS, 5-Year Estimates



Most housing units in the Township are owner-occupied. A community with a high rate of owner-occupied units typically indicates a stable, invested, and affluent community.

Table 5. Units in Structure

Units in Structure	Estimate
1, detached	891
1, attached	7
2 apartments	0
3 or 4 apartments	23
5 to 9 apartments	6
10 or more apartments	0
Mobile home or other type of housing	139

Source: ACS 2022, 5-Year Estimates

As depicted in **Table 5**, the predominant type of structures in the Township consists of detached single-unit dwellings. Figure 10 below illustrates the age distribution of the housing stock, while Table 6 indicates that numerous housing units with mortgages are valued within the range of approximately \$100,000 to \$299,999. Overall, according to estimates from the United States Census, the median housing value in the Township is approximately \$251,000.

Figure 10. Year Structures Built

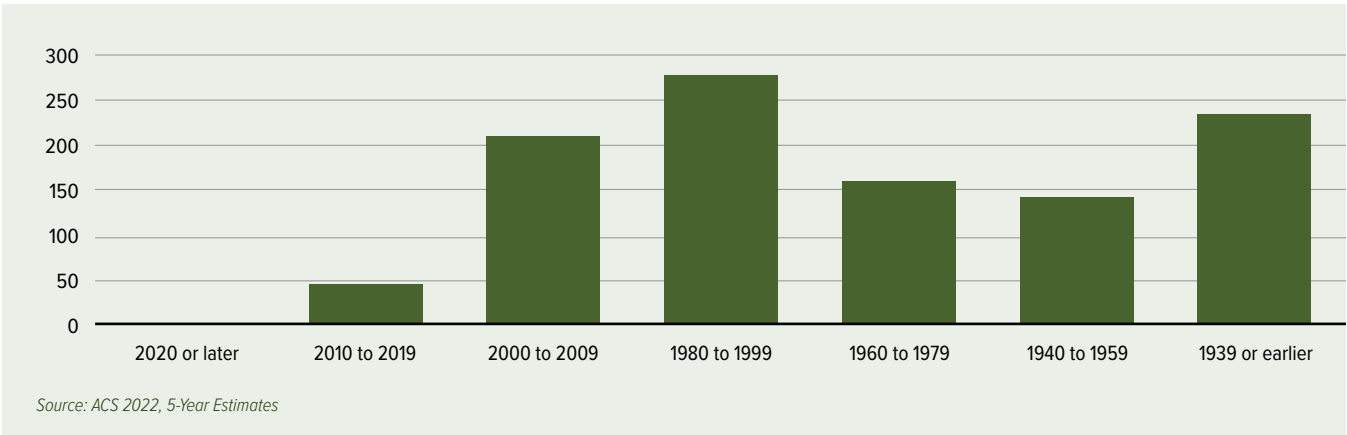
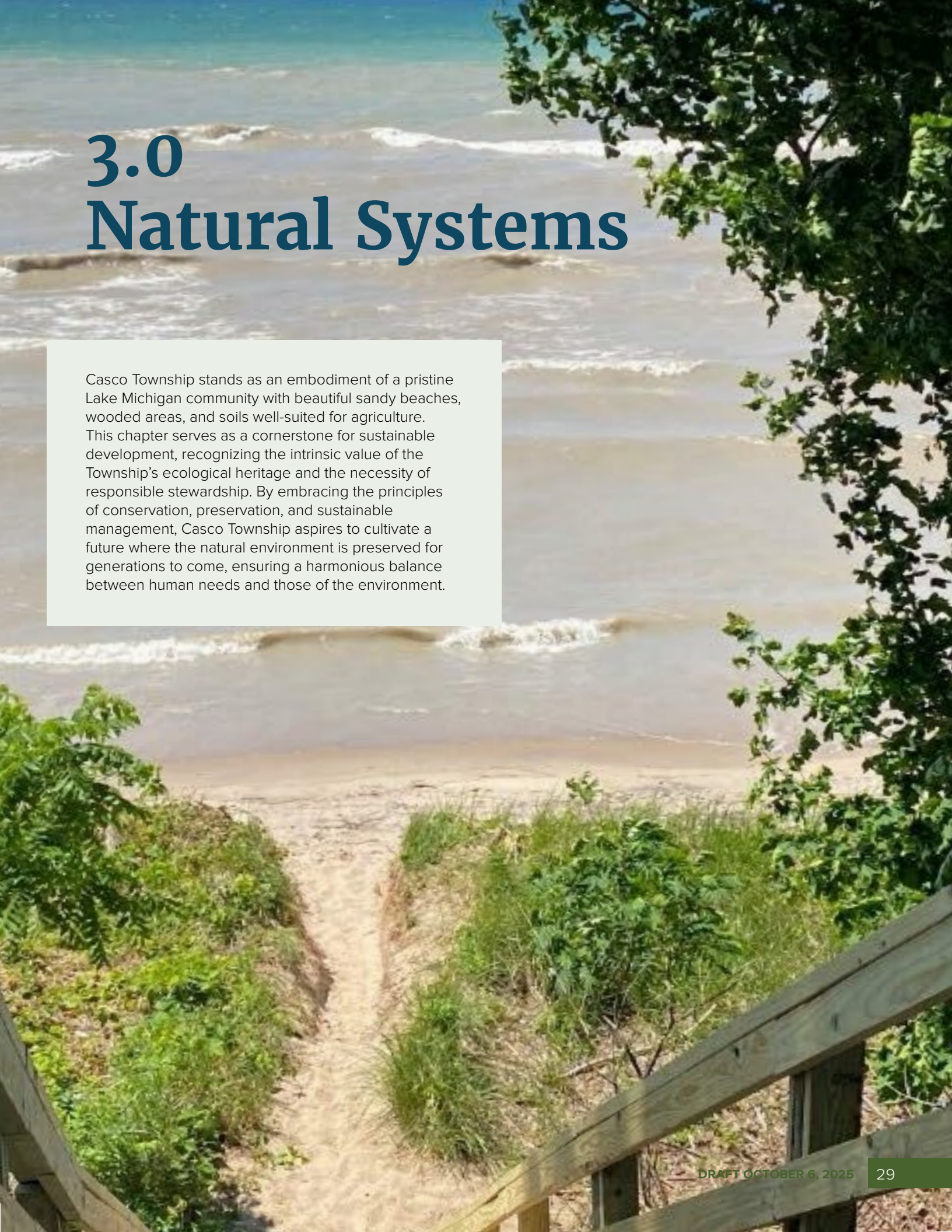


Table 6. Owner-occupied Housing Units with a Mortgage

Housing Value	Number of Units
Less than \$50,000	0
\$50,000 to \$99,999	79
\$100,000 to \$299,999	180
\$300,000 to \$499,999	95
\$500,000 to \$749,999	34
\$750,000 to \$999,999	8
\$1,000,000 or more	20

Source: ACS 2022, 5-Year Estimates





3.0 Natural Systems

Casco Township stands as an embodiment of a pristine Lake Michigan community with beautiful sandy beaches, wooded areas, and soils well-suited for agriculture. This chapter serves as a cornerstone for sustainable development, recognizing the intrinsic value of the Township's ecological heritage and the necessity of responsible stewardship. By embracing the principles of conservation, preservation, and sustainable management, Casco Township aspires to cultivate a future where the natural environment is preserved for generations to come, ensuring a harmonious balance between human needs and those of the environment.

3.1 Natural Resources and the Environment

Casco Township stands as an embodiment of a pristine Lake Michigan community with beautiful sandy beaches, wooded areas, and soils well-suited for agriculture. This chapter serves as a cornerstone for sustainable development, recognizing the intrinsic value of the Township's ecological heritage and the necessity of responsible stewardship. By embracing the principles of conservation, preservation, and sustainable management, Casco Township aspires to cultivate a future where the natural environment is preserved for generations to come, ensuring a harmonious balance between human needs and those of the environment.



Natural Features and Characteristics

Landcover. Historically, land cover in the Township was dominated by forests. These forests include tree species such as beech, sugar maple, and hemlock across the Township and patches of mixed hardwood swamp in wetland areas. Dunes could be found along the southernmost Lake Michigan shoreline. The majority of the Township was covered by these dense forests, prior to permanent settlement in the 1800's. As will be discussed in further portions of this Master Plan, the Township should be cognizant of the existing natural features and how best to preserve and protect this characteristic of the community.

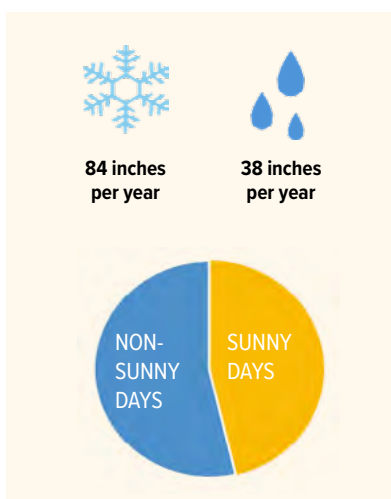
Topography and Soils. Topography is relatively modest in much of Casco Township as virtually all the township has elevations in the 550-foot to 730-foot elevation, which is above the prevailing elevation of Lake Michigan at 577 feet. However, the Lake Michigan frontage is lined with steep bluffs, while there is a gentle roll to the farmland and woodland east of the freeway. The land falls to about 620 feet elevation in the west portion of the township. The clear waters and sandy bottoms of the North and Middle Branches of the Black River provide minor, localized relief at the river banks. Casco Township has a limited variety of soil types.

The first type is agricultural soil located to the east, which is characterized by gently rolling to level land. These soils are ideal for cultivating blueberry orchards and some cash crops. The area is mostly dominated by histosols, which have developed from organic materials. The Morocco- Newton-Oakville and Oakville associations are the most common soil types located east of the North Branch of the Black River. West of the North Branch of the Black River, the soil is primarily composed of Capac-Rimer-Pipestone associations with accumulations of clay in the second layer. These soils are not well-suited for farming and include the area of the Lake Michigan beach.



Weather and Temperature.

Casco Township has a moderate climate with warm to hot summers and cold winters. The average temperature in summer ranges from mid-60s to upper 80s, while winter temperatures drop to mid-20s to low 40s. The area receives moderate precipitation throughout the year, with snowfall typically occurring between November and April. Due to its location on the Lake Michigan shoreline, the Township experiences strong winds off the lake during both summer and winter months.



Water Bodies. Overall, there are two major water features in Casco Township. The first, and most obvious feature is Lake Michigan. This Great Lake runs along the 6 ½ mile western border of the township with bluffs as high as 100 feet. The long-term average temperature for Lake Michigan has been 61.9 degrees Fahrenheit, which means the Lake holds a great amount of heat at its surface.

The second water feature, while less prominent than the Great Lake it drains into, is the Black River. The Northern Branch enters Casco via Ganges Township to the north and the Middle Branch meanders into Casco via Lee Township to the east. The two branches conjoin east of I-196 and continue southwest into South Haven. The river can be classified as a warm river, meaning the river is capable of supporting diverse aquatic life adapted to higher temperatures, however, it can be more susceptible to environmental stressors such as pollution and habitat degradation.

Wetlands. The majority of Casco's wetlands can be found along the Black River, with additional wetlands located along the eastern portion of the Township, near Scott Creek Drain. Wetlands are low-lying areas of land that are typically saturated with water, which can be on a permanent basis or seasonally. Wetlands also contain aquatic vegetation and act as transitional areas between well-drained areas and the more permanently flooded environment.

The wetlands within Casco Township are considered freshwater forested/shrubs. These types of wetlands are described as a forest area that is permanently or seasonally covered by freshwater.

Wildlife. As a community situated on one of the largest freshwater bodies of water in the world, many types of flora and fauna can be found within the Township. Lake Michigan has cold and deep waters that are rich in oxygen, which has historically supported many fish species such as Lake Trout, Yellow Perch, Lake Sturgeon, Lake Whitefish, and Muskellunge. On the other hand, the Black River supports a salmon spawning run and contains populations of steelhead and both brook and rainbow trout. Land animals come in a great variety and include species like white-tailed deer, raccoons, amphibians, and a variety of bird species.

Climate Weather Adaptation

Every community in the United States has experienced the effects of climate change. In general, Michigan has seen warming temperatures, increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, changing precipitation patterns, and fluctuations in lake levels. As the climate continues to change, Casco Township will continue to feel the impact, especially as a lake community. Much of the threat the community may experience may be due to erosion and the increased intensity of storms that come eastward over Lake Michigan. To gauge the impact of climate change on the community, Casco Township should consider:

Conducting a risk assessment. A risk assessment that actively engages the public, identifies current vulnerabilities, and forms an adaptation plan. Future updates to the Master Plan should consider the inclusion of a risk assessment.

Upgrading infrastructure. Infrastructure should be updated to withstand hazards such as erosion, flooding, wind storms, heatwaves, ice storms, etc. This could involve retrofitting buildings for energy efficiency or reinforcing critical infrastructure (roads, bridges, utilities).

Conservation. Efforts to protect natural resources such as the shoreline, rivers, wetlands, and forests are essential for resilience. Not only are these features essential for the wildlife that inhabit them, but they also provide essential processes for the wellbeing of Casco Township. For example, large spans of trees can protect buildings from wind and weather, and wetlands filter stormwater.

Additional considerations should be given to help protect the existing shoreline along Lake Michigan from development pressure.



Emergency Response Plans. Emergency Response Plans allow communities to effectively respond to climate-related disasters. They ensure emergency services, first responders, and community organizations are trained and well-equipped to handle various scenarios.



Environmental Education, Partnerships, and Outreach

The environment extends beyond manmade borders and increasing awareness and collaboration is the best and most effective way to make a difference.

Partnerships. It's not always possible or practical to address environmental issues alone. Partnerships allow for increased reach and impact through the pooling of resources, enhanced credibility and trust, and diversified perspectives. Casco Township has a variety of existing and untapped partnerships.

- » **Nearby municipalities.** Because the natural environment extends beyond political borders, it's essential to coordinate with nearby municipalities. For example, communities along the Lake Michigan shoreline and the Black River are impacted by Casco and vice versa. The Township is encouraged to coordinate with Ganges Township, Clyde Township, Lee Township, Geneva Township, South Haven Township, and the City of South Haven.
- » **Regional entities.** With a broader impact, regional entities have the potential to provide resources to help further the goals of both the Township and the entire region. Casco Township must collaborate with Allegan County in some instances Van Buren County for items such as effective emergency management and response and policy and planning coordination.
- » Beyond the county level, Casco is located within the bounds of the West Michigan Planning Commission, whose mission is to assist planning efforts in community and economic development, provide a regional forum for sharing information and ideas, and promote cooperative solutions to regional issues.



Reparation of damage to Casco Township Nature Preserve Shoreline. January 21, 2020. (Photo Credit: Joel Bissell)

3.2 Parks and Facilities

Casco Township boasts a handful of beautiful parks within its borders.



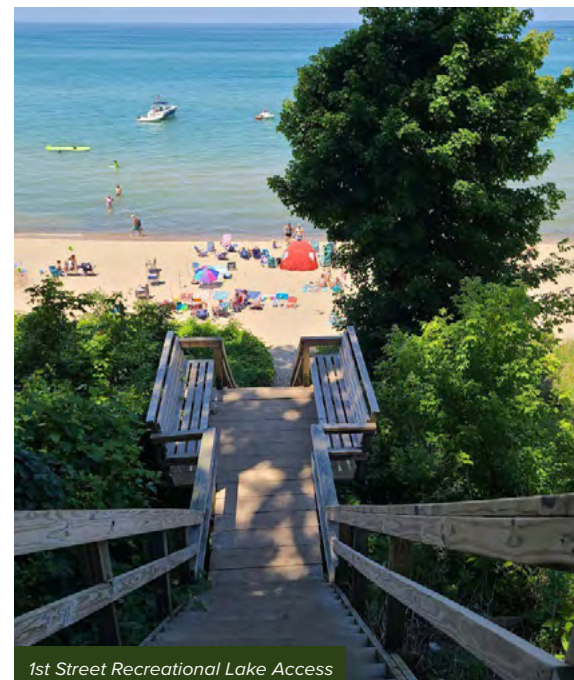
Casco Township Nature Preserve

Casco Township Nature Preserve.

Opening to public use in 2012, the Casco Township Nature Preserve is a nineteen-acre natural area located on Lake Michigan. The park includes two small parking lots, an ADA-accessible trail loop, and outstanding views from a high bluff overlooking Lake Michigan. Other amenities include ADA-accessible picnic tables, benches, interpretive signage, and toilet facilities. A wooden stairway had provided access to the beach from 2016-2020 but was destroyed by high water levels. Re-establishing access to the 700' of beach frontage is the top priority for the Parks and Recreation committee..

1st Street Recreational Lake

Access. An eighteen-foot wide access site is located at the end of 1st Street and includes a non-improved pathway, bike rack, and wood stairway to the Lake Michigan beach. Access to the site is by pedestrian and cyclist access only. The wood stairway includes a small resting area at the landing with two benches.



1st Street Recreational Lake Access

Miami Park Beach

The Township purchased two undeveloped lots located on the beach in Miami Park Subdivision from the State of Michigan. These lots contain a tall bluff and a lower beach. No access between the high bluff and lower beach areas currently exists.



Mt. Pleasant

This site is an unimproved wooded parcel located on Lake Michigan. Viewing of Lake Michigan can be enjoyed from the parcel at the top of the bluff.



Township Hall Property

The property consists of approximately 40 acres and is located on the site of Township Hall (the southwest corner of 107th Street and 71st Street) which is currently unimproved and leased for farming.



68th Street Wooded Lot

This site is 28 acres of unimproved and undeveloped woodland on 68th Street north of 104th Ave.



Transfer Station

The transfer station is located on 69th Street north of 103rd Avenue. It provided access to garbage and recycling services to Casco residents via a “dump card” mailed annually with the winter taxes.

3.3 Energy

The Township is in support of alternative energy sources including wind, solar, and battery storage on a personal scale.



Future siting of utility scale alternative energy options must be based on the ecological and economic benefits of the project compared to the impacts on the immediate surroundings, and those impacts can be managed through zoning regulations. Some of the considerations that zoning can regulate would include: protection of the Township's natural character and beauty , protection of the Township's Agricultural systems, protection for neighboring residences through appropriate setbacks and landscaped buffers, and locating new systems near existing transmission infrastructure.

