

# Allis Township

MASTER PLAN

2026-2031

**DRAFT**

# Table of Contents

---

## Chapter 1 Introduction

The Purpose & Process	1-1
Location	1-3

---

## Chapter 2 Socio-Economic Data

Population	2-1
Age Distribution	2-3
School Enrollment & Educational Attainment	2-5
Financials	2-6
Labor Force	2-9
Employment Sectors	2-10
State Equalized Value (SEV)	2-11

---

## Chapter 3 Community Services & Facilities

Water & Sewage Disposal	3-1
Solid Waste	3-2
Utility Services	3-2
Police, Fire & Ambulance Services	3-2
Transportation	3-3
Municipal & County Facilities	3-3
Library	3-5
Schools	3-5
Churches	3-6
Cemetery	3-6
Medical Facilities	3-6
Recreational Facilities	3-7

---

# Table of Contents

---

## Chapter 4 Natural Resources

Climate	4-1
Land Cover	4-1
Geology	4-4
Topography	4-5
Soils	4-6
Water Resources	4-10
Wetlands	4-12
Fish & Wildlife	4-14
Oil & Gas	4-15

---

## Chapter 5 Housing

Overview	5-1
Household Characteristics	5-1
Household Income	5-2
Current Housing Inventory	5-3
Occupied Units	5-5
Household Expenses	5-6
Current Housing Cost	5-7

---

## Chapter 6 Existing Land Use

Existing Land Use	6-1
Existing Land Uses Defined	6-2

---

## Chapter 7 Input 7 Goals

Survey Synopsis	7-1
Goals	7-2

---

# Table of Contents

---

## Chapter 8 Future Land Use

Introduction	8-1
Designation & Zoning Table	8-1
Low Density Residential	8-2
Medium Density Residential	8-3
Forest Recreation	8-4
Agriculture Residential	8-5
Commercial	8-6
Industrial/Extractive	8-7

---

## Chapter 9 Adoption & Implementation

Public Hearing	9-1
Plan Adoption	9-1
Documentation	9-1
Plan Implementation	9-1
Zoning Ordinance	9-2
Grants & Capital Improvement Plan	9-2

---

## Appendix A

Full Survey Results	A-1
Documentation	A-6

---

Master Plan Assistance Provided By:  
Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG)  
80 Livingston Blvd Suite U-108  
PO Box 457  
Gaylord, MI 49734  
[www.nemcog.org](http://www.nemcog.org)

---

Socio-Economic Data Sources:  
2024 American Community Survey  
US Census  
Presque Isle County Equalization

---

Map Sources:  
Agricultural Soils and Slopes & Hydric Soils: Natural Resource Conservation Service, USDA  
Oil & Gas Wells: Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, & Energy  
Land Cover: USGS National Land Cover Database  
Wetlands: National Wetland Inventory, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Roads: State of Michigan

---



# Introduction

---

# Chapter 1

# The Purpose & Process

The purpose of the Allis Township Master Plan is to provide guidelines for future physical development of the community, while protecting water resources, other natural resources, and rural township character. This plan presents extensive background information for the Township and the surrounding area, including social and economic data, description and mapping of natural resources, and inventory of existing community facilities. The background information is analyzed to identify characteristics, changes, and trends occurring in Allis Township. Community concerns are identified based on the Township Board and Planning Commission comments and input provided at public meetings, the community visioning session, and the public survey. Community goals and policies are presented to guide future development based on these background studies, key land use trends, and community issues. These goals, along with a map of existing land uses, provide the basis for the Future Land Use Map. The Future Land Use map recommends locations for various types of future development within the Township.

According to Michigan law, a zoning ordinance must align with an adopted Master Plan to be valid and enforceable. In the late 1990s, wishing to pursue master planning for the community as an independent governmental unit and break from the County's Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance, Allis Township engaged in a process to create its first Master Plan and to develop a local zoning ordinance based on that plan. Since that time, several changes have occurred in the community and the region, leading to the need for an update to that Plan.

The authority to develop the master plan is provided through the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended. Public Act 33 of 2008 requires the Planning Commission to hold a public hearing before the final adoption of a master plan, as well as when the Planning Commission alters, amends, or expands the scope of its master plan after its original adoption.

A Master Plan can generally be described by the following:

- \* Future-Oriented: The Plan concerns itself with long-range planning in guiding growth and land use needs. The plan is not only a picture of the community today, but a guide to how the community should evolve over the next five to ten years in response to growth.
- \* General: The plan establishes broad principles and policies to address future growth and land use needs.
- \* Comprehensive: The plan addresses all types of land uses and the practical geographic boundaries of each.
- \* A Plan: The land use plan is a tangible document, which consists of both text and maps, with maps typically illustrating the policies set forth within the text.

The Master Plan aims to preserve and develop a community that benefits both its residents and neighboring areas. To accomplish this, the Plan provides an analysis of the community's existing resources and serves as a guide for making informed land use decisions.

Master Plans serve to:

- \* Seek citizen input on needs and services.
- \* Provide an overall perspective of the land, how it is being used, and how it should be used in the future.
- \* Create a general statement of the goals and objectives of the community.
- \* Preserve the quality of life in the community.
- \* Promote public health, safety, and welfare for the region's citizens.
- \* Guide the use of limited resources and preservation in the most effective manner possible through clear and logical zoning decisions.

Master Plans do not carry the force of law; rather, they serve as guides meant to be regularly referenced and updated. The Future Land Use plan is a central element of the Master Plan, informing decisions related to zoning, capital improvements, utility expansions, land divisions, and interactions with neighboring communities. It is important to note that, as a guide rather than an engineering tool, the maps in this document should not be used to measure property lines, serve as a definitive source for tax purposes, or determine precise boundaries for floodplains or wetlands.

# Location

Allis Township is in the southwest corner of Presque Isle County in the northeast region of Michigan's Lower Peninsula. Allis Township is made up of two traditional 36-square-mile geographic townships, except for the City of Onaway located at the northern border of the Township. The Township is bordered by North Allis Township to the north, Case Township to the east, Montmorency County's Montmorency Township to the south, and by Cheboygan County's Forest Township on the west.





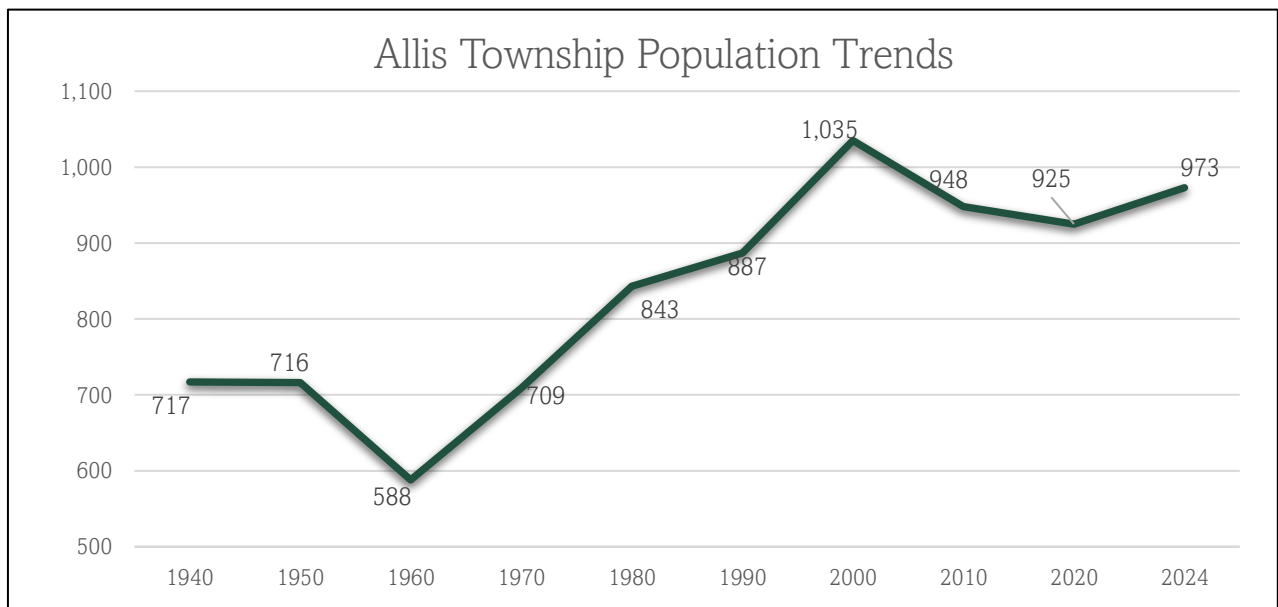
# Socio-Economic Data

## Chapter 2

# Population

Demographic shifts help illustrate how Allis Township is growing, how that growth affects the land, and what trends may shape future planning. The Township’s population reached 973 in the 2024 American Community Survey, a 0.9% increase since 2014, while Presque Isle County’s population increased by 0.6% during the same period. However, both the 2020 U.S. Census and recent ACS counts were influenced by COVID-19–related disruptions, likely resulting in undercounts across several population groups.

Table 2-1 Population Trend Allis Township			
Year	Population	Number Change	Percent Change
1940	717	---	---
1950	716	-1	-0.1%
1960	588	-128	-17.9%
1970	709	121	20.6%
1980	843	134	18.9%
1990	887	44	5.2%
2000	1,035	148	16.7%
2010	948	-87	-8.4%
2020*	925	-23	-2.4%
2024	973	48	5.2%



The population count does not account for seasonal residents. To estimate the seasonal population, we can multiply the number of seasonal housing units by the average household size. According to the 2024 American Community Survey, there are 83 homes in the Township designated for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use, with an average household size of 2.33 people. This results in an estimated seasonal population of approximately 193 individuals. However, this figure does not include seasonal visitors or tourists staying in local motels, campgrounds, or with family and friends. Accurately determining the number of tourists visiting annually is beyond the scope of this plan.

