

ISHPEMING TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN

2026-2031



DRAFT DECEMBER 2025
ADOPTED ____ 2025

ISHPEMING TOWNSHIP
RESOLUTION

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This plan could not have been completed without the dedication and support from the Township staff and the following organizations:

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 Greater Ishpeming Commission on Aging
 Lake Superior Community Partnership
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Ishpeming Township Citizens

THANK YOU!

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1 Introduction

WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN?

A Master Plan is a document that provides guidance for the growth, development, and physical improvements within a municipality. The document reflects the community it serves and draws on public input to define a united vision of the community's future. Based on thorough analysis of community data, the Master Plan offers constructive recommendations and implementation steps that can be undertaken to achieve the City's vision.

The core purpose of a Master Plan is to guide land use patterns, economic development and redevelopment, transportation and access, community infrastructure and services, and the management of the community's natural resources. It is a tool for identifying the long-range community challenges on the horizon and provides the framework for how we will adapt to meet those needs for the future.

AUTHORITY TO PLAN

In Michigan, P.A. 33 of 2008, commonly referred to as the *Michigan Planning Enabling Act*, authorizes units of government to plan, create Planning Commissions, and regulate and subdivide land. The act permits and mandates the Planning Commission to create and adopt a Master Plan. The Master Plan is the basis for land use regulations and zoning. For units of government that have and enforce zoning, that zoning must be based on a plan. The purpose of this Master Plan is to guide future development towards more economic and efficient

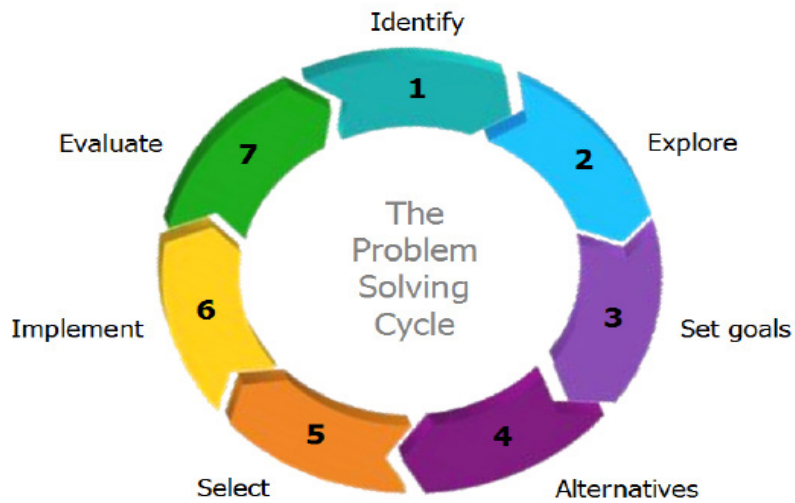
use of the land; promote public health, safety, and the general welfare; and provide for adequate transportation systems and infrastructure, public utilities, and recreation.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

Community planning is a cyclical process. Every five years, a community must review its Master Plan and consider necessary updates. The Annual Report found in Appendix A provides the important factors which could be reviewed to determine the need for updates to the plan.

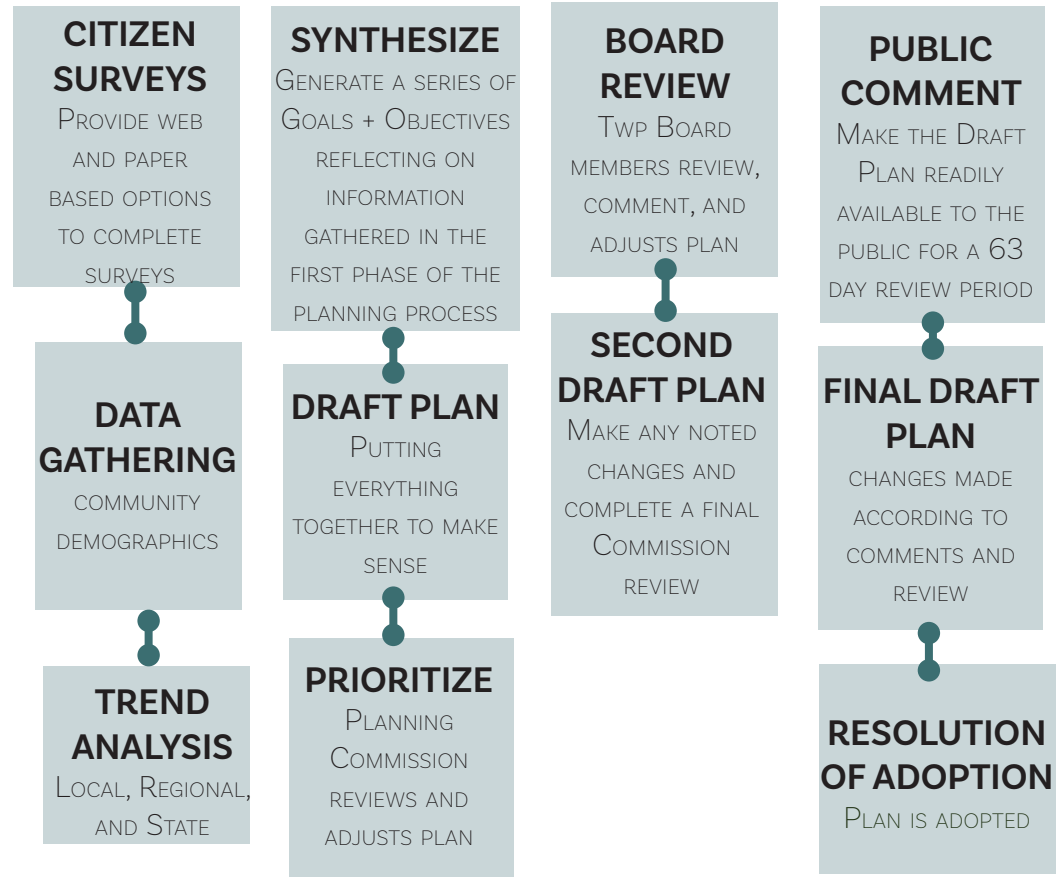
The seven-step process chart (right) describes the phases of the plan's development, starting with a review of the current plan. Next, the plan engages with community stakeholders who will provide important perspectives and feedback on areas relevant to their interests.

In the third step, research and analysis on a range of community related topics is performed to give insight into the factors and trends shaping the community. From this analysis, we are able to engage with community stakeholders on step four to identify issues, needs, and opportunities as they relate to the community.



Step five involves the creation of a strategic framework for addressing the issues and opportunities that were defined, and result in a collection of top goals, related objectives, and policy recommendations for future adoption. These strategic items are then included with the content of the plan and in step six, the Planning Commission proceeds with the formal adoption of the Plan at a public meeting.

After the adoption of the Master Plan, local elected and appointed leaders, City administrators, and other public and private stakeholders will work together on step seven to implement the action items and recommendations found in the plan. Five years from the adoption of the plan, the Commission will start again from the beginning of the cycle to determine what has been accomplished and what changes need to be made to the strategy in light of new information.



PAST PLANNING ACTIVITIES

In order to adequately plan for the future, a community must first review the recommendations and strategies of other relevant and recent community plans. By coordinating and aligning strategies with these past efforts, we avoid the pitfall of “reinventing the wheel” and build a strategy that interrelates with other programs and initiatives to build mutual support, as opposed to pushing in different directions in pursuit of the same vision.

2020 Marquette County Master Plan 2040

Marquette County’s 2040 Master Plan included all townships, breaking them into four planning regions based on their location and unique features. Ishpeming Township falls into the Iron Core region, showcasing the rich mining heritage and small-town resilience.

2022 Marquette County Recovery and Resiliency Plan

This plan was created during a partnership between CUPPAD and TIP Strategies, a consulting firm operating out of Houston, TX. This plan was created as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, to bolster the resilience of economic development in the county.

2024 Central UP Regional Housing Partnership Action Plan

CUPPAD and Community Action Alger Marquette (CAAM), along with many volunteer working groups, worked to refine and personalize the goals contained in the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA)’s Statewide Housing Plan. After much consideration, the goals and objectives in this plan are indicative of the unique and nuanced housing need in our local area.

2025 Ishpeming Township Recreation Plan

This Recreation Plan update was done in coordination with Ishpeming Township’s Planning Commission, based on a community survey. This plan emphasized the lack of recreational opportunities and suggests various projects, goals, and objectives based on community input.



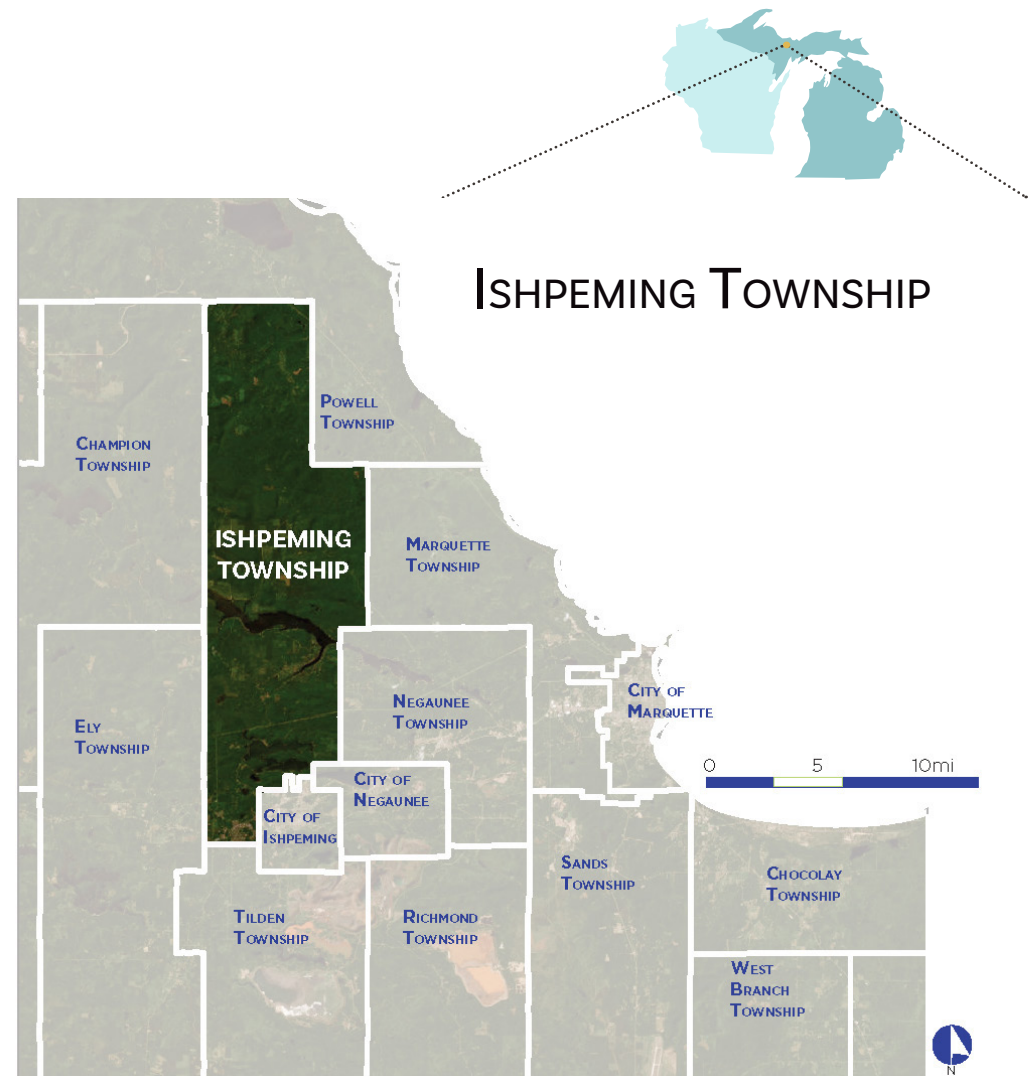
REGIONAL CONTEXT + HISTORY

Ishpeming Township is located to the north and west of the City of Ishpeming in Marquette County. In the recently completed 2040 Marquette County master plan Ishpeming Township is grouped together with Negaunee, Richmond, and Tilden Townships, along with the cities of Negaunee and Ishpeming. This region is highlighted as the “Iron Core Region” noted for its iron ore mining heritage, historic neighborhoods, and their rugged resilient small-town character.

The township’s early economy was driven by iron mining, which was part of the larger Marquette Iron Range. This area became one of the most important iron ore-producing regions in the United States, contributing to the growth of the steel industry in the Midwest. The Cleveland-Cliffs Iron Company (now Cleveland-Cliffs Inc.) was a major operator in the area and established mining operations that created employment and spurred population growth.

Mining towns in the Upper Peninsula, including Ishpeming Township, experienced rapid growth as immigrants from Europe, especially Finland, Sweden, Italy, and Croatia, came to work in the mines. The influx of diverse cultural groups added to the township’s character.

Alongside mining, logging became a significant industry in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The dense forests surrounding the township provided valuable timber, which was harvested and transported to build railroads, homes, and businesses across the Midwest. By the mid-20th century, many of the iron mines began to decline as ore became harder to extract and cheaper foreign sources of iron entered the market. This caused a population decline and economic slowdown in the area. However, the



“**IN THE NEXT TWO DECADES, Iron Core WILL SIGNIFICANTLY BENEFIT FROM CONTINUED REVITALIZATION OF ITS NEIGHBORHOODS AND DOWNTOWN DISTRICTS, MEETING THE EVOLVING NEEDS OF ITS POPULATION, CAPITALIZING ON LOCAL, NATIONAL, AND GLOBAL TRENDS TO CREATE OPPORTUNITY FOR THE NEXT GENERATION.**”

-MARQUETTE COUNTY 2040: YOUR COUNTY, YOUR PLAN, OUR COMMON FUTURE

Cleveland-Cliffs Company remained a key player, and the mining industry, while reduced in scale, has continued to play a role in the region's economy.

Today, Ishpeming Township is a mix of rural and residential areas with a focus on outdoor recreation, thanks to the natural beauty of the surrounding forests, lakes, and trails. While the iron mining industry is not as dominant as it once was, remnants of the mining culture still influence the township. It is also home to residents who work in nearby towns like Marquette, and its economy has diversified to include tourism and small businesses.

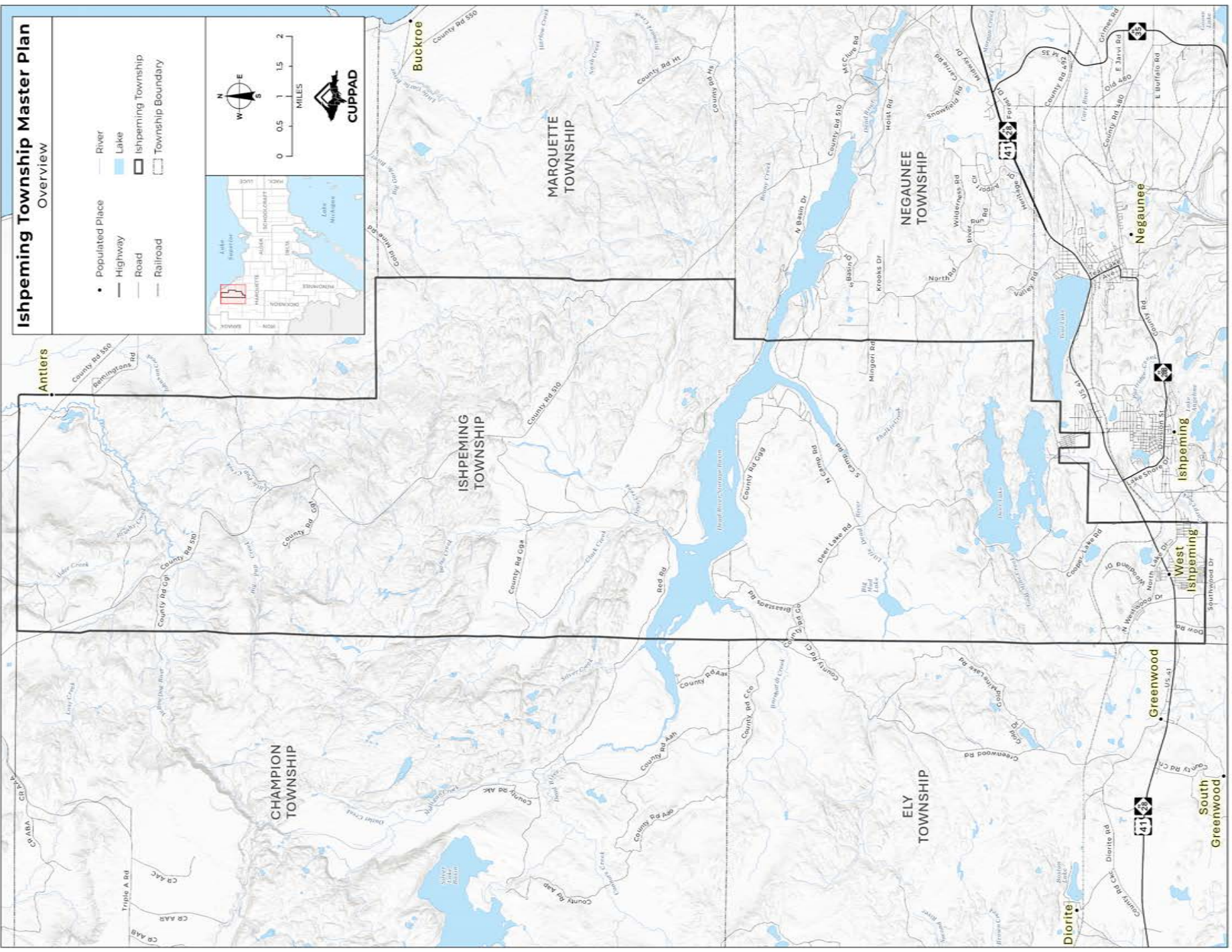
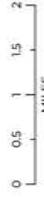
The township's history of mining and logging is still visible in the landscape, from abandoned mining sites to heritage celebrations that honor the community's immigrant roots and industrial past.



Ishpeming Township Master Plan

Overview

- Populated Place
- Highway
- Road
- Railroad
- River
- Lake
- ▭ Ishpeming Township
- ▭ Township Boundary



2 Guiding Principles

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

Throughout the process of developing the 2025 Master Plan, a number of overarching guiding principles were consistently mentioned which described common values held by the community. These guiding principles and the Vision Statement paint a picture of Ishpeming Township's future, which will result from the implementation of strategic elements found in this plan.

The word cloud below reflects the community's view of the township based on the community survey, which can be found in the appendix. Most mentioned was "Community" (38 mentions), "Safety" (25 mentions), and "Neighborhood" (24 mentions). Also mentioned were "Small Town Feel" (23), "Quiet" (22), and "Affordable" (20).



Ishpeming Township is fortunate to have a friendly community that is full of neighborly people and has admiration and respect for nature. It's citizens value the quiet small-town feel of the safe rural community. Keeping these top values in mind, the Strategic Priorities were built around how the community sees itself and hopes to meet and confront challenges in the future.

1. STRONG SENSE OF COMMUNITY

The frequent mention of "Small Town" indicates a strong community value in maintaining the intimate, close-knit, and unique qualities of Ishpeming Township. This principle emphasizes the importance of preserving the township's small-town charm and identity as it grows and evolves.

2. SAFE AND QUIET

Survey respondents frequently mentioned the aspects of safety and quietness that makes the community so special. Nothing is more important than a community in which everyone feels safe and secure.

3. SMALL TOWN NEIGHBORHOODS

The mentions of "Small Town Feel", "Neighborhoods", and "Affordable" are all indicators of a healthy community. Most people live in the township specifically for the small town feel and quiet nature. This is important to recognize when planning for future developments and changes.

A Vision for the Future

“Ishpeming Township envisions growing thoughtfully while preserving the qualities that make it a unique and cherished place to live. Rooted in a strong sense of community and pride, the Township will remain a safe, welcoming, and affordable home for residents of all ages.

We will protect our quiet neighborhoods, natural beauty, and small-town character while embracing opportunities for sustainable development, outdoor recreation, and local collaboration. Guided by the voices of our residents, we envision a future where every person feels connected, secure, and proud to call Ishpeming Township home.”

3 Trends Shaping the Region

POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

This section of the Master Plan is often referred to as the “fact book”, an important component that provides data on the changes that are occurring in the community and region regarding population, economics, and housing, among other topics. By analyzing the data of the past, we can draw conclusions about what the future might bring and be better prepared for the changes that take place. Examining population trends is helpful for communities to plan for resources and amenities to meet the needs of the residents. Population change is a primary component in tracking a community’s past growth or decline, as well as forecasting future population trends. Population characteristics relate directly to housing, education, recreation, health care, and the future economic needs of the community. All statistics were taken from the US Census Bureau and the American Community Survey. Data for the township is used when available, otherwise county data is used.

Over the last 50 years the population in the state of Michigan has generally grown. Marquette County and Ishpeming Township have been growing in recent years, but have experienced a general downward trend, with

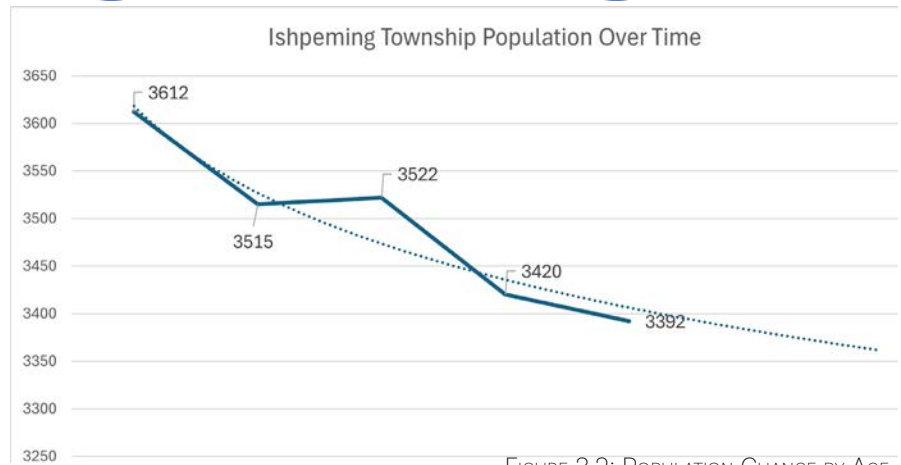


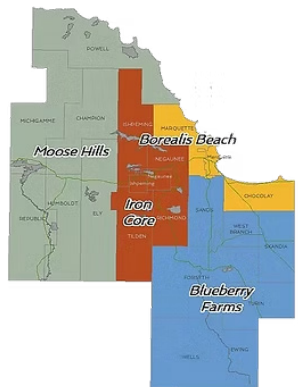
FIGURE 3.2: POPULATION CHANGE BY AGE

lower population numbers between 1990 and 2000. Even though figure 3.2 shows a downward trend, we can assume that the population will continue towards a plateau if not continuing to rise incrementally. People are being drawn to the area for the small-town feeling, the relatively low cost of living, and the proximity to outdoor recreation amenities and nature.