4.0 Transportation, Infrastructure & Public Services



4.1 Transportation

The primary transportation system in Casco Township is the road network. The road network consists of one freeway (I-196/US-31) which traverses north/south within a mile and a half of Lake Michigan. It has interchanges in the township at 109th Avenue and North Shore Drive.

The east-west Allegan County Primary Roads are 102nd Avenue, Northshore Drive, and parts of 103rd Avenue, and 109th Avenue. Primary north-south roads are the Blue Star Memorial Highway, I-196/US-31 freeway, and 66th Street. There is no major street or road which is at or near capacity.

The public agencies primarily responsible for transportation systems are the Michigan Department of Transportation, the Allegan County Road Commission, and, to some degree of financial participation, the Township of Casco. Although the Township does levy a small road millage, it does not have operational or maintenance responsibility over any roads.



Public Transportation

There are limited public transportation services in Casco Township. However, Allegan County offers transportation services that allow access to employment, medical care, and other quality-of-life necessities. This is achieved through Allegan County Transportation (ACT), a bus service serving the area since 2000. Details about ACT such as scheduling rides and the hours of operation are available on the Allegan County website.

Non-motorized Transportation

As far as possible, the Township supports the inclusion of non-motorized transportation facilities by encouraging the activities of the Friends of the Blue Star Trail and the long-standing policy of the Allegan County Road Commission to provide paved road shoulders where needed for public safety.

4.2 Infrastructure

Infrastructure encompasses a wide array of essential facilities and systems that ensure the functionality of Casco Township. Infrastructure includes physical assets—such as roads, bridges, sidewalks, tunnels, water supply systems, sewers, and electrical grids—and services, including telecommunications networks (which cover internet connectivity and broadcasting), transportation systems, and the distribution of water and power. These elements are critical not only for sustaining economic activities but also for facilitating comprehensive community development.



Water and Sewer

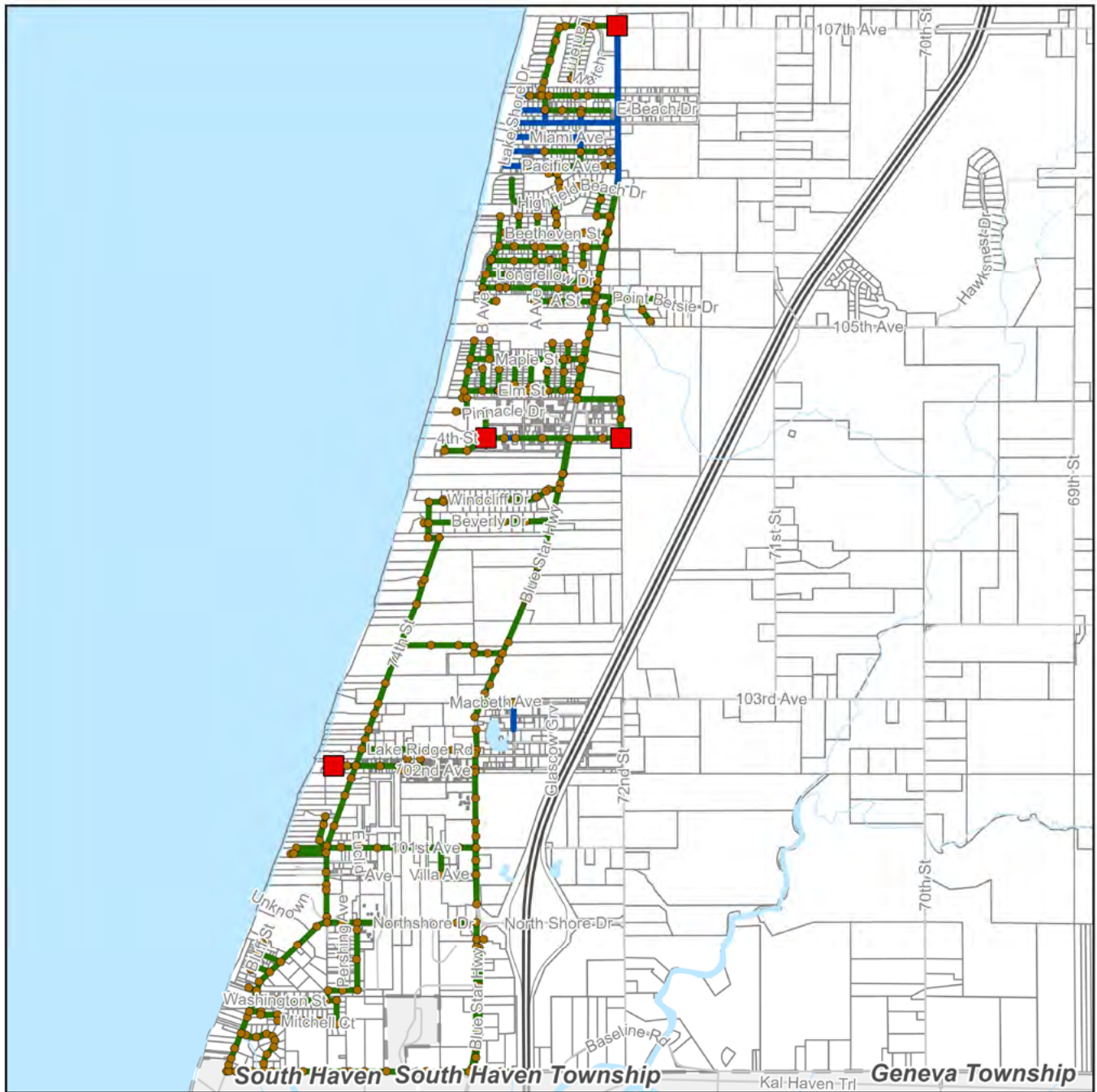
Casco Township is a member of the South Haven Water and Sewer Authority (SHAWSA). Around 1990, Casco Township joined South Haven Charter Township to establish a sewer and water authority to address serious problems caused by inadequate septic systems and wells in the two communities. Although public utilities are limited in Casco Township, sanitary sewer and water service have been further extended to several areas in the southwest quadrant of Casco Township. For planning purposes, the service area for these utilities has been defined as the area west of I-196 and south of 107th Avenue. Several special assessment districts have already been established within this area to defray the costs of constructing the utility lines. The remainder of the Township parcels are serviced by private water wells and septic systems. These private systems are governed by Allegan County's water and sewage regulations. Such regulations address the location of wells construction standards and well depth.

Electric & Gas

In Casco, electricity and the electrical grid are provided and maintained by Consumer's Energy and the City of South Haven, while natural gas is provided by Michigan Gas Utilities, where available.

Internet, Cell, & Broadband

Internet is available within the Township through a variety of means including fiber optic, wireless towers, DSL lines, satellite dishes, and cellular hotspots. There are a variety of cellphone and internet providers available for residents to choose from.



MAP 5. Sewer and Water

Casco Township, Allegan County, MI

May 27, 2025

LEGEND

- Lift Station
- Manhole
- Force Main
- Sanitary Sewer

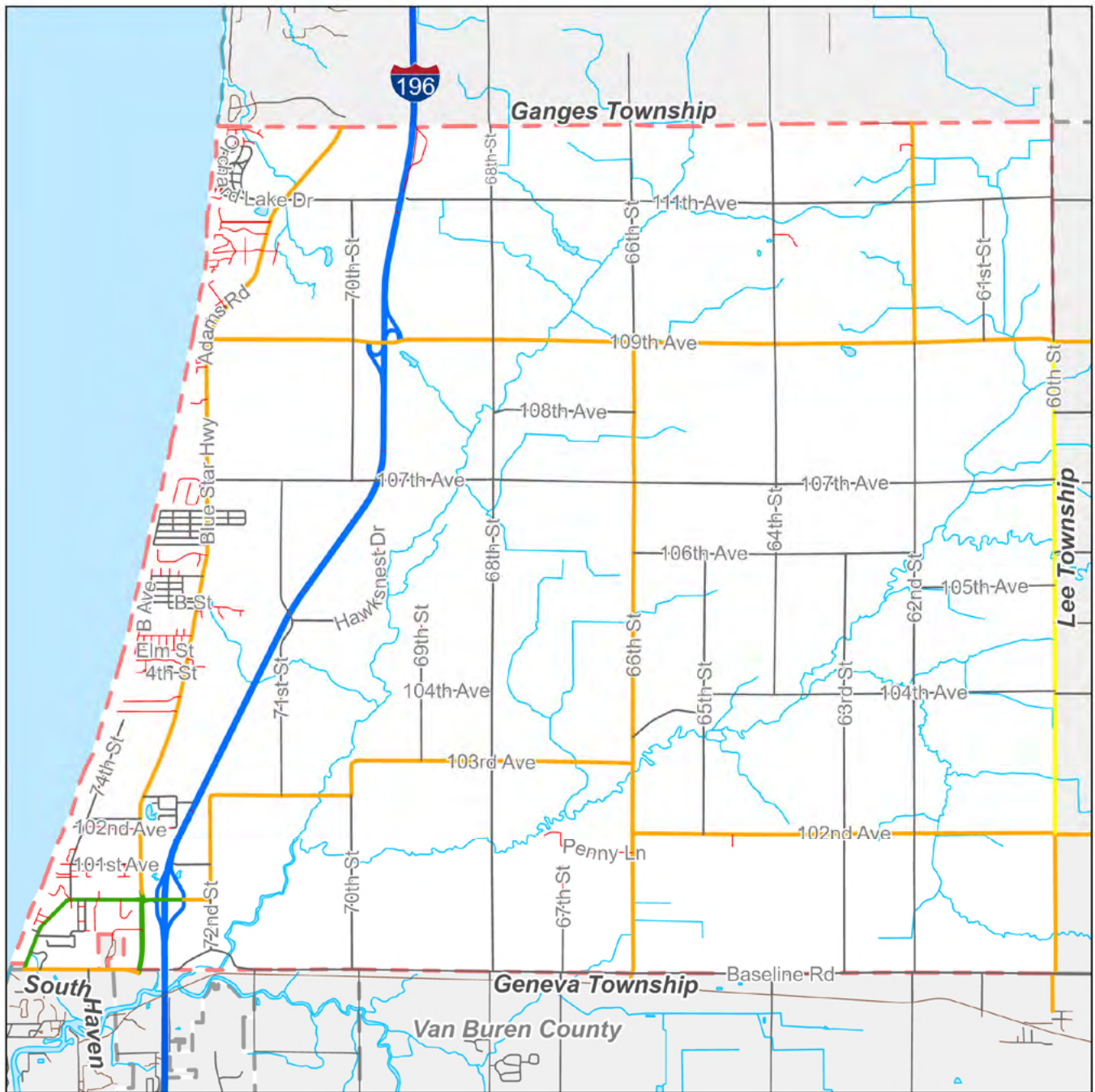
0 1,000 2,000
FEET



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a. Data Source: Casco Township, 2025. McKenna 2025.



MCKENNA



MAP 6. National Functional Classification

Casco Township, Allegan County, MI

April 1, 2024

LEGEND

- Interstate
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Local Road
- Non-Certified

0 0.5 1.0
MILES



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a. Data Source: Allegan County, 2024. McKenna 2025.



MCKENNA

4.3 Public Services



Township Hall

Casco Township Hall is located at 7104 107th Avenue, South Haven, Michigan. The Township Hall functions as the primary meeting space for the Township Board, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals and other meeting bodies as deemed necessary. The Township Hall also hosts the Treasurer's, Clerk's, and Supervisor's offices.

Public Safety

Police. A Casco Township millage funds a dedicated full time Deputy Sheriff provided by the Allegan County Sheriff's Department. In addition to emergency service response, Allegan County provides property inspections services for those who wish to have their property checked in the event they are out of town.

Fire & Emergency Medical Services (EMS). Casco Township works with SHAES (South Haven Area Emergency Services) to provide the Township with emergency services including both fire response and emergency medical services.

Healthcare

Hospitals. Bronson Hospital in South Haven, Holland Hospital in Holland, and Beacon Allegan Hospital are all within a half hour of Casco Township Hall. South Haven is the closest, while the others are under 24 miles away..

Senior Services-

Funded through two millages, All Casco residents aged 60 years or older are eligible to participate in and receive support through both Van Buren Senior Services and Allegan County Senior Services. Through Van Buren Senior Services, senior residents can participate in daily activities offered in South Haven, Casco and other satellite sites, lunches, day trips, and other organized trips. Services through Allegan County Senior Services are aimed at helping home-bound seniors maintain independence, dignity, and quality of life. Such services include personal emergency response devices, home delivered hot meals, essential in-home support for personal care and limited homemaking support, adult day care and transportation.

Education

Schools. Most of the township residents are within the South Haven school district, but the northeastern area of the township is part of the Fennville School District, and the southeastern tip of the township attends Bloomingdale Schools.

The South Haven Public Schools had a student count of 1,779 in the 2023-2024 school year. Fennville Public Schools had a student count of 1,258 in the 2023-2024 school year. Lastly, the Bloomingdale Public School District had a student count of 1,033 for the 2023-2024 school year. These student counts encompass grades Kindergarten through 12th. The student count data was provided by the "MI School Data".



Libraries

There are two libraries near Casco Township—Fennville District Library & Enrichment Center and South Haven Memorial Library. In relation to the township hall, the Fennville Library is approximately 15 miles away, while the South Haven Library is approximately 6 miles away.

Fennville District Library & Enrichment Center. The Fennville District Library is classified as a Class IV library by the Library of Michigan. It currently serves over 14,496 patrons who reside in the district or in townships that have a contract with the library for services. The service area includes the City of Fennville, the townships of Casco, Clyde, Ganges, and Lee (by contract), as well as the southern portion of Manlius Township that lies below the Kalamazoo River (by contract). The library's own collection consists of more than 65,000 items, and patrons have access to over four million items owned by the 42 member libraries of the Lakeland Library Cooperative.

South Haven Memorial Library. Located in downtown South Haven, the library offers over 54,000 materials including books, audiobooks, and magazines. The library also offers downloadable media, daily newspapers, free wireless internet, fax services, a community room, children's and teen programs, and much more.

Both libraries participate in the MLibrary Card and MeLCat programs, offering patrons access to millions of items throughout the state of Michigan. There are public access Internet stations available, as well as Wi-Fi service for patrons who bring their own laptops. Cardholders can place holds on materials, access numerous online databases, and download eBooks and eAudiobooks remotely through the library's website.



Cemeteries

Casco Township has three cemeteries, which are governed by rules approved by the Casco Township board. Rates are set by the board for interment services and monument installations are provided by the Cemetery Sexton. Lots may be purchased by both residents and non-residents.



Stuller Cemetery
64th St. South of 111th Avenue



McDowell Cemetery
107th Avenue across from Township Hall



Stephenson Cemetery
66th St. between 102nd and 103rd Avenues

Emergency Management

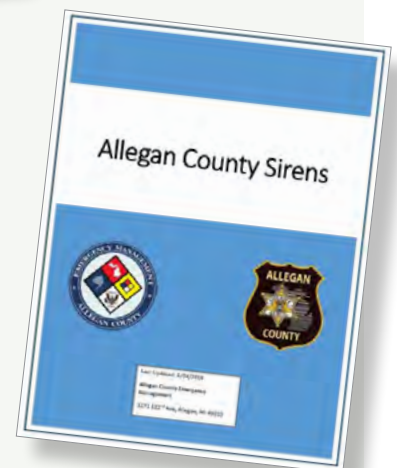
Emergency management is largely overseen by Allegan County, whose role is to protect the lives and property of citizens before a disaster strikes through preparedness, training, and mitigation, and to reduce human suffering after a disaster strikes through prompt and effective coordination of the County's response and recovery efforts.

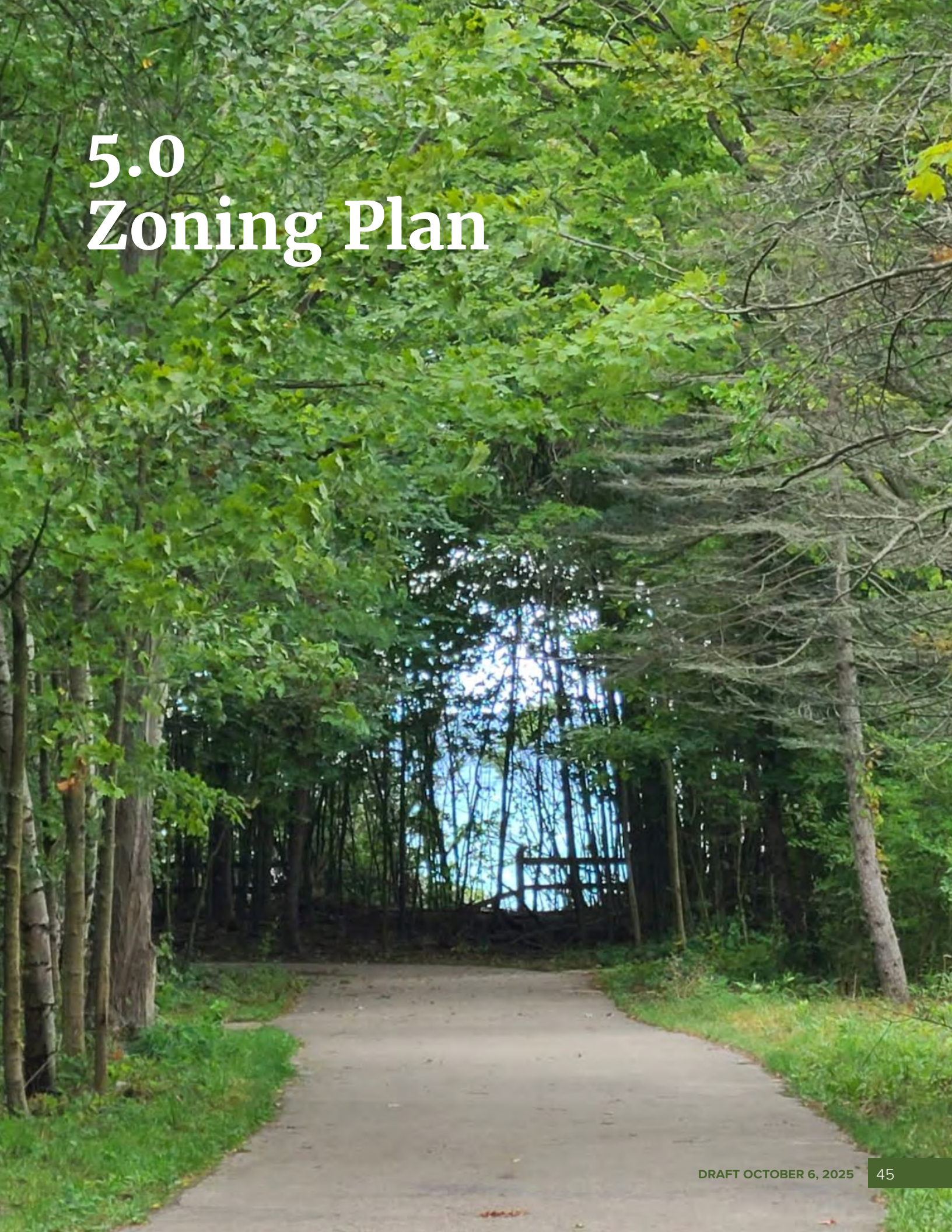
Allegan County Emergency Management has a variety of resources for communities and individuals for disaster preparedness and recovery. This includes but is not limited to information, training and exercises, and grants.