Table 2-2 Population					
Municipality	2014	2019	2024	Numeric Change	Percent Change
Allis Township	964	970	973	9	0.9%
North Allis Township	377	338	515	138	36.6%
City of Onaway	829	807	674	-155	-18.7%
Case Township	825	756	762	-63	-7.6%
Presque Isle County	13,128	12,714	13,209	81	0.6%
State of Michigan	9,889,024	9,965,265	10,077,761	188,737	1.9%



# Age Distribution

Table 2-3 illustrates the age distribution of Allis Township, Presque Isle County, and the State of Michigan, highlighting the differences in demographic patterns across these areas. In Allis Township, the largest age group is those aged 65 to 74, making up 17.8% of the population, followed by those aged 55 to 64 (13.5%) and 45 to 54 (13.2%). The first two age groups are the highest for the County as well, but at a higher rate, and 75 and up in the County is equal to 45 to 54 in the Township.

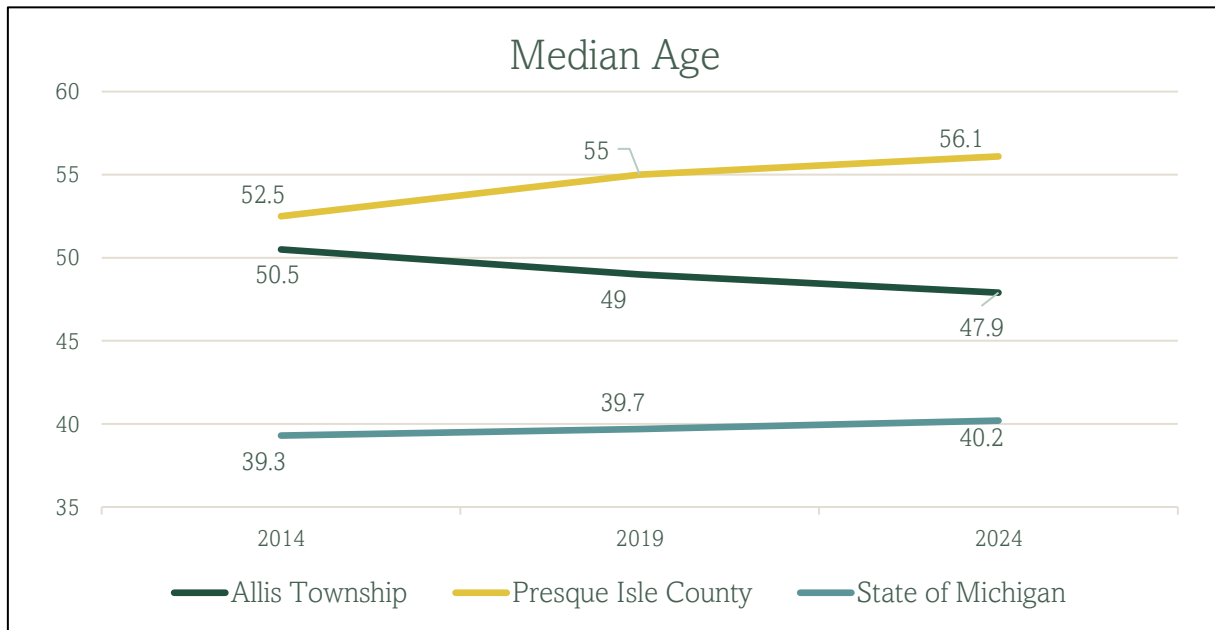
On the younger end, Allis Township has a smaller proportion of children under 5 (3.9%) compared to Presque Isle County (4.1%) and the State of Michigan (5.4%). Similarly, the 5 to 9 age group is slightly higher in the State (5.8%) than in the County (3.7%) and Allis Township (3.7%). In contrast, the 15 to 19 age group in Allis Township (7.0%) is nearly double that of the County (4.1%) and higher than the State (6.5%). The 25 to 34 age group in Allis Township is also slightly higher than in the County, but 4.9% lower than in the State.

	Allis Township	Presque Isle County	State of Michigan
Under 5	3.9%	4.1%	5.4%
5 to 9	3.7%	3.7%	5.8%
10 to 14	8.1%	4.9%	6.2%
15 to 19	7.0%	4.1%	6.5%
20 to 24	2.6%	3.8%	6.6%
25 to 34	8.3%	8.1%	13.2%
35 to 44	10.8%	9.5%	12.1%
45 to 54	13.2%	10.5%	12.0%
55 to 64	13.5%	17.6%	13.6%
65 to 74	17.8%	20.5%	11.2%
75 and up	11.1%	13.2%	7.4%



Table 2-4 presents the median age for Allis Township, Presque Isle County, and the State of Michigan from 2014 to 2024. In Allis Township, the median age has decreased from 50.5 years in 2014 to 47.9 years in 2024. This reflects a trend toward a somewhat younger population over the past decade. In contrast, Presque Isle County has seen a steady increase in median age, rising from 52.5 years in 2014 to 56.1 years in 2024, indicating an aging population over this period. The State of Michigan’s median age has also increased, though less dramatically, from 39.3 years in 2014 to 40.2 years in 2024. This shows a more gradual aging trend at the State level compared to the County and Township. Overall, Allis Township's median age remains lower than Presque Isle County's, but higher than the State's, reflecting the Township's higher percentage of lower age groups (5-19 and 25-54) than the County's percentages of the same groups.

Table 2-4 Median Age								
Allis Township			Presque Isle County			State of Michigan		
2014	2019	2024	2014	2019	2024	2014	2019	2024
50.5	49.0	47.9	52.5	55.0	56.1	39.3	39.7	40.2



# School Enrollment & Educational Attainment

Allis Township's school-aged children primarily attend Onaway Public Schools. For the 2024-25 school year, Onaway had an enrollment of 511 students, with 297 of those students, or 58.12%, classified as economically disadvantaged. "Economic disadvantage" refers to families whose income is below a certain threshold, often impacting their ability to afford necessities such as housing, food, healthcare, and other essential services. In educational settings, this can also mean that students may face challenges accessing resources like tutoring, extracurricular activities, and technology, which can affect their academic performance and overall well-being.

Table 2-5 Educational Attainment			
	Allis Township	Presque Isle County	State of Michigan
Population 25 and over	727	10,492	7,008,507
Less than 9 <sup>th</sup> grade education	2.5%	2.7%	2.6%
9 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> grade without diploma	4.8%	4.9%	5.3%
High school diploma or equivalency	40.9%	35.5%	28.0%
Some college; no degree	18.8%	23.1%	21.9%
Associate degree	13.6%	12.4%	9.8%
Bachelor's degree	16.2%	14.7%	19.7%
Graduate or professional degree	3.2%	6.7%	12.7%
High school graduate or higher	92.7%	92.4%	92.1%
Bachelor's degree or higher	19.4%	21.4%	32.4%

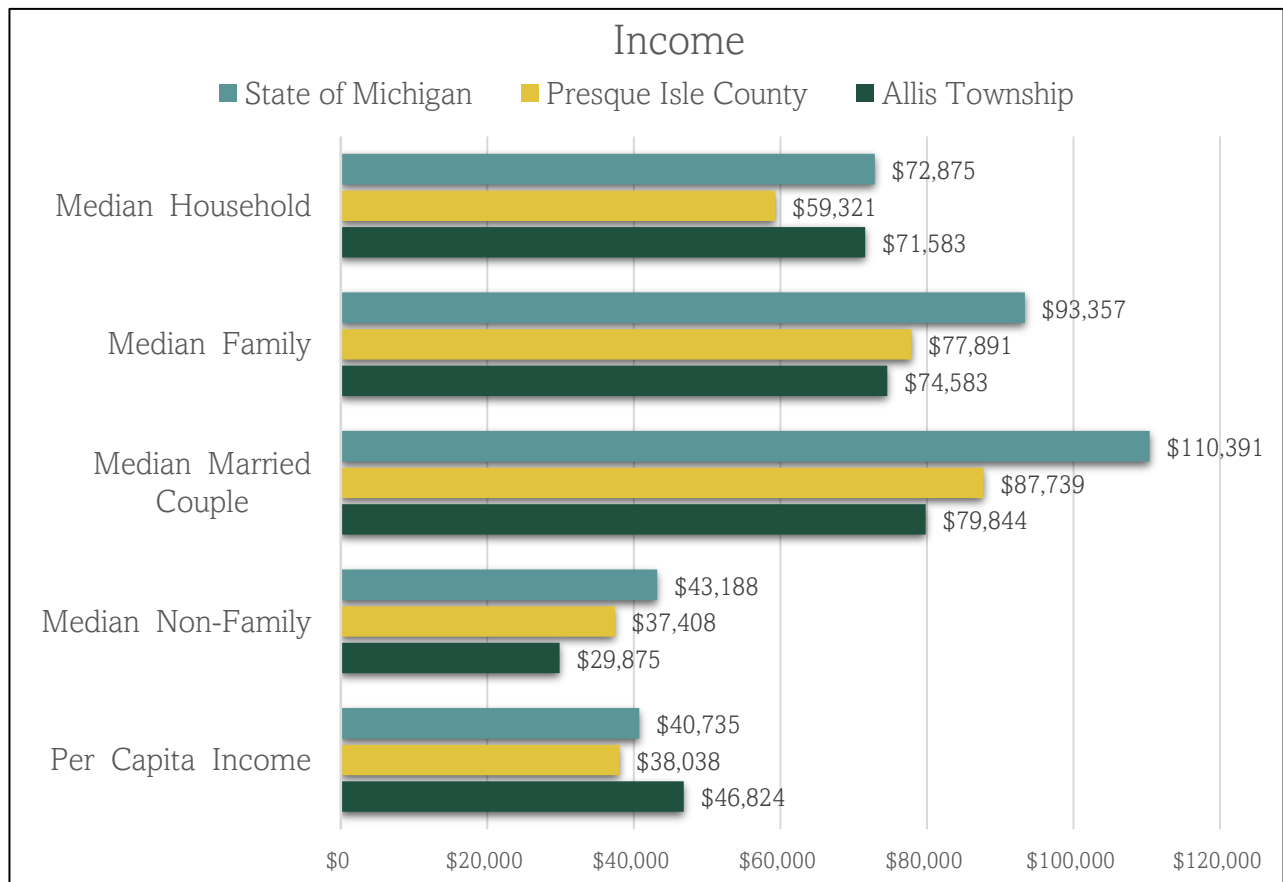
Of the 727 Township residents aged 25 and older, 92.7% are high school graduates, and 19.4% hold a bachelor's degree or higher. Educational attainment in Presque Isle County is similar to the Township, and statewide levels exceed both, likely reflecting limited local access to higher education. Still, attainment has improved over the past decade, including a more than twofold increase in residents with bachelor's degrees.