Age distribution can illustrate the difference between certain cohorts over time, allowing for better informed planning decisions. Do we need more playgrounds or senior housing? What will our workforce look like in 20 years? These questions can be answered with an

Population by Year	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Ishpeming Township	3,420	3,511	3,515	3,511	3,514
Marquette County	70,887	70,887	64,634	67,077	66,017
Michigan	9,262,078	9,295,297	9,938,444	9,883,640	10,077,331

FIGURE 3.1: POPULATION BY YEAR, STATE, COUNTY, AND TOWNSHIP; 1980-2020

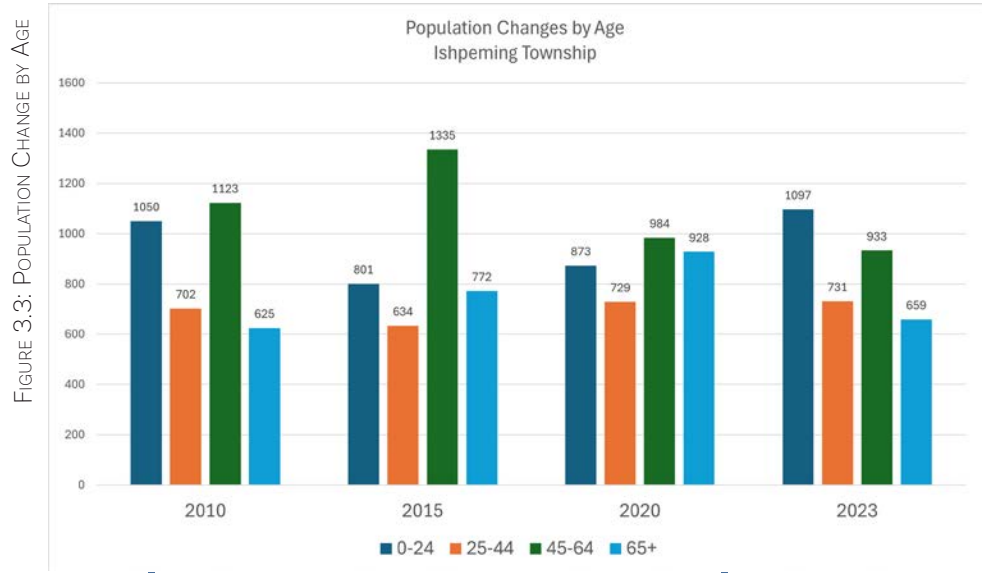


“IN THE NEXT TWO DECADES, Iron Core WILL SIGNIFICANTLY BENEFIT FROM CONTINUED REVITALIZATION OF ITS NEIGHBORHOODS AND DOWNTOWN DISTRICTS, MEETING THE EVOLVING NEEDS OF ITS POPULATION, CAPITALIZING ON LOCAL, NATIONAL, AND GLOBAL TRENDS TO CREATE OPPORTUNITY FOR THE NEXT GENERATION.”

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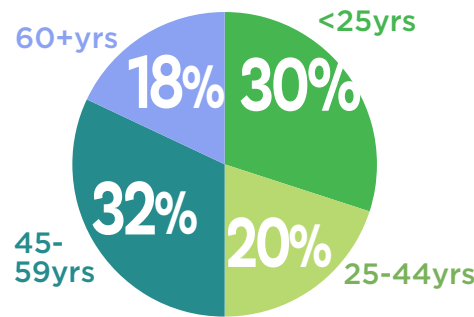
approximation based on data and facts. According to American Community Survey of 2023, the median age in Ishpeming Township is 42.3 years, slightly younger than the previous year's figure of 46. This figure paired with the pie charts comparing 2000 age cohort figures with 2023 (figure 3.4), indicates that the population of those under 25 and those over 60 are slowly growing. Other categories, those aged 25-59 are slightly decreasing. Ishpeming Township has a healthy mix of ages but should start to think about the growing children and senior population.

Population pyramids are useful tools meant to measure subsets of age groups split by sex. They are a snapshot in time of the structure of the population of a community and can help explain changes in workforce, birth rates, migration, and more. Figure 3.5 relays population information for the township split by sex. It is interesting to note that the lowest population category is young adults between the age of 25-29, most notably males.



AGE | 2000

Source: US Census ACS Data



AGE | 2023

Source: US Census ACS Data

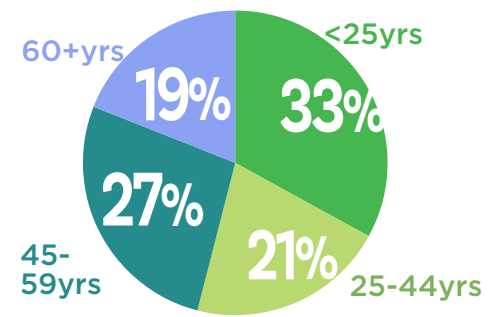


FIGURE 3.4: AGE COHORTS BY YEAR

The growing age categories remain to be those between 60-64 and the teenage population between 15-19. Keeping these trends in mind will help community leaders prioritize development in a way that meets the needs of all its members.

According to the community survey, residents feel there is room for the Ishpeming Township population to grow. The majority (59%) responded that the local population should grow a little, with 17% responding that it should grow a lot. 23% said it should stay the same. This suggests that the community is relatively open to both new and returning residents.

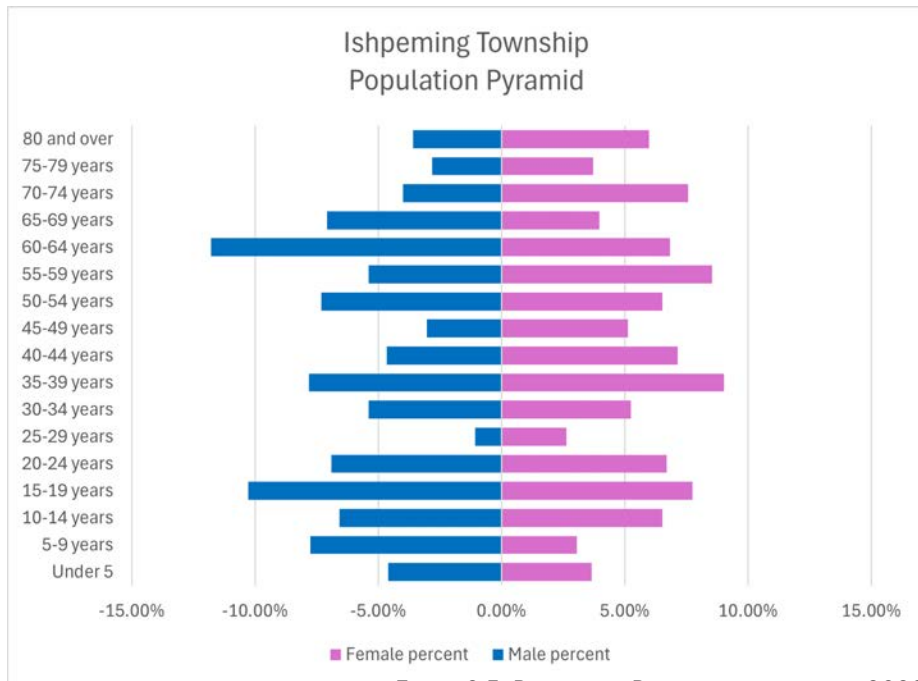


FIGURE 3.5: POPULATION PYRAMID BY SEX AND AGE 2023

INCOME TRENDS

At this time in 2025, the most current and best available income figures are provided by the Census Bureau’s 2023 American Community Survey (ACS). Like any survey, it comes with a margin of error relative to the size of the community sample. Figure 3.6 below depicts two types of income data, households and families in the year 2023. A household consists of all people who occupy a housing unit collectively, while a family is defined by two or more related individuals within a single household. Households generally make more than families, usually because of multiple earners. At a certain point, after \$100,000, it tends to even out. According to the figure, the most households and families in the township make between \$50,000 and \$75,000 and again between \$100,000 and \$149,000. These numbers are relatively high for rural townships in Michigan.

Median household income and the poverty rate can reveal more trends. The median household income in 2023 was \$79,485, just over the Michigan median income at \$66,986.

From 2010 to 2023, Ishpeming Township saw a notable

increase in both household and family income levels—rising by over 50%. Likewise, Ishpeming Township’s poverty level rate is 5.4%, almost half of the state rate of 13.4%. With low poverty levels and high-income levels, the data suggests that the township’s residents are relatively economically secure. However, while this points to economic progress, it’s important to consider how inflation and cost-of-living changes have shaped residents’ real financial well-being during this period.

Incomes tend to rise over time, so do the price of goods and services. Unfortunately, the price of goods and services has continued to rise faster than wages. This leaves many people, not in poverty, but in a different category, called ALICE. ALICE is an acronym that stands for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed - meaning a group of people who, even though they have employment, are struggling economically. They are above the Federal Poverty Level but still barely make enough to make ends meet. ALICE is put together by the United Way and describes the population in this segment as “working hard but barely surviving and definitely not thriving.” These populations often have to

	2010	2023	Change
Median Household Income (MHI)	\$48,333	\$79,485	+64.5%
Median Family Income (MFI)	\$62,083	\$94,375	+52.1%

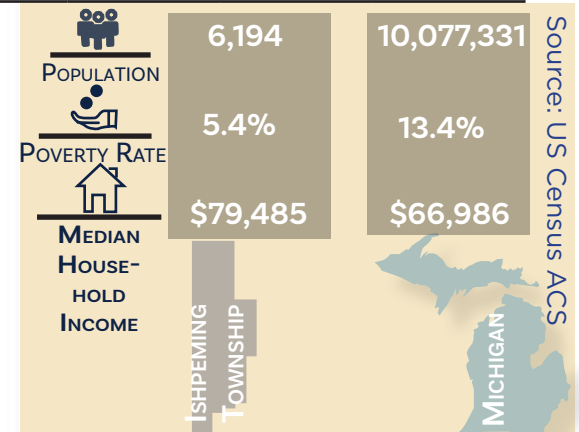
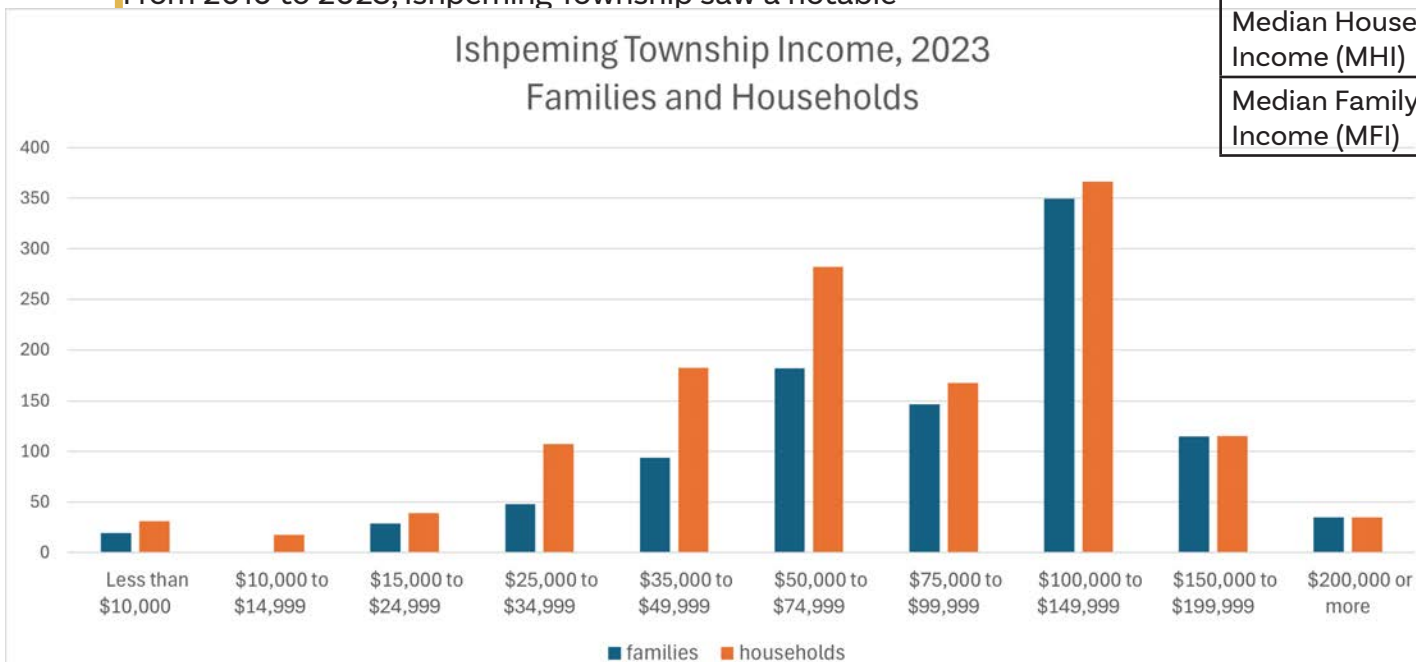


FIGURE 3.7: FAMILY INCOME AND POVERTY 2023

FIGURE 3.6: FAMILY INCOME AND HOUSEHOLD INCOME, 2023
SOURCE: ACS 2022, CENSUS BUREAU 2010, 2022

make difficult choices with limited resources. A single mother might have to choose between medication and baby formula. A college student may be having to choose between grocery shopping and making rent.

According to this report, in Marquette County 41% of households struggle to afford the basic necessities of housing, child care, food, technology, health care, and transportation. While financial circumstances for families and households can change over time, many find themselves bouncing between poverty and the ALICE threshold, while those above the ALICE threshold are less susceptible to these changes. In figure 3.8, poverty levels stay about the same, while the ALICE population fluctuates and continues to grow. In 2010 the ALICE rate was 20% for Marquette County, while in 2022 it was 26%. During the 2023 update, Marquette County's ALICE rate is 41%, almost doubling. While this category continues to grow along with inflation, it is important that township and county leaders recognize that

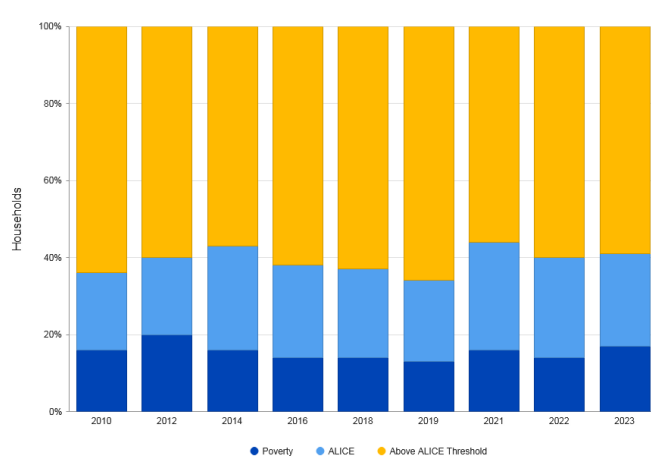


FIGURE 3.8

SOURCE: UNITEDFORALICE.ORG/COUNTY-REPORTS/MICHIGANEHOLD

income and poverty are not the only markers of household stability. It is also important to note that many people in the ALICE population are employed, but a substantial portion of both full and part-time workers are paid by the hour; these workers are more likely to have fluctuations in income and are less likely to receive benefits like sick leave and paid time off. According to the United Way report, only a small portion of Marquette County is unemployed, about 2.9%, while those not in the labor force account for 21.1%, and those retired account for 20.1%. The seasonality of the tourism industry and service-based jobs in Marquette County is also an important factor to consider.

Figure 3.10 is a table called the Household Survival Budget. The Household Survival Budget reflects the minimum cost to live and work in the current economy and includes housing, childcare, food, transportation, health care, technology, and taxes. It does not include savings for emergencies or future goals like college or retirement. In 2023, household costs in every county in Michigan were well above the Federal Poverty Level of \$13,590 for a single adult and \$27,750 for a family of four.

Household Survival Budget, Marquette County, Michigan, 2023								
Monthly Costs	Single Adult	One Adult, One Child	One Adult, One In Child Care	Two Adults	Two Adults Two Children	Two Adults, Two In Child Care	Single Adult 65+	Two Adults 65+
Housing	\$662	\$800	\$800	\$800	\$988	\$988	\$662	\$800
Child Care	\$0	\$200	\$533	\$0	\$400	\$1,133	\$0	\$0
Food	\$506	\$856	\$768	\$927	\$1,555	\$1,373	\$465	\$853
Transportation	\$416	\$539	\$539	\$635	\$964	\$964	\$352	\$507
Health Care	\$180	\$447	\$447	\$447	\$670	\$670	\$494	\$987
Technology	\$86	\$86	\$86	\$116	\$116	\$116	\$86	\$116
Miscellaneous	\$185	\$293	\$317	\$293	\$469	\$524	\$206	\$326
Taxes	\$311	\$290	\$345	\$436	\$431	\$556	\$365	\$682
Monthly Total	\$2,346	\$3,511	\$3,835	\$3,654	\$5,593	\$6,324	\$2,630	\$4,271
ANNUAL TOTAL	\$28,152	\$42,132	\$46,020	\$43,848	\$67,116	\$75,888	\$31,560	\$51,252
Hourly Wage	\$14.08	\$21.07	\$23.01	\$21.92	\$33.56	\$37.94	\$15.78	\$25.63

FIGURE 3.10

SOURCE: UNITEDFORALICE.ORG/COUNTY-REPORTS/MICHIGANEHOLD INCOME, 2023 15

Labor Status, Population 16 and Over, Marquette County, Michigan, 2023

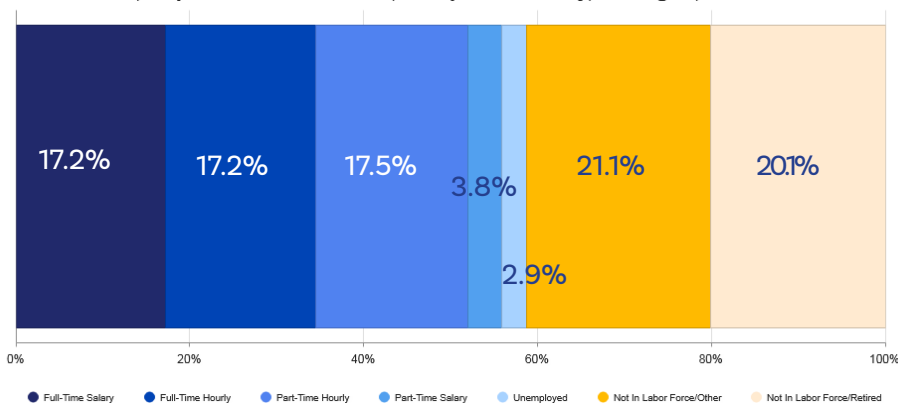


FIGURE 3.9

SOURCE: UNITEDFORALICE.ORG/COUNTY-REPORTS/MICHIGANEHOLD INCOME, 2023

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

At this time in 2025, the best and most reliable employment and economic data comes from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics and the St Louis FRED, Federal Reserve Economic Data. While there is no data for Ishpeming Township specifically, there is valuable data available for Marquette County.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics in figure 3.11, the unemployment rate in Marquette County has had various ups and downs over the years. In 2000, the County's employment total was 32,958 with an average annual unemployment rate of 4.5%. The most recent total in late 2020 indicates the employment total was 29,121 with an average annual unemployment rate of 9.7%. The shaded areas indicate a recession, with the blue line indicating the unemployment rate. The Great Recession, which officially lasted from about December 2007 through June 2009 resulted in an average unemployment rate of just over 10%. In subsequent years, Michigan experienced a longer recovery period than the rest of the nation, presumably as a result of having a less diversified economy, heavily centered around manufacturing. Since this event, the employment numbers have not fully recovered to pre-recession levels. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic is in part responsible for

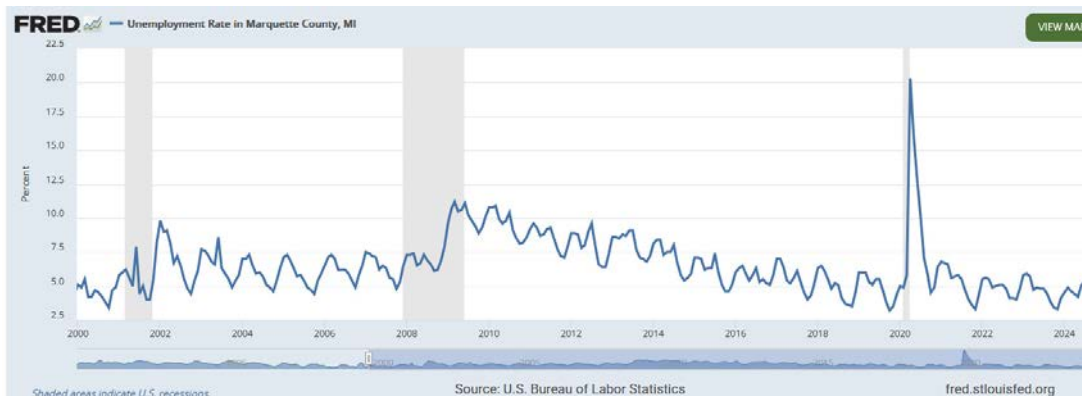


FIGURE 3.11 UNEMPLOYMENT IN MARQUETTE COUNTY, 2022

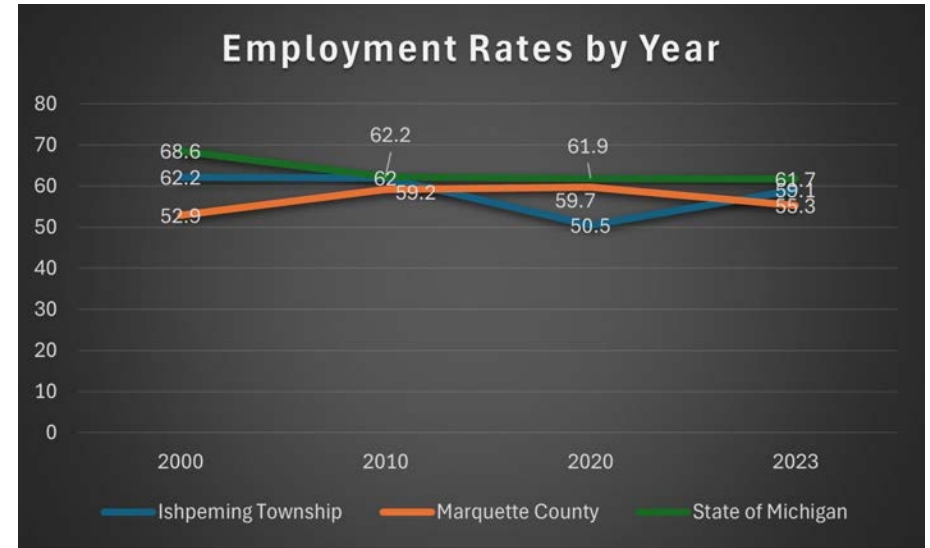


FIGURE 3.12 EMPLOYMENT RATES BY YEAR, TOWNSHIP, COUNTY, STATE
SOURCE: AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 2023

higher unemployment numbers, as certain professions and trades were put on hold for lockdowns to stop the spread. Also in 2020, employment numbers dipped by almost 1,000 jobs. It is possible that following the pandemic, many workers have permanently left the local labor force; perhaps moved, retired, or are in disability status.

Conversely, employment rates since 2000 have generally dipped by a couple of percentage points. For instance, in the State of Michigan, the 2023 employment rate is 61.7%, and is considerably lower than the 68.6% in 2000. Marquette County's employment rates have risen throughout the early 2000's, but have since dipped to 55.3%. Ishpeming Township's employment rate has been somewhat stable until 2020 when it dipped to 50.5%. There has been a rise by 9 percent in 2023, indicating a steady rise back to that of state and county levels. While these rates are not too different, it is useful to compare the Township rate to that of the larger County and that of the State to get a larger picture of the state of employment.

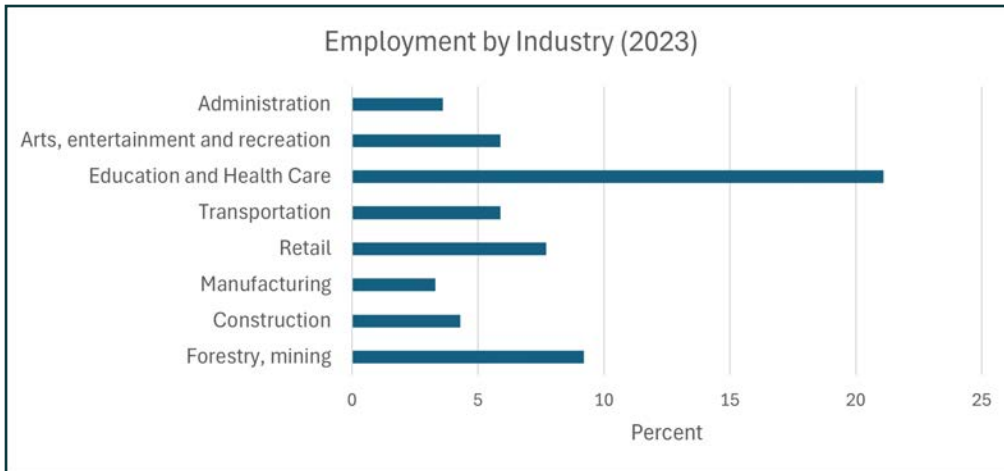


FIGURE 3.13 EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY, ISHPEMING TOWNSHIP, ACS 2023

In Marquette County’s Master Plan, Marquette County 2040, the county is split into four different sections. Ishpeming Township falls into the Iron Core Region, which is described as “heartland living, rich with heritage” pulling from its rugged resilient mining roots and small-town living. This region saw the brunt of the mine closures and has since struggled to pivot industries and restore historic downtowns. Today, the top occupations in Marquette County are trending towards Education, Health Care, Retail, Manufacturing, and Office Administration and Management. Education and Health Care is the fastest growing category in the past few years. The top employers in Ishpeming Township reflect these shifting priorities, as noted by the following key employers:

Key Employers	~# of Employees
UP Health System - Bell Hospital	350
UPPCO - Ishpeming Center	160
Ishpeming Public Schools	75
MarqTran - County Headquarters	100

For most of Marquette County’s history, the economy was principally based on the iron ore mining industry. Mining on the Marquette Iron Range in Marquette County goes back more

than 150 years. Since the closing of many of these mines, the economy has had to shift from iron ore production to a more manufacturing, retail service, administration, and tourism-based economy. It is crucial that our local economy and industries are able to shift to meet these growing industries to stay relevant and viable into the future, offering local employment opportunities and generating local wealth. According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2019-2023 data, workers aged

16 and over in Ishpeming Township have a mean travel time to work of 22.8 minutes. This is roughly 25% longer than the average commute in Marquette County at 18.6 minutes. It is estimated that about 75% of township residents leave the township for work, while only 5% work within the township. Given the rural nature of the township, it follows that residents in Ishpeming Township have to travel slightly longer to get to work, increasing costs in time, vehicular maintenance, and scheduling. This becomes even more strenuous when households only have one personal vehicle.