*The **Family Preparedness Guide** was prepared by the Michigan State Police. The goal of the document is to help families develop and emergency plan.*

*The **Allegan County Sirens** document covers the details of all sirens located within the County boundaries. The website also has a coverage map.*





5.0 Zoning Plan

5.1 Public Engagement Summary

Public engagement played a crucial role in shaping the master plan, serving as the backbone of the plan's development, with the content of this chapter being primarily based on public input. Casco Township engaged the public in the following ways:



Community Survey

The bulk of this document is based on public engagement garnered via a community survey, which was launched on June 1st, 2024, and closed on November 20, 2024. The survey consisted of 21 questions, which ranged in type and topic.

The survey was distributed via a Quick Response “QR” code alongside property owners’ summer tax bills, resulting in 151 responses. On average the survey took about 10 minutes to complete.

Below is an overview of the survey’s responses. For response data, please see Appendix 7.1

63-Day Public Comment Period

To fulfill State requirements, Casco Township released its draft to the public for 63 days of review on _____. The Township provided notices to all adjacent municipalities, utility agencies, regional planning bodies, and local stakeholders.

Public Hearing

On _____, the Casco Township Planning Commission held a public hearing. At the public hearing, the Planning Commission received X comments.



Summary

Housing. Survey respondents indicated overall support for Accessory Dwelling Units, Senior Living Facilities, Small Single Family Homes, and Medium Single Family Homes.

Rural Atmosphere. Many survey respondents wish to maintain the Township's rural atmosphere.

Livability. Many respondents expect to live in the Township for the next 10 years and believe that housing is available and affordable.

Township Improvements. Of all the choices proposed for making an improvement, the largest response was to improve transportation options including bike paths and sidewalks.

Future Needs. There is overwhelming positive support for investing in Township Parks, supporting Agri-tourism, and allowing small scale retail, service and restaurant commercial use

"I am going to be building a new home here because I love what you have to offer."

– Future Casco Township Resident

"I feel lucky to live here" – Casco Township Resident

5.2 Future Land Use & Zoning Plan

The plan for future land use is focused on ensuring that development and redevelopment and enhances the existing character of Casco Township. Map 7: Future Land Use visually represents the Township’s vision for the future. The map is:

- » Used to evaluate development proposals to ensure they do not disrupt the community’s vision.
- » The basis for amendments to the Zoning Ordinance, which dictates the exact legal requirements for development across the Township.

In addition, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act requires that a Master Plan include a Zoning Plan, which explains how the future land use categories relate to the districts on the zoning map. This is described within the future land use categories below.



Zoning Districts	
AG	Agricultural
RR	Rural Residential
LDR	Low Density Residential
MDR	Medium Density Residential
LR-A	Lakeshore Residential
LR-B	Lakeshore Residential
HDR	High Density Residential
C	Commercial

Future Land Use Category Descriptions

Rural Agricultural AG, RR,

The Rural Agricultural future land use category intends to maintain the rural atmosphere with relatively large single-family lots and no expectations of utilities. Residential dwellings are generally on large lots (5 acres or more) and are sometimes accompanied by agricultural use. Dwellings in this area are of extremely low-density. The township's industrial land use areas will be associated with a principal agricultural use and approved via a special use process. Further, agri-tourism based businesses should be permitted with special conditions.





Lakeshore Estates – LR-A, LR-B

The Lakeshore Estates category is intended for developments between Lake Michigan and the Blue Star Memorial Highway. Much of this area consists of re-vegetated dunes or clay bluffs. A large portion of land is already platted with some of the platted lots being developed. The existing lots are generally small in size with seasonal cottages that may eventually be converted into larger year-round dwellings. Other parcels already have occupied year-round dwellings. In those areas that are already platted, the density of existing development varies significantly. Still, it may be as high as eight dwelling units per acre, even where public sewer is not available. While these existing platted lots must be appropriately recognized through zoning, no new plats should be permitted at such densities. The overall density of new development within this land use category should be no more than 2.5 units per acre where public sewer is available (Area A, or LR-A), and a maximum of one unit per acre without public sewer (Area B, LR-B). The zoning ordinance should be amended to reflect the difference in the minimum lot size between the two districts.

The Casco Township Board has limited municipal water and sanitary sewer infrastructure to a service area south of 107th Avenue and west of Blue Star Highway. For this reason, Area A extends from the South Haven City Limit to the south to 107th Avenue to the north. Area B has a southern boundary of 107th Avenue and extends north to the Township boundary that's shared with Ganges Township. Rezoning requests from Area B to Area A must be accompanied by an extension of the public infrastructure completely funded by the developer.



Low Density Residential LDR

Suburban-style, single-family residential dwellings characterize the Low-Density Residential land use category. Property within the Low-Density Residential category is intended to have public utilities available, including public sanitary sewers and, where needed, water supply; however, pre-existing platted parcels outside of the utility receiving area will be classified in this category. The lots in this district can be smaller with a maximum density of 3.5 dwelling units per acre.

Medium Density Residential MDR, MHC

Within the Medium Density Residential future land use category, residential development may have up to 6 dwellings per acre and require public sanitary sewer services. This category permits a variety of moderately intense residential uses such as duplexes, townhomes, and condominiums. Limited Multi-family units including triplexes and quadplexes may be considered.



High Density Residential* – HDR, MHC

High-density residential development is not fully compatible with the rural environment. Zoning for such areas should be limited to areas served by municipal sanitary sewer and municipal water supplies and hook-up must be mandatory to protect public health. In addition, the character of the community requires that high-density residential development be limited to areas most easily served by existing schools, parks, highways, commercial development, public utilities, and emergency/public safety services. With these conditions controlling, High Density Residential development must be planned for areas along Baseline Road, east of the line of 74th Street extended south and west of the commercial areas fronting on Blue Star Highway and no further north than North Shore Drive, an area of 122 acres. The overall density of this High Density Planning Area shall not exceed 10 dwelling units per acre.

Within this category, smaller scale multi-family units such as triplexes and quadplexes are preferred. Large scale apartment complexes are not appropriate for a rural township; however, Manufactured Housing Communities should be included in this category.

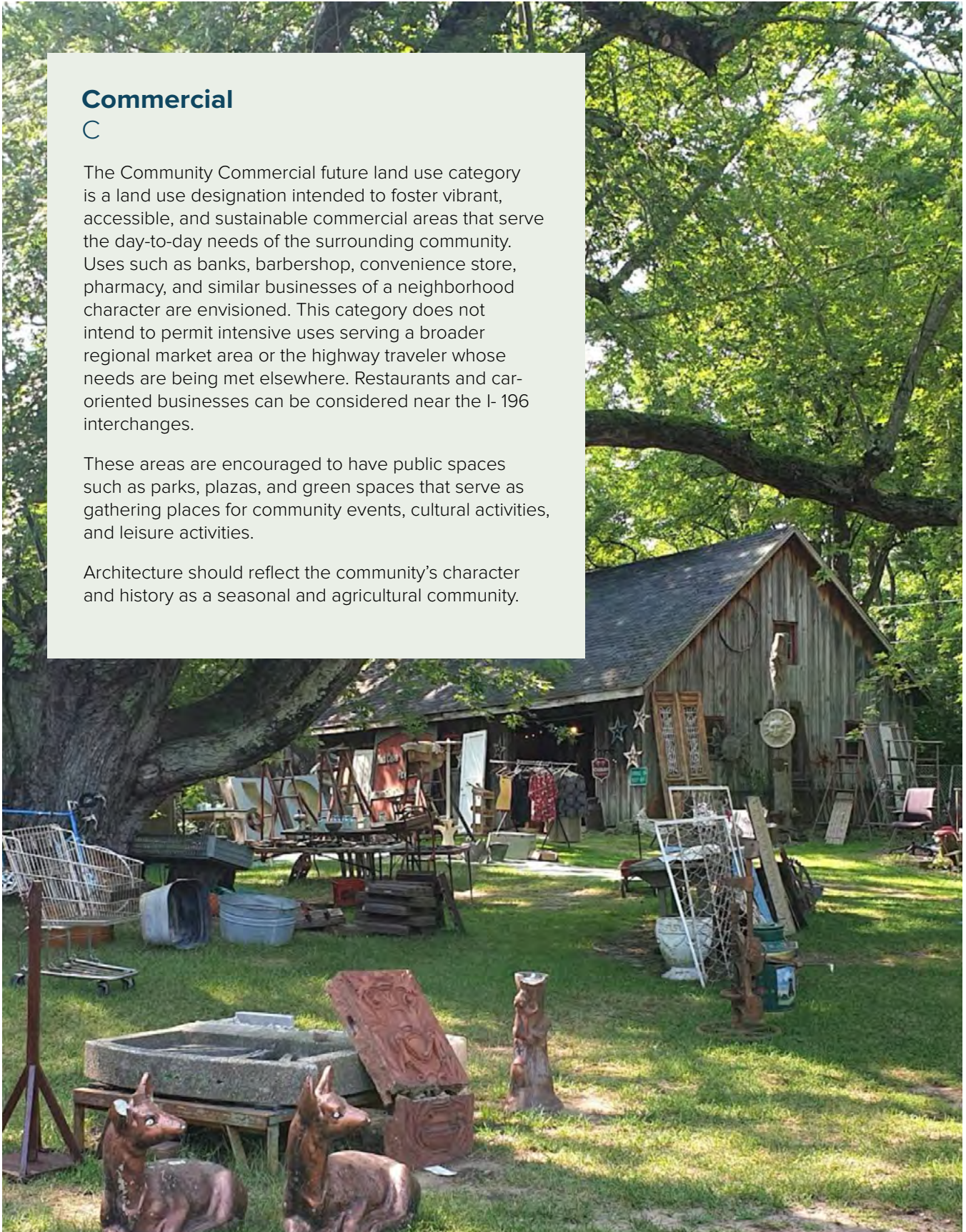
Commercial

C

The Community Commercial future land use category is a land use designation intended to foster vibrant, accessible, and sustainable commercial areas that serve the day-to-day needs of the surrounding community. Uses such as banks, barbershop, convenience store, pharmacy, and similar businesses of a neighborhood character are envisioned. This category does not intend to permit intensive uses serving a broader regional market area or the highway traveler whose needs are being met elsewhere. Restaurants and car-oriented businesses can be considered near the I-196 interchanges.

These areas are encouraged to have public spaces such as parks, plazas, and green spaces that serve as gathering places for community events, cultural activities, and leisure activities.

Architecture should reflect the community's character and history as a seasonal and agricultural community.



5.3

Zoning Plan

Agricultural Districts AG, RR

- » Agri-tourism should be considered as a permitted use subject to enhanced conditions
- » Industrial uses will be considered as special uses in the Agricultural district.
- » Energy Development will be allowed as a special use within the district.
- » Open Space Development should be promoted as the primary option for new housing in these districts.

Residential Districts LR-A, LR-B, LDR, MDR, HDR

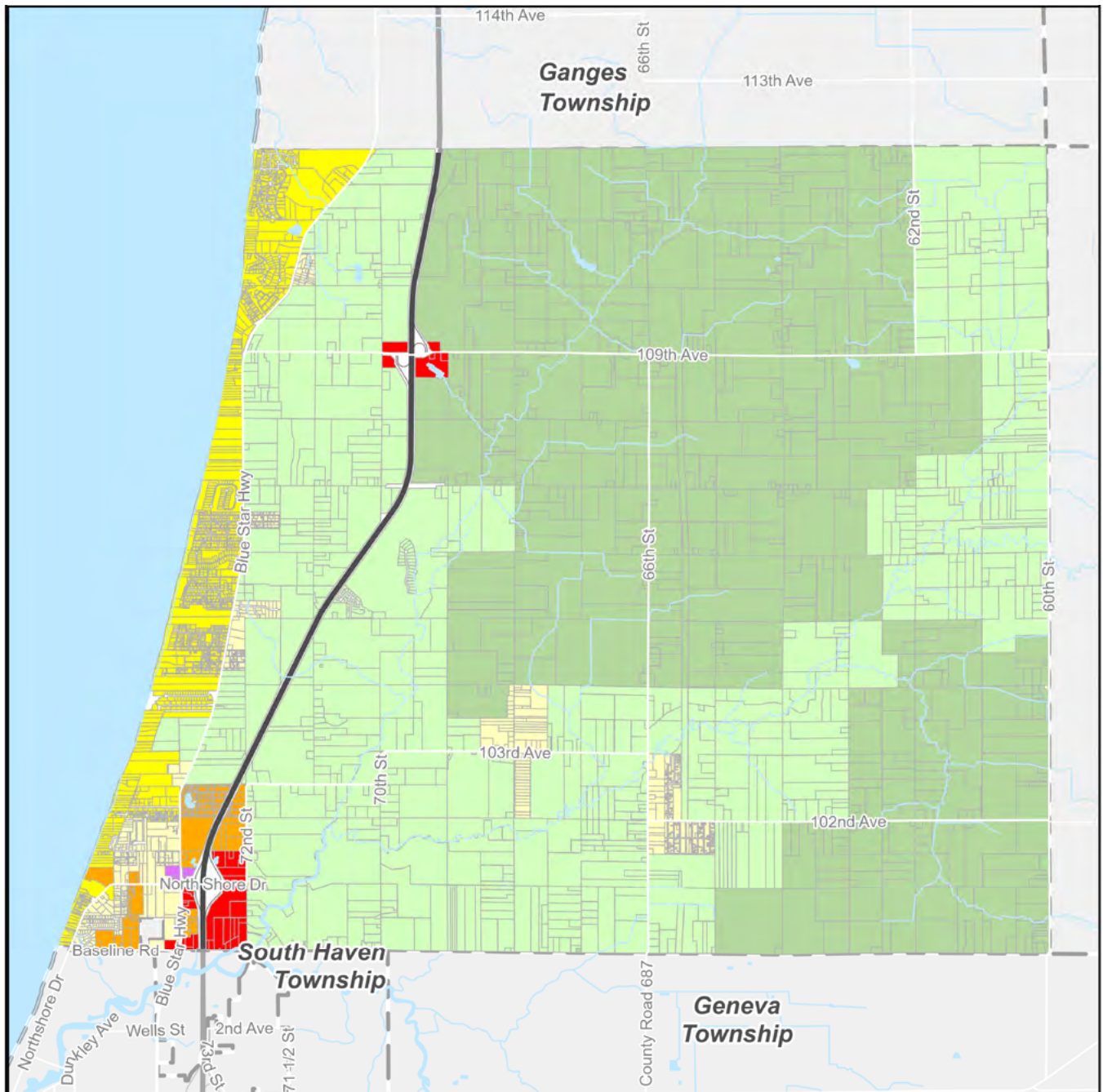
- » Higher density housing developments will be considered where public utilities are available.
- » Lakeshore residential districts shall be limited to single family residential use.
- » MDR and HDR zoning districts shall be limited to areas along or near Baseline Road and the City of South Haven.
- » Manufactured Housing Communities shall be included in the HDR district.
- » New residential developments should be interconnected with each other.

Commercial District C

- » Conduct a market analysis to understand the ideal locations for commercial zoning and update the Zoning Map / Future Land Use Map accordingly.
- » Adjust the schedule of regulations to align with the vision for Commercial Districts outlined in this Master Plan.
- » Consider the creation of new standards strictly for car-oriented uses (drive-throughs, vehicle service stations, car washes, etc.) Where are car-oriented uses appropriate? Where should these uses be permitted or prohibited to allow for attractive community gateways while also providing necessary services?

All Districts

Inventory and adjust permitted and special land uses to ensure the Zoning Ordinance aligns with the community vision.



MAP 7. Future Land Use

Casco Township, Allegan County, MI

September 8, 2025

LEGEND

- Agriculture
- Rural Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Lakeshore Residential
- Commercial

0 0.5 1.0
MILES



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a. Data Source: McKenna 2025



MCKENNA

5.4 Goals, Objectives, and Action Plan

Vision

The vision is a long-term method of seeing a community's future with discernment and foresight.

Goal

A goal is a destination, a final purpose which a community seeks to attain in certain categories. It is a broad, general statement focusing on part of the vision.

Objectives

An objective is a means to accomplish the Goal. It may be very specific or detail a future action that should be undertaken.

VISION

Casco Township seeks to preserve its rural character while supporting the needs of seasonal and year-round residents by maintaining agricultural heritage, enhancing recreational and natural areas, and providing essential services.

The goals and action plan in this chapter are designed after the S.M.A.R.T. Goals framework, which consists of the following:

S – Specific: Clearly define what the Township wants to achieve. The goal should be unambiguous and easy to understand.

M – Measurable: Establish criteria for measuring progress and determining when the goal has been achieved.

A – Achievable: The goals and objectives are realistic and attainable within the Township's current resources and restraints.

R – Relevant: Goals, objectives, and

T – Time Bound: Set a clear deadline or timeframe for achieving the goal to motivate action. In this plan, timelines are within the action plan, with specific timelines ranging from 0-2 years to 5 or more years.