# Financials

As illustrated in Table 2-6, Allis Township’s median household income and per capita income are slightly higher than Presque Isle County, and per capita income is even higher than the State of Michigan. Household income is almost the same as the State. The Township’s median income for families, married couples, and non-family households is lower than that in the County and the State.

Table 2-6 Income			
	Allis Township	Presque Isle County	State of Michigan
Median Household	\$71,583	\$59,321	\$72,875
Median Family	\$74,583	\$77,891	\$93,357
Median Married Couple	\$79,844	\$87,739	\$110,391
Median Non-Family	\$29,875	\$37,408	\$43,188
Per Capita Income	\$46,824	\$38,038	\$40,735



Shown in Table 2-7 below, the percentage of income earnings from employment was higher in the Township than in the County, though not the State. However, the mean earnings were vastly higher than even those statewide. In addition, the lower percentage of people receiving income from social security and retirement incomes in the Township compared to the County indicates a younger population. The percentage of the population receiving supplemental security income and cash public assistance in the Township is comparatively higher than in the County and the State. Food stamps/SNAP benefits are much lower in the Township.

**Table 2-7 Income Sources**

Source	Allis Township		Presque Isle County		State of Michigan	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent
With earnings	258	62.8%	3881	58.3%	3,017,942	74.0%
<i>Mean earnings</i>	\$144,203	---	\$78,143	---	\$101,365	---
With Social Security	194	47.2%	3351	50.4%	1,421,376	34.9%
<i>Mean Social Security Income</i>	\$23,455	---	\$25,588	---	\$25,306	---
With retirement income	133	32.4%	2700	40.6%	1,145,735	28.1%
<i>Mean retirement income</i>	\$19,791	---	\$30,842	---	\$28,787	---
With Supplemental Security Income	47	11.4%	495	7.4%	231,820	5.7%
<i>Mean Supplemental Security Income</i>	\$10,257	---	\$13,639	---	\$11,875	---
With cash public assistance income	13	3.2%	148	2.2%	119,122	2.9%
<i>Mean cash public assistance income</i>	---	---	\$2,589	---	\$4,032	---
With Food Stamp/SNAP benefits in the past 12 months	21	5.1%	587	8.8%	473,967	11.6%



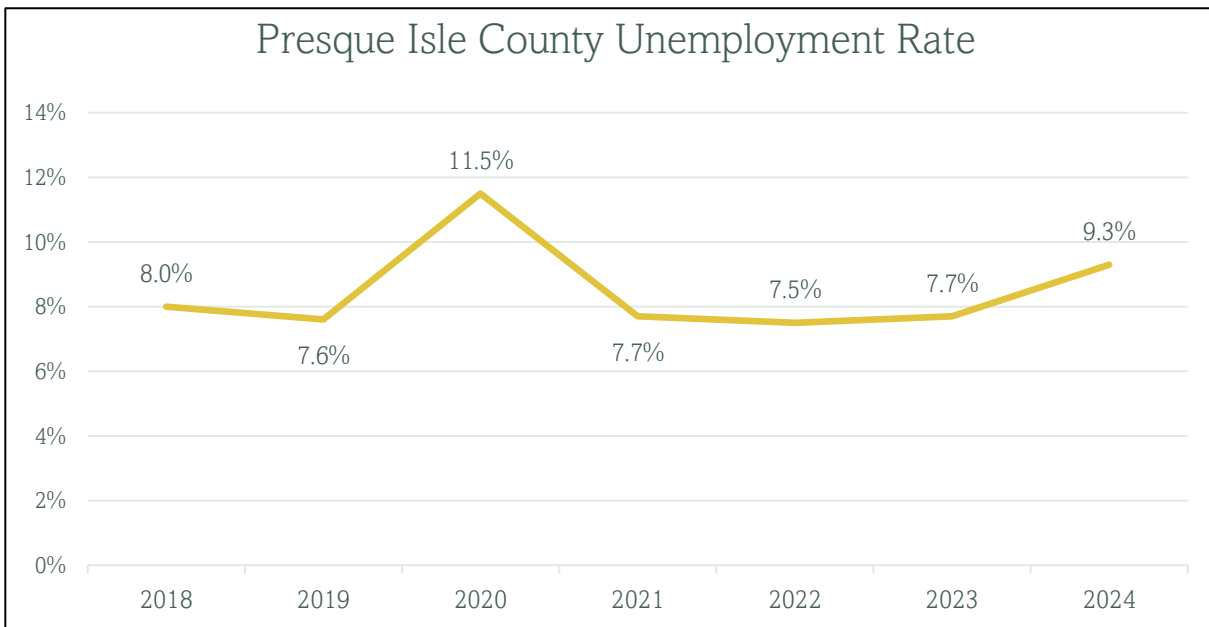
Poverty rates in Allis Township are generally lower than in the County and the State. The poverty rate for individuals is 10.8%, lower than the County rate; the County is slightly higher than the State rate. However, the poverty rate for senior citizens (14.6%) is more than 50% higher than that of the State and County. Mirroring the total for individuals, 10.6% of families in Allis Township are below the poverty line. Married-couple families are a similar 10.7%. The 2024 ACS reports that none of the 40 households with a single female head-of-household are below the poverty line, though this is possibly due to under sampling errors in the data collection process.



# Labor Force

The civilian labor force is defined as all civilian individuals over the age of 16 who are employed or actively seeking employment. Labor force numbers can change rather quickly in response to economic conditions. During prolonged periods of unemployment, unsuccessful job seekers can drop out of the workforce by going back to school, leaving the area to search for work, or stopping the work search. Allis Township and Presque Isle County have seen fluctuations in their civilian labor force and employment numbers since 2000. However, the United States experienced an economic downturn due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in many people being without work and a source of income. Data collected during the pandemic may not accurately portray conditions due to data collection issues and COVID-19 policies and procedures.

2-8 Employment Information Presque Isle County				
Year	Civilian Labor Force	Employment	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
2024	4,954	4,494	460	9.3%
2023	5,045	4,659	386	7.7%
2022	4,904	4,534	370	7.5%
2021	4,788	4,419	369	7.7%
2020	4,960	4,388	572	11.5%
2019	4,964	4,587	377	7.6%
2018	5,047	4,644	403	8.0%



# Employment Sectors

The largest employment industry in the Township is services, which employ 30.2% of the Township’s workforce, as demonstrated in Table 2-9. Transportation and communications is the second largest employment industry and employs 23.4% of workers, followed by retail trade, which employs 14.9% of workers. However, this data may underrepresent certain industries depending upon who responded during the data collection period.

About 77.8% of residents drive alone to work. Other forms of transportation are much less popular in Allis Township, likely due to longer distances (excluding the City of Onaway) and limited options. 13.9% of residents work from home. 36.6% of people traveled less than 15 minutes to work, while 49.8% traveled 30 minutes or more to work. 21.1% traveled more than 60 minutes to work.

2-9 Major Employment Type				
Category	Allis Township		Presque Isle County	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Agricultural, Forestry, Fishing	4	1.7%	153	4.5%
Mining	3	1.3%	169	5.0%
Construction	17	7.2%	236	7.0%
Manufacturing	9	3.8%	419	12.5%
Transportation and Communications	55	23.4%	284	8.4%
Wholesale Trade	2	0.85%	31	0.9%
Retail Trade	35	14.9%	359	10.7%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	23	9.8%	248	7.4%
Services	71	30.2%	1,056	31.4%
Public Administration	2	0.85%	194	5.8%
Unclassified	14	6.0%	215	6.4%