Ishpeming Township would benefit from having more and diverse local employers. One way some U.P. communities fill this void is with the tourism industry. Ishpeming Township is fortunate to have vast swaths of wild land, many lakes, and outdoor recreation opportunities of all types. It also has a rich history from which to draw unique visitor experiences from, either through storytelling, interpretive signage, or guided tours of the area.

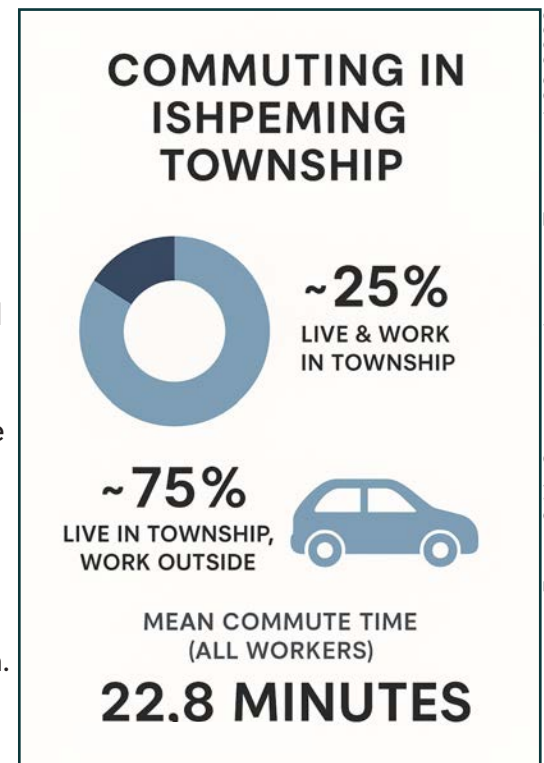


FIGURE 3.14: COMMUTING, ISHPEMING TOWNSHIP, ACS 2023

EDUCATION TRENDS

Educational attainment in Ishpeming Township reflects a strong emphasis on high school education, with a notable portion of residents pursuing higher education. According to the US Census Reporter, of residents 25 and older, 94% are high school graduates. Of those, 28.9% have attained a bachelor's degree or higher. Almost 37% have had some college education but have had to stop school before graduation.

Comparing these trends to broader regions, that of the County and the State, Marquette County's highschool graduation rate among those 25 and older, 95.2% have graduated highschool. In the state of Michigan the average is 92%. In the entire United States, the national average is 89.9% Ishpeming Township sits just under the county average, but well over the country's average.

However, Ishpeming Township lacks in higher educational attainment, with 34.7% of Marquette County residents holding a bachelor's degree or higher. In the state of Michigan the rate is slightly lower at 31.1%. This shows the township is committed to education and growth, offering excellent schools and continuous educational opportunities. Community initiatives promote lifelong learning and development, contributing to the overall

educational landscape of the area. This means that while there is a high rate of high school completion, there are no local (within the township) higher education establishments, possibly making it more difficult to pursue. In terms of educational attainment by race, the highest rate of high school graduation is among Native American and Black residents, with a rate of 100%.

It is also important to note that many graduated students may not go to a traditional college or university and may instead choose to attend vocational schools, Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses, or mentorships. These sorts of establishments would be highly valuable to Ishpeming Township, given the high employment rates of those in manufacturing, administration, and health care industries. While specific data is not readily available, in Michigan during the 2023-24 school year, over 112,156 students enrolled in CTE programs, marking a noticeable 9% increase in the past two years.

Educational attainment

94%

High school grad or higher

about the same as the rate in Marquette County: 95.5%

about the same as the rate in Michigan: 91.9%

28.9%

Bachelor's degree or higher

about 80 percent of the rate in Marquette County: 35.8%

about 90 percent of the rate in Michigan: 31.8%

Population by highest level of education

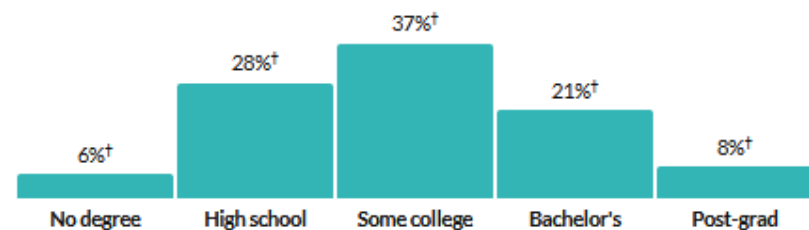


FIGURE 3.15: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT 24 YEARS AND OLDER, ISHPEMING TOWNSHIP, 2023

HOUSING TRENDS

Housing availability, type, and condition are all important factors contributing to the overall quality of life in Ishpeming Township. This section assesses various housing characteristics using 2010 - 2023 Census data, the latest American Community Survey (ACS) data, and local real estate listings in order to provide a snapshot of the current housing trends.

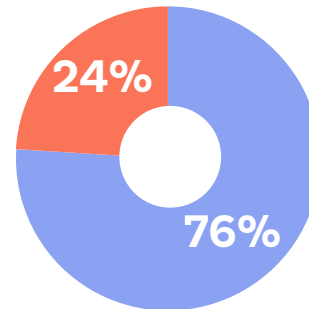
Since the 2020 pandemic, the housing market has been booming. Housing prices continue to rise and the demand for quality affordable housing in Marquette County continues to grow. Home prices in Ishpeming Township have seen a similar rise. According to realtor.com, in May of 2024, the median list price for a home was \$147,400. In May of 2025, the median list price is \$208,650, reflecting an increase of 41.5% in one year alone. These figures are consistent with the significant rise in home prices in the area in recent years.

Housing in Ishpeming Township tends to be more affordable than that in other areas of Marquette County. The median list price in the City of Marquette is about \$389,000, almost double the price of housing in the township. This is but one factor when people decide where to live and work. Rentals are likewise growing in price per month. According to Apartments.com, the average rent for a 1-bedroom apartment at this time in 2025, is \$718, for a 2-bedroom apartment it is \$1,192 a month. Both of these figures reflect a rising rate of about 1.2%. While this rate may seem small, it puts further financial strain on those who may already be struggling. Availability of apartments is also an issue.

A **household** consists of all people who occupy a housing unit collectively, while a **family household** is defined by

HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE

Non-Family Households

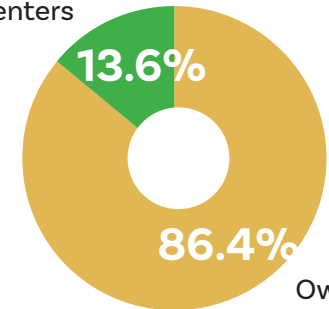


Family Households

Average Household Size = 2.49

HOUSING BY TENURE

Renters



Owners

two or more related individuals within a single household. A **non-family household** means the people who occupy a housing unit are not related, such as roommates. In Ishpeming Township, 24% of households are non-family households, while family households make up 76%. Families currently outweigh non-families in the township. The average household size in the township is 2.49 people.

Housing tenure is a financial arrangement and ownership structure under which someone has the right to live in a house or other dwelling. This is usually in the form of a mortgage or rental agreement. In Ishpeming Township, 86.4% of households are considered owners, under a mortgage tenure agreement. The other 13.6% are households who have a rental agreement with a landlord or a company. This means that not all families are owners and not all non-family households are renters. Housing tenure over time (figure 3.17) shows that the owner and rental rates have stayed at relatively similar rates with about a quarter of the population of the township renting. Since 2010, however, ownership has been going down

while the percentage of renters grew. This is indicative of the rate of the rising costs of homeownership over the last twelve years. Other important factors to consider when examining tenure and household type are the age of tenants, household size, educational attainment, and the availability of housing stock.

Tenure By Age (figure 3.18) reveals that most homeowners in Ishpeming Township are within the 35-44, 55-64, and 65-74 age brackets. These numbers dip significantly at the Under 35 and 85 and Older age brackets. This suggests that most homeowners are retired or are getting close to retirement, with the over 85 crowd possibly moving in with family or caregiving homes depending on their needs. Those under 35 could struggle to become homeowners based on income or their ability to secure a mortgage. The age categories with the most renters are those Under 35 and at 55-64 years of age. This suggests that most renters are on the younger side of the spectrum. Younger people often don't have the immediate means to make a big housing purchase, even if they would like to. The high cost of homeownership, even entry-level, continues to be a barrier for most young people.

Household size can often determine income levels, budgets, and living situations. The household size most common in the township is a 2-person household. These might be married couples, unmarried couples, or roommates. Among them, 507 account for homeowners, while only 19 households are renters. The highest category for renters is 1-person households. Households consisting

TENURE BY AGE

	Owner	Renter	Total
Under 35	85	93	178
35-44 years	258	16	274
45-54 years	216	0	216
55-64 years	285	48	333
65-74 years	188	4	192
75-84 years	87	12	99
85 and older	41	10	51

TENURE BY HOUSEHOLD SIZE

	Owner	Renter	Total
1 person	169	120	289
2 person	507	19	526
3 person	182	44	226
4 or more people	199	0	199

of four or more people who own their house are almost as numerous as those consisting of one person homeowners.

The housing tenure data for Ishpeming Township reveals important patterns about community stability and housing market dynamics. According to the 2023 American Community Survey, the township's housing stock shows a diverse range of occupancy periods, with residents having moved into their current homes across several decades.

The data (figure 3.19) shows that approximately 23% of current residents (277 households) have lived in their homes for over 35 years, having moved in during 1989 or earlier. This substantial long-term resident population

FIGURE 3.18: TENURE BY AGE AND SIZE, ACS, 2023

TENURE OVER TIME

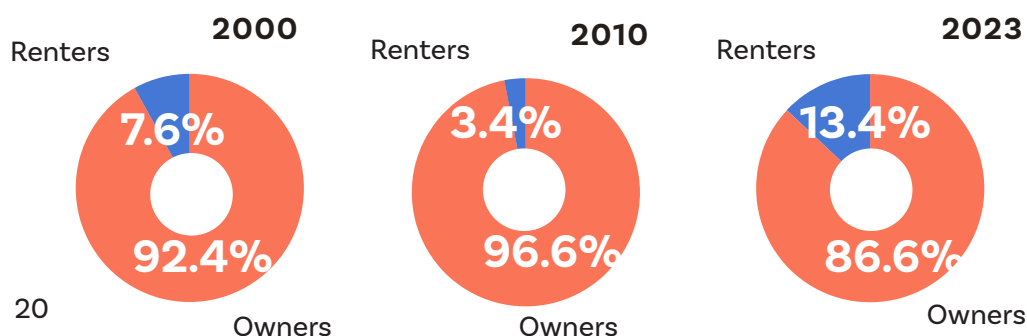


FIGURE 3.17: HOUSING TENURE OVER TIME, ACS, 2023

indicates strong community roots and housing stability. Notably, all of these long-term residents are homeowners, with no renters remaining from this early period. The largest single cohort of recent arrivals moved between 2010-2017, representing 262 households. This period coincides with the post-recession recovery years and suggests renewed housing market activity during this timeframe. The homeownership rate among this group is exceptionally high at 91% (239 owners vs. 23 renters). More recent years show continued, though somewhat reduced, housing market activity. Between 2018-2020, 269 households moved into their current residences, with a homeownership rate of 62% (167 owners, 102 renters). The most recent period (2021 or later) shows 114 new resident households, maintaining a similar homeownership rate of 61%.

time periods, homeownership significantly outpaces rental occupancy, indicating Ishpeming Township's character as primarily a homeownership community. While homeownership dominates, the presence of rental housing, particularly among more recent residents, suggests ongoing demand for diverse housing options to serve different household types and life stages.

This tenure pattern suggests a stable residential community with consistent, moderate growth and strong homeownership preferences that should inform future housing and development policies.

Educational attainment patterns in Ishpeming Township show distinct relationships with homeownership rates, reflecting broader economic and demographic trends in the community. The data reveals a strong correlation between educational attainment and homeownership rates. Homeowners significantly outnumber renters across all educational levels, with owners representing roughly 87% of all adult residents. However, the rental population, while small at about 190 residents, shows a more diverse educational mix proportionally.

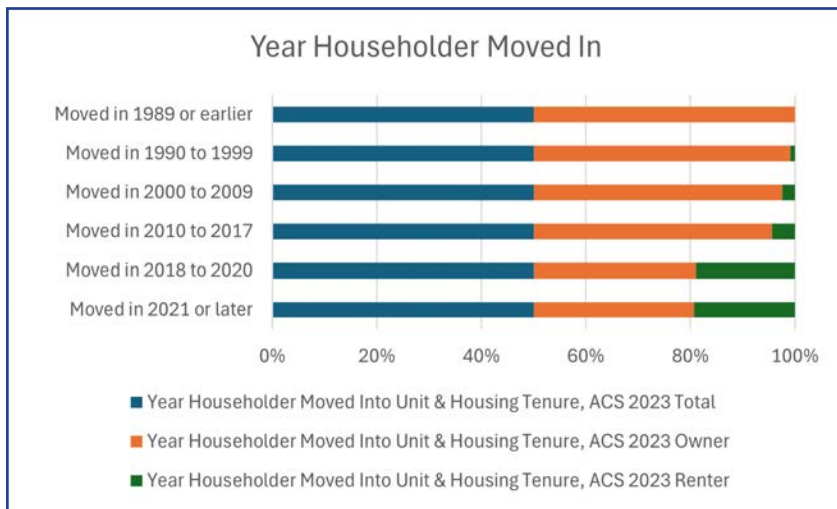


FIGURE 3.19: HOUSING TENURE OVER TIME, ACS, 2023

The high percentage of long-term residents suggests strong neighborhood stability and community attachment, which is valuable for maintaining local character and supporting civic engagement. Across all

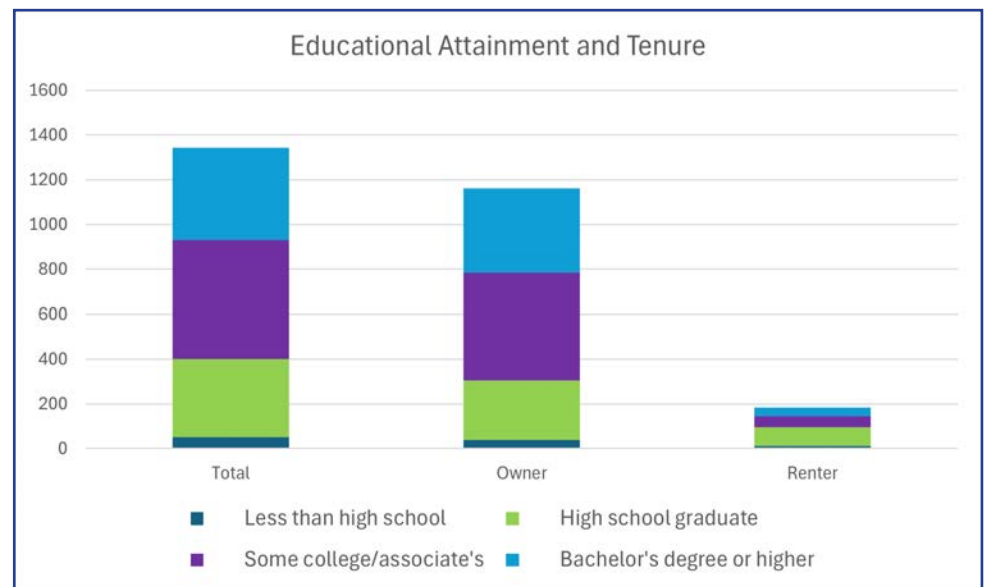


FIGURE 3.20: HOUSING TENURE OVER TIME, ACS, 2023

The high overall educational attainment levels suggest a skilled workforce that can support diverse economic development initiatives. The strong homeownership rates across all education levels indicate broad housing stability and community investment. The presence of college-educated renters may represent younger professionals, recent graduates, or individuals in transition, suggesting continued need for quality rental housing options to serve this demographic and support workforce retention. This educational and tenure profile positions Ishpeming Township as a stable community with human capital assets that can support both residential quality of life and economic development objectives.

Housing stock plays a fundamental role in shaping the current housing climate, influencing affordability, availability, and overall market conditions. Data reveals a community with predominantly older housing stock, declining total inventory, and limited new construction

activity that reflects broader regional economic patterns. Ishpeming Township’s housing inventory is characterized by its historic character, with the majority of units built during the mid-20th century. The largest portion of housing stock dates to the 1960-1979 period (approximately 950 units), representing the community’s peak development era. Combined with units from 1940-1959 (about 580 units), nearly two-thirds of the township’s housing was constructed during a 40-year period of regional economic growth.

Pre-1940 housing accounts for roughly 460 units, indicating the community’s established historic foundation. In contrast, recent construction has been minimal, with fewer than 100 units built since 2000, and only about 45 units constructed since 2010. Building permit data for Marquette County shows the broader regional context affecting Ishpeming Township. New residential construction peaked in the late 1990s and mid-2000s, reaching over 400 units annually during boom periods. However, construction activity has remained consistently low since the 2008 recession, averaging fewer than 120 units annually county-wide in recent years.

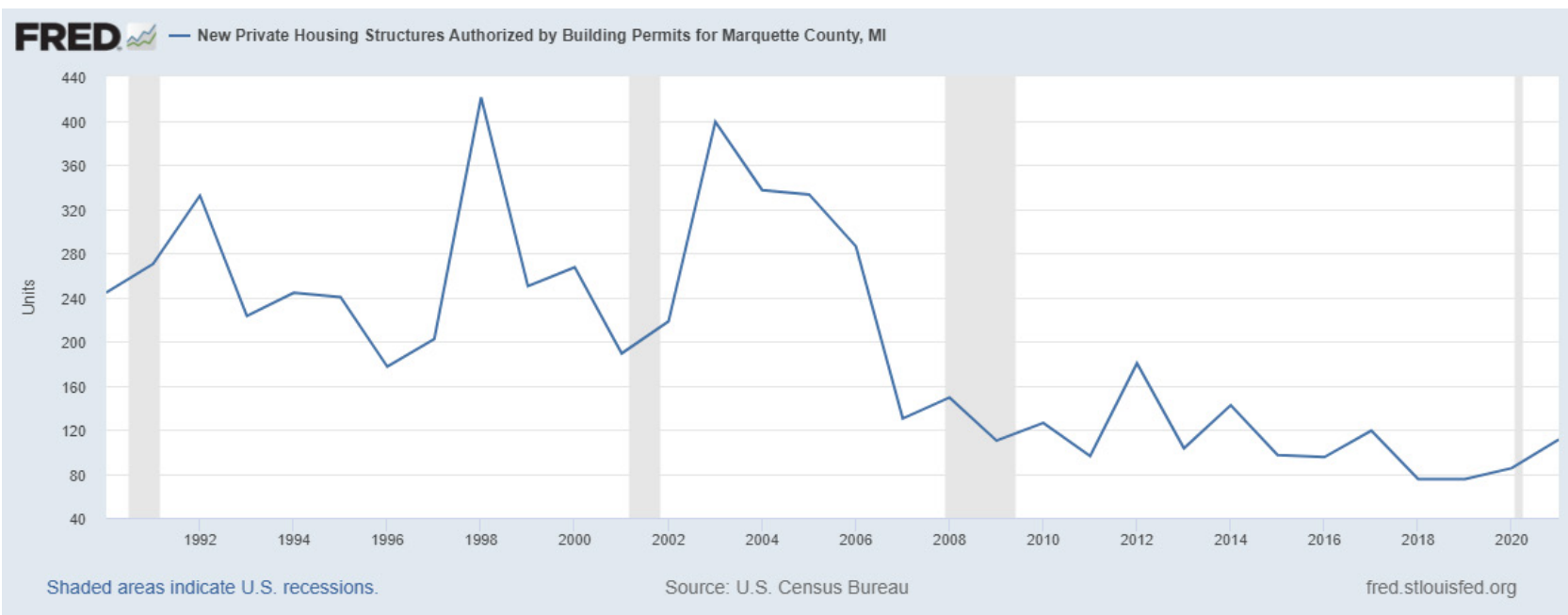


FIGURE 3.21: PRIVATE HOUSING STRUCTURE BUILDING PERMITS: MARQUETTE COUNTY
SOURCE: FEDERAL RESERVE ECONOMIC DATA, FRED @ ST. LOUIS FED, 2023

The township has experienced a notable decline in total housing units over the past two decades. From 1,692 total units in 2000, the inventory dropped to 1,737 units in 2010 (a slight increase), before declining significantly to 1,551 units by 2023. This represents an 8% reduction in housing stock since 2000.

Occupied housing has remained relatively stable, declining modestly from 1,347 units in 2000 to 1,342 units in 2023. However, vacant and seasonal units have decreased dramatically from 345 units in 2000 to 208 units in 2023, indicating either demolition of deteriorated properties or conversion of seasonal units to year-round occupancy.

The aging housing stock presents both challenges and opportunities. With over 60% of units exceeding 40 years old, the community faces ongoing maintenance and modernization needs. The minimal new construction suggests limited development pressure but also indicates potential constraints on growth and housing choice.

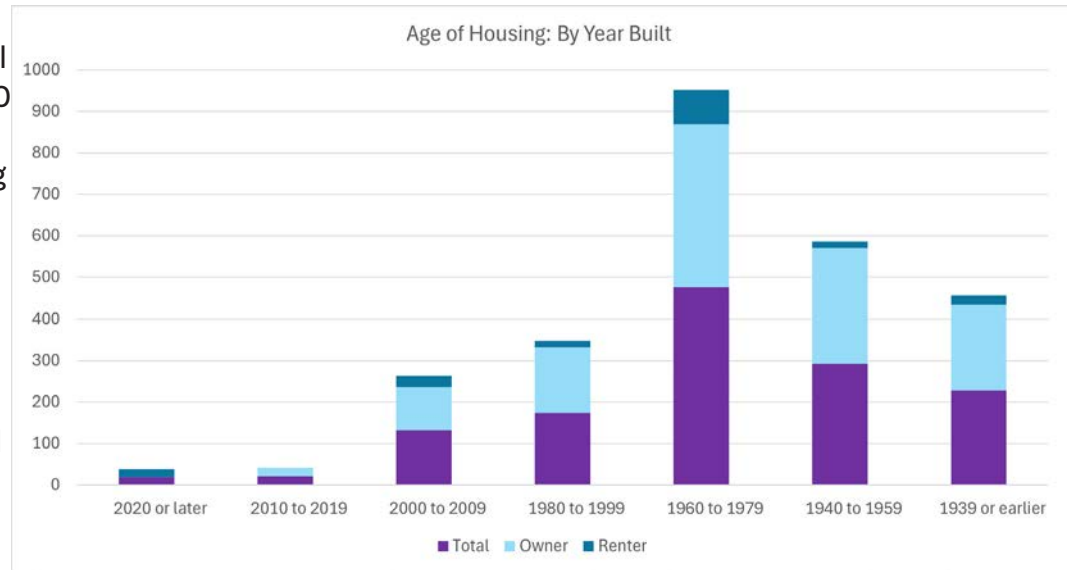


FIGURE 3.23: AGE OF HOUSING BY YEAR BUILD, ISHPERING TOWNSHIP, ACS 2023

The decline in vacant units may reflect market adjustments and property maintenance issues, while the stable occupied housing count suggests continued demand. Future planning should address housing rehabilitation needs, infill development opportunities, and strategies to attract new residential investment while preserving the community’s historic character.