Goals & Objectives

GOAL #1 – Protect Rural Character

Accommodate growth in housing and population without sacrificing the rural character of the Township or the quality of the natural resources

Objective 1a	Open Space Design, Cluster Development, and Planned Unit Developments should be encouraged for the natural protection of open space.
Objective 1b	Reinforce the rural identity of the Township as new residential development and/or redevelopment occurs in the Township.
Objective 1c	Educate property owners and the public at large about the importance of preserving open space and land conservation practices.
Objective 1d	Limit higher density residential development to those areas planned for those uses and are served by public utilities.
Objective 1e	Adopt local regulations to preserve significant natural features in the Township including floodplains and the natural features on the beach and bluff.

Protect existing agricultural areas and farmland in the Township.

Objective 1f	Support efforts to preserve farmland through Purchase of Development Rights programs, PA 116 applications, and other farming preservation programs.
Objective 1g	Allow value added agricultural related uses and agritourism options to enhance the incomes of farm families without developing the property.
Objective 1h	Identify areas of prime farmland and farms of local importance to prioritize preservation efforts.
Objective 1i	Allow for small scale business and home occupation options in the Agricultural and Rural Residential Zoning Districts.

GOAL #2 – High Quality Community Development

Encourage a Balance of Residential and Agricultural Land Uses.

Objective 2a	Techniques such as Open Space Design or Planned Unit Developments should be encouraged when residential development occurs in Agricultural and Rural Residential areas to mitigate the impacts on agricultural uses.
Objective 2b	Concentrate the growth of higher density residential sites to those specific areas best suited to support that use and that will not reduce agricultural use or rural character.
Objective 2c	New Residential development will encourage the use of natural storm water management techniques in the site design.
Objective 2d	The Township will encourage the limited development of Mixed Middle housing types such triplexes, quadplexes and others in the areas of the Township served by public utilities.
Objective 2e	The responsible development and management of Short-Term rental housing will be supported and regulated by the Township.

Promote commercial development in targeted areas.

Objective 2f	Encourage small scale commercial retail and service businesses that complement and serve the needs of the community.
Objective 2g	Direct more intensive commercial development to the South Haven area where commercial land use already exists and support infrastructure is present.
Objective 2h	Support potential highway commercial expansion adjacent and near to the two interchanges of I-196.
Objective 2i	Permit and regulate Mixed Use Development where appropriate to allow additional affordable residential units that can support nearby commercial uses.

GOAL #3 – Public Resources and Infrastructure

Encourage new development to those areas where public infrastructure is available or planned.

Objective 3a	Encourage the extension of utilities as a prerequisite to more intensive development with the utility service area.
Objective 3b	Coordinate with the Allegan County Road Commission for road maintenance and improvements and prioritize funding road improvement projects in the utility service area to support development.
Objective 3c	Provide coordination between the water/sewer service area and the zoning map in order to ensure that the zoning ordinance does not hinder development and that public investment in the utility is not overextended.
Objective 3d	Support the development of alternative energy generation for individual properties and utility scale energy production.

Plan to provide for, maintain and expand public parks, trails, and community space

Objective 3f	Seek funding to re-establish access to and improve the Township owned land along Lake Michigan.
Objective 3g	Collaborate with Allegan County, The State of Michigan, and other resources to develop the Blue Star Linear Trail.
Objective 3h	Improve and maintain community resources and open space including the Casco Twp Nature Preserve, the Township Park, and other important property.
Objective 3i	Maintain opportunities for active and passive recreation in the Township by implementing key aspects of the Parks and Recreation Plan and by establishing site development standards related to non-motorized transportation that complement existing and planned community recreational facilities.



6.0 Action Plan



The goals and objectives of the master plan have little weight without a clear and practical implementation plan. When used consistently, the information in this chapter provides a foundation for the appropriate planning, development, and regulation of resources. The implementation plan is organized by theme and identifies priority, time frame, and responsible parties.

Priority	
L	Low Priority
M	Medium Priority
H	High Priority

Time Frame	
Short Term	0-2 years
Medium Term	2-5 years
Long Term	5+ years
Ongoing	Ongoing

Lead	
AC	Allegan County
BO	Business Owners
C	Consultant / Contractor
CM	Community Members
EGLE	Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy
MDOT	Michigan Department of Transportation
NJ	Neighboring Jurisdictions
PC	Planning Commission
SOM	State of Michigan
TB	Township Board of Trustees
V	Volunteers
WMRPC	West Michigan Regional Planning Commission
ZA	Zoning Administrator

Miscellaneous Planning and Zoning Actions

Project	Product	Priority	Time Frame	Lead
Conduct a technical review of the Zoning ordinance to identify amendments needs to allow/improve the implementation of the Master Plan. <i>Supported by objectives: 1a, 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d</i>	Review Audit	High	Short Term	PC C
Amend the Zoning Ordinance consistent with the findings of the technical review. <i>Supported by objectives: 1a, 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d</i>	Zoning Amendments	High	Medium Term	PC ZA C TB
Amend the official Zoning Map to ensure consistency with the Zoning Ordinance and the Master Plan. <i>Supported by objectives: 2b, 2f, 2g</i>	Map	Medium	Short Term	PC ZA TB
Encourage Training for the PC, ZBA, and TB to promote efficient operations of Boards and Commissions. <i>Supported by objectives: 1c, 1f</i>	Education	Medium	Ongoing	PC TB ZBA ZA
Actively recruit community members to become involved in Township Planning and Zoning Activities and decision making. <i>Supported by objectives:</i>	Outreach	Medium	Ongoing	TB PC V

Other Plans and Reviews

Project	Product	Priority	Time Frame	Lead
Regularly apply for grant funding to support desired capital and policy improvements. <i>Supported by objectives: 3f, 3g, 3h</i>	Financial	High	Ongoing	TB C WMRPC
Enhance Site Plan Review skills to optimize the ability to implement the Township's zoning standards, especially those designed to address key land use issues. <i>Supported by objectives: 2d, 2f, 2g, 2h</i>	Education	High	Ongoing	PC TB C
Collaborate with the Township Board to complete and update the Capital Improvement Plan on an annual basis. <i>Supported by objectives: 2d, 3a, 3b</i>	CIP	High	Ongoing	TB PC
Update the Casco Twp Parks and Recreation Plan every 5 years to remain eligible for grant funding. <i>Supported by objectives: 3f, 3g, 3h</i>	Parks and Rec Plan	Medium	Ongoing	PC C TB
Upload the Capital Improvement Plan to the new State of Michigan MiDIG website to coordinate capital projects with multiple agencies. <i>Supported by objectives: 2d, 3a, 3b</i>	CIP	Medium	Short Term	SOM PC

Goal #1 – Protect Rural Character

Project	Product	Priority	Time Frame	Lead
Adopt policies that require developer participation in the extension of utilities prior to development within or adjacent to the utility service area. <i>Supported by objectives:1d, 2b</i>	Policy	High	Short Term	TB
Review the Zoning Ordinance requirements for Ag districts to ensure that Agricultural land uses are the primary focus and that Agri – industry and Agri-tourism uses are a viable option in the district. <i>Supported by objectives:1g, 1i</i>	Zoning	High	Short Term	PC C ZA
Manage Growth by implementing tools such as Open Space Design and Planned Unit Development. <i>Supported by objectives: 1a, 2a</i>	Zoning	Medium	Short Term	PC ZA
Partner with EGLE and the DNR to support and maintain the Township's coastline. <i>Supported by objectives: 3f, 3h</i>	Outreach /Partnership	Medium	Ongoing	EGLE TB
Collaborate with local, state, and regional recreation organizations to improve the Township's parks and recreational facilities. <i>Supported by objectives:3g, 3h, 3i</i>	Outreach	Medium	Ongoing	EGLE TB
Develop Standards for managing development adjacent to wetlands and floodplains to prevent irresponsible development. <i>Supported by objectives:1e</i>	Zoning	Medium	Short Term	PC C ZA
Encourage and support cooperative planning efforts with the neighboring townships and the City of South Haven on significant development projects. <i>Supported by objectives:3b, 3g</i>	Outreach	Low	Medium Term	TB NJ PC

Goal #2 – High Quality Community Development

Project	Product	Priority	Time Frame	Lead
Promote home size flexibility by decreasing the minimum house size square footage and lot size requirements, as appropriate. <i>Supported by objectives: 2d</i>	Zoning	High	Short Term	PC ZA
Support the limited expansion of low density multi- family housing options in the Township's residential districts. <i>Supported by objectives: 2d, 2i</i>	Zoning	High	Short Term	PC C
Encourage small neighborhood retail and service development near residential districts to serve the convenience needs of the immediate neighborhoods. <i>Supported by objectives: 2f, 2i</i>	Zoning	Medium	Medium Term	PC C
Evaluate the benefits of zoning the areas adjacent to the two I-196 interchanges for expanded commercial opportunities. <i>Supported by objectives: 2h</i>	Study	Medium	Medium Term	SOM C PC
Concentrate large scale commercial development in areas where public infrastructure can adequately support such activities. <i>Supported by objectives: 2g, 2h</i>	Zoning	Low	Long Term	PC C ZA
Support Interconnectivity in large scale residential neighborhood developments within the utility service area. <i>Supported by objectives: 1a, 2a</i>	Zoning	Low	Short Term	PC Dev C

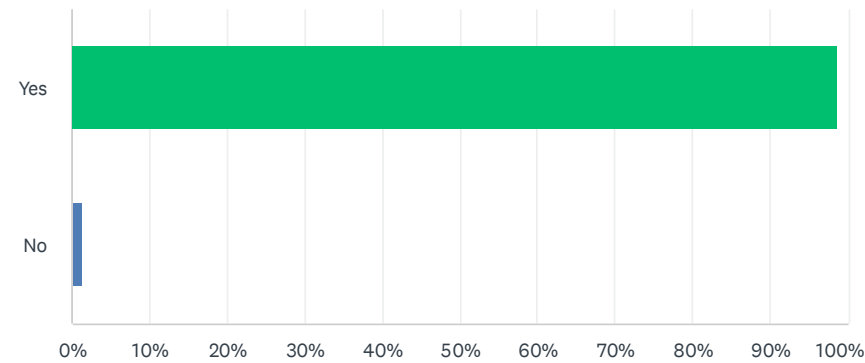
Goal #3 – Public Resources and Infrastructure

Project	Product	Priority	Time Frame	Lead
Encourage and support the development and completion of the Blue Star Linear Trail through Casco Township. <i>Supported by objectives:3g</i>	Trail	High	Medium Term	WMRPC AC SOM TB
Develop Ordinance Language for all types of alternative energy use and development. <i>Supported by objectives:3d</i>	Zoning	High	Short Term	PC C DEV
Regularly review the utility service area to determine any need for expansion. <i>Supported by objectives: 3a</i>	Utility Service Area Updates	Medium	Ongoing	TB
Coordinate with the Allegan County Road Commission on the maintenance and improvement of the Township Roads. <i>Supported by objectives:3b</i>	CIP	Medium	Ongoing	TB AC
Collaborate with other providers on the expansion of utility services as development warrants. <i>Supported by objectives:3a</i>	Zoning, Policy	Medium	Long Term	NJ TB DEV

7.0 Appendix

Q1 Do you own property within Casco Township?

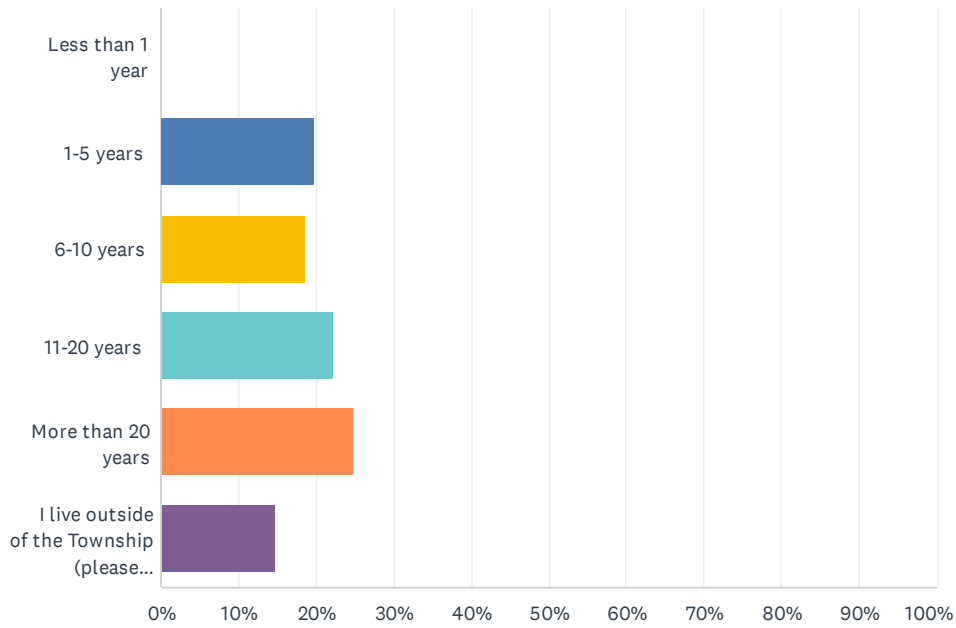
Answered: 81 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	98.77%	80
No	1.23%	1
TOTAL		81

Q2 How long have you lived in the Township? Does not have to be continuous, please add up only the time that you have lived within the municipal limits.

Answered: 81 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than 1 year	0.00%	0
1-5 years	19.75%	16
6-10 years	18.52%	15
11-20 years	22.22%	18
More than 20 years	24.69%	20
I live outside of the Township (please indicate which City/Township and State)	14.81%	12
TOTAL		81

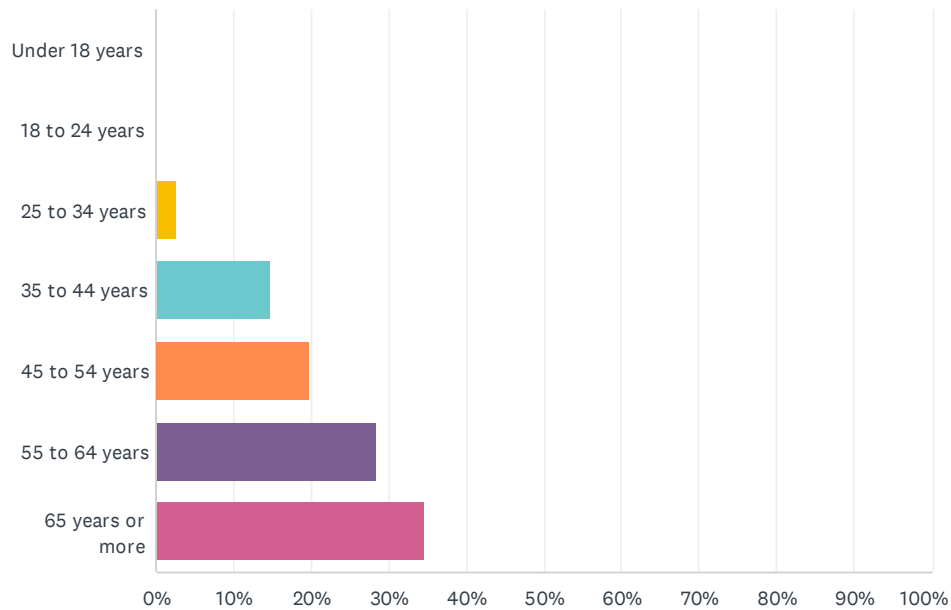
#	I LIVE OUTSIDE OF THE TOWNSHIP (PLEASE INDICATE WHICH CITY/TOWNSHIP AND STATE)	DATE
1	We purchased our second home in Casco in June 2020	8/19/2024 12:37 PM
2	Chcago	8/15/2024 8:27 AM
3	Chicago, Illinois	7/28/2024 11:26 PM
4	Bartlett,IL	7/28/2024 2:12 PM
5	Grand Raoids Township, kent county Michigan	7/28/2024 1:27 PM

Casco Township 2024 Master Plan Survey

6	Grand Rapids MI	7/27/2024 1:46 PM
7	Plainwell, Mi	7/23/2024 5:20 PM
8	Kalamazoo, MI	7/23/2024 4:08 PM
9	Lowell, MI	7/23/2024 2:52 PM
10	South Haven	7/23/2024 11:47 AM
11	Chicago Illinois	7/22/2024 6:54 PM
12	Ganges	6/19/2024 6:56 PM

Q3 What is your age?

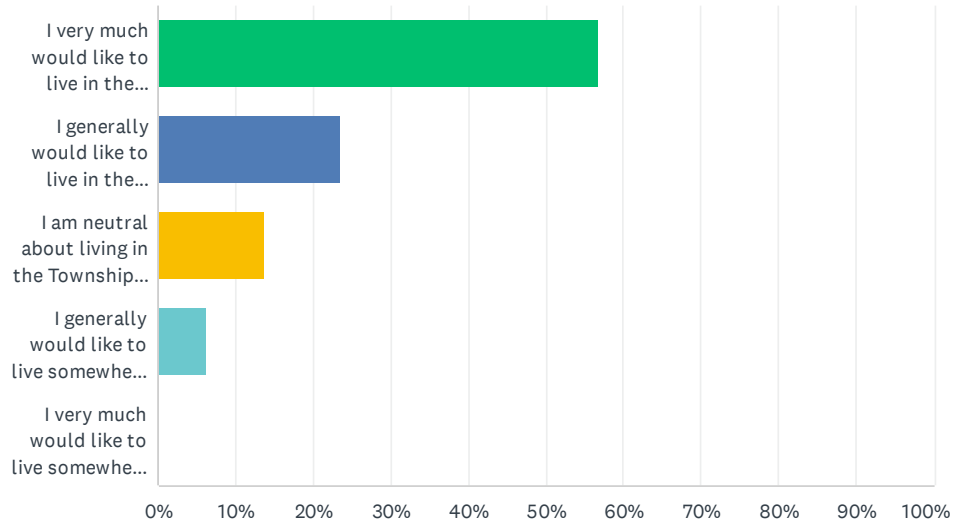
Answered: 81 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 18 years	0.00%	0
18 to 24 years	0.00%	0
25 to 34 years	2.47%	2
35 to 44 years	14.81%	12
45 to 54 years	19.75%	16
55 to 64 years	28.40%	23
65 years or more	34.57%	28
TOTAL		81

Q4 How would you feel about living in the Township for the next 5-10 years?