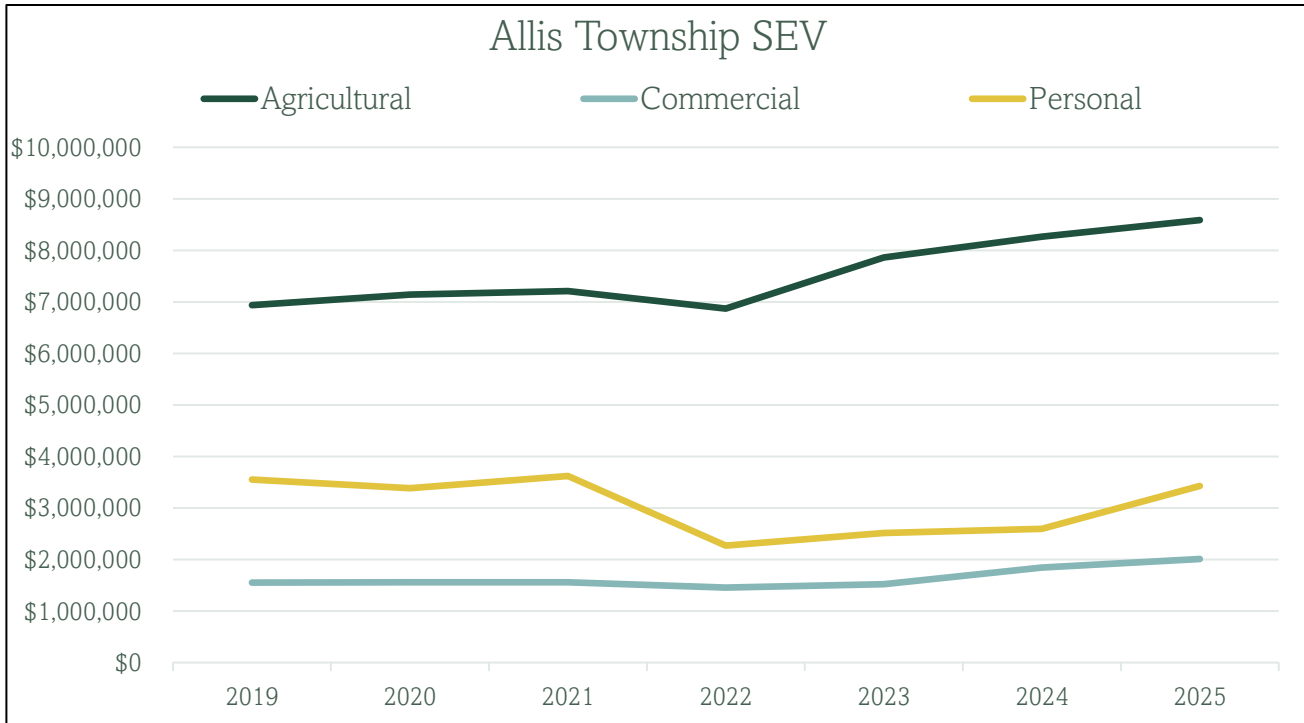
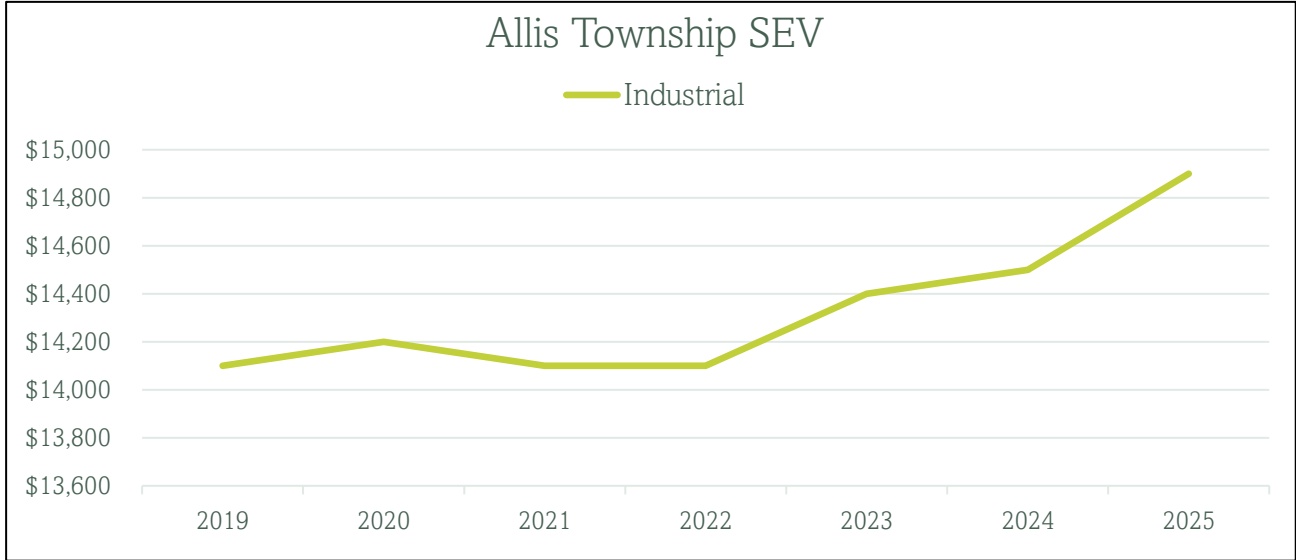


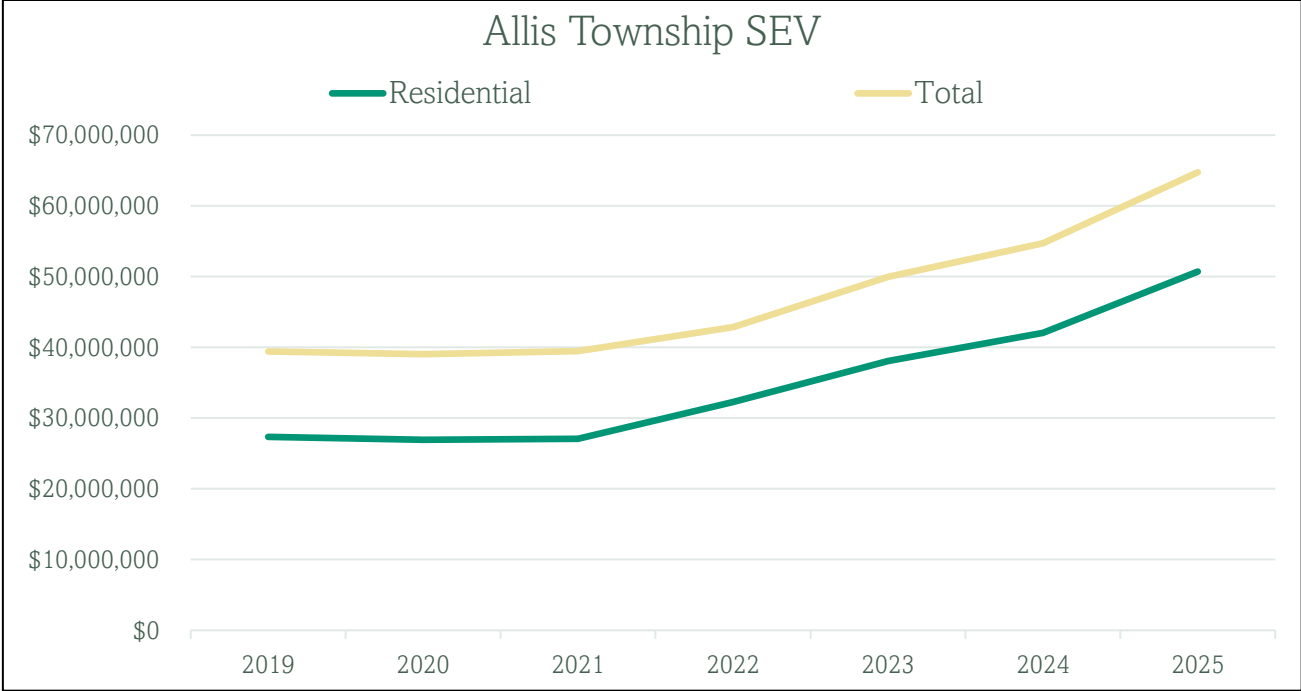
# State Equalized Value (SEV)

Another measure of community wealth is land value. Real and personal property is an important part of a community’s tax base and can provide income to support local government services, including law enforcement, emergency services, education, health and social services, land use controls, environmental protection, and public administration.

Characteristics of property values can be obtained through the analysis of the State Equalized Value (SEV). Overall, Allis Township’s SEV has consistently increased since 2019, especially between 2022 and 2023. Personal property fluctuated from 2019 to 2021, before decreasing in 2022 and fluctuating again in the following years and spiking in 2025. Over 78% of the Township’s SEV is comprised of residential property, followed by agricultural land at 13.3% and commercial land at 3.1%. The total value of the industrial category is negligible at 0.02% of the total SEV. The remaining value is personal property. Taxable personal property is the non-depreciated value of machinery and equipment owned by businesses and industries.

Table 2-10 Allis Township SEV						
	Agricultural	Commercial	Industrial	Residential	Personal	Total
2019	\$6,933,400	\$1,550,300	\$14,100	\$27,355,600	\$3,550,350	\$39,403,750
2020	\$7,143,400	\$1,560,300	\$14,200	\$26,931,500	\$3,383,900	\$39,033,300
2021	\$7,207,800	\$1,559,500	\$14,100	\$27,065,600	\$3,620,000	\$39,467,000
2022	\$6,868,800	\$1,454,500	\$14,100	\$32,261,400	\$2,269,000	\$42,867,800
2023	\$7,858,400	\$1,518,600	\$14,400	\$38,046,200	\$2,511,250	\$49,948,850
2024	\$8,262,700	\$1,842,300	\$14,500	\$42,022,600	\$2,592,000	\$54,734,100
2025	\$8,586,500	\$2,009,600	\$14,900	\$50,707,500	\$3,429,250	\$64,747,750







# Community Services & Facilitates

## Chapter 3

Quality of life in a community is closely tied to the range of services available to residents and visitors. Smaller communities often lack the resources to provide the full range of services found in larger municipalities, relying instead on shared, contracted, or county- and state-provided services. This chapter outlines the services currently available in Allis Township. While these services generally meet present needs, future growth may require upgrades or expansions to maintain a high quality of life.

## Water & Sewage Disposal

Allis Township does not provide public water or sewage disposal systems for Township residents. However, the City of Onaway does provide public water to a limited number of customers near the city limits. Those served include: two businesses and two residences on M-33 south of Onaway; Presque Isle Electric & Gas, Presque Isle County Road Commission garage, and two residences on M-68 east of Onaway; and three residences on Hayner Road. The Onaway Public School District campus is the only property in Allis Township served by the Onaway Public Sewer system.

Most of the residents and business owners must rely on on-site private wells for domestic drinking water needs and private on-site septic systems for wastewater disposal. Based on District Health Department #4 water well records, at least 300 wells, the vast majority of which are domestic, are known to exist in Allis Township. However, this does not include older wells installed prior to Health Department permitting and record keeping, or wells constructed without a permit.