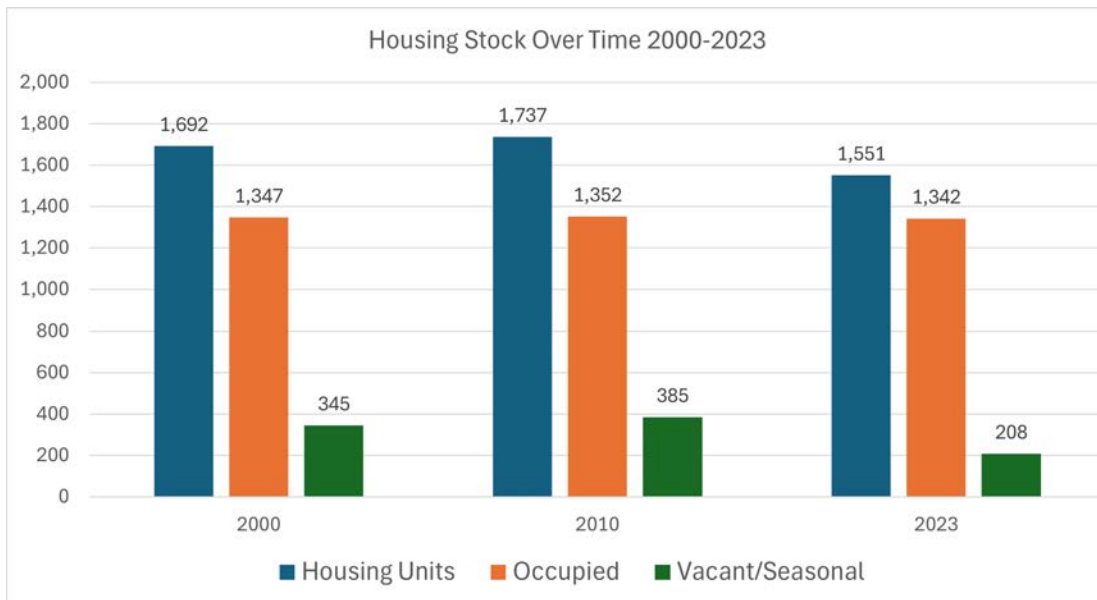


FIGURE 3.22: HOUSING STOCK OVER TIME, ISHPERING TOWNSHIP, ACS 2023

4 People + Community

Examining trends shaping the Township, County, and Region provides an important snapshot of demographic and economic statistics. Analyzing these statistics and predicting future trends can help communities plan for their development in order to meet the needs and desires of their residents. Meeting these needs is important for residents to feel safe and included in the larger community, adding to current resident retention and new resident attraction.

Some ways to foster this identity and pride include celebrating shared histories, beautifying our community, and encouraging unique events that bring community members together in celebration. Storytelling, resident or business profiles, and successful branding campaigns can also help this effort.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Planning Commission, along with the results of the community survey, recognizes the following strategic priorities that guide and prioritize the following goals and objectives for future community development.

Community Identity + Pride

A common theme mentioned throughout the community survey is the desire to see more community ownership and pride in Ishpeming Township. Community pride fosters a sense of belonging and connection, not just to a place, but to each other and the larger community. People want a place to be proud of, much more than just hometown pride. When people feel proud of something, they will want to take care of it. Creating this feeling in Ishpeming Township could go a long way in the general upkeep of parks and public spaces, population retention, and economic development in the form of investment or businesses.

Healthy Population Growth

Rural areas often face the daunting problem of population growth and retention. Ishpeming Township's population numbers have hovered right around 3,500 for the last 20 years. While this number is not growing, it is not shrinking significantly either. This suggests that Ishpeming Township is a desirable place to live, work, and raise a family. Friendly communities, affordable living options, and proximity to outdoor recreational opportunities are among the top drivers for people choosing to relocate to the area. These are also contributing factors to general quality of life. High quality of life is desirable and can be achieved through placemaking efforts, embracing regional talent attraction and retention strategies, and consistent community events. Maintaining and growing the housing stock is another important feature for increasing in-migration.

Increased Public Engagement

Public engagement is a critical element in the development of broadly inclusive communities and leaders who are responsive to their own constituents. Increasing participation in planning activities and civic matters can help guide projects in a way that is most desirable for the general community.

Meaningful engagement can also lead to a more informed citizenry, mitigating harmful rumors and divisive hearsay. When residents are more informed, they are more empowered to provide constructive feedback to leaders which can result in project modifications that better align with the needs and wants of the community. Consistently meeting the public's expectation for public engagement serves to build a sense of trust, transparency, and understanding that will enhance the bond between the township and its residents.



GOALS + OBJECTIVES

Goal 4.1: Encourage population growth and retention of current residents through desirable amenities and purposeful marketing.

Objective 4.1.1: Promote Ishpeming Township as a destination for tourists and a safe and suitable area for families.

Objective 4.1.2: Improve local amenities such as high-speed internet, reliable public transportation, and walkability.

Objective 4.1.3: Provide township-wide “welcome wagon” or similar services to new and prospective residents.

Objective 4.1.4: Prioritize school and educational developments, access to parks and recreation, and pedestrian mobility and safety.

Goal 4.2: Encourage and facilitate community togetherness through broad inclusion, consistent township messaging, and representation.

Objective 4.2.1: Ensure broad community participation by reaching out consistently through multiple channels such as, local news, flyers, facebook, and a unified township internet presence.

Objective 4.2.2: Organize events that center around shared history of the Township, landmarks, or showcase areas of special interest.

Goal 4.3: Increase participation and involvement of citizens in public engagement and local decision-making processes.

Objective 4.1.1: Coordinate messaging efforts online through the township website and utilize social media channels for maximum reach.

Objective 4.1.2: Identify and utilize community leaders and board members to take a lead on promotion and organization for community events and education.

Objective 4.1.3: Include announcements of public meetings in local publications and bulletin boards in each community within the township.

Objective 4.1.4: Engage in educational opportunities for the community, highlighting the importance of public participation and encouraging participation.



Goal 4.4: Invest in youth-centered civic engagement opportunities to bolster community pride and ownership.

Objective 4.4.1: Collaborate with schools to foster meaningful opportunities for engagement that match with curriculum and grade level.

Objective 4.4.2: Consider appointing a youth liaison to the planning commission or board to facilitate youth engagement and ownership in the community.

Objective 4.4.3: Coordinate with schools on volunteer opportunities, community event support, and community beautification efforts.

Objective 4.4.4: Survey high school and middle school students on priorities in the community and foster ideas for youth centered community improvements or updates to amenities.



Goal 4.5: Create and maintain amenities that allow for senior citizens to age in place comfortably.

Objective 4.5.1: Continue updates and improvements to the programming and facility at the Ishpeming Senior Center to improve engagement and participation.

Objective 4.5.2: Create a plan to develop quality market-rate senior housing and/or assisted living facilities to keep local senior in the area.

Objective 4.5.3: When making transportation improvements, consider seniors that may have limited mobility options.

Objective 4.5.4: Consider engaging with local schools on intergenerational events, opportunities, and meals for community cohesion.



5

Economic Development

The field of economic development has traditionally focused on the strategies of business attraction, retention, and expansion to drive local job growth and prosperity. However, the evolution of our society, driven by factors like the advancements in technology, globalization, and others have changed this field significantly. Today, talented and skilled people are the fuel of the current global economy and where they live and cluster, industries tend to grow and thrive. These workers are generally more free to relocate and are searching for places that hold a high quality of life, competitive salaries, and high-quality affordable housing options. Vibrant downtowns and inclusive communities are also significant factors.

In the Upper Peninsula, there are many opportunities for knowledge and skill-based industries, but land-based industries, upon which the U.P. was founded (forestry, agriculture, mining, fishing) are still important today. Mining was the foundation for the Ishpeming area and is still an active industry in the larger Marquette County area, with the Eagle and Tilden mines employing many who reside in Ishpeming Township. Unfortunately, land-based industries are particularly subject to market changes and sustainability practices, making longevity hard to predict. Heavy reliance on relatively few land-based industries may leave the community less resilient when faced with significant economic shocks, such as a mine closure. It would be beneficial for local leaders to seek opportunities for industry diversification to increase local employment. One such diversification tactic is to lean into the natural beauty of the township, and to promote tourism and outdoor recreation opportunities.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Planning Commission, along with the results of the community survey, recognizes the following strategic priorities that guide and prioritize the following goals and objectives for future economic development.

Industry Diversification

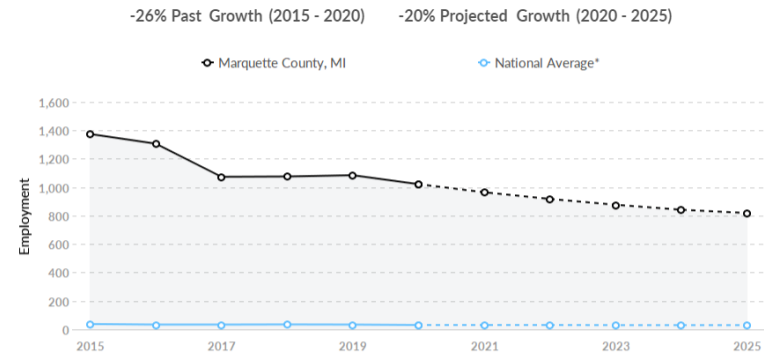
Industry diversification is a strategy that seeks to grow the output, workforce, and wages of new and emerging industries in regions where few larger industries dominate the economy. Diversification of industries, similar to investment planning, can result in reduced potential losses and greater potential for rapid recovery when impacted by economic shocks, such as the Great Recession and the COVID-19 Pandemic.

According to EMSI, Economic Modeling Specialists International, which provides high-quality employment data and economic analysis via web tools and reports, the highest industry cluster in the county is Non-Function Employment, meaning, service-based uncategorical industries such as food service and retail, numbering over 16,000 jobs in 2020 (figure 23). Knowledge-Intensive Business Services is the next highest industry cluster, followed closely by Higher Education. Agriculture and Natural Resource extraction is still high up on the list, but only employs about 5% of the local workforce.

Mining remains a current staple of Marquette County industries, but is expected to continue its downward trend. Figure 24 shows the employment rates of the County along with the national average. Marquette County has many more employees than the national average, but there has been a 26% drop in growth over 2015-2020, and is projected to fall another 20% by 2025.

Supply Is Higher Than the National Average

The regional vs. national average employment helps you understand if the supply of Mining (except Oil and Gas) is a strength or weakness for Marquette County, MI, and how it is changing relative to the nation. An average area of this size would have 31* employees, while there are 1,022 here. This higher than expected supply may make it easier to find candidates. The gap between expected and actual employment is projected to narrow over the next 5 years.



*National average values are derived by taking the national value for Mining (except Oil and Gas) and scaling it down to account for the difference in overall workforce size between the nation and Marquette County, MI. In other words, the values represent the national average adjusted for region size.

Figure 23: Mining Industry Employment Rates
Source: Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI), 2020

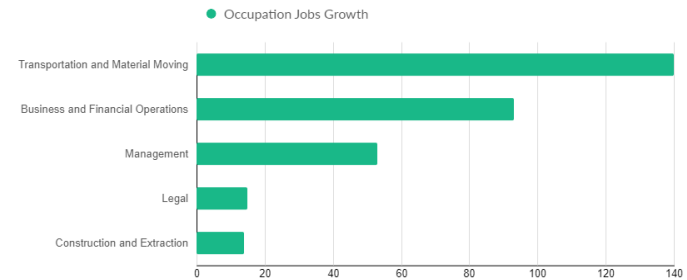
A breakdown of those currently employed in the mining industry by age in figure 25 shows that most employees are between the ages of 35 and 54, with almost a quarter of those being over 55. This suggests that those in the mining industry may stay until they retire. These figures also suggest that young people are not relying on employment in the mining industry but may be searching elsewhere for more sustainable and reliable opportunities.

The decline of the mining industry ultimately means less entry-level family-wage jobs for the residents of Marquette County. While mining remains an important industry in Marquette County, it is not sustainable nor dependable for future generations as the natural resources in the area are limited and finite.

There has been a recent shift away from mining and manufacturing from 2020 onwards, with management and technical services industries growing the fastest (figure 26). The top growing occupations meanwhile

include management, transportation and material moving, and business/financial operations. Transportation and material moving occupations are quickly outpacing the rest, with the number of positions reaching over 140 in Marquette County alone. This suggests that skills and experience are vital when seeking specialized or management positions.

Top Growing Occupations



Top Growing Industries

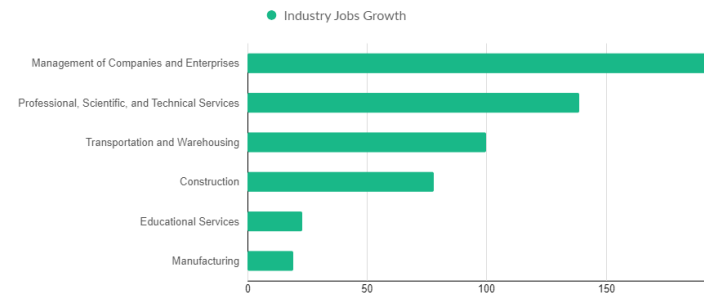


Figure 25: Top Growing Occupations and Industries, Marquette County
Source: Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI), 2020

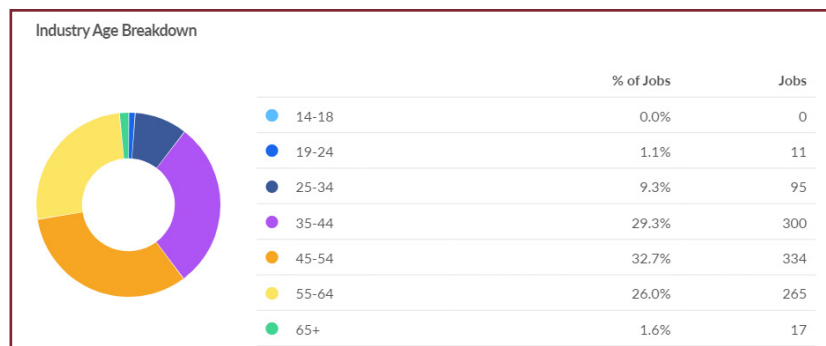


Figure 24: Mining Industry Age Breakdown
Source: Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI), 2020

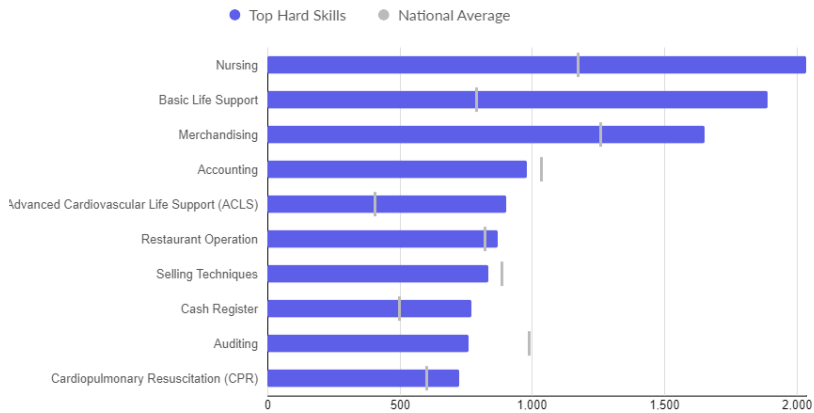


Figure 26: Top Hard Skills vs National Average, Marquette County
 Source: Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI), 2020

Figure 26 shows the top Hard Skills in Marquette County compared to the National Average. Hard skills refer to the job-related knowledge and abilities that employees need to perform their job duties effectively. Soft skills are the personal qualities that make an employee successful, such as personal relations, collaboration, and time management. Hard skills show the level of training and specialization an employee needs to be eligible for certain occupations.

Nursing is the top hard skill for Marquette County, followed closely by Basic Life Support and Merchandising. All of these skills exceed the national average, and is indicative of the importance of the health sector in the County and those who support it.

Accounting, Selling Techniques, and Auditing are hard skills where Marquette County falls behind the National Average, but are not vastly important for the region's economy. Growing skills in a workforce is often a necessary and difficult task, especially when there is a major shift in industries, like in Marquette County.

Ishpeming Township in particular has a strong base in manufacturing industries, as discussed in Chapter 3, along with strong values on educational attainment. Talent and skill pipelines can make a large impact and often seek to reach high school and college students.

Talent & Skill Pipeline Development

Talent and skill pipelines are a method of keeping and maintaining a pool of talented and skilled workers, ready to fill in employment and knowledge gaps in a certain industry. Pipelines can be built with the help of local employers, schools, and other community driven or economic development organizations. These pipelines can also help support emerging industries, such as the tech industry, remote working, and outdoor recreation. Figure 27 shows an example process in which the City, an economic developer, higher education institution, or a local employer can start to develop a highly skilled and already trained pool of potential employees. First an industry is selected and their needs are assessed. Where are they lacking? What sorts of positions need to be filled either now or in the near future? Develop training programs and/ or credentials to meet those specific needs. Recruitment starts, often at the high school level, for interested students. The candidates that complete the program are now hire-ready and strengthen the local economy. By forming mutually beneficial partnerships with local businesses and industries, the local economy can be strengthened with potential workers while encouraging the future workforce (students) to stay in the area. These pipelines can provide a clear path from school to career and are an investment in specially trained individuals for companies. Likewise, outside of traditional career paths, entrepreneurship and business incubators also have the potential to create further jobs and opportunities. These activities could also be

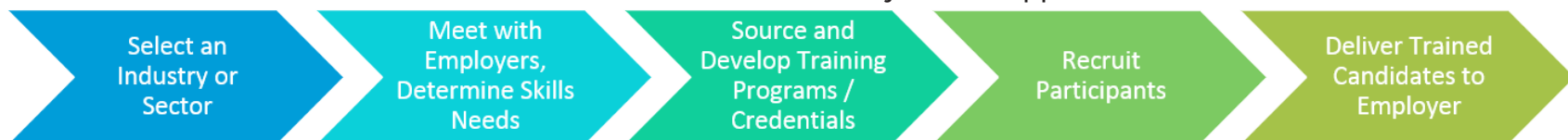


Figure 27: Talent and Skill Pipeline Example

supported using a pipeline or other services offered by the local SmartZone or employee resources such as Michigan Works.

Outdoor Recreation

Outdoor recreation has recently been recognized as an emerging and growing industry cluster, especially in Marquette County. Tourism and service-based jobs and industries are readily available, but due to their seasonal nature, these sectors are difficult to sustain a community on its own. However, following the COVID-19 Pandemic, Marquette County, along with much of Michigan, saw increased tourism and visitors, often overwhelming outdoor recreational capacities and threatening sustainability practices for popular facilities and attractions.

The Bureau of Economic Analysis calculates the economic output nationwide for outdoor recreation is \$689 billion, surpassing other industries such as mining, farming, and manufacturing. Since then, outdoor recreation has played an increasingly important role in supporting economic growth in the United States. Harnessing this industry growth for destination states, like Michigan, could be a strong economic driver for prosperity and quality of life.

As demand for outdoor recreation increases, so does the region's ability to grow this industry responsibly and sustainably. Ishpeming Township is at a unique vantage point in the U.P. and could increase the availability and quality of outdoor attractions, capturing tourists who value the distinctive amenities the township has to offer. The township could also attract repeat visitors who have already visited the more popular places such as Munising and Marquette, or those who prefer their great outdoor adventures without crowds of people.

At this time in 2025, township leaders have recognized the need for increased maintenance and capacity in the surrounding area and have outlined ongoing and future projects more specifically in the Parks and Recreation Plan (2024). Some proposed projects include renovating the Township Park and addressing the community need for non-motorized trails with regional connections. The proximity to trails, lakes, and camping amenities make Ishpeming Township a near perfect destination for outdoor recreation opportunities no matter the season.

Communities across Michigan recognize that outdoor recreation supports health, contributes to a high quality of life and—perhaps most importantly—attracts and sustains employers and families. Outdoor recreation in Michigan is a real and steady economic driver, especially in the Upper Peninsula.

In Michigan, outdoor recreation annually generates:



**\$26.6 BILLION in
consumer spending**



232,000 direct jobs



**\$2.1 BILLION in state and
local tax revenue**



**\$7.5 BILLION in wages
and salaries**

*Figure 28: Outdoor Recreation in Michigan Values
Source: Michigan Office of Outdoor Recreation Industry, 2021*

GOALS + OBJECTIVES

Goal 5.1: Invest in workforce development and youth retention strategies.

Objective 5.1.1: Partner with higher education universities, community colleges, and technical schools to align awareness and training opportunities with emerging industries.

Objective 5.1.2: Promote potential apprenticeships with local employers for high school students.

Objective 5.1.3: Make connections between local schools and Career Technical Education specialists like Marquette-Alger CTE, perhaps sharing resources with nearby communities.



Goal 5.2: Attract and grow small business owners and opportunities while supporting entrepreneurs.

Objective 5.2.1: The Planning Commission will periodically review the zoning code to determine where possibilities exist for incorporating new light and small industry uses within appropriate zoning districts.

Objective 5.2.2: Review contemporary data on locational advantages as it relates to emerging outdoor recreation industries to foster opportunities.

Objective 5.2.3: Continue working towards expanding high speed internet to underserved areas to foster remote work opportunities.

Objective 5.2.4: Collaborate and partner with the Lake Superior Community Partnership and their work in the West End to make entrepreneurship opportunities known and available.



Goal 5.3: Strengthen and enhance local recreational amenities through regional collaboration and community engagement.

Objective 5.3.1: Promote year-round recreational activities within the township.

Objective 5.3.2: Develop trail connections to the Iron Ore Heritage Trail for ease of use by residents and visitors.

Objective 5.3.3: Continue to collaborate with nearby communities to share and extend resources.

Objective 5.3.4: Protect vulnerable areas such as agricultural lands and forests while encouraging sustainable industries, such as agritourism.



Goal 5.4: Improve the diversity of industries and employment opportunities by building on existing strengths, locational advantages, and emerging opportunities.

Objective 5.2.1: Keep and maintain an inventory of underutilized or vacant commercial and industrial properties that could be reused or developed.

Objective 5.2.2: Support value-added industries, such as food processing, craft beverage production, or specialty farming.

Objective 5.2.3: Encourage and support outdoor recreation based businesses such as retailers, guide services, and equipment manufacturers.



6 Natural Resources, Environment, and Energy

Ishpeming Township is fortunate to be surrounded by an abundance of largely undeveloped beautiful natural features. These are the features that have the potential to draw in visitors and outdoor enthusiasts. Seemingly endless possibilities exist for recreation during all four seasons of the year. The entire Upper Peninsula has been seeing record numbers of visitors and tourists, here to take in all that we have to offer. However, with this influx comes a responsibility to take care of the community, the environment, and the natural resources that make the township so special.

As the global economy and climate changes, industries using fossil fuels are particularly vulnerable to economic shockwaves. This makes it more important than ever to adopt sustainable practices for energy longevity and to protect our environment for future generations.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Planning Commission, along with the results of the community survey, recognizes the following strategic priorities that guide the following goals and objectives.

Low-Impact Approaches to Development

Low-Impact Development (LID) is a term that refers to the development precautions and structural best practices when engaging in the development of land which attempts to allow a site to function in a state as close as

possible to its pre-developed state. For example, existing soils, vegetation, and mature trees may be protected from encroachment on unused portions of the development site. Part of the benefits of these practices are ensuring healthy stormwater drainage, preserving natural habitats, and preserving the character of the natural landscape that makes our home so unique. LID is not a “one size fits all” approach, nor is it a solution to every environmental problem, but it can be used as a tool for communities to preserve their natural environment and become more resilient in the face of extreme weather events such as storms or flooding.