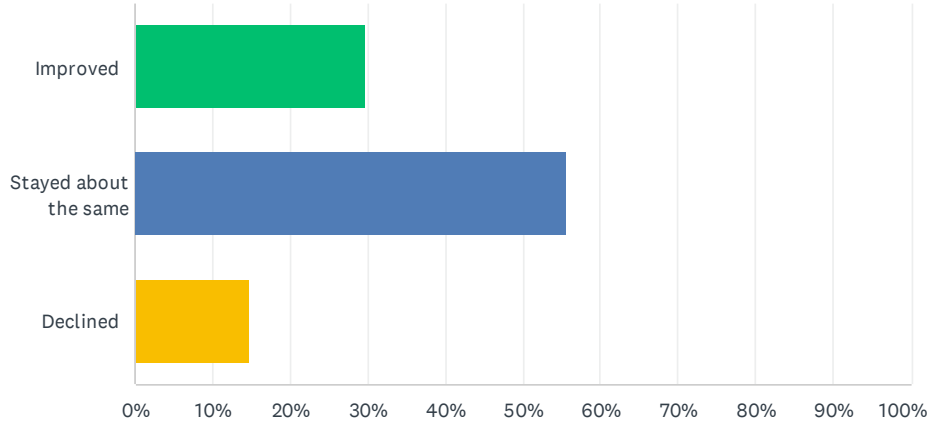
Answered: 81 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I very much would like to live in the Township for the next 5-10 years	56.79%	46
I generally would like to live in the Township for the next 5-10 years	23.46%	19
I am neutral about living in the Township for the next 5-10 years	13.58%	11
I generally would like to live somewhere other than the Township for the next 5-10 years	6.17%	5
I very much would like to live somewhere other than the Township for the next 5-10 years	0.00%	0
TOTAL		81

Q5 Over the past five years, do you believe the quality of life in the Township has improved, stayed about the same, or declined? Why?

Answered: 81 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Improved	29.63%	24
Stayed about the same	55.56%	45
Declined	14.81%	12
TOTAL		81

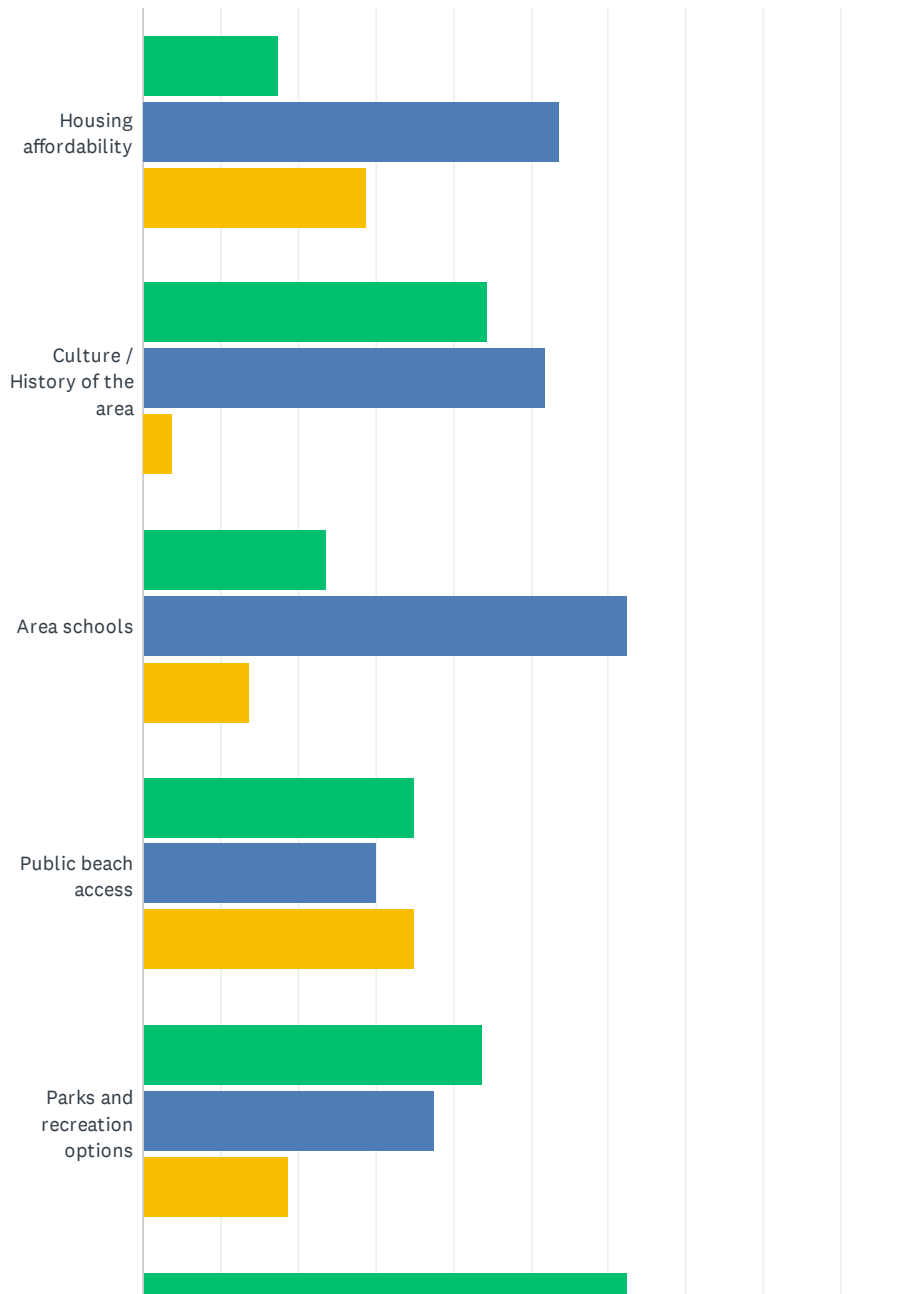
#	PLEASE EXPLAIN	DATE
1	Senior services vbss building, fiber internet, str regulations	9/16/2024 9:59 PM
2	Rental homes whose occupants are not connected to the community, vs full time residents who have a vested interest in building a community	9/15/2024 9:20 AM
3	Lost access to beach at preserve	9/14/2024 11:57 AM
4	Fiber optic internet is well received.	9/9/2024 2:03 PM
5	Road improvements	9/5/2024 6:43 PM
6	Public sewer, parks, STR policy - allowed and regulated	9/4/2024 9:06 PM
7	Over regulation of private property.	8/8/2024 3:34 PM
8	Gradual erosion of property rights through zoning and increased taxes	8/6/2024 6:05 PM
9	Development along Blue Star Highway has taken away from the peaceful rural nature of the township	8/5/2024 3:30 PM
10	Property owners have made visible improvements to their land and property. This gives a vibrant feel to the area.	8/5/2024 2:02 PM
11	Too many rentals	8/1/2024 2:43 PM
12	New fun things to do! Would love to show off our part of the country more....let's get creative.	7/30/2024 3:40 PM
13	Access to retail, restaurants, necessities.	7/29/2024 12:11 PM

Casco Township 2024 Master Plan Survey

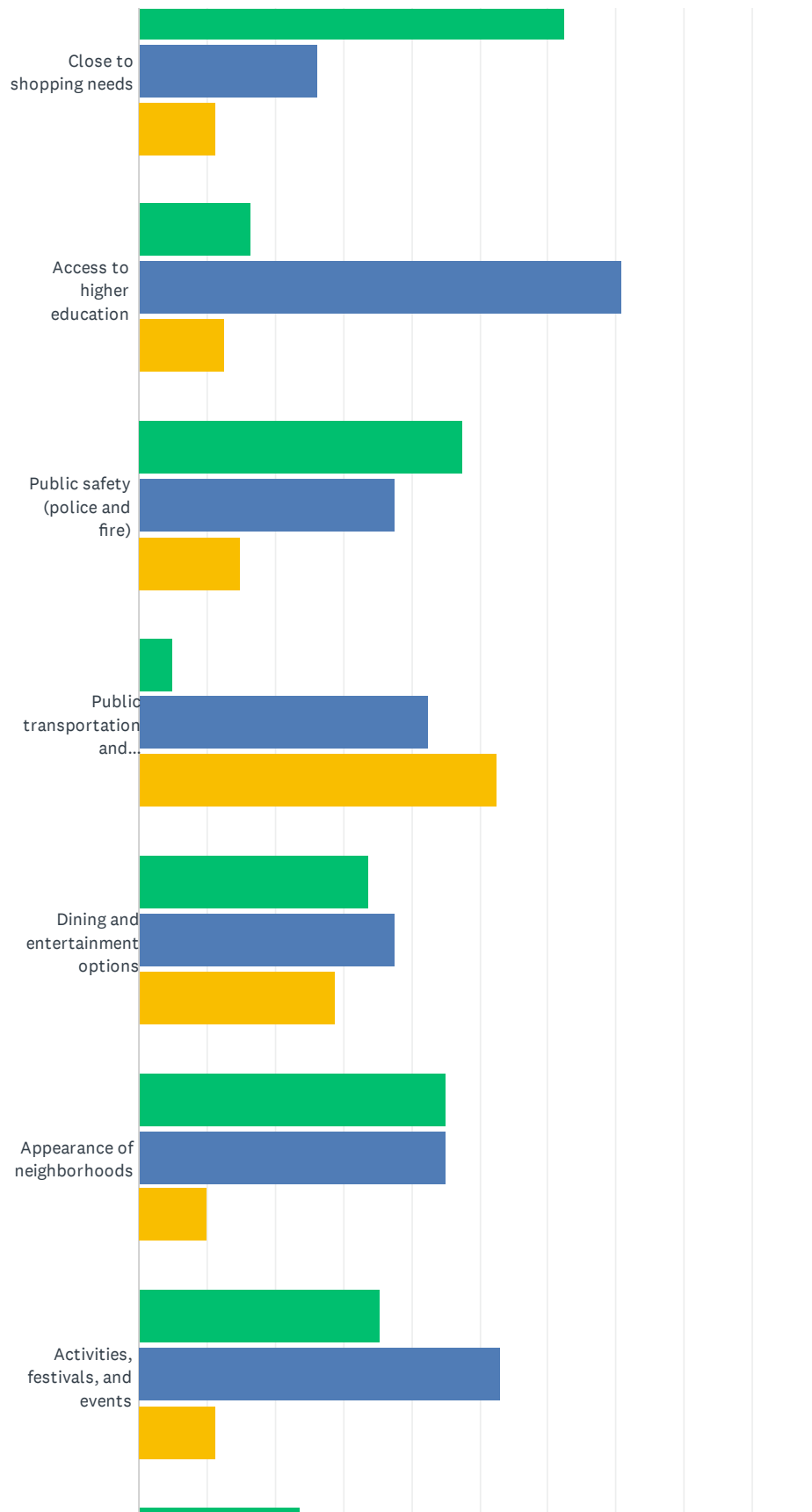
14	Fiber internet available.	7/29/2024 10:33 AM
15	The impact of the approval of DayDreamer Domes is yet to be known.	7/29/2024 9:55 AM
16	Not welcoming. No visible amenity improvements, unclear if twp even works w city of SH or county to get up to 2024.	7/28/2024 1:27 PM
17	The community is opening up and recovering after covid.	7/27/2024 4:01 PM
18	More building	7/27/2024 1:46 PM
19	Access to high quality internet has been a big improvement	7/27/2024 9:26 AM
20	People moving here by choice not by necessity	7/25/2024 8:45 AM
21	Internet is finally come	7/25/2024 7:00 AM
22	Short term rental across the street is loud. Also there are too many fireworks.	7/24/2024 7:23 PM
23	The area on 68th Street between 104th and the Black River has had break-ins, drugs, and is generally unsightly	7/24/2024 4:14 PM
24	Road improvements, more communication and the latest to join the senior center in South Haven	7/24/2024 8:56 AM
25	I am going to be building a new home there because I love what you have to offer.	7/23/2024 5:20 PM
26	New residences and developments are of higher quality and price.	7/23/2024 2:52 PM
27	I have very friendly neighbors. But I don't spend long periods of time in the township now.	7/22/2024 6:54 PM
28	Amenities and services have been expanded	7/22/2024 3:37 PM
29	Although there has been some development along the shoreline and around Blue Star, it's still a rural feeling of community.	7/15/2024 4:11 PM
30	There have been ups and downs that seem to equal out	7/12/2024 7:06 AM
31	Too many short term rentals	7/11/2024 7:39 AM
32	Basically growth along lakeshore and farming east of 196	6/26/2024 5:57 PM
33	The Preserve, township management, roads, blight and appear to be being managed well.	6/19/2024 6:56 PM

Q6 The following chart seeks input regarding your perception of various topics within the Township. If you feel that the category is a contributing factor to the Township, please indicate that contribution is positive, neutral, or negative. Example: If you perceive housing is affordable within the Township, you might mark “positive”. If you perceive housing to be less attainable (non-affordable), you might mark “negative”.

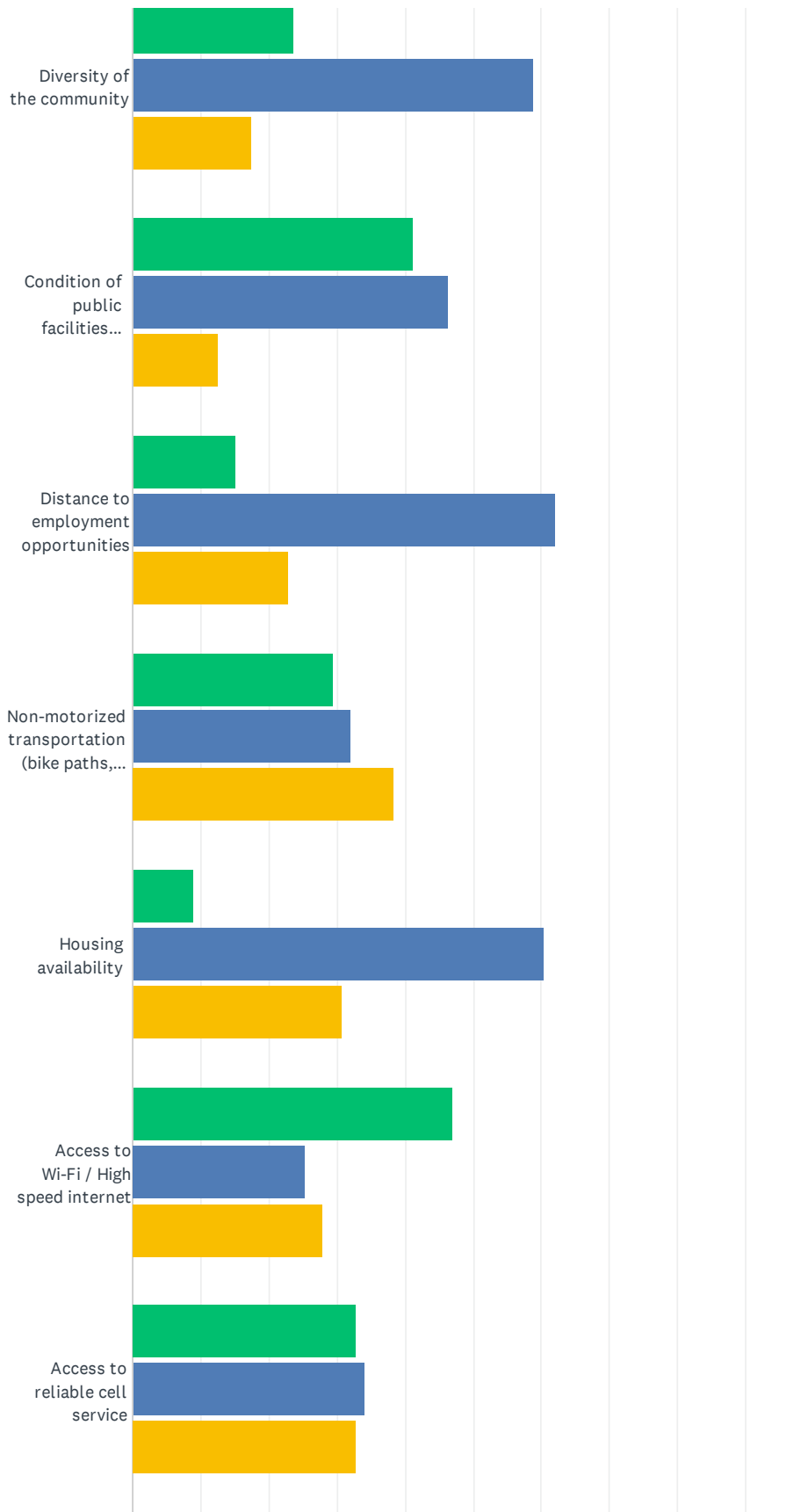
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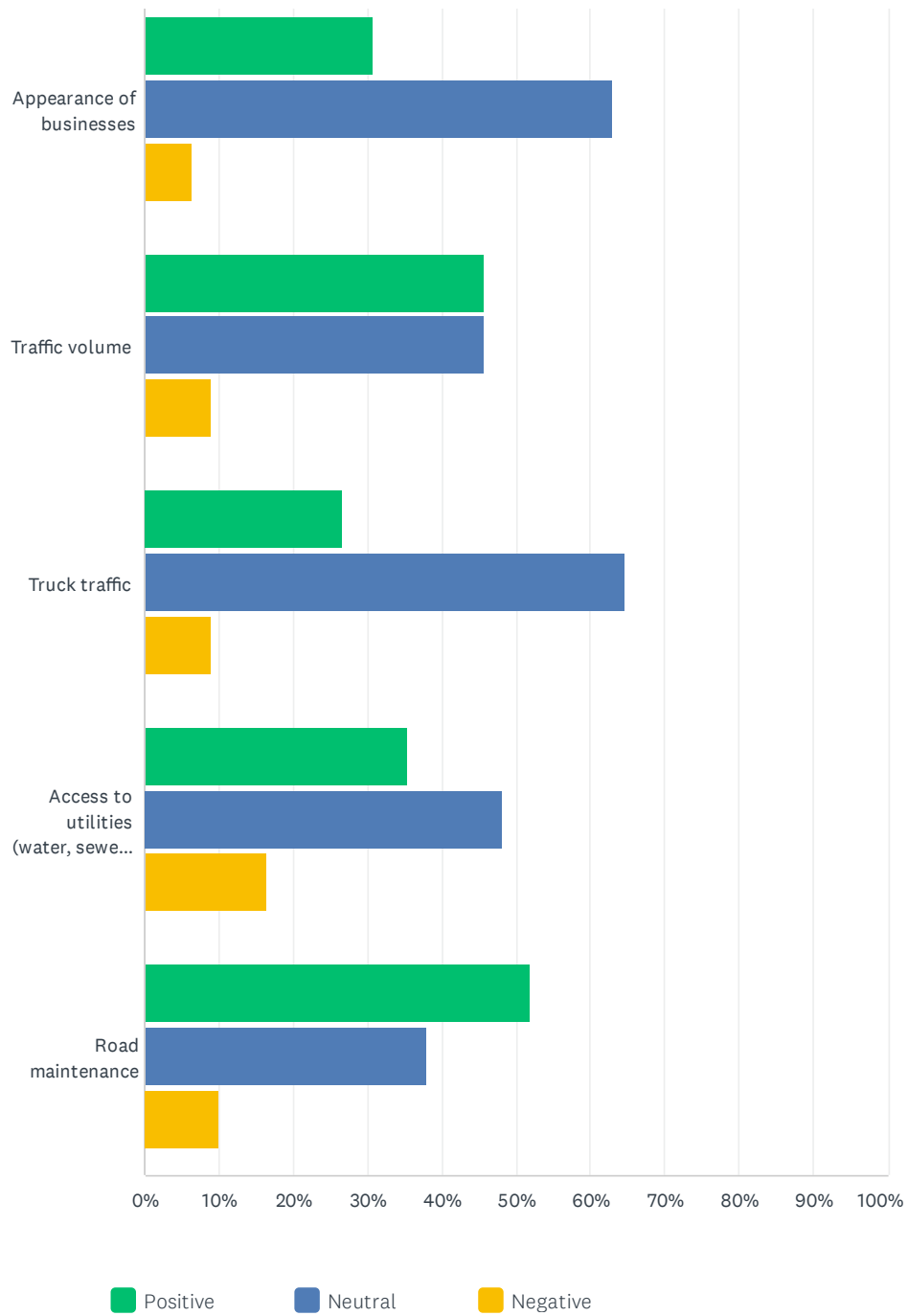
Casco Township 2024 Master Plan Survey