Regarding on-site sewage disposal systems, the following summary was provided by the Sanitarian of the Health Department:

“The soils throughout the Township range from sand to clay with some limestone near the surface west and north of Onaway. It is common to find sand, loam and clay on the same lot or parcel. When dry sand and light loams are encountered the sewage absorption bed is placed below the ground surface. If only heavy loams and clays are present elevated absorption beds have been very successful. The final grades over the top of those raised systems are from about one to four feet above the original ground surface. The higher systems are placed on the heaviest soils. For a three-bedroom home the size of the absorption bed would range from 600 square feet in sand to about 750 square feet for elevated systems over clay.

Approximately 50 percent of the homes in the Township had sewage systems installed under the Sanitary Code since 1968. The sewage systems have an average life of about 30 years, however, if there is heavy use the system may only function for two to ten years.”

# Solid Waste

Allis Township does not presently offer solid waste management or municipal waste disposal service. Residents rely on private waste haulers to pick up. The haulers must dispose of the rubbish in a licensed landfill. GFL and Pac Sanitation are the primary providers in the Township. GFL's Elk Run Landfill is in Allis Township and is open Monday through Friday.

Presque Isle County provides recycling drop-off sites in Millersburg and Hawks, and at the Allis Township Hall, North Allis Township Hall, Ocqueoc Township transfer station, and Krakow Township transfer station. Clear glass, newspaper, tin cans, and #2 plastics are accepted. Recyclables are then transported to the Emmet County transfer station.

# Utility Services

Presque Isle Electric and Gas Cooperative, Inc. supplies electric service to all areas of the Township.

Natural gas is provided by Presque Isle Electric & Gas to the Onaway School Campus to most of the Township. Residents may purchase propane gas or fuel oil from several suppliers throughout the area. Some residents elect to heat with wood.

Frontier, Spectrum, and PIE&G Connect provide WiFi-type line telephone service, while residents and commercial users have the option of many wireless providers for cellular service. Spectrum and PIE&G Connect provide high-speed internet.

# Police, Fire & Ambulance Services

Law enforcement protection for Allis Township is primarily the responsibility of the Presque Isle County Sheriff's Department. The Michigan State Police aid as necessary, but they regularly patrol only state highways, such as M-68 and M-33, in the Township. Presque Isle County is also included in the Huron Undercover Narcotics Team (HUNT).

Fire protection for Allis Township is available through a joint agreement with the City of Onaway and North Allis Township and is provided on a volunteer basis. The Onaway Area Ambulance Service is the EMS provider for the area.

# Transportation

Two state trunklines, M-68 and M-33, run through Allis Township. M-68 runs east/west across the northern portion of the Township. M-33 runs north from the Township’s southern boundary to M-68, joins with M-68 in Onaway, and continues to the Township’s western boundary as one stretch of pavement. The Michigan Department of Transportation is responsible for maintaining the state trunklines. Other local roads are under County or Township jurisdiction and are maintained by the Presque Isle County Road Commission.

Regional air service is available at Alpena County Regional Airport, located approximately 50 miles east of Allis Township on M-32. Commercial Air service is provided by United Express, offering flights between Alpena and Chicago with connections to most major cities. Commercial flights to Detroit with connections to major cities are also provided by commercial Airlines from Pellston Regional Airport in Emmet County, approximately 40 miles from Allis Township. Air Freight service is available at both regional airports.

## Municipal & County Facilities

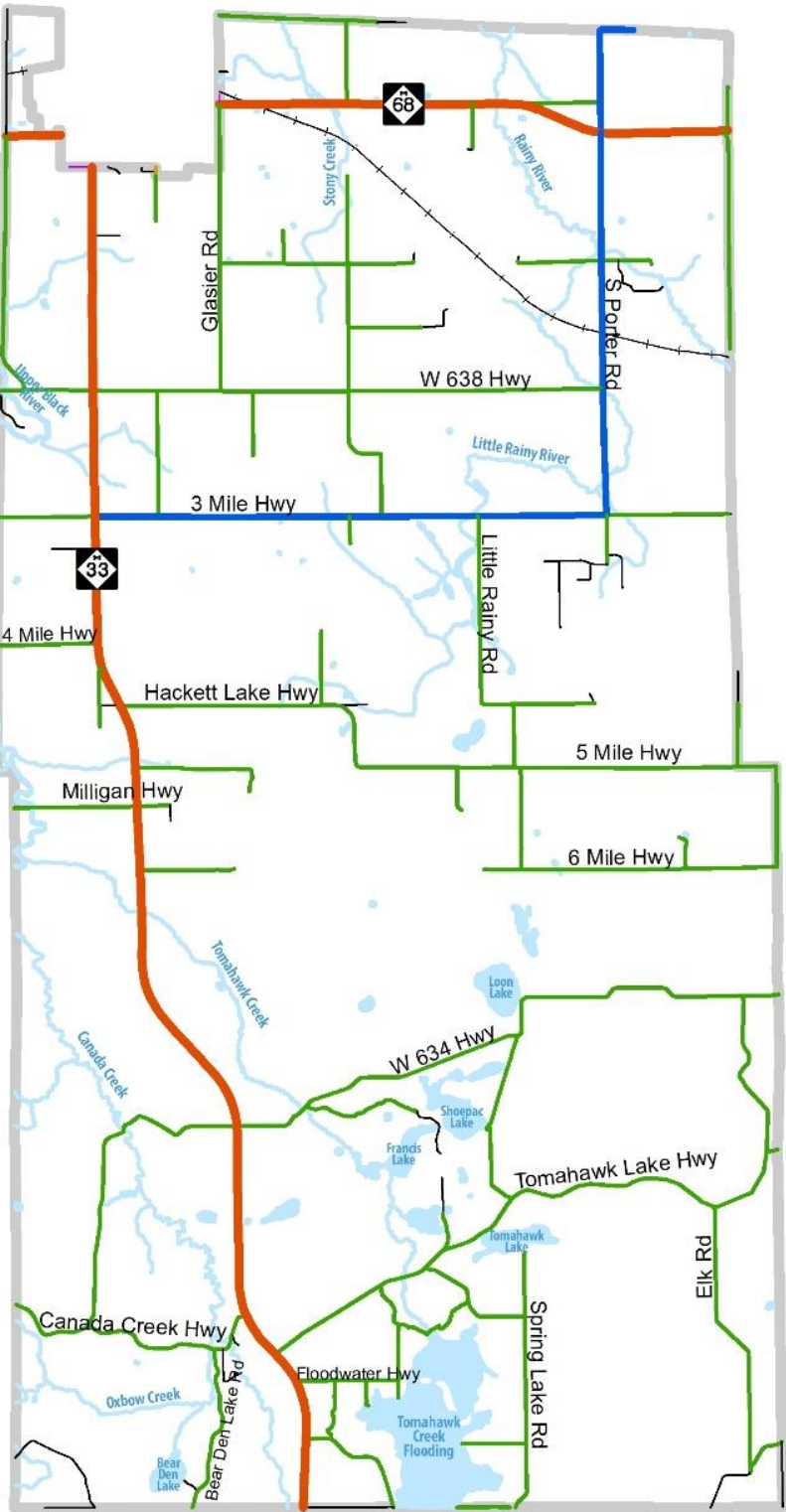
In addition to providing office and meeting space for Township government and officials, the Allis Township Hall, located at the corner of Glasier Road and West 638 Highway, is rented to residents for private social events. A pavilion and ballfield are also located on the site and are often in use. The Presque Isle County Road Commission’s west side garage is located on M-68, just outside the Onaway City limits. The building houses equipment storage, a maintenance facility, and office space. Equipment and materials are also stored outside the building.



# Allis Township Master Plan

## Roads

-  State Trunkline
-  County Primary
-  County Local
-  City Major
-  City Minor
-  Unclassified
-  Railroad



Map by the Northeast Michigan  
Council of Governments

Data: State of Michigan



2025

# Library

The Onaway Public Library is a branch of the Presque Isle District Library and is located on State Street (M-68) in the City. This is the closest and most convenient library for Allis Township residents. The main library staff in Rogers City provides support services, such as inter-library loan, computer search, book ordering and processing, and reference-related services. The Friends of the Library actively volunteer to assist the library through fundraising and contribute labor.

# Schools

Allis Township is incorporated within the Onaway Area School District. The district serves the K-12 population with 3 buildings – Elementary, Middle, and High School – located at one campus in Allis Township on M-33 just south of Onaway. Head Start and Early Childhood Education are available for preschool-aged children. In addition, the school system provides adult education and enrichment classes. Township residents also utilize the Presque Isle Academy in Onaway, a charter school.

Alpena Community College (ACC), a two-year institution, serves the higher education needs of the region’s population. ACC offers several associate degree programs, career and technical training, liberal arts and transfer programs, and has a center for economic and human resources development. In addition, ACC has a joint agreement with Lake Superior State University offering bachelor's degree programs in business administration, accounting, and nursing, as well as a master’s in business administration program.

Post-high school education is also available locally at North Central Michigan College (NCMC) in Petoskey, offering programs similar to ACC. NCMC, like ACC, offers higher-level degree programs through an arrangement with Lake Superior State University.



# Churches

Churches located in Allis Township are Awakon on M-33 south of the Onaway City limits, Seventh Day Adventist on M-68 west of the city limits, and Joy Community Church on County Line Road. In addition, many Township residents are members of churches in Onaway. They include St. Paul Catholic, Holy Cross Lutheran, United Methodist, Community of Christ, and First Baptist.

# Cemetery

Three cemeteries are in the Township. The Allis Township Cemetery is located on West 638 Highway about ½ mile east of M-33. Elmwood Cemetery and St. Paul Catholic Cemetery are located on adjacent parcels on M-68 just west of Onaway.