Growing Renewable Energy Capacity

As the cost to distribute energy from non-renewable sources grows high and the efficiency and prices of renewable technologies improves, it is worth considering updates to infrastructure and amenities that are ultimately less expensive, renewable, and sustainable. Ishpeming Township is served by the Upper Peninsula Power Company (UPPCO) who recently announced an ambitious goal of approximately 50% of its energy generation to come from renewable resources by the year 2028, with 100% by 2040. This goal aligns well with the State of Michigan’s Renewable and Clean Energy Standards. Local governments can assist with these goals by adopting compatible renewable energy ordinances to guide the development and acceptance of both

large and smaller scale solar and wind projects. Some possibilities for such projects include rooftops of homes and businesses, vacant lots, and even repurposed parking lots. Encouraging assessments of current energy use and upgrading to more energy efficient devices can also help reach this goal, while saving residents money.

Prioritizing Environmental Protections

As a potential destination for outdoor-based recreation of all kinds, it is invariably important to promote balanced and responsible growth and development. Preserving the wild spaces within the township should be a priority, balancing with potential economic and community development opportunities. Simple steps such as preserving native plant areas as pollinator gardens can have a big impact. Community information campaigns against garbage dumping or littering can also serve to protect the beauty of the local environment.



GOALS + OBJECTIVES

Goal 6.1: Promote, encourage, and facilitate widespread adoption of renewable energy systems across residential, commercial, and municipal sectors.

Objective 6.1.1: Review municipal buildings and ordinance codes for potential barriers to development of renewable energy technologies and improve upon any outdated or overly burdensome regulations as appropriate.

Objective 6.1.2: Encourage and educate residents, local establishments, schools, and other public sector organizations about cost savings from improved weatherization and energy efficiency upgrades.

Objective 6.1.3: Encourage including energy efficiency and renewable energy requirements during any upgrade, renovation, or new construction of facilities or amenities.

Objective 6.1.4: Consider partnering with regional and state entities such as UPPCO, Marquette County, and Michigan Energy Options to create a comprehensive energy plan for the township, aligned with county and state goals.

Goal 6.2: Protect natural and environmentally sensitive areas with low impact approaches to development and redevelopment.

Objective 6.2.1: Consider creation of a stormwater management plan to reduce problems caused by flooding and erosion.

Objective 6.2.2: Enhance the greenspaces throughout the township through creation of rain gardens, native plantings, swales, and other low impact design elements.

Objective 6.2.3: Increase public knowledge and participation about clean water and lake and river area protections by hosting workshops, community events, and educational campaigns.

Objective 6.2.4: Encourage community leaders and elected officials to engage in trainings and educational opportunities from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) and other local organizations such as the Superior Watershed Partnership (SWP).

Objective 6.2.5: Facilitate funding, creation, and implementation of a community-wide curb-side recycling program to reduce waste.

Objective 6.2.6: Consider implementing guidelines for development that preserve the natural environment such as dark sky lighting.

Goal 6.3: Encourage responsible use and upkeep of public and recreational places within the township by promoting ownership and pride.

Objective 6.3.1: Consider working with local and regional organizations who have successful campaigns in place, such as Travel Marquette with their “Respect Marquette” educational campaign for visitors and residents.

Objective 6.3.2: Coordinate with and support local volunteers and outdoor recreation organizations or clubs to maintain current trails and greenspaces with possibilities of upgrades and expansions.

Objective 6.3.3: Promote Ishpeming Township as a destination for adventure and all-season recreational activities and events.



7

Housing + Neighborhoods

Housing is a key factor in planning for a community's future. The availability and affordability of housing directly influences where and how people live, work, and interact with their community and surroundings. Local governments can have an impact on housing through policy, availability of infrastructure and public services, incentives, and quality of life amenities.

Examining trends in housing can reveal some insights into the past while helping communities plan for the future. Over the past several years the housing market has seen higher selling prices, higher rental costs, and less availability leading to higher demand and more competition. In Ishpeming Township, as in most rural places, neighborhoods are generally spaced far apart and are unique in their positioning and challenges. According to the community survey, the challenges mentioned the most were the lack of quality of rentals, general blight and property mismanagement, and the poor state of roads and sidewalks.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

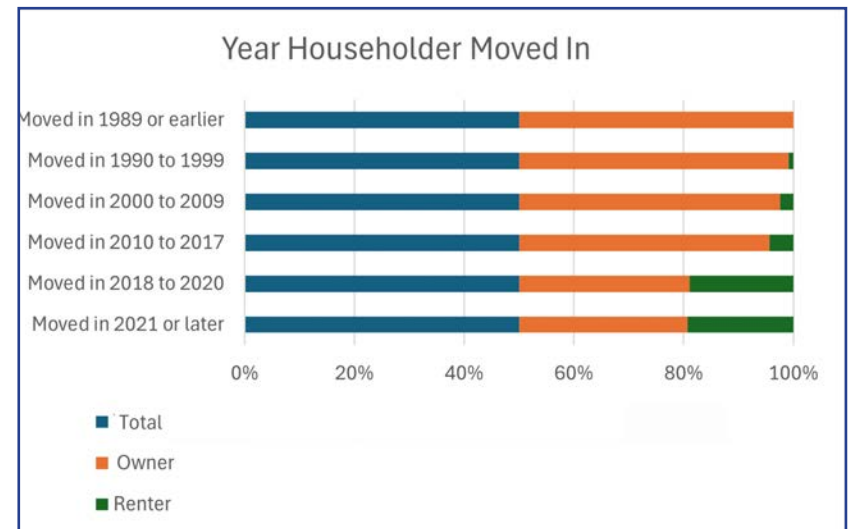
The Planning Commission, along with the results of the community survey, recognizes the following strategic priorities that guide and prioritize the following goals and objectives for future community development.

Responsive to Community Needs

Demand for quality housing is quickly outpacing available stock for homeowners and renters alike, driving up prices. Most Upper Peninsula communities are experiencing this same trend. According to the community survey,

Ishpeming Township residents are most concerned about the regulation of Short Term Rentals, or STRs. About 50% of those respondents agreed however, that there is an appropriate mix of STRs compared to full time residences. While the number of STRs is not currently an issue, over 50% of respondents strongly agreed that STRs should be regulated throughout the township.

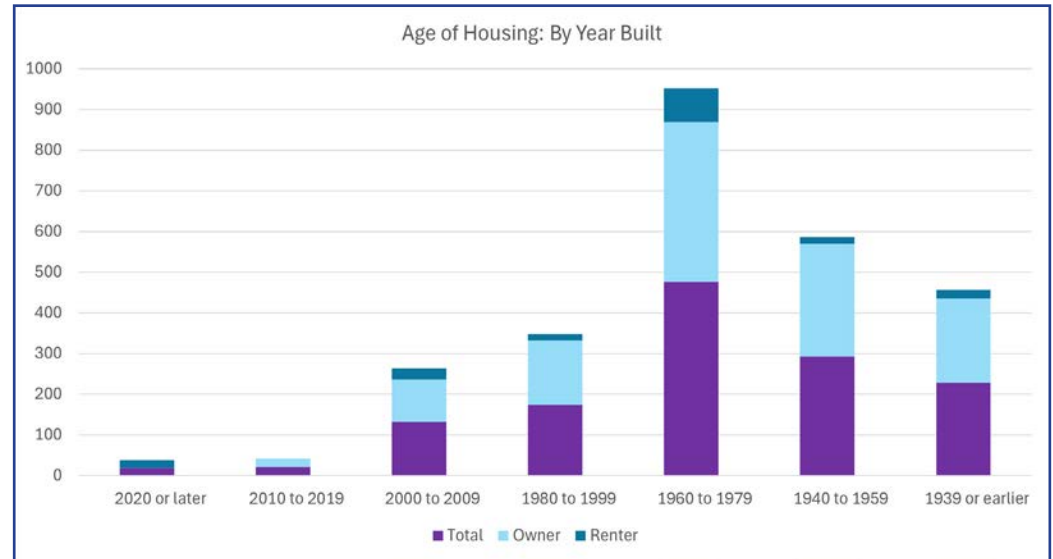
This suggests that Ishpeming Township is experiencing a deficit in "missing middle" housing. "Missing Middle" is a term that refers to housing types that are not commonly present in Michigan communities and typically include such forms as mixed-use loft apartments above a commercial business, townhouses and rowhouses, duplexes, and possibly apartment buildings that would fit into current neighborhoods. In Ishpeming Township, the growth of such missing middle housing could appeal to those who find themselves priced out of the current market. Smaller living spaces such as cottages, tiny homes, and modular housing could appeal to certain segments of the population, such as retirees looking to



downsize, empty-nesters, or young professionals. About 75% of survey respondents indicated that their homes have the appropriate conditions to allow them to stay there in old age. This is a higher percentage than most communities, suggesting that housing in Ishpeming Township is senior friendly and that people want to stay. Most homeowners moved to Ishpeming Township before 1990, while more renters joined after the year 2000, with this number continuing to rise. This suggests that there is more desire for rental properties in recent years, perhaps due to the increase in housing costs.

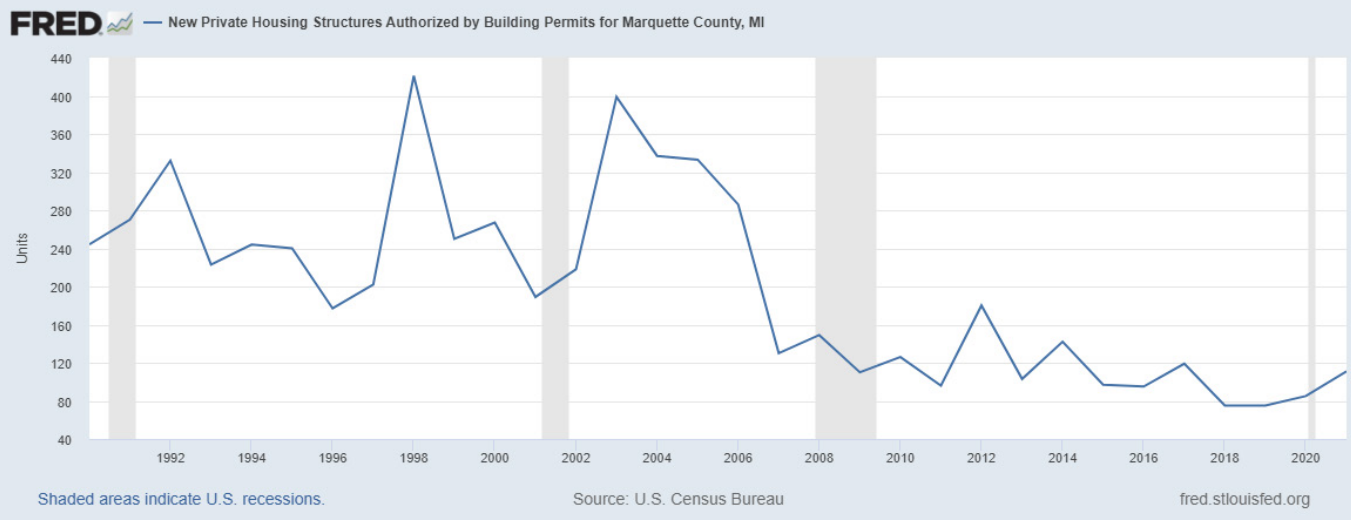
Preserve and Enhance Existing Housing Stock

Like many areas of the rural Upper Peninsula, most of the current housing stock in Ishpeming Township was built between 1960 and 1980. New home build permits within Marquette County (figure 7.1) have dropped within recent years, especially when compared to the years before the 2008 housing bubble, when home prices dropped then rose quickly and lending practices were questionable. COVID-19 highlighted the national housing shortage. Many people desired to move to less populous places, interest rates were lowered, and the nature of office-work changed, allowing for more remote



working opportunities. Building materials went up in price due to supply chain disruptions and lockdowns. These prices and demands have not significantly changed in recent years. Approximately 74% of homes in the township were built before 1970, indicating a significant portion of homes are aging, requiring specialized maintenance, modernization, or accessibility renovations. Weatherization and improvements for energy efficiency are also among the top concerns for homeowners.

Desireable neighborhoods are those in which every citizen has access to affordable housing and high quality public institutions, amenities, and infrastructure. Walkability and access to public transportation are also highly desireable and making plans to address these issues in neighborhoods could not only enhance quality of life for citizens, but could also add to the attractiveness of the area to new residents.





HOUSING STOCK OVER TIME 200-2020
ACS, US CENSUS 2023

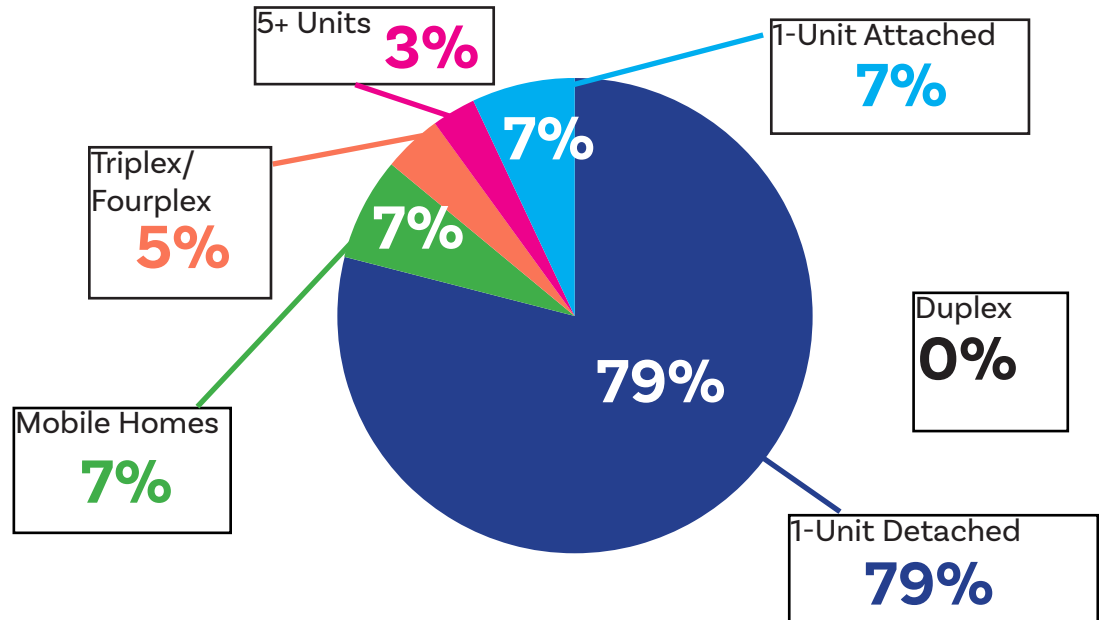
The township could benefit from a concerted effort to improve the quality of existing housing stock. Utilizing a home repair grant program or similar program could assist property owners with completing much needed updates, renovations, and beautification projects that might otherwise be out of financial reach. More housing developments focused on affordable properties for renters would begin to address some of the discrepancy on housing availability.



Quality Affordable Neighborhoods with Diverse Housing Options

Quiet Neighborhoods, Friendly Neighbors, and Safety were among the top mentions in the community survey. Residents already value the quality neighborhoods in Ishpeming Township, but could be bolstered with the inclusion of different home types into these already thriving places. The majority of homes in the township are single family, 1 unit detached, typical of many UP communities. A one-unit detached housing unit is a standalone residential structure designed to house a single family or household. It is physically separated from other buildings, meaning it does not share walls, floors, or ceilings with any other dwelling units. It typically involves its own parcel of land with open space (yards) around it. Over 79% of the township's housing

HOME TYPES IN ISHPERING TOWNSHIP



SOURCE: ACS 2023

stock fits this description and is often cost-prohibitive to young families and seniors.

However, there are no duplexes, or 2 unit buildings, 1 unit attached makes up about 7%, along with mobile homes. Triplex and fourplex, 3-4 unit buildings only make up about 5%, with 5+ units making up 3%. This shows that there is room to grow as far as housing diversity is considered.

The current supply of housing does not meet demand. Homes are selling quickly, at record prices. The township should consider future housing developments that center around senior living, young families, and others that may be in need of rentals or transitional housing. Large apartment complexes may be out-of-character for the township, but alternatives that fit within the community could be considered, such as duplexes and four-plexes.

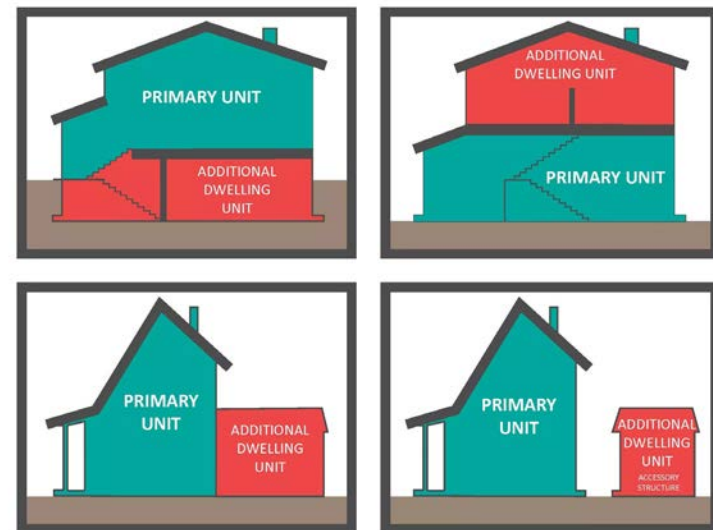
According to the Marquette County Housing Needs Assessment (2020), seniors are the fastest growing group of homeowners in recent years. About one-third of all households are headed by someone of retirement age. Seniors may need more assistance with mobility upgrades, such as access ramps, and have more specialized healthcare needs, making proximity to hospitals and services more important than ever. Special considerations should be made when approving site development for shared housing. These considerations include appropriate amenities, such as a play park for children or a social gathering area for residents with picnic amenities. These may seem like small additions, but are an excellent tool for fostering community bonds between residents.

Planned Unit Development provides a mechanism for balancing rural character preservation with responsible residential growth. By allowing flexibility in lot size and configuration, PUDs can achieve the same overall density permitted by zoning while directing homes toward areas with infrastructure capacity and away from environmentally constrained or agriculturally productive land. This approach reduces scattered rural sprawl, improves service efficiency, and strengthens connections

between housing and community assets.

Infill development could be another useful tool to increase housing density and affordability. Infill development refers to the process of developing vacant or underused parcels within the populated parts of the township, rather than expanding outward with new development. Oftentimes, this can be filling in vacant residential spaces, but it can also mean redevelopment of current usable structures. Renovation and adaptive reuse of current buildings can be much more feasible and cost-efficient than new construction, labor, and materials. Infill development also promotes mixed-use neighborhoods, raises property values, and can preserve and protect green spaces within the township. Successful infill development requires collaboration between developers, local government, and members of the community to ensure that it aligns with overall goals and vision for sustainable growth.

Overall, the township is well-poised to draw in new residents due to the relative affordability in comparison to the City of Marquette and neighboring cities of Ishpeming and Negaunee.



GOALS + OBJECTIVES

Goal 7.1: Increase the stock of quality affordable, attainable, and market-rate housing that meets the needs and incomes of Ishpeming Township residents.

Objective 7.1.1: Collaborate with the Marquette County Land Bank and local developers to facilitate redevelopment of tax-foreclosed, vacant, and underutilized properties.

Objective 7.1.2: Encourage development of mixed-use, workforce, and missing middle housing projects.

Objective 7.1.3: Encourage infill development, cluster subdivisions, and creative lot use in appropriate zoning districts.

Objective 7.1.4: Explore the creation of a local housing trust fund or other financing mechanisms with county or regional partners to support affordability initiatives.

Objective 7.1.5: Support access to first-time homebuyer education, down payment assistance, and credit counseling in partnership with state and regional programs.

Objective 7.1.6: Coordinate with local landlords to engage in education, best practices, and accountability measures to ensure quality rentals.

Objective 7.1.7: Continue to enforce registration of short term rentals to keep the STR ratio within desirable limits.

Goal 7.2: Strengthen and improve neighborhoods in Ishpeming Township by encouraging and incentivizing home updates made by homeowners.

Objective 7.2.1: Seek grants to develop a housing rehabilitation strategy to assist homeowners with repair, energy efficiency upgrades, and safety improvements.

Objective 7.2.2: Monitor housing conditions township-wide to prioritize reinvestment areas and resource allocation when possible.

Objective 7.2.3: Consider creation of a housing committee to keep a boots-on-the-ground approach to local housing issues.

Objective 7.2.4: Continue to enforce the township's zoning ordinance regarding blight and excessive junk to enhance neighborhood appeal and appearances.



Goal 7.3: Promote, enhance, and strengthen the ability of older adults to age in place where they wish to stay.

Objective 7.3.1: Incentivize and promote development and creation of local senior housing, assisted living centers, and other aging-friendly facilities with universal design features (zero-step entries, wider doorways, single-floor living).

Objective 7.3.2: Support accessibility projects and renovations to elder-owned homes, including access ramps and ground floor amenities.

Objective 7.3.3: Facilitate partnerships with local and regional service providers to enhance and integrate support services for seniors such as tele-health services and meals-on-wheels.

Goal 7.4: Coordinate housing growth with infrastructure availability and proximity to social and community services.

Objective 7.4.1: Promote walkability by clustering housing developments near amenities and destinations such as parks and schools.

Objective 7.4.2: Foster collaboration between public and private sectors to encourage local investment in affordable housing projects in desirable locations.

Objective 7.4.3: Identify and prioritize housing development in areas with existing water, sewer, road, and broadband infrastructure.

Objective 7.4.4: Perform a regular review of the zoning ordinance to further streamline potential housing developments and desirable housing typologies for the township.

Objective 7.4.5: Consider the use of Planned Unit Development (PUD) as a tool to direct new residential growth.



8

Quality of Life

This chapter addresses the features, amenities, experiences, and conditions that collectively make Ishpeming Township a desirable place to live. Quality of life is important for resident longevity and general health. It impacts future residents, children, the elderly, visitors, and everyone in between. What makes Ishpeming Township special? How can we create a great place that retains its citizens, has opportunities for youth, and draws in new families? What can we do as a community to make the overall population more happy, healthy, and safe? These are the big questions that we attempt to find solutions to as we engage in meaningful community development over the coming years to create and maintain a vibrant and desirable place to live.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Planning Commission, along with the results of the community survey, recognizes the following strategic priorities that guide and prioritize the following goals and objectives.

Recreational Assets and Walkability

Ishpeming Township is positioned within a wealth of recreational assets. Whether on land, water, ice or snow the township's recreational assets are a draw for visitors and important for residents to connect with nature and each other.

Walkability refers to how safe, practical, and convenient an area is for pedestrian traffic. A walkable community is characterized by a well-connected street network, a mix of land uses, and pedestrian infrastructure such as sidewalks, wayfinding signage, curb ramps, crosswalks

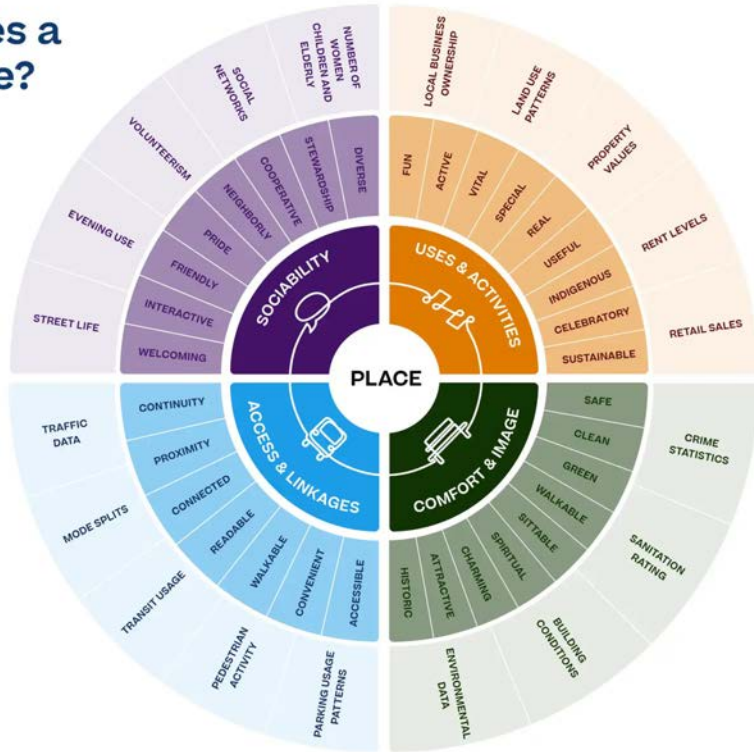
and more. High levels of walkability contribute to public health, decrease reliance on motor vehicles, and enhanced local economic vitality. Surveys conducted by the Urban Land Institute and the National Association of Realtors reveal a growing number of Americans prefer walkable access to daily needs, public spaces, and amenities. These preferences are reflected in real estate demand, rising property values, and rising interest in mixed use developments.