Casco Township 2024 Master Plan Survey



Casco Township 2024 Master Plan Survey



Casco Township 2024 Master Plan Survey

	POSITIVE	NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	TOTAL
Housing affordability	17.50% 14	53.75% 43	28.75% 23	80
Culture / History of the area	44.30% 35	51.90% 41	3.80% 3	79
Area schools	23.75% 19	62.50% 50	13.75% 11	80
Public beach access	35.00% 28	30.00% 24	35.00% 28	80
Parks and recreation options	43.75% 35	37.50% 30	18.75% 15	80
Close to shopping needs	62.50% 50	26.25% 21	11.25% 9	80
Access to higher education	16.46% 13	70.89% 56	12.66% 10	79
Public safety (police and fire)	47.50% 38	37.50% 30	15.00% 12	80
Public transportation and accessibility	5.00% 4	42.50% 34	52.50% 42	80
Dining and entertainment options	33.75% 27	37.50% 30	28.75% 23	80
Appearance of neighborhoods	45.00% 36	45.00% 36	10.00% 8	80
Activities, festivals, and events	35.44% 28	53.16% 42	11.39% 9	79
Diversity of the community	23.75% 19	58.75% 47	17.50% 14	80
Condition of public facilities (parks, public buildings, etc.)	41.25% 33	46.25% 37	12.50% 10	80
Distance to employment opportunities	15.19% 12	62.03% 49	22.78% 18	79
Non-motorized transportation (bike paths, sidewalks, etc.)	29.49% 23	32.05% 25	38.46% 30	78
Housing availability	8.97% 7	60.26% 47	30.77% 24	78
Access to Wi-Fi / High speed internet	46.84% 37	25.32% 20	27.85% 22	79
Access to reliable cell service	32.91% 26	34.18% 27	32.91% 26	79
Appearance of businesses	30.77% 24	62.82% 49	6.41% 5	78
Traffic volume	45.57% 36	45.57% 36	8.86% 7	79
Truck traffic	26.58% 21	64.56% 51	8.86% 7	79
Access to utilities (water, sewer, gas, etc.)	35.44% 28	48.10% 38	16.46% 13	79
Road maintenance	51.90%	37.97%	10.13%	

Casco Township 2024 Master Plan Survey

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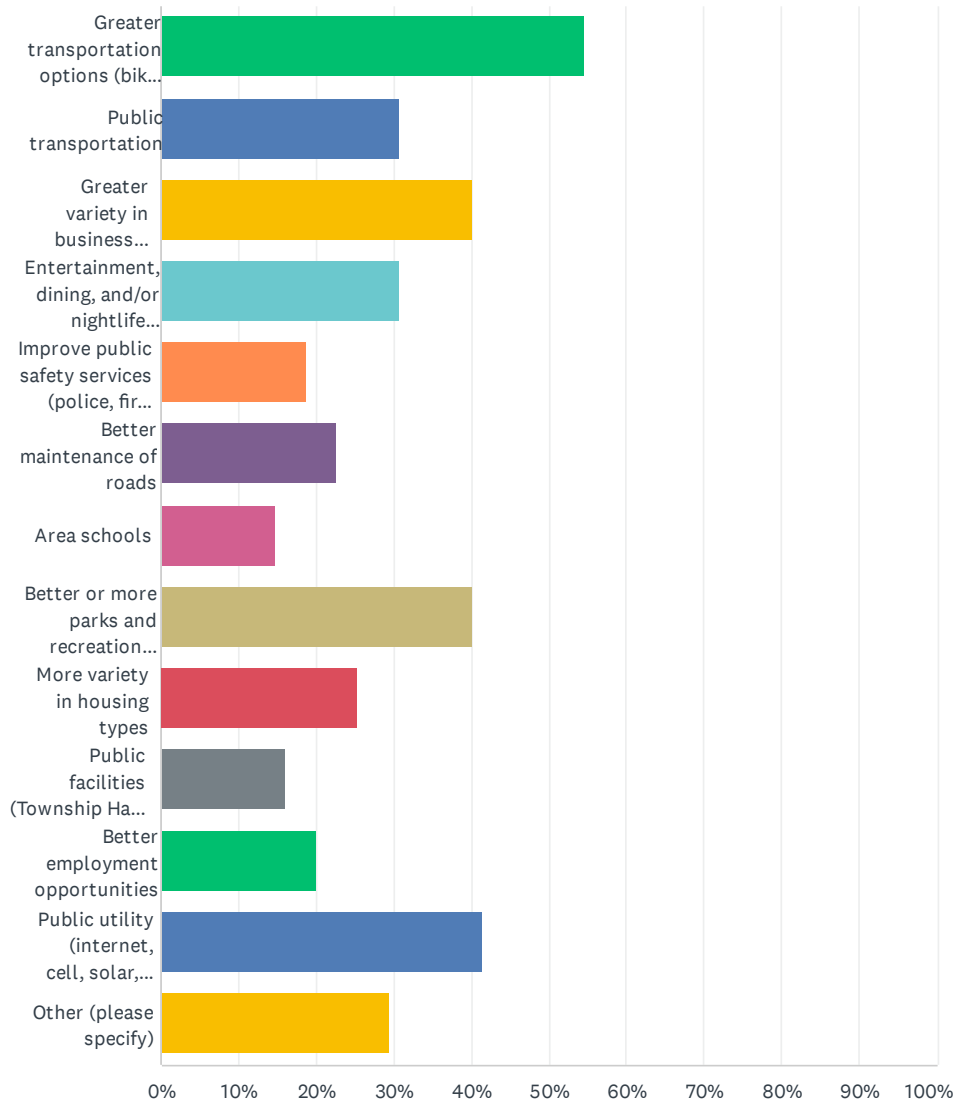
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79

#	COMMENTS	DATE
1	I feel lucky to live here	9/16/2024 9:59 PM
2	We need restaurants along the lake shore	9/15/2024 11:56 PM
3	I am more concerned with Casco maintaining its rural atmosphere than attracting more businesses . South Haven, Fennville, Holland, Kazoo all within driving distance	9/5/2024 5:44 PM
4	Housing: Restrictions on minimum lot size and minimum house size limit the supply of housing which increases costs. Shopping: Zoning restrictions on small businesses stifles development of local shopping opportunities	8/6/2024 6:05 PM
5	The lakeside road, both North and South is an irretrievable treasure once developers bring their money and their pressure on our township representatives. Progress is not in more houses, commercial buildings and bigger roads. Progress in these times is in preservation of the natural beauty and peace of the township.	8/5/2024 3:30 PM
6	Poor choice of application of road improvements	8/1/2024 2:43 PM
7	grass desperately needs to be CUT DOWN on corners where you come onto blue star especially fourth/cente along that area.....some were cut and some were not! I think Casco township is a beautiful place to live	7/30/2024 3:40 PM
8	I find Casco responsive to homeowner and community concerns. I'll add that short term renting should be supported because if the revenue it brings to the area.	7/29/2024 12:11 PM
9	Casco is supportive of bringing the Blue Star Bike Trail down through the township via the Blue Star Highway...this is a significant mistake. Also, the stairs to the beach at the park need to be fixed/replaced so that all township residents have access to Lake Michigan.	7/29/2024 9:55 AM
10	I would love to see a gluten free or allergy safe restaurant and bakery in South Haven. Otherwise, I think our town has everything and is a fabulous place to be.	7/27/2024 4:01 PM
11	Would like more paved roads including 105the Avenue at 62nd.	7/26/2024 11:27 AM
12	I see law enforcement on our roads less than I used to. Also sad to see properties with junk laying around which reduces neighborhood values.	7/24/2024 10:03 AM
13	Snow removal could be faster	7/24/2024 8:32 AM
14	.	7/23/2024 2:52 PM
15	No growth no jobs no events or festivals in casco	7/6/2024 10:29 AM
16	Activities, shopping in SoHa/Holland were factored in when answering some of questions above	6/26/2024 5:57 PM
17	Since Casco is an agricultural/bedroom community some of the item are NA	6/19/2024 6:56 PM

Q7 What could be improved about the Township? Check all that apply.

Answered: 75 Skipped: 6



Casco Township 2024 Master Plan Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Greater transportation options (bike paths, sidewalks, etc.)	54.67%	41
Public transportation	30.67%	23
Greater variety in business options (dining, retail, gas station, personal service, repair)	40.00%	30
Entertainment, dining, and/or nightlife options	30.67%	23
Improve public safety services (police, fire, ambulance)	18.67%	14
Better maintenance of roads	22.67%	17
Area schools	14.67%	11
Better or more parks and recreation facilities	40.00%	30
More variety in housing types	25.33%	19
Public facilities (Township Hall, transfer station, cemetery, parks)	16.00%	12
Better employment opportunities	20.00%	15
Public utility (internet, cell, solar, wind, water/sewer, gas)	41.33%	31
Other (please specify)	29.33%	22
Total Respondents: 75		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Beach access	9/14/2024 11:57 AM
2	Beach access. More police . Better plowing in winter.	9/5/2024 5:44 PM
3	Lake access at park, bike trail	9/4/2024 9:06 PM
4	Be in-district for Lake Michigan College	9/4/2024 3:07 PM
5	Public support of bluff erosion issues; this ultimately affects all residents. Not asking for hand-outs but support for financing would make a big impact.	8/10/2024 11:53 AM
6	Decreased zoning laws and intrusions into private property.	8/8/2024 3:34 PM
7	The township government needs to recognize that it is responsible for providing the proper environment for private enterprise to flourish, not for creating that enterprise itself. The engine of economic and cultural development is the private sector. Zoning and other types of government regulation often inhibit the proactive development of economic and cultural enterprises. Government bureaucracy will never be able to outperform the invisible hand, but it can and often does interfere with it.	8/6/2024 6:05 PM
8	Fairer property taxes.	8/5/2024 3:30 PM
9	Being supportive of a bike path	7/31/2024 3:33 PM
10	Generally happy here!	7/31/2024 2:40 PM
11	Friends of the Blue Star trail is trying please please make it safe for biking, walking runningblue star is just too narrow!\	7/30/2024 3:40 PM
12	Additional cell phone towers needed to provide service during busier, high traffic months.	7/29/2024 10:33 AM
13	Support the Blue Star Trail through the township. It will be a positive for the township and the area.	7/29/2024 9:55 AM
14	A dedicated allergy (GF, NF, DF, vegan types) safe restaurant and bakery would be a nice addition. I currently drive to sagatauk and holland to go to allergy safe restaurants and bakeries.	7/27/2024 4:01 PM

Casco Township 2024 Master Plan Survey

15	Better zoning to keep areas from blight like 68th St south from 104th; Property taxes are rising too fast and will make some parts of the Township unaffordable	7/24/2024 4:14 PM
16	The transfer station is usually a mess. All the trash laying around needs picked up.	7/24/2024 10:03 AM
17	Better and more beach access	7/24/2024 8:56 AM
18	Casco needs to restore beach stairs at the nature preserve park.	7/23/2024 4:08 PM
19	Local ordinances should be enforced in regard to signs along roadways (political and businesses)	7/23/2024 11:47 AM
20	Township property assessment efforts are failing. New homes are built and routinely never picked up on the tax roll. Homes along the lakefront that sell for 2, or 3 million are assessed for 1/4 of their value where homes that sell inland are assessed at or above the sale price. Once again the rich pay less in taxes, and hundreds of thousands of uncollected property taxes are missed because of years of systemic poor assessors being a pass at doing their job appropriately.	6/27/2024 4:59 PM
21	Township services: better support for website and regular updating to stay current. Also better maintenance of Short term rental list and complaints handled by hotline that is functioning!	6/26/2024 5:57 PM
22	Smaller subdivisions with small-med size homes would make the township more accessible	6/19/2024 6:56 PM

Q8 Do you have other concerns that are not listed above?

Answered: 25 Skipped: 56

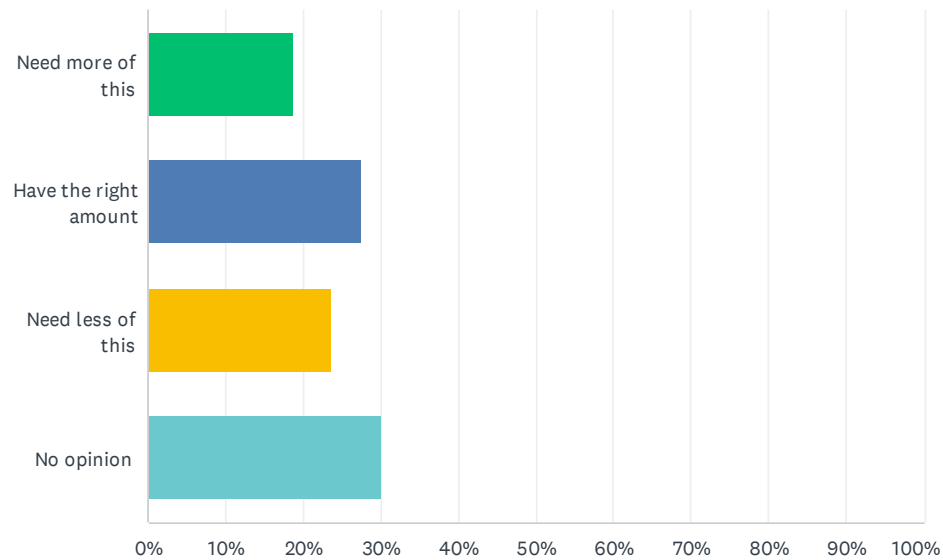
#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	A coordinated effort to create opportunities for first time homeowners. Attainable homes, \$250k or less.	9/16/2024 9:59 PM
2	No	9/15/2024 11:56 PM
3	Senior services should all be at Van Buren. The facility is amazing and people should not be doing exercises and playing cards at the hall. It is distracting and creates an unprofessional environment.	9/4/2024 9:06 PM
4	The encroachment of summer rentals	9/4/2024 8:02 PM
5	Stick to the zone rules for lot sizes. Too often you haven taken large parcels with homes and split off the home in a smaller than approved lot. No need for this. If you keep making these exemptions, you'll end up with no ag and houses shoulder to shoulder.	9/4/2024 3:42 PM
6	Property owners whose property rights have been confiscated through re-zoning of their parcels should either be compensated for the confiscated rights, or the township should send a written notice to the property owners offering to return the confiscated rights.	8/6/2024 6:05 PM
7	I was told by someone who should know that the township is sitting on \$16,000,000.00. This is our money. It should be used in such a way that we get to vote on projects, not just weigh in. Also, if the Township has this much money, why doesn't it lower property taxes? Do we really need new buildings?	8/5/2024 3:30 PM
8	High speed internet is the single greatest concern of ours.	8/5/2024 2:02 PM
9	Having families live in the area, want to live here full time, is the key to a vibrant future for the area.	7/31/2024 6:34 PM
10	Excessive cost of water and sewer utilities is a major negative in this area!	7/31/2024 3:27 PM
11	Re-zoning to allow non-ag businesses in twp	7/29/2024 3:42 PM
12	Road and culvert maintenance appears inconsistent.	7/29/2024 12:11 PM
13	Casco Twsp. should not become a commercial area. There are plenty of businesses in South Haven, Holland and St. Joe/Benton Harbor.	7/29/2024 9:55 AM
14	No	7/26/2024 11:27 AM
15	Beach access and removal of private beach signs are my two primary concerns.	7/24/2024 8:56 AM
16	No	7/24/2024 8:32 AM
17	Biggest issue is lack of reliable cell phone service and WiFi	7/23/2024 8:06 PM
18	We live near first avenue beach access. Renters and guests from Jensen's RV continually bring dogs to the beach. We need a bigger sign stating no dogs allowed and some do not pick up there dog droppings.	7/23/2024 4:10 PM
19	Tasha Smalley does not represent my ideals.	7/23/2024 12:29 PM
20	I appreciate the direction of policies in regard to private property rights, namely allowing barns (not requiring a house on the property). I still believe that Tasha Smalley should be fired for what she put us through, she exploited her position to harass us when she should have known that we were following local ordinances. Complete incompetence. And then she used her position in South Haven Township to make it difficult for our son to build his house.	7/23/2024 11:47 AM
21	Neighbors are renting a container dwelling they did not get a permit to build. Another neighbor added a shed right up against our lot line. LAX code enforcement.	7/22/2024 5:58 PM

Casco Township 2024 Master Plan Survey

22	Shoreline erosion is an issue.	7/15/2024 4:11 PM
23	Allow businesses to come in. Quit being so hard to work with	7/6/2024 10:29 AM
24	Zoning and building codes are woefully not enforced and could improve greatly to minimize problems between neighbors of the Township enforcement implemented. There is an immense amount of building and renovation of that gets completed with no permits.	6/27/2024 4:59 PM
25	Need more personnel/outsourcing to handle growing demands of residents	6/26/2024 5:57 PM

Q9 Does Casco Township need more, less, or have the right amount of large-sized single family homes?