# Medical Facilities

Because of Allis Township’s central location in northern Michigan, residents and visitors needing medical treatment may access services at McLaren Northern Michigan Hospital in Petoskey or MyMichigan Medical Center in Alpena. A few of the services offered by these hospitals include specialty and outpatient services, 24-hour fully staffed emergency rooms, emergency transportation, alcohol and drug treatment, and mental health treatment. These hospitals are affiliated with numerous nearby health clinics. Additionally, specialty medicine physicians are on staff at both locations.

District Health Department #4 is often able to meet the health care needs of the community, which are not available or affordable elsewhere. The Health Department service area includes Alpena, Cheboygan, Presque Isle, and Montmorency Counties and is headed by a board consisting of representatives from the participating County Boards of Commissioners. Programs offered by the Health Department fall under three categories: home health care services, environmental health services, and personal health services.

Nash Manor LLC is in Allis Township, serving adults needing assisted living care.

# Recreational Facilities

One important attraction sought by residents and visitors is the abundant recreational opportunities of the local area. The State of Michigan's state forests located in Allis Township provide year-round recreation opportunities for all users. Approximately 18,200 acres or 24.2 square miles of the Mackinaw State Forest covers nearly 80% of Allis Township's southern half. The Tomahawk Creek Flooding and Shoepac Lake areas in the State Forest offer rustic camping, hiking, fishing, hunting, swimming, and similar activities. The 70-mile High Country Pathway passes through the state forest as well.

A designated trail for snowmobiles in winter and non-motorized activities such as hiking, biking, and horseback riding in spring, summer, and fall, follows the former D&M railroad grade as it passes through the northern portion of the Township.

Additionally, outdoor recreational opportunities are available to residents and visitors using the lakes, streams, and forests of the Township for rest and relaxation.

The Allis Township Hall and pavilion are available for rent to residents for social events, such as family reunions, wedding receptions, bridal and baby showers, and similar activities. Local Little League teams use the adjoining ball field for T-ball, softball, and baseball. Allis Township is included in the Presque Isle County Recreation Plan.

Recreational facilities in the City of Onaway, including ball fields, basketball courts, and horseshoe pits, are often used by residents of the surrounding area. The Presque Isle County Council on Aging, a non-profit corporation, operates the two Senior Citizen Centers in Onaway and Posen. Both facilities provide meals, entertainment, and meeting space to area senior citizens aged 60 and over.

Many of the Onaway Area School's facilities are available for public use by special arrangement (such as submitting a special insurance form) when not in use for school-related activities. These facilities include the gymnasium, weight room, playground, track, and meeting rooms. Privately owned and operated recreational facilities in Allis Township include the Onaway Speedway.





# Natural Resources

## Chapter 4

Northern Michigan's natural environment and rural character are major draws for residents and visitors. Outdoor activities, such as hunting, fishing, boating, snowmobiling, golfing, and more, attract people from across the state and beyond, and many longtime visitors choose to retire here. These natural amenities form a key economic base for the region.

However, the environment also places limits on development. Sensitive features such as wetlands and erosion-prone soils can be easily damaged by land clearing and construction. Respecting these environmental constraints is essential to preserving the area's appeal, avoiding land-alteration problems, and sustaining the tourism and recreation economy.

This chapter examines the physical environment of Allis Township, including climate, geology, topography, soils, water, vegetation, and wildlife, to inform future land-use planning.

## Climate

The climate is one factor that contributes to Allis Township's appeal as a recreational/residential community. The Township's climatic conditions are similar to those across northern Lower Michigan: extended cold winters and moderate warm summers. Located in the north central part of the northern lower peninsula, the Township is approximately 20 miles inland from Lake Huron and 40 miles inland from Lake Michigan. These geographical locations, combined with the surrounding topography, minimize the moderating effect of both Great Lakes. Here, local topography influences temperatures and associated frost conditions. For example, low areas and depressions often experience frost earlier than the surrounding uplands.

## Land Cover

The land cover map of Allis Township reveals a predominantly natural landscape made up of extensive wetlands, forests, and agricultural land, and interspersed with areas of medium and low-intensity development. Open water consists of lakes, rivers, and streams. The map reflects Allis Township's largely rural character and the importance of balancing development with the protection of natural resources.

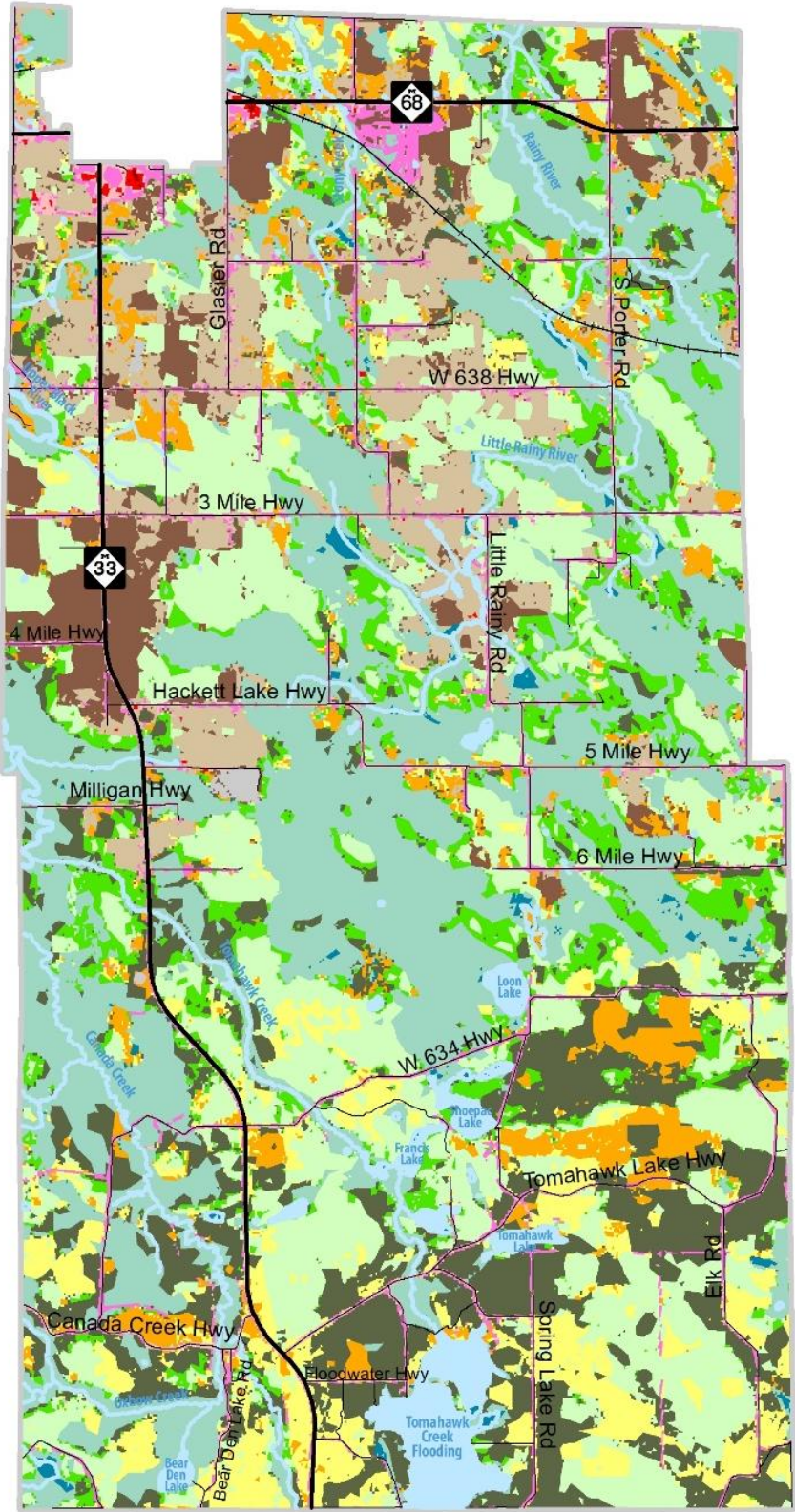
### **Forest Cover**

Forests make up the backbone of the region's natural landscape. Several distinct forest types are represented, each with unique characteristics:

- **Evergreen Forests:** Dominated by coniferous trees such as pines, spruces, and firs, evergreen forests retain their foliage year-round. These forests provide year-round wildlife habitat, help regulate the water cycle, and play an important role in carbon sequestration.
- **Deciduous Forests:** Comprised mainly of broadleaf trees like oaks, maples, and birches that shed their leaves each fall, these forests are known for their vibrant seasonal changes.
- **Mixed Forests:** These areas contain a combination of deciduous and evergreen tree species. Mixed forests enhance landscape diversity and serve as transitional zones between pure coniferous and broadleaf forests.

# Allis Township Master Plan

## Land Cover



- Developed, Low Intensity
- Developed, Medium Intensity
- Developed, High Intensity
- Developed, Open Space
- Cultivated Crops
- Pasture/Hay
- Grassland/Herbaceous
- Evergreen Forest
- Deciduous Forest
- Mixed Forest
- Shrub/Scrub
- Woody Wetlands
- Emergent Herbaceous Wetlands
- Barren Land (Rock/Sand/Clay)
- Open Water

Map by the Northeast Michigan Council of Governments

Data: USGS National Land Cover Database



2025

The MIRIS Land Use Inventory identifies the dominant forest associations in Allis Township as aspen/white birch (15,347 acres), jack, white, and red pine (7,385 acres), and northern hardwoods like oak, sugar maple, and American beech (1,000 acres) in upland areas. Wetland forests comprise lowland hardwoods (2,379 acres), including black ash and slippery elm, and lowland conifers (3,890 acres), such as northern white cedar and balsam fir. These forests offer wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, income from timber management, water resource protection, and scenic beauty. Heavily forested areas are mainly in the southern half of the Township, with scattered wooded regions in the north.