Traditionally, walkable places are built around a downtown. Lacking one, Ishpeming Township could build a walkable center around its Township Park with public amenities. Many people who responded to the community survey indicated they would like to be able to walk to the Township Park safely. Sometimes, this meant having to cross US 41 or having to likewise walk along heavily trafficked roads. Repaired sidewalks, meaningful trail connections, and safe crosswalks could go a long way to make Ishpeming Township more walkable and accessible to all.

Engaging Public Spaces

When properly maintained and well-used, public spaces can contribute significantly to community vitality and vibrancy. By enhancing and investing in public spaces, these actions tend to have the effect of encouraging private investment in nearby properties. **Placemaking** is a term that means creating places where people want to be and focuses on transforming public spaces to strengthen the connections between people and these places. Put simply, placemaking is a process centered on people and their needs, aspirations, desires, and visions, built upon community participation.

What Makes a Great Place?



Project
for Public
Spaces

FIGURE 8.1: THE PLACE DIAGRAM
WWW.PPS.ORG

A concept forged by the Project for Public Spaces (figure 8.1) known as the Power of 10 suggests that a place needs ten major destinations in the region, ten places within each destination, and ten things to do in each place to create a desirable and attractive place where people want to gather. This concept provides local leaders with a target for creating a transformational placemaking strategy that includes incremental and tangible goals. Township leaders should work to map the placemaking assets it currently has, then determine where and how it can be enhanced to achieve the Power of 10 principles. Ishpeming Township could benefit from combining placemaking with economic development through pop-up markets, public art installations, and other community events.

Increasing Access to Local Food

Access to fresh, healthy, locally grown foods is vitally important to the health and general well-being of our community. As the COVID-19 pandemic revealed, we cannot always rely on traditional outside supply chains for food and other household items. Producing food locally, like in a community garden, could provide nutritious food while teaching residents how to grow their own. Farm-to-School projects, like the successful partnering between Partridge Creek Farm and the Ishpeming / Negaunee area schools, could also be beneficial in addressing childhood hunger and obesity. Hosting a farmers market, creating community gardens, or sponsoring educational programming are all great steps in increasing access to healthy local food.



GOALS + OBJECTIVES

Goal 8.1: Foster improved walkability and non-motorized connections to local amenities and neighborhoods.

Objective 8.1.1: Conduct a comprehensive assessment of existing sidewalks, addressing issues such as maintenance, accessibility, and continuity to create an improved pedestrian network.

Objective 8.1.2: Identify key destinations such as parks, schools, and businesses and plan and prioritize walking routes from neighborhoods that have the most need

Objective 8.1.3: Seek pedestrian infrastructure improvement grants and Safe Routes to School opportunities to address deteriorating and unsafe sidewalks.

Objective 8.1.4: Consider creation of an elevated walkway over US 41 to promote residential mobility and safety.



Goal 8.2: Improve the health of the Township's residents through increased access to affordable locally grown foods.

Objective 8.2.1: Encourage and expand public knowledge on local zoning regulations regarding small scale agriculture and small livestock in residential areas.

Objective 8.2.2: Increase the township's participation and access to nearby farmers markets, or consider hosting a market at a central place within the township.

Objective 8.2.3: Partner with MSU Extension for healthy food, lifestyle, and educational programs and materials to be distributed at public institutions or community events.

Objective 8.2.4: Explore incentives for encouraging local grocery store development with a focus on locally grown and produced goods.



Goal 8.3: Engage in community events that spark pride and belonging.

Objective 8.3.1: Establish regular programming including seasonal festivals, outdoor movie nights, and community dinners that celebrate local culture.

Objective 8.3.2: Develop intergenerational programming that connects long-time residents with newcomers and different age groups.

Objective 8.3.3: Support volunteer-driven community organizations and provide meeting spaces for local groups and clubs.



Goal 8.4: Strengthen community well-being by enhancing access to services and fostering neighborhood connections.

Objective 8.4.1: Improve broadband internet access to ensure residents can access telehealth services, online education, and remote work opportunities.

Objective 8.4.2: Create skill-sharing networks where residents can teach and learn from each other, reducing isolation while building community capacity.

Objective 8.4.3: Develop block parties, neighborhood clean-up days, and other hyperlocal events that strengthen bonds between immediate neighbors.

Objective 8.4.4: Support community-based mental health and wellness initiatives that address rural isolation and seasonal challenges.



9

Infrastructure + Assets

Examining trends shaping the Township, County, and Region provides an important snapshot of demographic and economic statistics. Analyzing these statistics and predicting future trends can help communities plan for their development in order to meet the needs and desires of their residents. Meeting these needs is important for residents to feel safe and included in the larger community, adding to current resident retention and new resident attraction.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Planning Commission, along with the results of the community survey, recognizes the following strategic priorities that guide and prioritize the following goals and objectives for future community development.

Asset Management and Capital Improvement Planning

What are the assets that we own? What condition are they in and what is their remaining viable lifespan? How will we budget for their repair and replacement in the future? These are some of the questions we ask as we develop a holistic approach to infrastructure management. Asset management is a relatively new practice in Michigan, especially in rural communities. When the anticipated life of a sewer pipe is greater than the lifespan of your average person, it is reasonable that the party who was responsible for its installation may have overlooked the fact that it may eventually need to be replaced. Nearly a century later we are experiencing these challenges that come with the end-life of many infrastructure assets, particularly water and sewer pipes

that have been hidden from view.

An increasingly important tool in planning and budgeting for capital improvements is a Capital Improvements Plan, or CIP. This plan takes stock of current assets, needs, and challenges by ranking each item by importance and urgency. The CIP is formed by community leaders, the planning commission, and other governmental department heads such as the Chief of Police.

Prioritizing Repairs to Existing Assets

Municipal budgets are, unfortunately, not unlimited. Leaders must be fiscally responsible and informed when making decisions that impact the community. For Forsyth Township, many infrastructure maintenance projects should take priority over expanding any services and new developments. These timely repairs are essential to local quality of life and visitor attraction alike. Construction and repairs to these systems can sometimes be streamlined and done at the same time with the help of tools such as the MIC Dig Once Project Portal from the State of Michigan, which allows authorized entities to document ongoing and future infrastructure projects. Applying for state and federal grants can often alleviate financial concern for larger infrastructure projects, such as pipe replacement. Infrastructure repairs should also be implemented first where it is the worst to protect community members and their safety. The Central Upper Peninsula Planning and Development regional commission (CUPPAD) conducts road rating for central UP communities annually, following the State of Michigan's Transportation Asset Management Council's (TAMC) recommendations using PASER. PASER stands for

PAvement Surface Evaluation and Rating, which is a visual audit performed by trained raters who categorize roads from good (green), fair (orange), poor (red). The PASER ratings for 2025 can be found on the map on the next page. This creates an inventory and starting point by identifying the roads in the best and worst conditions.

Complete Streets and Walkability

Complete streets is a concept that recommends roads are designed and operated so they are safe, comfortable, and convenient for all practical users, which may include pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities. This type of policy is not intended to place additional requirements on road redesigns where compatibility is not appropriate, but rather to simply enhance considerations for incorporating improvements for uses to better serve the community. Such an example could include the placement of a high visibility crosswalk in an area where pedestrians are common, or eliminating curbing in areas where wheelchair and stroller access is needed.

Walkability and **walk appeal** are similar concepts that address a community's potential for pedestrian mobility to desirable destinations and the relative safety and comfort of the route. Walkability is usually defined as being within a 5-10 minute walk from essential services and destinations like grocery stores, schools, or churches. Walk appeal refers to the quality and desirability of the walking environment. A walk through a township park is much different than a walk on the side of the highway. A complete streets policy may provide some flexible recommendations that can enhance the prospect and desirability of non-motorized mobility around the township. It is a well-documented

trend that these types of community improvements enhance the value and marketability of real estate.

The rural nature of Ishpeming Township makes pedestrian mobility particularly challenging. Focusing on destination based local hubs, such as schools, grocery stores, or post offices could provide a starting point for a neighborhood walkability assessment. Existing sidewalks could be audited for ease of use by people of all abilities and ages, and be repaired and modified to suit the community's needs. Non-motorized trails and greenways can also increase an area's walkability, especially when these are connected to larger networks that offer more mobility opportunities.



TRANSPORTATION

The basic objective of a road system is to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods. Communities depend on the safe and effective movement to sustain a functioning local economy. Transportation efficiency is a key factor in decision affecting land use and development. Making sure the transportation systems within the township are equitable, efficient, and inexpensive should be a priority for the community as a whole as it impacts community health and vitality. Ishpeming Township benefits from a strategic location along major regional transportation corridors that connect the Upper Peninsula to statewide and national networks. The township's transportation infrastructure serves as a foundation for economic development, community connectivity, and quality of life for residents.

ROADS

Major Highway US 41 / M-28 passes through West Ishpeming in the southernmost portion of the township, providing direct access to major regional destinations. This concurrent highway routing connects the township westward toward Houghton and the Keweenaw Peninsula, eastward to Marquette and the region's commercial center, and ultimately southeast to Escanaba and Lower Michigan markets. The recent completion of a \$6.4 million roundabout at the intersection of US-41/M-28 and Lakeshore Drive demonstrates ongoing state investment in improving traffic flow and safety infrastructure that benefits township residents and businesses. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) is responsible for all state trunklines and works with the Marquette County Road Commission (MCRC) and local road agencies to provide routine maintenance.

Local roads consist of a network of county roads and township streets that provide access to residential areas, businesses, and community facilities. Local roads serve dispersed rural development patterns typical of the Upper

Peninsula, connecting residential properties to essential services and employment centers.

RAIL SYSTEM

The township's rail infrastructure was instrumental in supporting the region's logging and mining industries, facilitating the transport of timber and iron ore to broader markets. There is currently one active rail line operated by Lake Superior & Ishpeming Railroad (LS&I) primarily for iron ore transport.

PORTS

The nearest ports to Ishpeming Township are located in the City of Marquette and the City of Escanaba where iron ore pellets are shipped from ore docks and commodities such as salt, limestone, and coal are received. Goods are then transported by rail and truck.

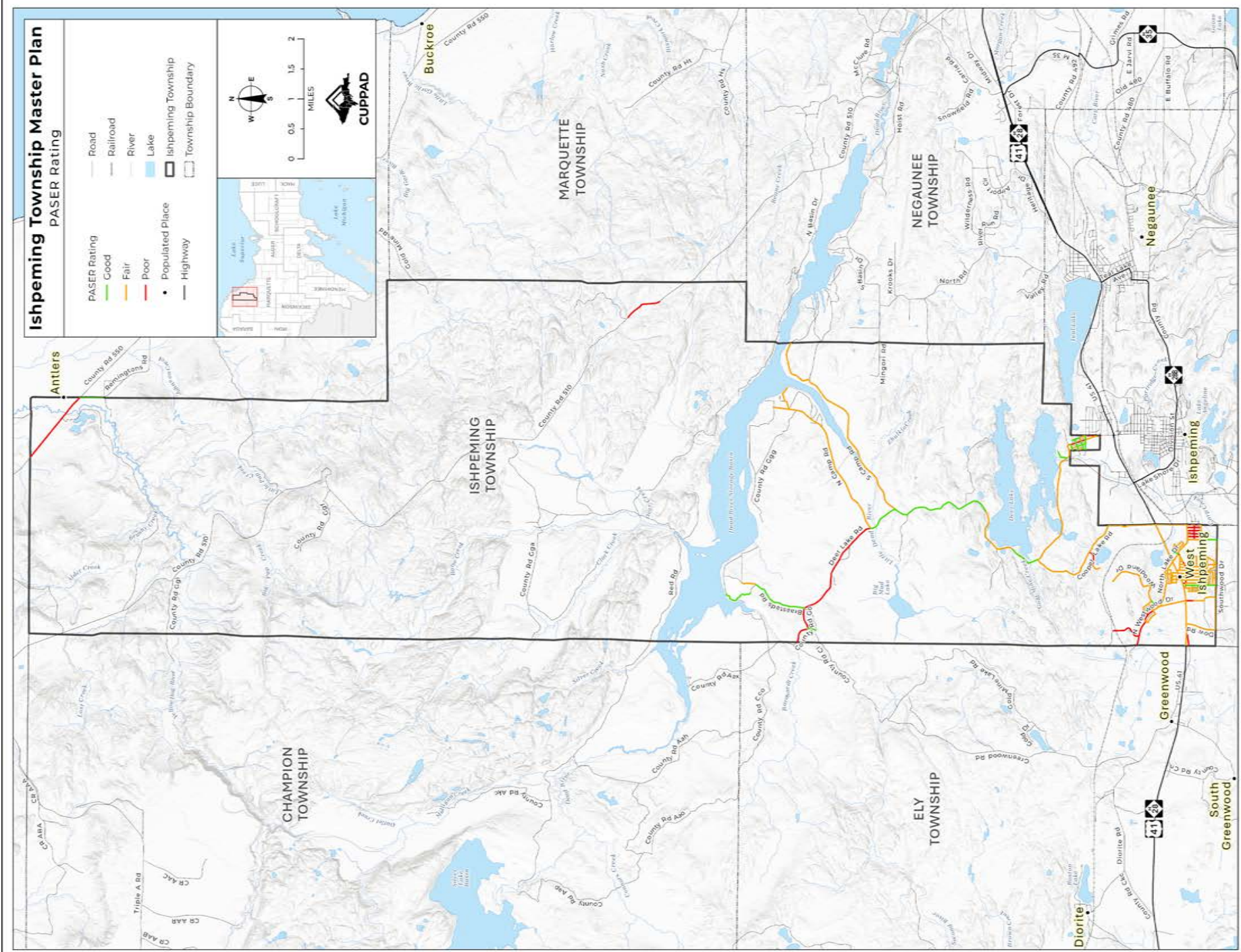
AIRPORT

The nearest airport is Sawyer International Airport, located about 20 miles southeast of the township.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Marq-Tran (Marquette County Transit Authority) offers limited rural route bus service to and from Ishpeming Township. However, this is operated on a demand-response and no fixed routes are currently available.

Overall, Ishpeming Township exhibits a strong transportation core, but has insufficient public transit, lacks pedestrian safety, and is experiencing aging infrastructure. Future planning should consider multi-modal connectivity, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and coordination with regional transportation planning efforts to maximize the benefits of the township's strategic location.



COMMUNITY FACILITIES

A variety of public facilities serve the everyday needs of residents within Ishpeming Township. Rural communities often share community facilities and emergency services with neighboring municipalities. Ishpeming Township is no different. An inventory and basic assessment of these facilities are described below.

ISHPEMING TOWNSHIP HALL

Located on US-41, the township hall hosts board meetings, planning and zoning services, tax services, and voting. It provides administrative services for the township and serves as a hub for resident inquiries and concerns. The Township Hall can be rented for community and personal events for a deposit fee via the rental forms at the office.

ISHPEMING TOWNSHIP RECREATION AREA

The sole township-owned facility in the township is the Ishpeming Township Recreation Area. Located adjacent to the Township Hall and Police Department complex on US-41 and covers 9 acres. This recreation area is open to the public during daylight hours. Amenities include a softball diamond, a little league diamond, tennis courts, restrooms, shuffleboard,

volleyball court, basketball court with 6 hoops, tennis court, and picnic tables with a covered pavillion. The pavillion is available on a first come-first serve basis and can be reserved for larger groups. This area also houses two playgrounds, one for those aged 5-12, and a tot lot for those aged under 5.

ISHPEMING TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

Staffed primarily by volunteers, the fire department offers fire suppression, rescue services, and mutual aid to neighboring areas. They are experts in handling fire prevention education and emergency preparedness. The Fire Department is not only an integral part of the community, but also facilitates and is active at a number of township events.

ISHPEMING TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Police Chief also serves as the School Resource Officer in this small police department. It is important to note that this is separate from the City of Ishpeming. The township police department serves the unincorporated areas of the township.

PUBLIC WORKS

The Public Works Department manages township road maintenance (in coordination with the Marquette County Road Commission), culvert work, cemetery upkeep, and some limited snowplowing.

LIBRARY

Ishpeming Township does not have its own library but shares services with the Carnegie Public Library in the City of Ishpeming. Outreach efforts visit the township periodically. A library kiosk, book return, or satellite branch at the township hall could improve local access and reach.



WATER + SEWER

Water services are essential to all members of a community. Ishpeming Township keeps these services running as smoothly as possible to avoid interruptions in the daily lives of the citizenry. These services need upkeep and maintenance while also participating in upgrades as new information and best practices are established. Water and sewer systems vary: some areas are served by the Ishpeming Area Joint Wastewater Authority, while others rely on private wells and septic systems.

Many rural communities in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan are facing the daunting task of updating aging water infrastructure systems with limited budgets. Partnering with nearby municipalities and offsetting costs with grant funding are some ways in which the township could help alleviate this burden. Wastewater services for the township are also served by this joint municipal arrangement.

Ishpeming township has one lift station, the rest are gravity-fed wastewater collection systems. It's important to be aware of municipal limitations and compatibility with development. The township could identify areas where future utility expansion may be feasible, possibly in coordination with future housing developments.

STORMWATER

Ishpeming Township experiences localized drainage challenges due to its rural road network, limited formal stormwater infrastructure, and natural topography. Much of the Township relies on roadside ditches and natural infiltration to manage stormwater, which can lead to issues such as standing water, road deterioration, and erosion if not properly maintained. Seasonal conditions, including snowmelt and heavy rainfall events, can further strain these systems.

Given these conditions, stormwater management in the Township should focus on practical, low-cost approaches that align with its rural character. Priorities include maintaining and improving roadside drainage systems, incorporating stormwater considerations into road maintenance activities, and encouraging development practices that minimize runoff and promote natural infiltration. By taking a proactive approach to drainage, the Township can protect infrastructure, reduce long-term maintenance costs, and preserve environmental quality.

Future development should be designed to manage stormwater on-site to the greatest extent feasible, utilizing natural drainage patterns and low-impact design techniques. The Township should incorporate stormwater considerations into site plan review and zoning regulations to ensure that new development does not negatively impact adjacent properties, roadways, or public infrastructure.

GOALS + OBJECTIVES

Goal 9.1: Develop and maintain plans for the management and improvement of public assets.

Objective 9.1.1: Create and maintain a local Asset Management Plan and/or a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) that includes transportation, water infrastructure, and waste management to assist in budgeting and prioritization for improvements.

Objective 9.1.2: Continue to increase knowledge of asset management practices and priorities by taking advantage of local and statewide training programs offered to Township officials and staff.

Objective 9.1.3: Update plans annually, adjusting for priorities and financial opportunities such as grants or other funding mechanisms.

Objective 9.1.4: Expand grant writing opportunities and capabilities by creating and utilizing local and regional partnerships on projects.

Objective 9.1.5: Consider creation of a stormwater management plan to protect assets.

Objective 9.1.6: Coordinate with regional partners to continue to support emergency services and response capacity.

Goal 9.2: Support the development of improved roadway designs to improve flow of traffic, pedestrian safety and access.

Objective 9.2.1: Consider performing a sidewalk audit or assessment for ease of pedestrian mobility in more densely populated areas.

Objective 9.2.2: Coordinate with area road agencies and neighboring jurisdictions when considering development and access management policies.

Objective 9.2.3: Improve road and sidewalk conditions for ease of use by pedestrians and bicyclists. Consider adopting policies for sidewalk snow removal.

Objective 9.2.4: Collaborate and seek grants with local schools on providing safe routes to school for students.



Goal 9.3: Maintain and improve public utilities, communication systems, and community facilities and services to accommodate the needs of residents, business owners, and visitors.

Objective 9.3.1: Encourage work towards development of reliable high-speed internet to increase community connectivity.

Objective 9.3.3: Assess the township's sewer and water infrastructure according to Michigan's Lead and Copper rule to protect public health and minimize lead and copper levels in drinking water.

Objective 9.3.4: Encourage public education on responsible consumer usage of public utilities to limit excess use and general wear and tear on these systems.

Objective 9.3.5: Conduct an audit of local utility rates to further understand costs, identify discrepancies, and to identify improvement opportunities. Prioritize repairs to historic infrastructure.

Objective 9.3.6: Encourage and support UPPCO's efforts to expand the power grid within the township to foster commercial development opportunities.

Objective 9.3.7: Research and consider mass communication capabilities for emergencies, such as text alerts, for township residents.

10 Land Use + Zoning Plan

The Land Use and Zoning Plan section is one of the most integral components in the development of a master plan. The **Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2008** specifically requires the plan to address land use issues and recommendations for the physical development of the community 20 years or more into the future. As proposals for development are considered the Planning Commission, Township Board, and other township administrators should refer to this section to ensure that the vision, principles, and intent of districts are followed as closely as possible or amended when a new direction is determined to be necessary.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Planning Commission, along with the results of the community survey, recognizes the following strategic priorities that guide and prioritize the following goals and objectives for future community development.

Protect Natural Resources

Much of Ishpeming Township's value lies in its forests, wetlands, lakes, and scenic landscapes, which also support recreation, tourism, and agriculture. Protecting these natural resources from overdevelopment is paramount to keep Ishpeming Township's unique identity and beauty. Future zoning and land use policies should prioritize the conservation of these resources while supporting compatible economic uses such as forestry, recreation, and tourism.

Conservation-oriented zoning, overlay districts, and development standards can help minimize impacts to sensitive areas like headwaters, steep slopes, and

wildlife habitats. By balancing environmental protection with sustainable economic activity, the Township can preserve its rural beauty and ecological integrity for future generations.

Focus Growth on Served Areas

Ishpeming Township's rural character and limited infrastructure capacity require a thoughtful approach to where and how new development occurs. With most areas relying on private wells and septic systems, and residents dependent on a road network designed for low-density use, not all parts of the Township are equally suited to accommodate growth. Without clear direction, scattered or inefficient development patterns can strain infrastructure, increase long-term maintenance costs, and erode the Township's rural identity.

Future land use planning in Ishpeming Township should focus growth where infrastructure already exists or can be efficiently extended, particularly near the City of Ishpeming, along US-41, and within areas served by public water and sewer. Concentrating development in these zones will reduce long-term costs for public services, improve emergency access, and preserve the Township's rural landscape. Encouraging infill, redevelopment, and clustered development patterns will help the Township manage growth responsibly while maintaining its identity and protecting natural resources.

By aligning growth patterns with infrastructure realities, the Township can support sustainable development while avoiding fragmentation of rural lands and inefficient expansion of services. Future development should be

directed to areas where infrastructure capacity, access, and site conditions can adequately support it. The Township should incorporate this approach into its Future Land Use Map and zoning regulations to discourage scattered development patterns and promote efficient, cost-effective growth.

Modernize Land Use

As demographic and economic trends evolve, Ishpeming Township's zoning should adapt to support a wider range of housing options and small-scale business opportunities. To address these challenges, the Township should align its land use policies and zoning regulations to support a broader range of housing types while maintaining the character of existing neighborhoods.

This includes allowing for "missing middle" housing such as duplexes and small multi-family developments in appropriate areas, as well as supporting flexible development approaches like Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) and site condominiums. Allowing accessory dwelling units, mixed-residential developments, and home-based enterprises can make housing more affordable and strengthen the local economy. Updating commercial and industrial districts to encourage adaptive reuse and emerging industries will further enhance the Township's economic resilience.

By modernizing its zoning ordinance, Ishpeming Township can create a more flexible framework that welcomes growth while reflecting community values and meeting changing needs.

LAND USE

Land use categories differ from zoning districts in that the land use represents the general type of activity desired within a parcel of land, while zoning districts sets the regulatory framework for approving future uses of land on that parcel. Likewise, the future land use map depicts how the township anticipates the land use to evolve or change over the next 5-20 years, setting up the basis for zoning regulations that will enable and support the township's future vision of land use.

Future land use is a way to describe, plan for, and adapt to changes in the community, environment, and developmental needs. The Future Land Use map reflects changes from input from community leaders, the Planning Commission, and the citizen survey. The future land use and zoning changes are documented in detail in the next section, the Zoning Plan.