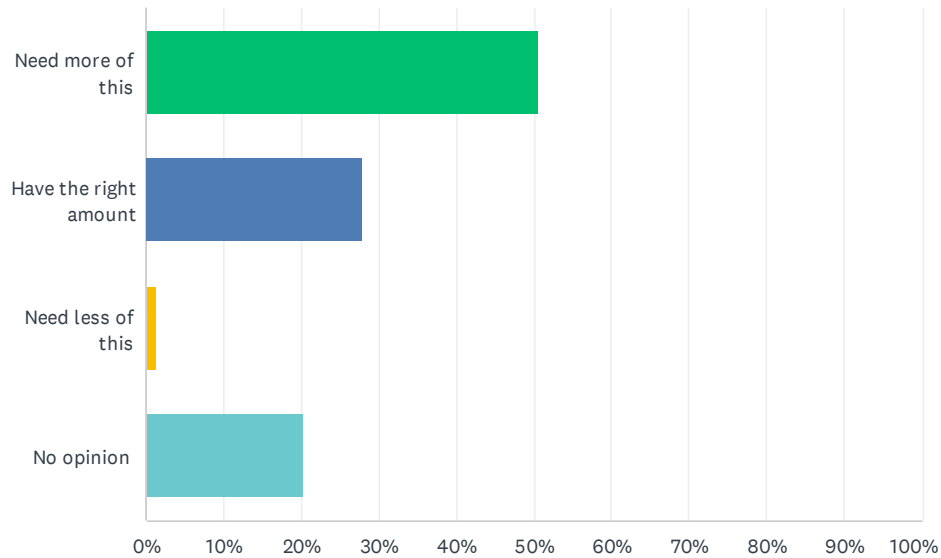
Answered: 80 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Need more of this	18.75%	15
Have the right amount	27.50%	22
Need less of this	23.75%	19
No opinion	30.00%	24
TOTAL		80

Q10 Does Casco Township need more, less, or have the right amount of medium-sized single family homes?

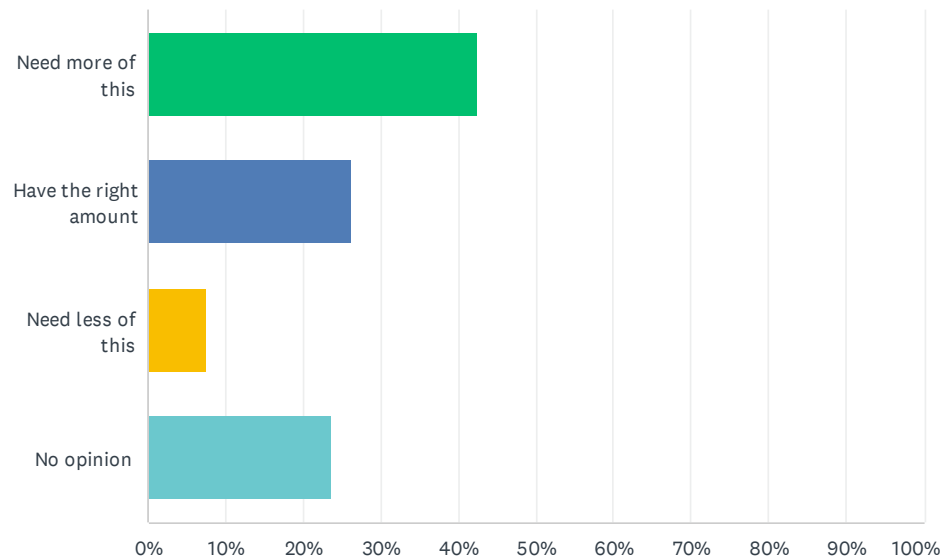
Answered: 79 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Need more of this	50.63%	40
Have the right amount	27.85%	22
Need less of this	1.27%	1
No opinion	20.25%	16
TOTAL		79

Q11 Does Casco Township need more, less, or have the right amount of small-sized single family homes?

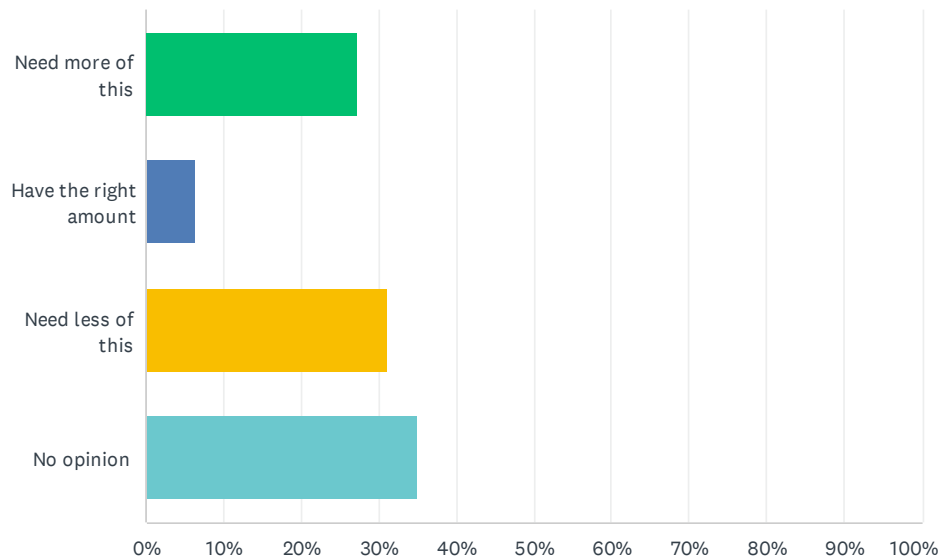
Answered: 80 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Need more of this		42.50%	34
Have the right amount		26.25%	21
Need less of this		7.50%	6
No opinion		23.75%	19
TOTAL			80

Q12 Does Casco Township need more, less, or have the right amount of duplexes?

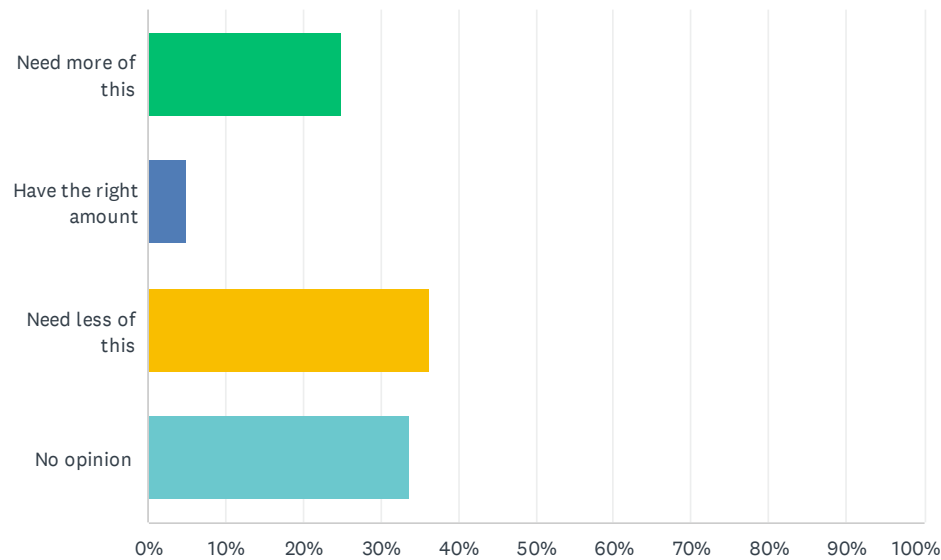
Answered: 77 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Need more of this	27.27%	21
Have the right amount	6.49%	5
Need less of this	31.17%	24
No opinion	35.06%	27
TOTAL		77

Q13 Does Casco Township need more, less, or have the right amount of triplexes?

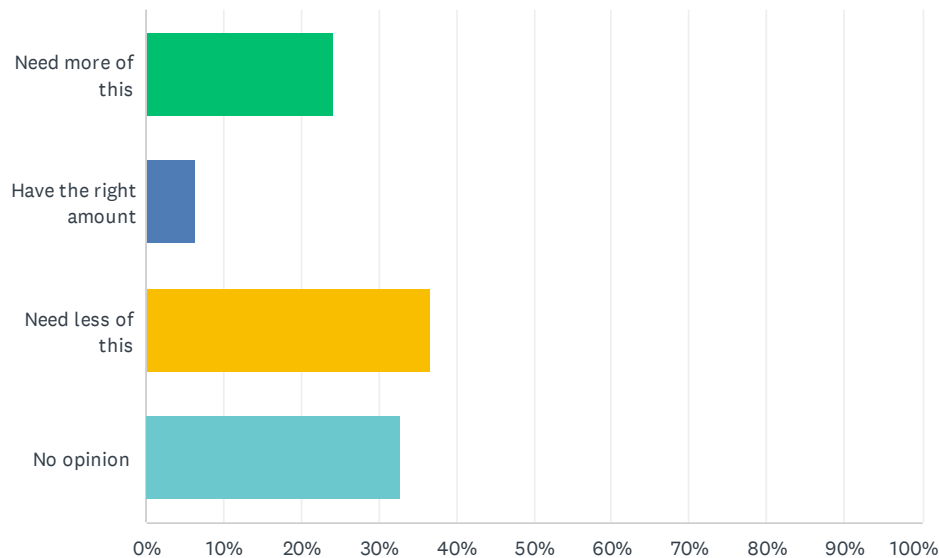
Answered: 80 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Need more of this		25.00%	20
Have the right amount		5.00%	4
Need less of this		36.25%	29
No opinion		33.75%	27
TOTAL			80

Q14 Does Casco Township need more, less, or have the right amount of quadplexes?

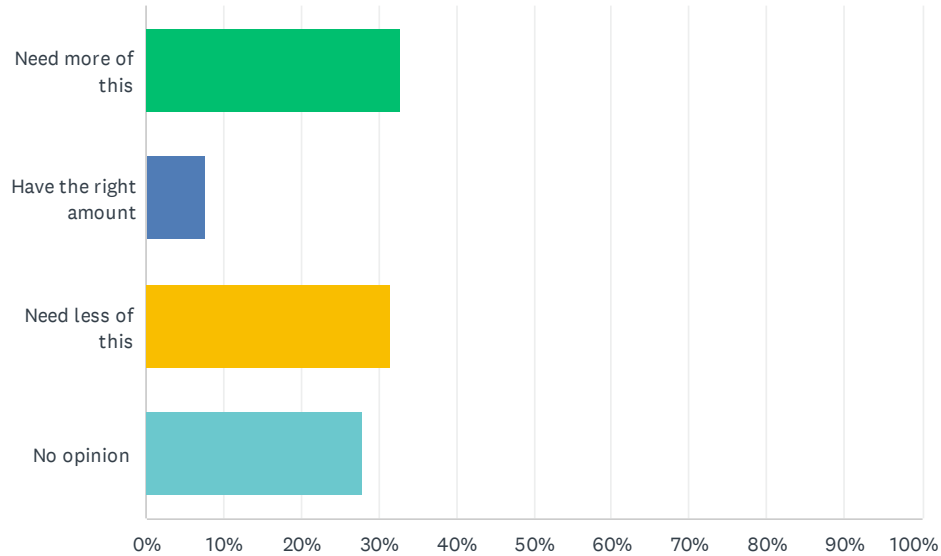
Answered: 79 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Need more of this		24.05%	19
Have the right amount		6.33%	5
Need less of this		36.71%	29
No opinion		32.91%	26
TOTAL			79

Q15 Does Casco Township need more, less, or have the right amount of attached townhouses or row homes?

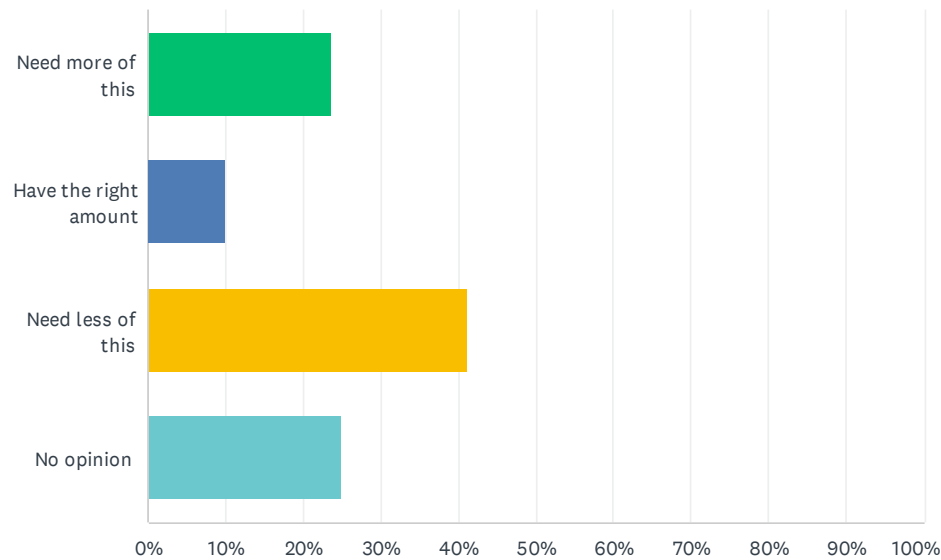
Answered: 79 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Need more of this	32.91%	26
Have the right amount	7.59%	6
Need less of this	31.65%	25
No opinion	27.85%	22
TOTAL		79

Q16 Does Casco Township need more, less, or have the right amount of apartment-style housing?

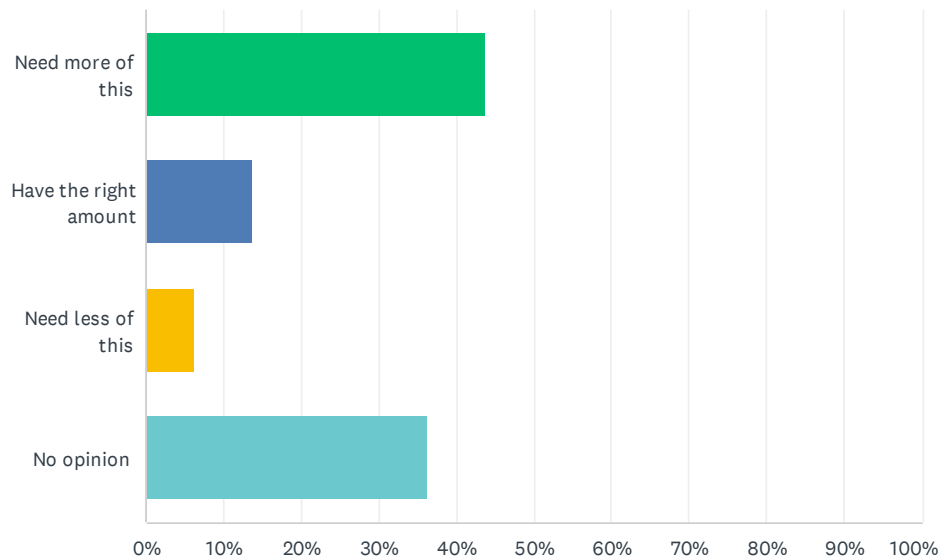
Answered: 80 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Need more of this	23.75%	19
Have the right amount	10.00%	8
Need less of this	41.25%	33
No opinion	25.00%	20
TOTAL		80

Q17 Does Casco Township need more, less, or have the right amount of senior living facilities?

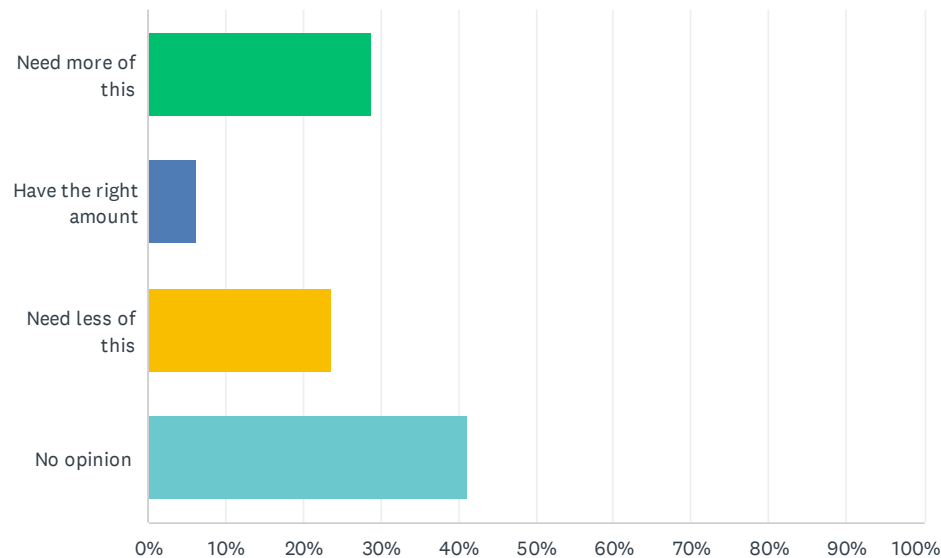
Answered: 80 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Need more of this		43.75%	35
Have the right amount		13.75%	11
Need less of this		6.25%	5
No opinion		36.25%	29
TOTAL			80

Q18 Does Casco Township need more, less, or have the right amount of micro housing?