### **Other Natural Land Cover Types**

- **Woody Wetlands:** These wetlands are forested areas where the soil remains saturated for long periods. Typically found along rivers, lakes, and flood-prone zones, they are rich in biodiversity and play a crucial ecological role by filtering water, absorbing floodwaters, and supporting amphibians, birds, and aquatic life.
- **Emergent Herbaceous Wetlands:** These are non-forested wetlands dominated by herbaceous (non-woody) vegetation such as cattails, sedges, and rushes. They are seasonally or permanently flooded and support a wide variety of waterfowl and wetland species. These wetlands may occur in lower-lying areas where standing water persists.
- **Shrub/Scrub Lands:** Characterized by low, woody vegetation such as shrubs, young trees, and brush, these areas often occur in places recovering from disturbance (such as fire, logging, or agriculture).
- **Cultivated Crops:** These lands are used for growing row crops (e.g., corn, soybeans) and other agricultural products. Cultivated cropland in the Township is limited, but where present, it reflects local agricultural activity and private land management.
- **Pasture/Hay:** Areas in this category are used for livestock grazing or for growing grasses and legumes that are harvested for hay. These lands support local farming and are often interspersed with rural homesteads.
- **Grassland/Herbaceous:** These areas are dominated by non-woody vegetation and are not actively used for agriculture. They may be natural prairies, fallow fields, or old pastureland. These lands contribute to open-space character and provide habitat for ground-nesting birds and pollinators.
- **Barren Land (Rock/Sand/Clay):** These areas have little to no vegetation and consist of exposed rock, sand, or clay. Such areas are minimal in the Township but may include gravel pits or exposed soil in transitional zones.
- **Open Water:** Includes lakes, rivers, ponds, and reservoirs.



# Geology

The geology of Allis Township, like that of the northern lower peninsula of Michigan, can be categorized into surface (quaternary) and bedrock geology. The quaternary geology formed 10,000 to 12,000 years ago through glacial activity, resulting in complex erosion and deposition patterns. Many creeks and wetlands are linked to glacial landforms, with melted ice blocks creating kettle holes that are now inland lakes.

During periods of glacial stagnation, debris accumulated in certain areas, forming ground moraines and till plains from unsorted sand, clay, and boulders. The Onaway Drumlin Field showcases elliptical hills shaped by glacial drift, indicating the glacier's southeastward movement. Glacial floodwaters further sculpted the landscape, creating outwash plains rich in sand and gravel, with organic materials in depressions. Figure 3 illustrates these glacial landforms.

The subsurface bedrock geology of Allis Township is composed of sedimentary rock from the Middle Devonian period of the Paleozoic Era. Covered by glacial deposits, the bedrock generally lies less than 10 feet deep in the northern part of the Township and over 400 feet below the surface in the south. This bedrock formed from ancient seas that existed 250 to 600 million years ago, where layers of silt, clay, sediments, marine life, and calcareous materials accumulated. Over time, these deposits transformed into shale, limestone, and dolomite. The upper layers include Antrim shale and the Traverse Group, with Antrim shale often containing valuable natural gas deposits.

## **Karst Geology**

The regional limestone bedrock features sinkholes and underground streams. As groundwater flows through cracks in the limestone, it gradually dissolves the rock, creating openings that can develop into underground caverns. When the ceiling of these caverns becomes too thin to support the weight above, it collapses, forming steep-sided sinkholes that may or may not contain standing water. This phenomenon is known as "karst geology." Figure 4 illustrates a typical limestone sinkhole formation.

Another type of sinkhole, called a solution sink, appears as bowl-shaped depressions deepened by the continuous dissolution of the bedrock. Additional karst features include dry valleys, swallow holes, and karst springs.

Karst formations are found in several northern Michigan counties, particularly in Presque Isle and northern Alpena counties, including Allis Township, as shown in Figure 5. Geologists believe a hinge-line fault connects various sinkholes and lakes, facilitating subterranean drainage from the Shoepac Lake area to Kelsey Lake and Misery Bay.

According to the Thunder Bay River Basin Study, groundwater in karst areas flows along fissures and through porous rocks, making it difficult to determine flow direction. Groundwater can move unpredictably, with velocities exceeding 30 feet per hour during floods. Consequently, water supplies in these areas are highly susceptible to contamination, as water quickly transfers from the surface to subsurface aquifers.

# Topography

Slope is an important topographic feature affecting development. Steep roadway grades, septic field failures, soil erosion, and excavation costs are some of the difficulties associated with severe slopes. Development on steeply sloped areas should be restricted. If development is permitted, sensitive site planning should be required along these steep slopes to prevent soil erosion.

Slope refers to the steepness or incline of the land, expressed as a percentage. Steeper slopes can increase construction costs, limit accessibility, and increase the risk of erosion or runoff-related issues. The Township's slopes are categorized as follows:

- Moderately Sloping (9–15%): Land with noticeable inclines that may require basic grading or erosion control during development.
- Strongly Sloping (15–30%): Areas with steep terrain that often pose significant challenges for construction, particularly for roads, buildings, and septic systems.

The highest elevations in Allis Township are found in the southern state forestland, with a notable hill in Section 36 reaching over 940 feet above sea level. The drumlins, or elliptically shaped hills, range from 820 to 900 feet in elevation, surrounded by nearly level outwash plains and large bogs where rivers and lakes are located.

For comparison, Lake Huron's mean elevation is 579 feet above sea level, and Allis Township is about 20 miles inland. Elevation generally increases slightly to the south of Lake Huron, with the highest points located in nearby Otsego County.

The lowest elevation in the Township, 741 feet above sea level, is found where the Rainy River flows north. According to 1986 USGS quadrangle maps, the elevations of various lakes are as follows: Francis Lake at 808 feet, Shoepac Lake at 823 feet, Long Lake at 799 feet, Little Tomahawk Lake at 813 feet, Big Tomahawk Lake at 823 feet, and Tomahawk Creek Flooding at 835 feet.



# Soils

Soil suitability is a key factor in land use planning, as it must align with the capacity of the land. Before development, assessing soil types and slopes is essential for determining their carrying capacity. Well-drained soils with adequate depth to the water table are ideal for minimizing stormwater impact and preventing groundwater contamination from septic systems.

Hydric soils are defined as soils that are saturated, flooded, or ponded long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic (low oxygen) conditions. These soils are typically associated with wetlands and play a critical role in supporting aquatic and semi-aquatic ecosystems. They may include muck or peat soils, such as:

- Carlisle Muck: A very poorly drained organic soil, formed from decomposed plant material in wetlands, bogs, and low-lying depressions. It typically consists of deep layers of dark, fibrous organic matter (peat and muck) and has a high-water table, often at or near the surface. Carlisle Muck supports wetland vegetation like sedges, cattails, tamarack, and black spruce. This soil is unsuitable for development or conventional agriculture but is critical for water storage, flood control, and wildlife habitat.
- Lupton Muck: A very poorly drained organic soil, like Carlisle Muck, but it typically forms in shallower depressions or slightly more transitional wetland zones. It has a high content of decomposed plant material and often lies near streams, lakes, or the margins of bogs. Like Carlisle, Lupton Muck supports wetland ecosystems and is unsuitable for building or farming without major drainage interventions. It plays an essential role in wetland hydrology and ecological function.

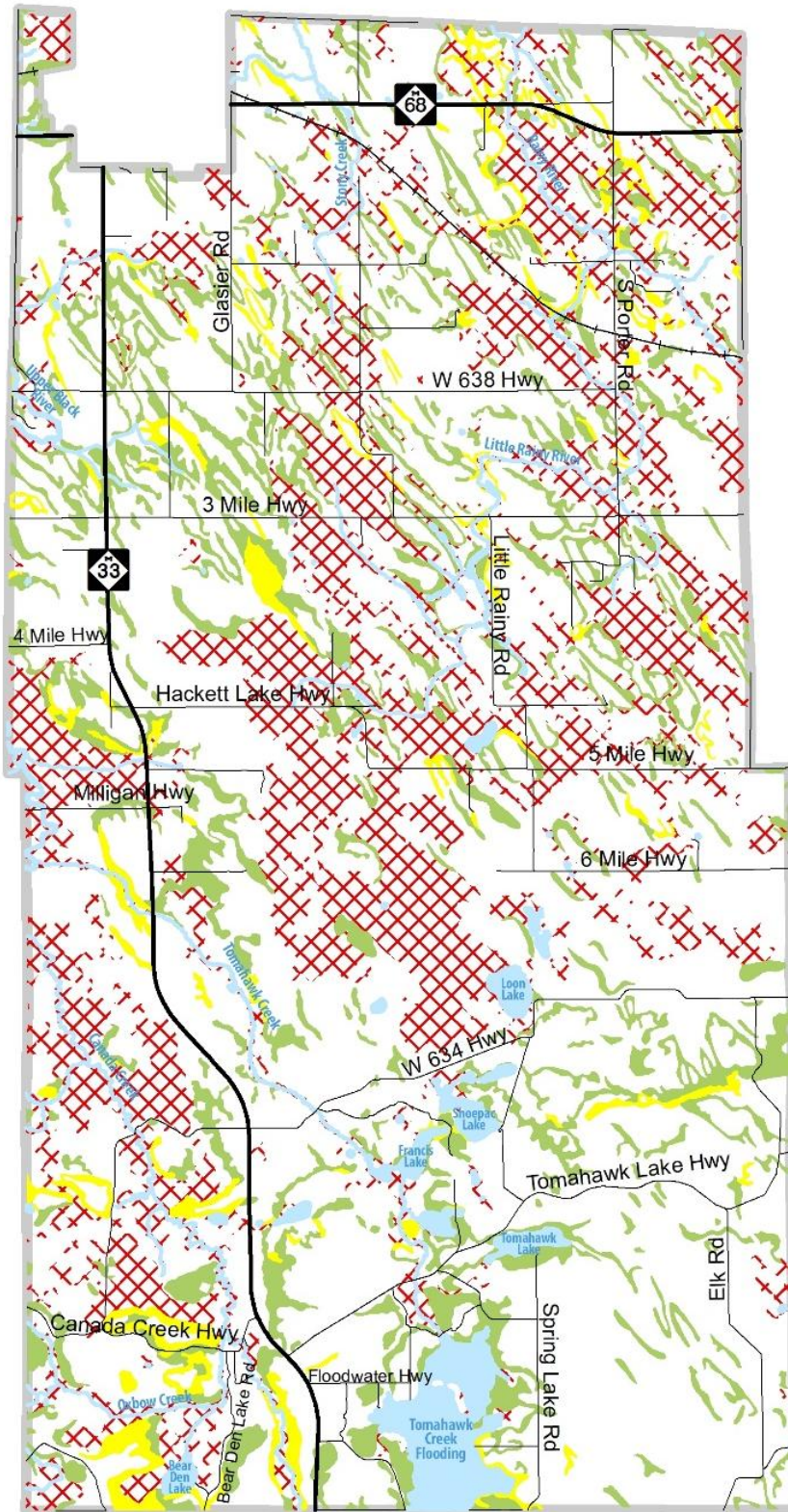
Steep slopes, hydric soils, and poorly drained areas present challenges for building and sanitary facilities due to wetness and frequent ponding. Areas with high water tables may require wetlands permits for development.