Land Use categories have been condensed into more flexible categories with easily understandable descriptions, encouraging development where appropriate. The Zoning Ordinance will be updated to reflect these changes. The Schedule of Regulations will be largely unchanged and will be housed within the Zoning Ordinance.

GOALS + OBJECTIVES

Goal 10.1: Concentrate development in areas with adequate infrastructure.

Objective 10.1.1: Prioritize development near West Ishpeming, the US-41 corridor, and near existing water and sewer service areas.

Objective 10.1.2: Encourage infill and redevelopment projects in already developed areas.

Objective 10.1.3: Promote clustered development patterns to reduce sprawl and increase local access to goods and services.

Objective 10.1.4: Discourage scattered commercial development along rural roadways.

Goal 10.2: Preserve environmentally sensitive areas and maintain rural landscape patterns.

Objective 10.2.1: Protect wetlands, forests, and other sensitive areas through zoning tools and protections.

Objective 10.2.2: Consider the use of overlay zoning districts and conservation (cluster) development standards to protect environmentally sensitive areas while allowing for reasonable development. These tools can help direct development away from wetlands, slopes, and other constrained lands, while preserving open space and maintaining the Township's rural character.

Objective 10.2.3: Identify environmentally sensitive and preserved open space parcels and limit development in those areas.



Goal 10.3: Update zoning regulations to support housing diversity and flexibility.

Objective 10.3.1: Allow missing middle housing types in appropriate areas by right.

Objective 10.3.2: Consider permitting PUDs and site condominiums. Consider having identified priority housing sites.

Objective 10.3.3: Support Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and small scale multi family developments.

Objective 10.3.4: Align zoning districts for ease of use by administrators, citizens, and potential developers. Make sure these align with the Future Land Use Map to ensure consistency.

Objective 10.3.5: Evaluate and refine dimensional and site development standards, including setbacks, lot coverage, and parking requirements, to reduce unnecessary regulatory barriers while maintaining compatibility with surrounding land uses and the Township's rural character.

Goal 10.4: Allow small-scale commercial and mixed-use opportunities that serve residents.

Objective 10.4.1: Avoid large scale incompatible commercial development. Encourage adaptive reuse of existing structures when possible.

Objective 10.4.2: Encourage small-scale neighborhood commercial nodes for desirable goods and services.

Objective 10.4.3: Develop zoning incentives or expedited review for developments that meet local resilience goals (e.g. workforce housing, green building, or job creation).



CURRENT ZONING

Ishpeming Township Zoning Map

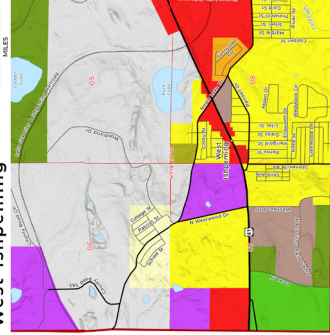


ZONING DISTRICTS

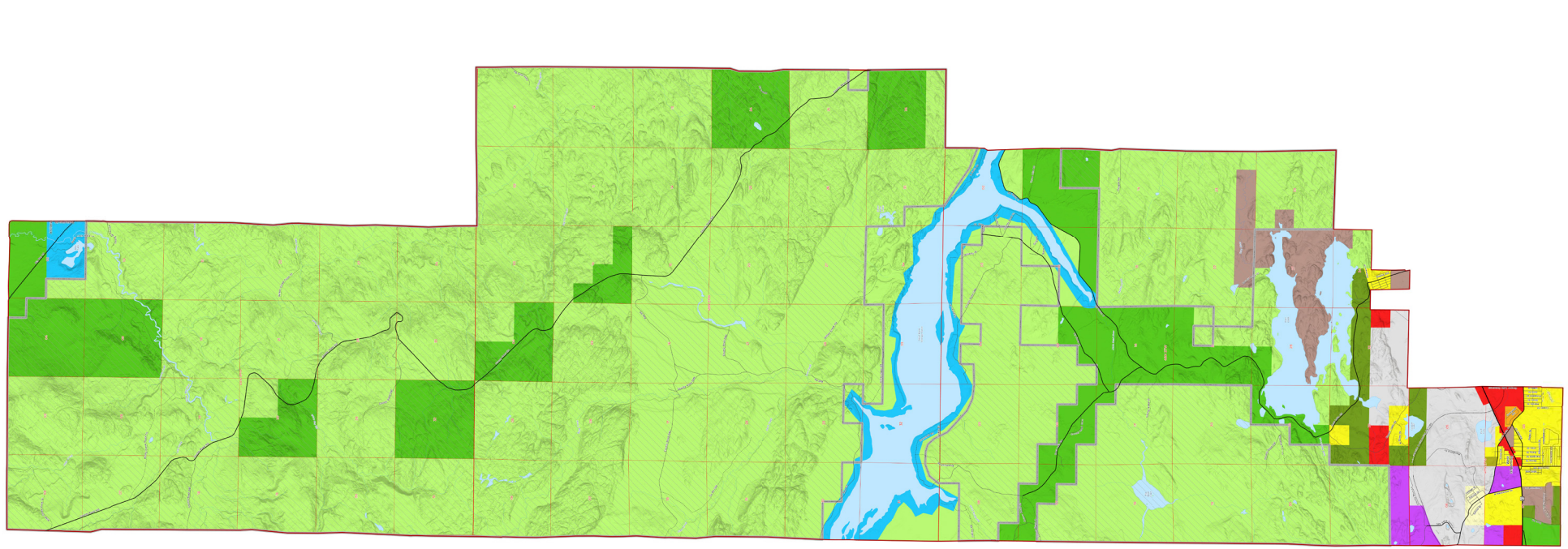
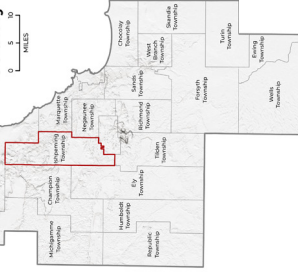
- R-1 = SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- R-2 = TWO FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- R-3 = MULTIPLE RESIDENTIAL
- R-4 = MOBILE HOME PARK
- RR-1 = RURAL RESIDENTIAL
- RR-2 = RURAL RESIDENTIAL
- C = COMMERCIAL DISTRICT
- I = INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT
- LSR = LAKESHORE AND RIVER DISTRICT
- RP = RESOURCE PRODUCTION
- MR = MINERAL RESOURCE DISTRICT
- PL = PUBLIC LAND DISTRICT
- WIND ENERGY OVERLAY

- Populated Place
- Highway
- Major Road
- Local Road
- Not Certified/Undefined Road
- Railroad
- River
- Lake
- Township Boundary
- Township and Range Line
- Section Line

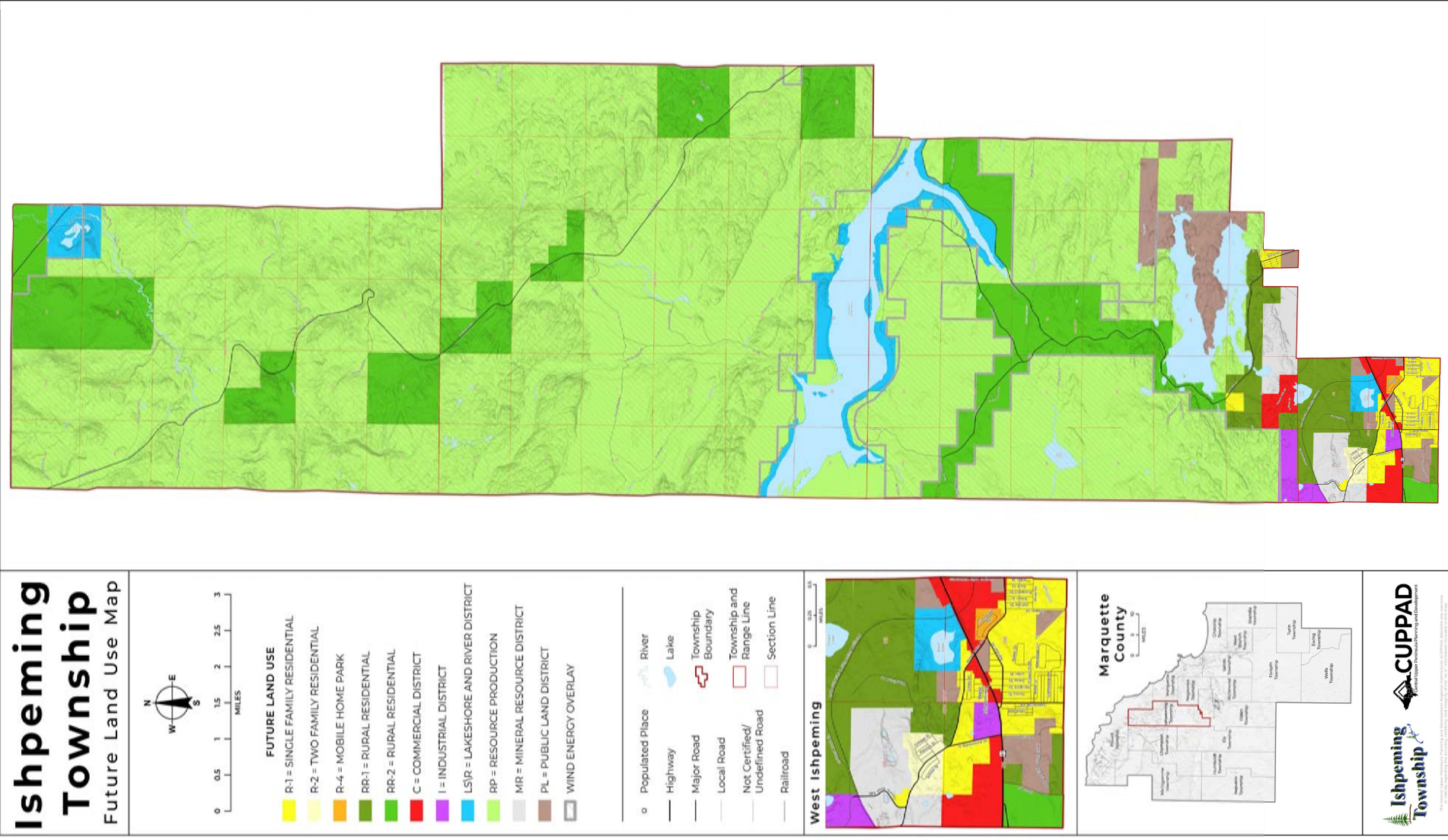
West Ishpeming



Marquette County



FUTURE LAND USE



ZONING PLAN

The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act of 2006 is a state law that provides the authority for communities in Michigan to use zoning as a tool for the regulation of land. This law states that local zoning regulations in a community must be based upon a plan and this means particularly a zoning plan. A zoning plan describes the ways in which the current existing land uses in the community may change in the future by relating those changes to the aspirations described on the Future Land Use Map and discussion on zoning districts. The zoning plan is the legal basis for the zoning ordinance in Ishpeming Township, which means any decisions contrary to what is stated in this plan could lack legal defensibility. The zoning plan is intended to guide all future rezoning activities and discretionary land use decisions in the community. Township leaders and planning commissioners should consult this section whenever these topics are under consideration. The table that follows describes the anticipated possible changes or lack thereof across the districts in Ishpeming Township.



Future Land Use Category	Current Land Use and Zoning	Strategies + Potential Zoning Changes
Low Density Residential	R-1 - Single Family Residential: To establish and preserve quiet single family home neighborhoods as desired by large numbers of people, free from other uses except those which are both compatible with and convenient to the residents of such district.	Primary: Single-Family development Secondary: ADUs, homebased businesses Changes: Allow ADUs by right or special use, evaluate minimum dwelling size requirements, refine parking minimums, and encourage infill.
Medium Density Residential	R-2 - Two Family Residential: To establish and preserve quiet neighborhoods for single and two family dwellings, free from other uses except those which are both compatible with and convenient to the residents of such districts.	Primary: Single-family and two-family residential. Secondary: Duplexes, ADU's, small-scale multifamily. Changes: Expand permitted housing types, reduce lot size and setback requirements as appropriate, allow small-scale multi-family by right in select areas.

Future Land Use Category	Current Land Use and Zoning	Strategies + Potential Zoning Changes
Medium Density Residential	R-3 - Multiple Residential: To establish and preserve neighborhoods for medium density residential uses, free from other uses except those which are both compatible with and convenient to the residents of such district.	Primary: Multi-family residential Secondary: Townhomes, clustered housing, small apartments. Changes: Supports missing middle housing types, align density with infrastructure availability, reduce parking minimums.
Medium Density Residential	R-4 - Mobile Home Park: To make provisions for mobile homes in mobile home parks not subdivided into individual lots, in an appropriate, safe sanitary, and attractive environment.	Primary: Manufactured housing communities Secondary: Affordable housing developments Changes: Maintain, update design standards for compatibility.
Rural Residential	RR-1 - Rural Residential: To establish and maintain an alternative residential environment in accessible rural areas in moderately low densities.	Primary: Large-lot single-family residential Secondary: Agriculture, hobby farms, forestry Changes: Maintain lot sizes to preserve rural character, encourage cluster development, limit parcel fragmentation.
Rural Residential (Agricultural)	RR-2 - Rural Residential: To establish and maintain an alternative residential environment in accessible rural areas at very low densities. Including agriculture and livestock keeping.	Primary: Agriculture, forestry, very-low residential density Secondary: Recreational uses, resource-based activities. Changes: Maintain large minimum lot sizes, protect agricultural and forested lands, limit non-agricultural development.

Future Land Use Category	Current Land Use and Zoning	Strategies + Potential Zoning Changes
Natural Resource / Conservation	LS/R: Lakeshore and River District: To establish and maintain for residential and recreational structures those areas with frontage on inland lakes and rivers which, because of their proximity to such inland lakes and rivers, are suitable for such development.	Primary: Waterfront residential and recreational uses Secondary: Low-impact tourism and recreation Changes: Strengthen shoreline setbacks, protect wetlands and water quality, limit density.
Commercial	C: Commercial District: To establish and preserve general commercial areas consisting of shopping centers, commercial strips, and compact business districts suited to the needs of travelers, tourists, and vacationers.	Primary: General commercial, retail, services Secondary: large-scale development Changes: encourage clustered development, adaptive reuse, and discourage strip commercial development.
Neighborhood Commercial / Mixed Use	C-1: Low-Intensity Commercial: To establish and preserve low intensity commercial areas which are suited for small commercial establishments and residential usage.	Primary: Retail, service, and general commercial Secondary: mixed-use (residential above commercial), offices Changes: Encourage nodal, clustered commercial areas, allow mixed-use development where appropriate
Public / Institutional	PL: Public Land: To preserve areas for public purposes including recreation.	Primary: Parks, civic uses, public facilities Secondary: community services and recreational amenities. Changes: maintain compatibility with surrounding areas, preserve public land.

Future Land Use Category	Current Land Use and Zoning	Strategies + Potential Zoning Changes
Industrial	I- Industrial District: To establish and preserve areas for necessary industrial and related uses of such a nature that they require isolation from many other kinds of land uses.	Primary: Industrial and manufacturing Secondary: warehousing, logistics, contractor yards Changes: maintain separation from residential areas, ensure adequate infrastructure and access.
Natural Resource	MR - Mineral Resource District: To establish land areas for the preservation, protection, and extraction of minerals, to protect mineral deposits near urban centers, and to provide environmental management.	Primary: Resource extraction Secondary: Limited related industrial uses Changes: Protect mineral extraction areas, require environmental plans, limit incompatible adjacent uses.
Natural Resource	RP - Resource Production: To establish and maintain for low intensity use those area which, because of their location and natural characteristics, are suitable for agricultural and forestry production, and recreational uses compatible with such low intensity areas.	Primary: Agriculture, forestry, resource production Secondary: Recreation and low-intensity uses Changes: Preserve working lands, limit encroachment, encourage sustainable land management practices.

SCHEDULE OF REGULATIONS

****DRAFT****

Set Back Requirements						
District	Front Setback	Side Setback	Rear Setback	Height	Min Lot Size	Min Lot Width
R-1 Single Family Residential	30'	10'	30'	35'	20,000 sq ft	125'
R-2 Two-Family Residential	30'	10'	30'	35'	20,000 sq ft	125'
R-3 Multiple Family Residential	30'	15'	30'	35'	20,000 sq ft	125'
R-4 Mobile Home Park	30'	15'	30'	35'	Per Park Design	-
RR-1 Rural Residential	40'	25'	40'	35'	3 acres	200'
RR-2 Rural Residential	50'	40'	50'	35'	10 acres	300'
LS/R Lakeshore and River	30'	15'	30' + separate water setback	30'	20,000 sq ft	100'
C Commercial	30'	10'	20'	40'	-	25'
C-1 Low Intensity Commercial	30'	20'	30'	35'	3 acres	30'
I Industrial	40'	20'	30'	50'	-	40'
PL Public Land	None	None	None	None	None	None
RP Resource Production	40'	20'	40'	35'	10 acres	300'
MR Mineral Resource	None	None	None	None	None	None

11 Implementation Strategy

Proactive application of the Master Plan is supported by the use of a well-coordinated implementation strategy. It includes the actions necessary for the achievement of goals and objectives expressed in previous sections, as well as other statutorily-required duties that local leaders should expect to accomplish relative to the plan. Accountability for this strategy is reinforced through the identification of responsible parties, estimated costs, and time frame for completion. The tool provided in this section is a five-year workplan that should be reviewed and updated each year. For best results, commitments from responsible parties should be secured when coordinated actions are identified. The action items listed below are examples of ways to meet this plan’s goals and strategies. Blank spaces are for leaders to add their own. Logging the date of completion allows for the celebration of wins, big and small.

Chapter 4. People + Community

Follows Goal / Objective	Action Item	Responsible Party/ Partners	Time Frame	Date Completed
4.1	Coordinate with regional partners to promote the Township as part of broader workforce participation efforts.	Township Staff, LSCP, CUPPAD	Medium	
4.2	Support and expand community events (seasonal festivals, markets, recreational programming)	Township Staff, Ishpeming Carnegie Library, NICE Schools	Long	
4.2	Explore opportunities for small-scale placemaking improvements (signage, gathering spaces, trail connections)	Township Staff	Medium	
4.3	Improve accessibility of public information including regular updates on Township projects and decisions.	Township Staff	Short/ Ongoing	
4.4	Partner with local schools to create youth advisory input opportunities or civic engagement activities	Township Staff, NICE Schools	Medium	

Time Frame Key	
Short	1-12 months
Medium	12-24 months
Long	24+ months

Chapter 4. People + Community

Follows Goal / Objective	Action Item	Responsible Party/ Partner	Time Frame	Date Completed
4.6	Partner with regional providers and employers to assess local childcare needs and gaps.	Township Staff, LSCP, CUPPAD	Medium	

Chapter 5. Economic Development

Follows Goal / Objective	Action Item	Responsible Party/ Partner	Time Frame	Date Completed
5.1	Update the Zoning Ordinance to allow a broader range of housing types, including duplexes, townhomes, and small multi-family dwellings.	Township Staff, Planning Commission	Medium	
5.1	Identify and prioritize target areas for new housing developments based on infrastructure, access, and proximity to services.	Township Staff, LSCP, Marquette County Land Bank, Planning Commission	Long	
5.2	Coordinate with regional partners and housing organizations to pursue housing grants and funding opportunities.	Township Staff, CUPPAD, MSHDA, LSCP, MCLB	Long	
5.3	Coordinate with local and regional partners to identify funding or assistance programs for home improvement.	Township Staff, Marquette County	Long	

Chapter 6. Natural Resources

Follows Goal / Objective	Action Item	Responsible Party/ Partner	Time Frame	Date Completed
6.1	Identify and map wetlands, flood-prone areas, steep slopes, and rocky areas to inform better land use decisions.	Township Staff, Superior Watershed Partnership, CUPPAD	Medium	
6.2	Encourage conservation and cluster development to preserve desired open space areas.	Township Staff, Planning Commission	Long/ Ongoing	
6.3	Incorporate stormwater management practices into development review to minimize runoff and protect water quality.	Township Staff, Planning Commission	Medium	
6.4	Encourage sustainable land management practices to limit conflicts between resource production and residential development.	Planning Commission	Long	
6.5	Support development and maintenance of public trails, parks, and recreation areas while protecting sensitive areas.	Township Staff, Planning Commission	Long	

Chapter 7. Housing + Neighborhoods

Follows Goal / Objective	Action Item	Responsible Party/ Partner	Time Frame	Date Completed
7.1	Partner with Marquette County Land Bank to identify and prioritize redevelopment-ready parcels.	Township Staff, MCLB	Medium	
7.1	Update the Zoning Ordinance to allow missing middle housing typologies.	Planning Commission	Short	
7.1	Develop a Township specific housing development guide to outline preferred development locations, infrastructure availability, and zoning expectations. Partner with regional entities to maximize use of existing tools.	Township Staff, Planning Commission, LSCP, MCLB	Long	
7.2	Pursue grant funding to establish a housing rehabilitation and weatherization program	Township Staff, LSCP, SWP	Long, Ongoing	
7.3	Support grant or assistance programs for accessibility upgrades, senior services, and home modification programs.	Township Staff, Marquette County	Long	

Chapter 8. Quality of Life

Follows Goal / Objective	Action Item	Responsible Party/ Partner	Time Frame	Date Completed
8.1	Identify opportunities to expand or connect trail networks and non-motorized pathways.	Township Staff, Planning Commission, Recreation Committee	Medium	
8.2	Develop consistent Township branding and messaging for communications and outreach.	Township Staff, Board	Short	
8.3	Support improvements to lighting, visibility, and safety conditions in public spaces.	Recreation Committee	Short	
8.4	Identify gaps in access to recreation, services, or facilities across the Township, considering the unique needs of youth, seniors, and persons with disabilities.	Recreation Committee	Short	

Chapter 9. Infrastructure

Follows Goal / Objective	Action Item	Responsible Party/ Partner	Time Frame	Date Completed
9.1	Develop and adopt a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) identifying priority infrastructure projects, costs, and timelines	Township Staff, Planning Commission, CUPPAD	Long	
9.1	Create and maintain a comprehensive asset inventory (roads, culverts, facilities, utilities)	Township Staff, Planning Commission	Medium	
9.1	Utilize tools such as PASER ratings and asset management systems to prioritize repairs	Township Staff, Planning Commission, CUPPAD, MDOT	Medium	
9.2	Explore adoption of Complete Streets principles where appropriate for Township conditions	Planning Commission, Marquette County, MDOT	Short	
9.3	Conduct a water and sewer infrastructure assessment, prioritizing aging systems and compliance with state regulations.	Township Staff, Ishpeming Area Joint Wastewater Authority	Long	
9.3	Explore feasibility of a library kiosk, book return, or satellite service at the Township Hall.	Township Staff, IC Library	Short	

Chapter 10. Land Use

Follows Goal / Objective	Action Item	Responsible Party/ Partner	Time Frame	Date Completed
10.1	Direct new development to areas with existing or planned public water, sewer, and road access, particularly near the City of Ishpeming and along US-41.	Planning Commission	Medium	
10.1	Coordinate land use decisions with infrastructure capacity and capital improvement planning.	Planning Commission	Long	
10.2	Review and update the Zoning Ordinance to establish or strengthen setback, buffers, and environmental protections.	Planning Commission, CUPPAD, SWP	Short	
10.3	Review and revise dimensional standards (lot size, setbacks, density, lot coverage) to remove unnecessary barriers.	Planning Commission	Short	
10.3	Align all zoning districts and permitted uses with the Future Land Use Map.	Planning Commission, CUPPAD	Short	
10.4	Explore incentives or expedited review processes for developments that meet community priorities (housing, sustainability, jobs)	Planning Commission, Marquette County, LSCP	Medium	

A Appendix: Outreach + Survey Results

Ishpeming Township CUPPAD

ISHPEMING TOWNSHIP

INVITES YOU TO COMPLETE THE COMMUNITY SURVEY

www.surveymonkey.com/r/IshTwp2024

This survey guides the development and priorities of the Master Plan and Recreation Plan for the next 5-10 years. Your voice matters!

Survey will be open until November 7, 2024
Please share!