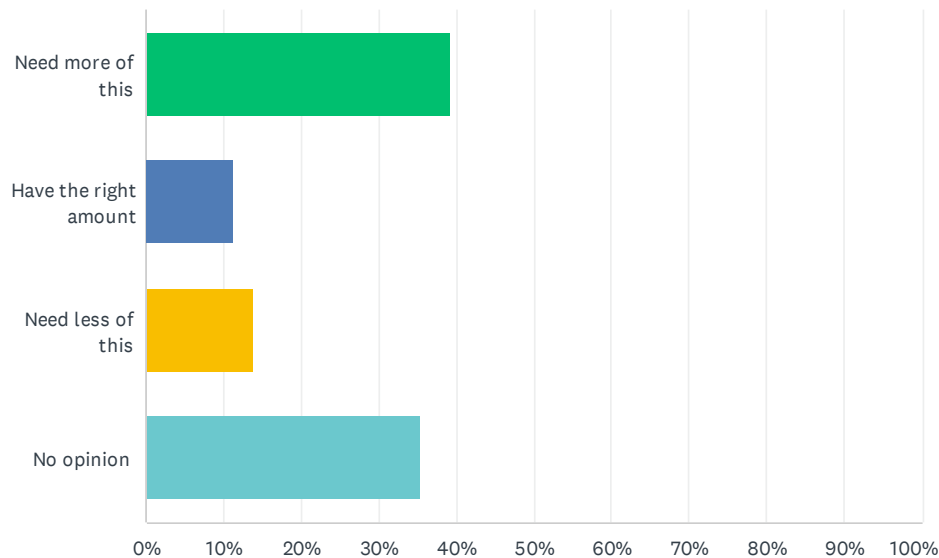
Answered: 80 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Need more of this	28.75%	23
Have the right amount	6.25%	5
Need less of this	23.75%	19
No opinion	41.25%	33
TOTAL		80

Q19 Does Casco Township need more, less, or have the right amount of accessory dwellings?

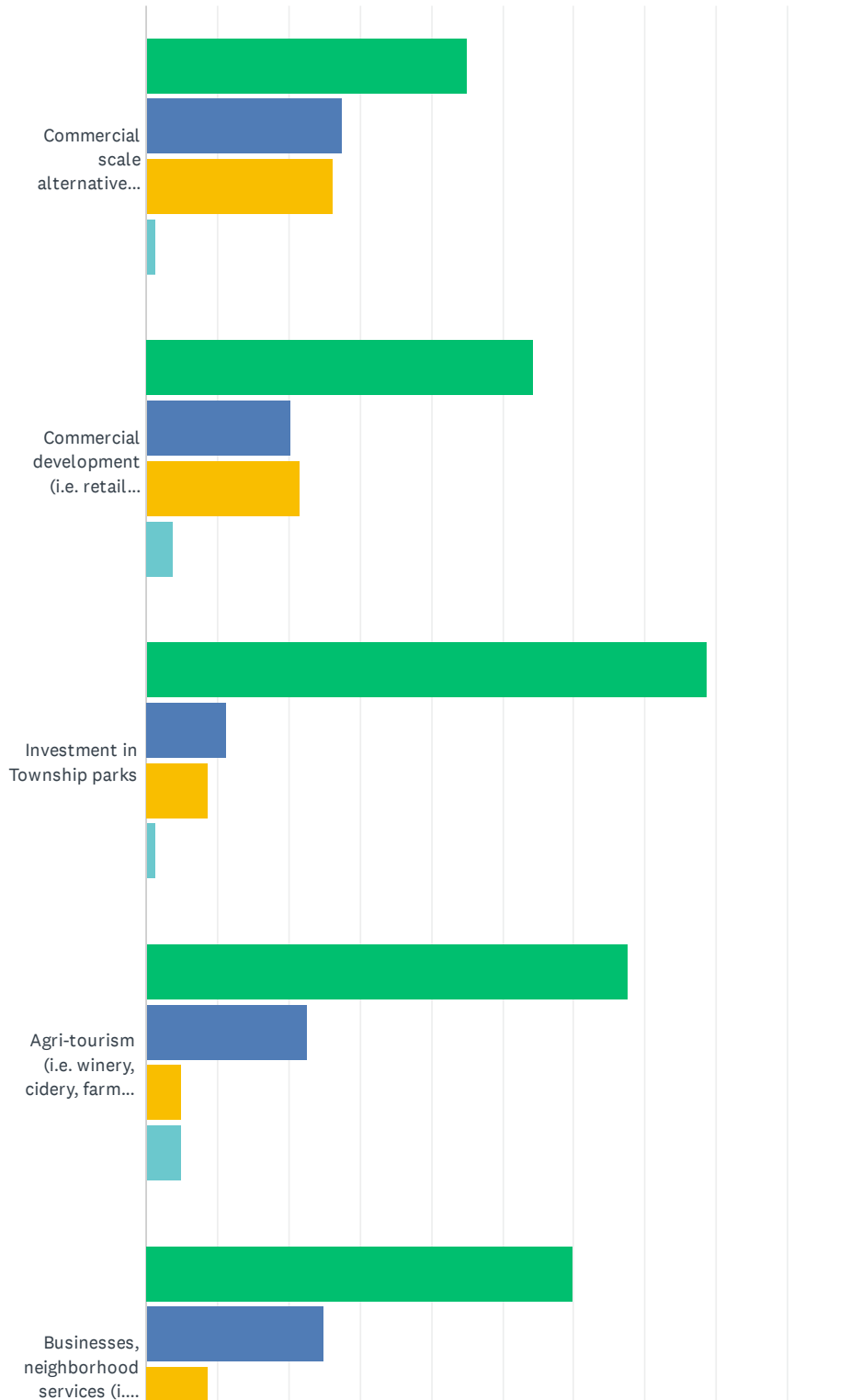
Answered: 79 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Need more of this		39.24%	31
Have the right amount		11.39%	9
Need less of this		13.92%	11
No opinion		35.44%	28
TOTAL			79

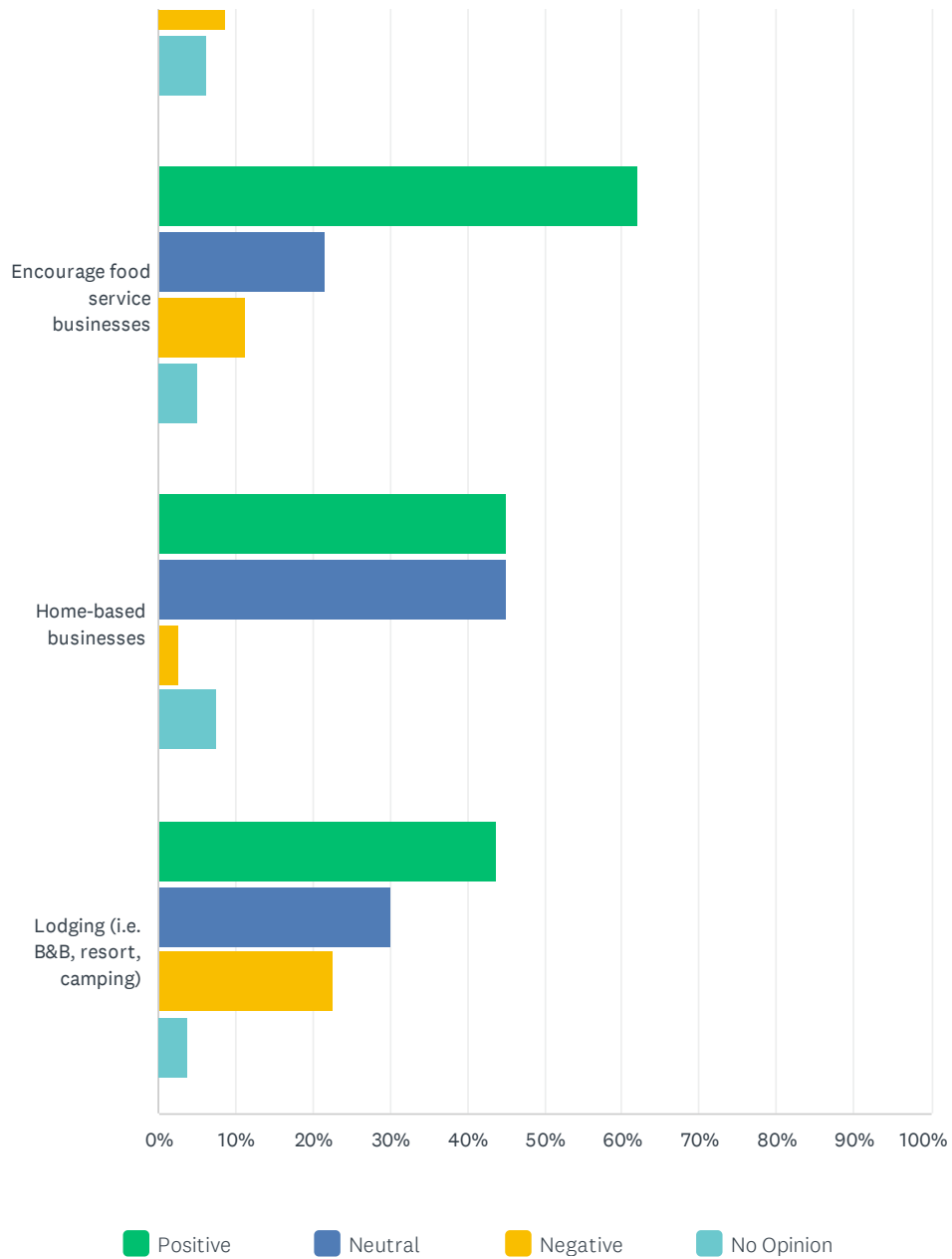
Q20 Please rate the following as a need for the future for Casco Township.

Answered: 80 Skipped: 1



30 / 36

Casco Township 2024 Master Plan Survey



Casco Township 2024 Master Plan Survey

	POSITIVE	NEUTRAL	NEGATIVE	NO OPINION	TOTAL
Commercial scale alternative energy (solar, wind, battery storage)	45.00% 36	27.50% 22	26.25% 21	1.25% 1	80
Commercial development (i.e. retail, restaurant, office)	54.43% 43	20.25% 16	21.52% 17	3.80% 3	79
Investment in Township parks	78.75% 63	11.25% 9	8.75% 7	1.25% 1	80
Agri-tourism (i.e. winery, cidery, farm market, farmers market)	67.50% 54	22.50% 18	5.00% 4	5.00% 4	80
Businesses, neighborhood services (i.e. repair shop, personal service)	60.00% 48	25.00% 20	8.75% 7	6.25% 5	80
Encourage food service businesses	62.03% 49	21.52% 17	11.39% 9	5.06% 4	79
Home-based businesses	45.00% 36	45.00% 36	2.50% 2	7.50% 6	80
Lodging (i.e. B&B, resort, camping)	43.75% 35	30.00% 24	22.50% 18	3.75% 3	80

#	COMMENTS	DATE
1	There are plenty of commercial opportunities, lodging, tourist destinations, and places to eat in nearby towns. putting more stuff in is not the answer	9/17/2024 4:11 PM
2	Would really like road to beach at park and Blue Star Trail	9/4/2024 9:06 PM
3	Please increase the ease of putting accessory dwellings on properties. Housing is so expensive that many are doing this now.	9/1/2024 5:36 PM
4	Thank you for the reasonable short term rental ordinance. STRs are important and appreciated.	8/19/2024 12:37 PM
5	Deregulate and let the invisible hand decide.	8/6/2024 6:05 PM
6	The temptation to fill the fields along Blue Star Highway is mighty. Houses, strip malls, office parks, etc., all pushed by developers who see dollar signs, takes away the peace and quiet of one of the last bastions of peaceful roadway in the county. More development means wider roads, more stoplights, more traffic, and more frenzy. There is no need when barely five miles away there are all the amenities the township needs.	8/5/2024 3:30 PM
7	More of the above and less rentals	8/1/2024 2:43 PM
8	I would like to see a future assessment of DayDreamer Domes to know the impact on the community.	7/31/2024 3:33 PM
9	We are a beautiful place to live let's have all kinds of discussion on the possibilities here...I have not studied any material on renewable energy so don't have an answer on how it would work here..	7/30/2024 3:40 PM
10	Regulate short term renting responsibly for both homeowners and guests.	7/29/2024 12:11 PM
11	Keep the residential and agricultural nature of Casco.	7/29/2024 9:55 AM
12	Do not sprawl because lots of land. Multi generational housing options un close proximity. Neighborhoods w diversisty pf hous8ng \$ options and some community gathering for nrighbors.and a bit of retail for a little restarant/ ice cream /market space so kids families geandparents can co exist all within walking distance and then eaay access to robust trail system and other bigger businessws servi8ces etc in South Havene	7/28/2024 1:27 PM
13	We need more service people in our town. It's hard to find local painters or handymen that are dependable.	7/27/2024 4:01 PM
14	Casco is generally an agricultural township. Keep it that way. Limit short term rentals. Limit all	7/24/2024 7:23 PM

Casco Township 2024 Master Plan Survey

	new housing developments. Keep Casco a great place to raise a family.	
15	We are in the southwest corner so not well-informed of other areas.	7/23/2024 3:30 PM
16	Ordinances should not prohibit private investment. We need to decrease the unacceptable cost of hooking up to water and sewer. It is the highest in the region, and the more people that hook up the lower our costs will be. I have no problem letting people pay less than us. If we want affordable housing this is a massive first step!	7/23/2024 11:47 AM
17	We need a beach access at the nature preserve. I don't want portable dwellings used for renting in my neighborhood. It makes the place look like a trailer park.	7/22/2024 5:58 PM
18	Improve your zoning and building codes, and enforce them. Neighbors should have to argue with each other over things that should and do routinely fall under code enforcement in larger well staffed communities.	6/27/2024 4:59 PM
19	Lodging-camping is not equivalent to Resorts we currently have. More resorts would be a positive is high quality	6/26/2024 5:57 PM
20	the variety of home sizes and duplex, triplex, and quadplex are ok as long as they are managed well and visually fit into the surrounding area.	6/19/2024 6:56 PM

Q21 Thank you for completing the survey! We appreciate you taking the time to provide feedback. If you would like to receive updates on the Master Plan project, please provide your email address below.

Answered: 47 Skipped: 34

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Name	97.87% 46
Email	93.62% 44

#	NAME	DATE
1	Julie cowie	9/16/2024 9:59 PM
2	Marci Hayes	9/15/2024 11:56 PM
3	McBride	9/14/2024 11:57 AM
4	Jason Garvin	9/9/2024 2:03 PM
5	Mary decker	9/5/2024 5:44 PM
6	Julie Werkema	9/4/2024 9:06 PM
7	Kelly Hecker	9/4/2024 3:07 PM
8	Amanda Garvin	9/1/2024 5:36 PM
9	William garrod	8/22/2024 5:17 PM
10	Mrs. Kim Alexopoulos	8/19/2024 12:37 PM
11	Anthony Wilkins	8/15/2024 8:27 AM
12	Dan Griffin	8/10/2024 11:53 AM
13	Christopher Fleming	8/6/2024 6:05 PM
14	Todd Hybels	8/6/2024 9:13 AM
15	Nancy Brown	8/1/2024 2:43 PM
16	Maureen Nugent	7/31/2024 3:33 PM
17	Paul Brazda	7/31/2024 3:27 PM
18	Teresa R Getman	7/30/2024 3:40 PM
19	Beth warsco	7/29/2024 3:42 PM
20	David Bentley	7/29/2024 12:11 PM
21	Jill Sell	7/29/2024 10:33 AM
22	Rich Nugent	7/29/2024 9:55 AM
23	Michael Finn	7/28/2024 11:26 PM
24	Chris Averill	7/28/2024 2:12 PM
25	Dennis Hoppe	7/27/2024 5:50 PM
26	William Hull	7/27/2024 9:26 AM
27	Kristine Palmer	7/26/2024 11:27 AM

Casco Township 2024 Master Plan Survey

28	Marie Fleming	7/25/2024 6:35 PM
29	Eileen Mead	7/25/2024 8:45 AM
30	John Sokel	7/25/2024 7:00 AM
31	Ann Gattorn	7/25/2024 6:48 AM
32	C Davis	7/24/2024 4:14 PM
33	Brent Auer	7/24/2024 10:03 AM
34	Rose Sallen	7/24/2024 8:56 AM
35	Mike Divelbiss	7/24/2024 8:37 AM
36	William Peterson	7/23/2024 8:06 PM
37	Debra Thorp	7/23/2024 5:20 PM
38	Alan Sylvester	7/23/2024 4:08 PM
39	Marci Tawney	7/23/2024 2:52 PM
40	Justin Goodenough	7/23/2024 1:40 PM
41	Mary Whiteford	7/23/2024 11:47 AM
42	Byrne Jim	7/22/2024 6:54 PM
43	Carolyn Slone	7/22/2024 5:58 PM
44	Jodie Bannister	7/22/2024 3:37 PM
45	David R. Campbell Sr	6/26/2024 5:57 PM
46	Kathy Stanton	6/19/2024 6:56 PM
#	EMAIL	DATE
1	Juliemcowie@gmail.com	9/16/2024 9:59 PM
2	marcihayes@comcast.net	9/15/2024 11:56 PM
3	ktmcb@aol.com	9/14/2024 11:57 AM
4	jason.r.garvin@gmail.com	9/9/2024 2:03 PM
5	mldphoto1@yahoo.com	9/5/2024 5:44 PM
6	Juliewerkema@gmail.com	9/4/2024 9:06 PM
7	kellyhecker1@gmail.com	9/4/2024 3:07 PM
8	amanda.echler@gmail.com	9/1/2024 5:36 PM
9	Billgarrod30@gmail.com	8/22/2024 5:17 PM
10	kimberlykozlowski@yahoo.com	8/19/2024 12:37 PM
11	Tonywilkins76@gmail.com	8/15/2024 8:27 AM
12	samuelsbride@outlook.com	8/8/2024 3:34 PM
13	Christopherfleming316@gmail.com	8/6/2024 6:05 PM
14	thybels@gmail.com	8/6/2024 9:13 AM
15	Mebehr07@gmail.com	8/1/2024 2:43 PM
16	nugent.maureen1@gmail.com	7/31/2024 3:33 PM
17	pjbrazda@yahoo.com	7/31/2024 3:27 PM
18	teresa@innerprizesllc.com	7/30/2024 3:40 PM

Casco Township
7104 107th Ave
South Haven, MI 49090