Central Upper Peninsula Planning and Development Regional Commission
October 9, 2024 · 🌐

Calling all Ishpeming Township residents and visitors! Your voice matters!

Ishpeming Township has begun the process of updating its Master Plan and Recreation Plan. Community input is an integral part of both plans. The Master Plan sets the goals and priority for development in the township, and is the basis for regulating land use and identifying the needs of the community for up to the next 20 years. The Recreation Plan sets community priorities and potential projects to enhance parks and recreation in the township for the next 5 years.

Your survey responses help to guide and shape the priorities in the plans.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/IshTwp2024>

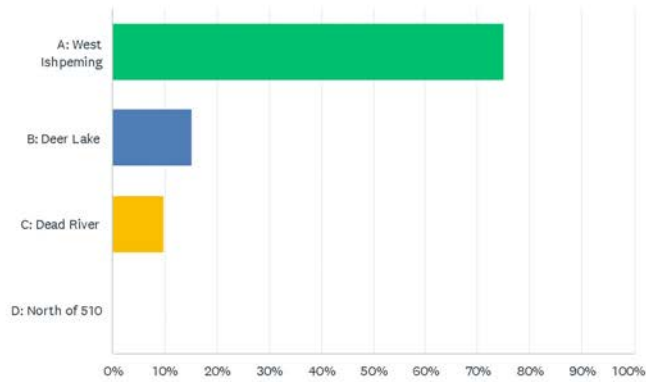
The survey will be open until November 7th, 2024. Please share!

The Community Survey was available from DATE to November 7, 2024, available in print and online at SurveyMonkey.com

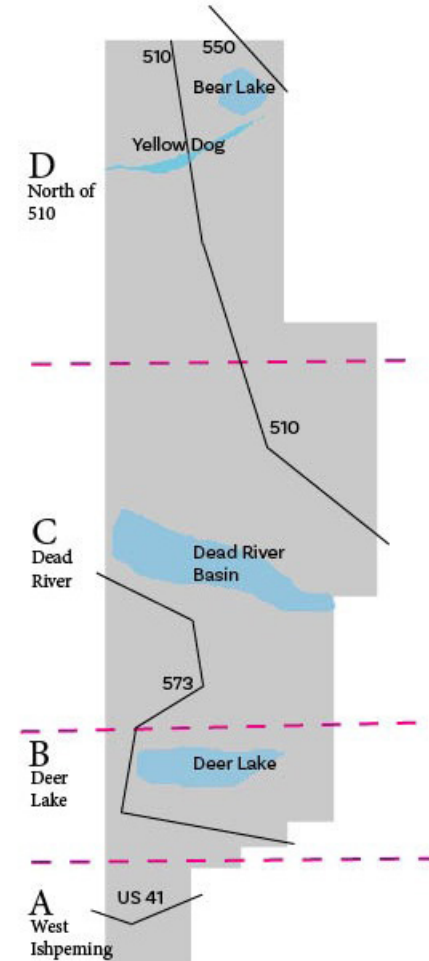
Ishpeming Township Master Plan and Recreation Plan Community Survey (2024)

Q1 According to the map above, I live in the approximate area of:

Answered: 152 Skipped: 4

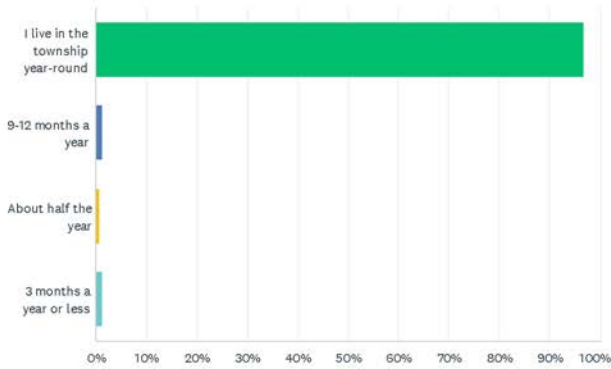


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A: West Ishpeming	75.00%	114
B: Deer Lake	15.13%	23
C: Dead River	9.87%	15
D: North of 510	0.00%	0
TOTAL		152



Q2 I live in the Township:

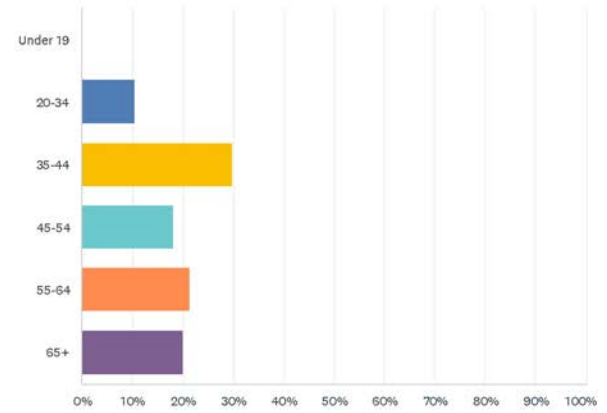
Answered: 155 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
I live in the township year-round	96.77% 150
9-12 months a year	1.29% 2
About half the year	0.65% 1
3 months a year or less	1.29% 2
TOTAL	155

Q3 What is your age?

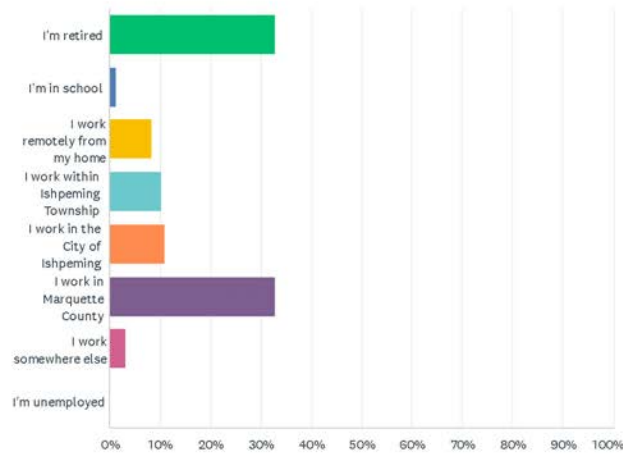
Answered: 154 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Under 19	0.00% 0
20-34	10.39% 16
35-44	29.87% 46
45-54	18.18% 28
55-64	21.43% 33
65+	20.13% 31
TOTAL	154

Q4 Where is your place of employment located?

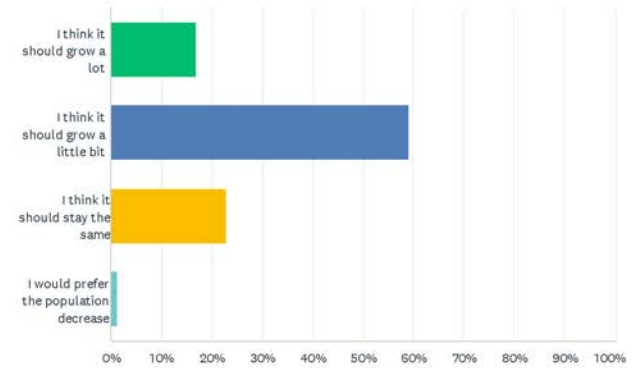
Answered: 155 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
I'm retired	32.90% 51
I'm in school	1.29% 2
I work remotely from my home	8.39% 13
I work within Ishpeming Township	10.32% 16
I work in the City of Ishpeming	10.97% 17
I work in Marquette County	32.90% 51
I work somewhere else	3.23% 5
I'm unemployed	0.00% 0
TOTAL	155

Q5 How important is it to you that the Township's population continues to be maintained or grow?

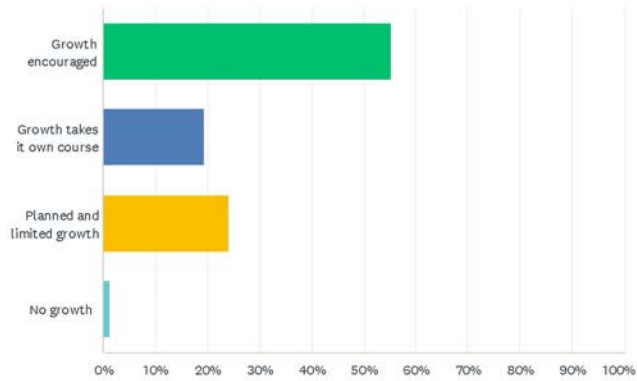
Answered: 154 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
I think it should grow a lot	16.88% 26
I think it should grow a little bit	59.09% 91
I think it should stay the same	22.73% 35
I would prefer the population decrease	1.30% 2
TOTAL	154

Q6 What strategy would you prefer for growth of businesses or commercial opportunities?

Answered: 154 Skipped: 2



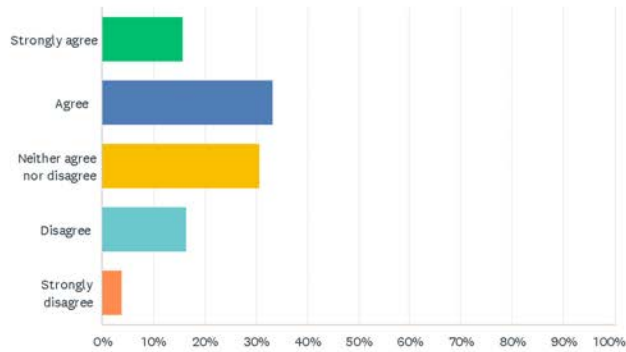
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Growth encouraged	55.19%	85
Growth takes its own course	19.48%	30
Planned and limited growth	24.03%	37
No growth	1.30%	2
TOTAL		154

Q7 If new businesses were able to locate in the township, what kinds would you like to see?

Answered: 122 Skipped: 34

Q8 Ishpeming Township should seek to maintain its rural character and protect the area from development which may cause that character to significantly change.

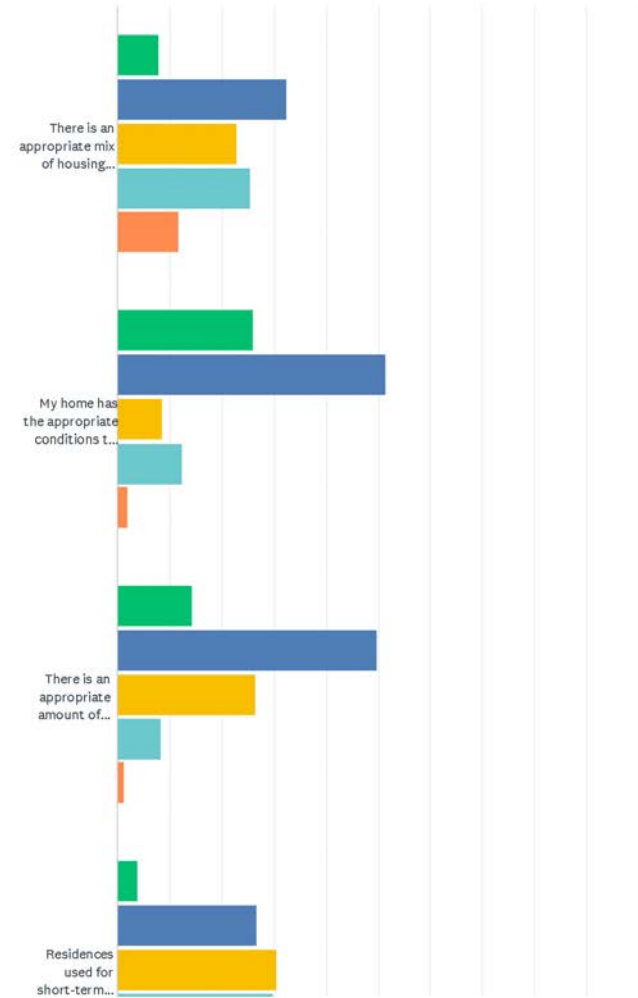
Answered: 153 Skipped: 3



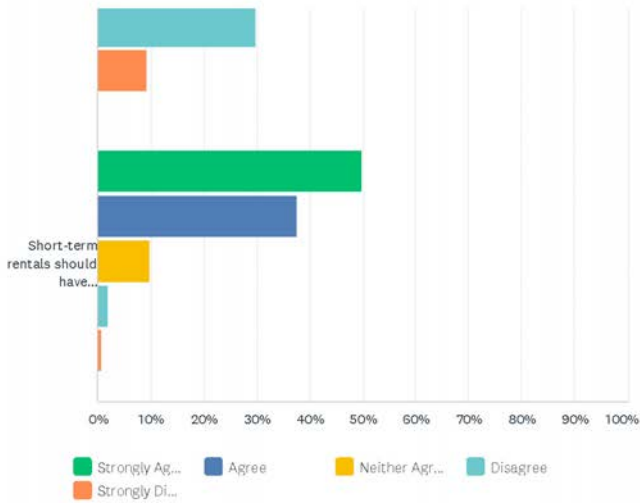
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	15.69%	24
Agree	33.33%	51
Neither agree nor disagree	30.72%	47
Disagree	16.34%	25
Strongly disagree	3.92%	6
TOTAL		153

Q9 Thinking about the overall housing stock available in the Township, to what degree to you agree or disagree with the following statements:

Answered: 155 Skipped: 1



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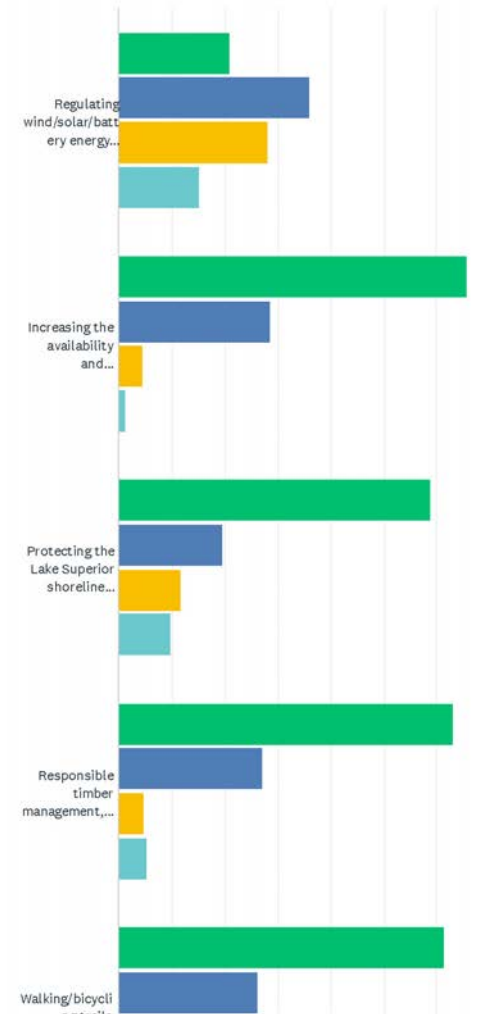


	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL
There is an appropriate mix of housing options for residents	7.79% 12	32.47% 50	22.73% 35	25.32% 39	11.69% 18	154
My home has the appropriate conditions to allow me to occupy it into old age	25.97% 40	51.30% 79	8.44% 13	12.34% 19	1.95% 3	154
There is an appropriate amount of permanent residences compared to seasonal cottages and camps	14.19% 22	49.68% 77	26.45% 41	8.39% 13	1.29% 2	155
Residences used for short-term rentals offer additional economic opportunities that are appropriate for the community.	3.90% 6	26.62% 41	30.52% 47	29.87% 46	9.09% 14	154
Short-term rentals should have appropriate regulations to protect the health, safety, and welfare of occupants and the community.	50.00% 76	37.50% 57	9.87% 15	1.97% 3	0.66% 1	152

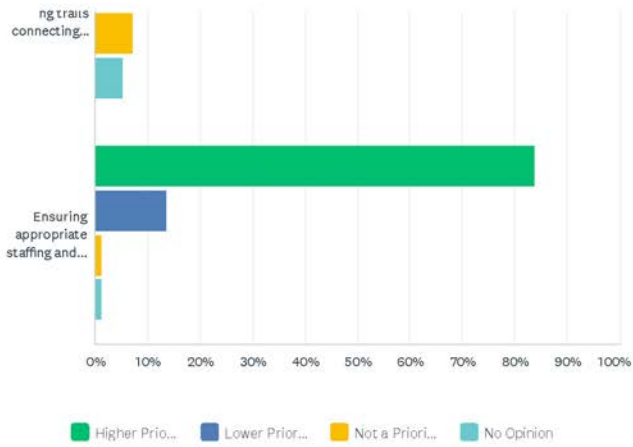
Ishpeming Township Master Plan and Recreation Plan Community Survey (2024)

Q10 Thinking about infrastructure and land use, what are your priorities for the following?

Answered: 154 Skipped: 2



Ishpeming Township Master Plan and Recreation Plan Community Survey (2024)



Ishpeming Township Master Plan and Recreation Plan Community Survey (2024)

Q11 What do you LOVE about living in Ishpeming Township?

Answered: 115 Skipped: 41

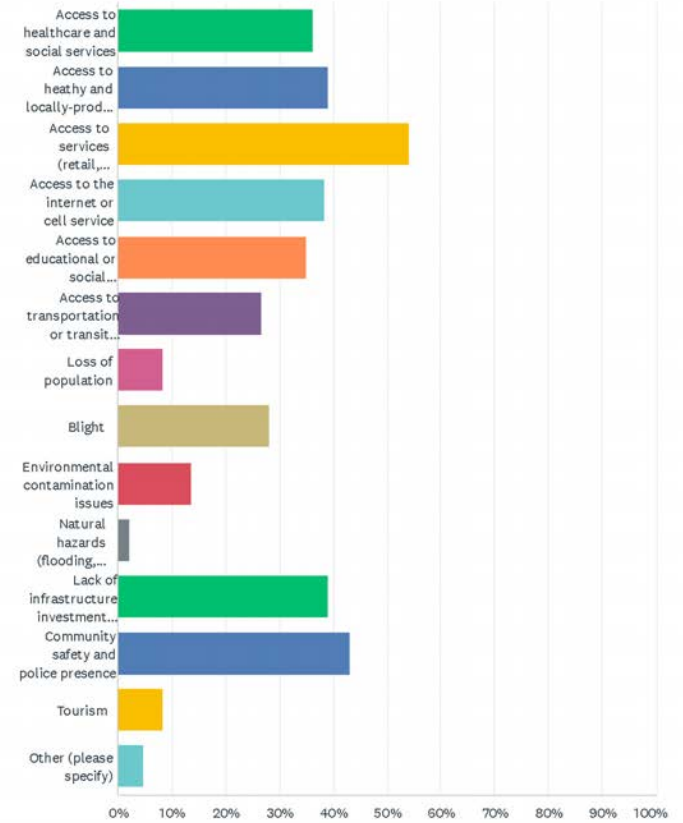
	HIGHER PRIORITY	LOWER PRIORITY	NOT A PRIORITY	NO OPINION	TOTAL
Regulating wind/solar/battery energy options with appropriate scales and conditions	20.92% 32	35.95% 55	28.10% 43	15.03% 23	153
Increasing the availability and participation in recycling, hazardous waste, and other waste [bulk, tires, electronics] collection programs	65.58% 101	28.57% 44	4.55% 7	1.30% 2	154
Protecting the Lake Superior shoreline through responsible coastal management practices	58.82% 90	19.61% 30	11.76% 18	9.80% 15	153
Responsible timber management, protecting the natural beauty and economic value of forested lands	63.16% 96	26.97% 41	4.61% 7	5.26% 8	152
Walking/bicycling trails connecting various areas or other communities	61.44% 94	26.14% 40	7.19% 11	5.23% 8	153
Ensuring appropriate staffing and equipment on the Volunteer Fire Department	83.77% 129	13.64% 21	1.30% 2	1.30% 2	154

Q12 In one word, what is the biggest issue in the area you live in or the Township as a whole?

Answered: 114 Skipped: 42

Q13 What issue(s) do you think have the greatest impact on the Township and its residents? [check all that apply]

Answered: 146 Skipped: 10



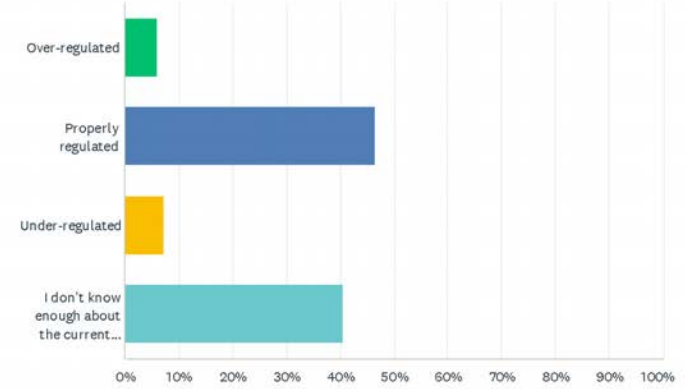
Ishpeming Township Master Plan and Recreation Plan Community Survey (2024)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Access to healthcare and social services	36.30%	53
Access to healthy and locally-produced food	39.04%	57
Access to services (retail, professionals, home and childcare)	54.11%	79
Access to the internet or cell service	38.36%	56
Access to educational or social opportunities for children	34.93%	51
Access to transportation or transit services	26.71%	39
Loss of population	8.22%	12
Blight	28.08%	41
Environmental contamination issues	13.70%	20
Natural hazards (flooding, lakeshore erosion, wildfire, extreme weather)	2.05%	3
Lack of infrastructure investment (roads, power, etc.)	39.04%	57
Community safety and police presence	43.15%	63
Tourism	8.22%	12
Other (please specify)	4.79%	7
Total Respondents: 146		

Ishpeming Township Master Plan and Recreation Plan Community Survey (2024)

Q14 Under the current zoning regulations, do you feel you are (choose one of the following):

Answered: 153 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Over-regulated	5.88%	9
Properly regulated	46.41%	71
Under-regulated	7.19%	11
I don't know enough about the current zoning	40.52%	62
TOTAL		153

Q15 What change would you like to see within Ishpeming Township?

Answered: 102 Skipped: 54

Q16 Is there anything else you would like to add that was not addressed by the questions? If you would also like to expand on any of your previous responses, please do so here.

Answered: 37 Skipped: 119

Q17 Ishpeming Township is also updating their 5-year recreation plan. The following questions will inform community priorities. In the past two years, what recreational activities have you or a member of your household participated in? (please list all, for example: hiking, biking, kayaking, etc.)

Answered: 113 Skipped: 43

Q18 Please list what you VALUE about the parks and recreational opportunities in Ishpeming Township.

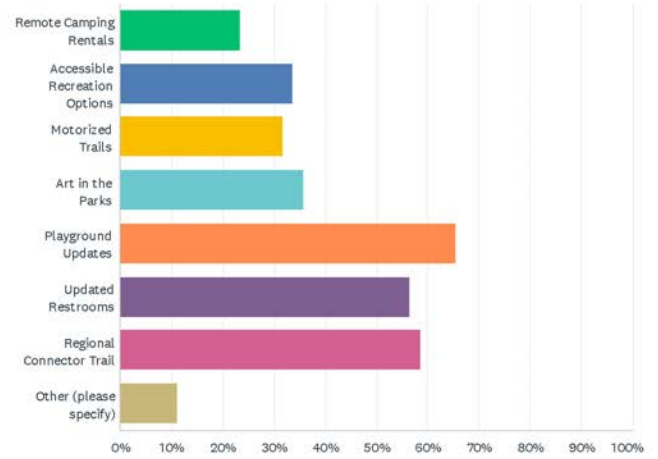
Answered: 89 Skipped: 67

Q19 Please list what you would like to see CHANGED regarding parks and recreational opportunities in Ishpeming Township.








Answered: 76 Skipped: 80

Q20 Please select the parks and recreation project ideas you would like to see happen within the township, and provide your own ideas.

Answered: 145 Skipped: 11



Ishpeming Township Master Plan and Recreation Plan Community Survey (2024)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
 Remote Camping Rentals	23.45%	34
 Accessible Recreation Options	33.79%	49
 Motorized Trails	31.72%	46
 Art in the Parks	35.86%	52
 Playground Updates	65.52%	95
 Updated Restrooms	56.55%	82
 Regional Connector Trail	58.62%	85
Other (please specify)	11.03%	16
Total Respondents: 145		

Ishpeming Township Master Plan and Recreation Plan Community Survey (2024)

Q21 Is there anything else you would like to add about parks and recreation in Ishpeming Township? If you'd like to expand on any previous questions, please do so here.

Answered: 28 Skipped: 128