While these limitations can be addressed through proper site development and engineering, such solutions can be complex and costly. Medium to high-density residential and commercial projects in these areas may also necessitate public water and sewer services.



# Allis Township Master Plan

## Slopes & Hydric Soils



- Strongly Sloping  
(15 - 30%)**
- Moderately  
Sloping (9 - 15%)**
- Hydric Soils**

Map by the Northeast Michigan  
Council of Governments

Data: Natural Resource  
Conservation Service, USDA



2025

The Agricultural Soils map for Allis Township identifies and classifies soils based on their suitability for farming as defined by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). These maps help inform land use decisions by highlighting soils that are best suited for growing crops or supporting pasture and hay production. Prime Farmland is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical soil characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. These soils:

- Have adequate moisture and temperature
- Are not excessively eroded or prone to flooding
- Have favorable soil depth, structure, and permeability
- Can produce high yields of crops with minimal inputs and sustainable management

Prime Farmland, if drained, applies to soils that meet all the criteria for prime farmland except for excessive wetness. These soils could be considered prime if properly drained through artificial means, such as tile drainage or ditching. These soils:

- Are common in areas with hydric or seasonally saturated soils
- May require permits or environmental review if wetlands are involved

Farmland of Local Importance includes soils that are not classified as prime farmland or prime if drained, but are still considered valuable for agriculture at the local or regional level. May be moderately productive under certain crops or rotations. These soils:

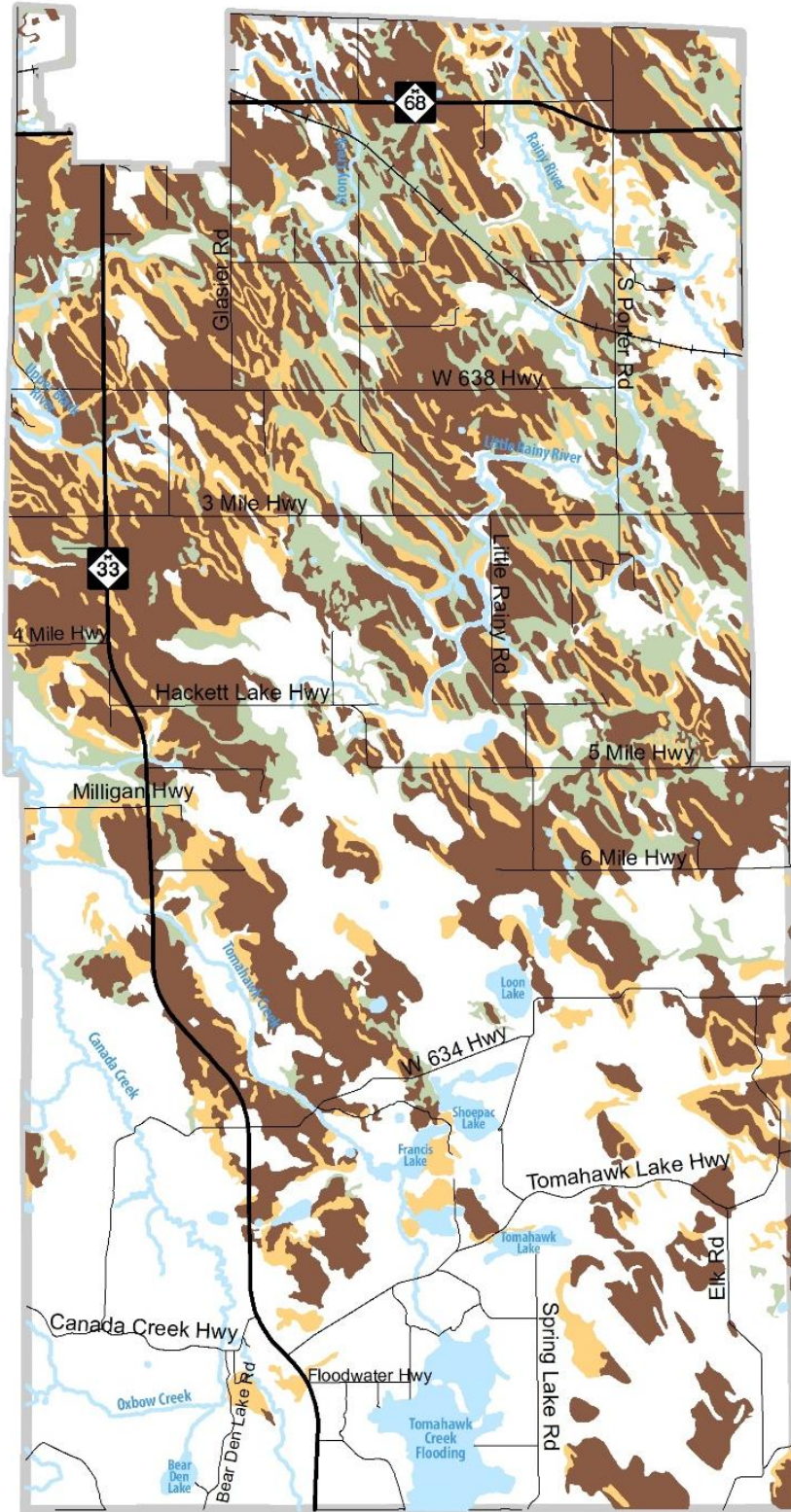
- Often support pasture, hayfields, or limited row crops
- Are typically used for small-scale or diversified farming operations.

Local conservation districts or planning commissions may define these areas based on historical land use, productivity, or economic importance to the community.



# Allis Township Master Plan

## Agricultural Soils



-  Prime Farmland
-  Farmland of local importance
-  Prime farmland if drained

Map by the Northeast Michigan  
Council of Governments

Data: Natural Resource  
Conservation Service, USDA



2025

# Water Resources

One of the most valuable natural resources in Allis Township is water. Both groundwater and surface water are vital resources within the Township. Residents of the Township must rely upon individual wells for drinking water. As evidenced by the development patterns, the surface water resources are clearly a focal point. These creeks and inland lakes are important scenic and recreational resources. It is therefore important that all water resources be protected and managed in a manner that ensures their quality.

While the current quality of surface waters in Allis Township is very good, the threat of potential water pollution from nonpoint sources is a major concern. Proper land use management can help control water quality conditions in Allis Township. Some methods to maintain and improve water quality include fertilizer/pesticide application controls, septic tank inspection, soil erosion and sedimentation prevention, and creation or protection of lake/stream greenbelt regulations.

## **Groundwater**

Important factors in the evaluation of groundwater are the quantity and quality of the water. The geologic and hydrologic features of the Township provide residents with sufficient water quantities. Water availability will not be a factor in limiting growth.

Depending upon the depth to bedrock, water wells in the Township are both in glacial drift and into the subsurface limestone bedrock. Shallow wells are most likely located near surface water features. The Health Department was not aware of water quality problems. Hardness is a problem, but this can be overcome with water softening units.

The vulnerability of drinking water aquifers to surface contamination is high in the Township due to the bedrock aquifers close to the surface and the highly permeable soils throughout the Township. A review of the Aquifer Vulnerability to Surface Contamination in Michigan Map, prepared by the Center for Remote Sensing and Department of Geography at Michigan State University, shows Allis Township having highly permeable soils over highly sensitive drift lithology and easily soluble bedrock aquifers less than 50 feet from the surface. Therefore, water quality is potentially more of a limiting factor than water supply in Allis Township. For example, the combination of highly permeable soils, shallow wells, on-site septic systems, intense industrial uses, and dense residential development can result in high nitrate levels in drinking water.

## **Surface Water**

Allis Township is located within the Black Lake watershed. Surface water resources include Canada Creek, Tomahawk Creek, Stoney Creek, Black River, Little Rainy River, Rainy River, Francis Lake, Loon Lake, Shoepac Lake, Bear Den Lake, Long Lake, Little Tomahawk Lake, Big Tomahawk Lake, and the Tomahawk Creek Flooding. Several of the lakes are seepage lakes, formed by sinkholes. The largest of these lakes is Shoepac Lake, which is 54 acres in size. According to the MIRIS Existing Land Cover/Use data, the surface area of the lakes and ponds accounts for some 790 acres or 1.9% of the Township area.

These creeks, rivers, and lakes offer scenic and recreational amenities to Township residents and visitors. The quality of these surface waters must be protected from the negative impacts of development, such as nonpoint source pollution and loss of scenic views to open water. Additionally, these surface water resources and associated wetlands are important for surface drainage, groundwater recharge, and wildlife habitat. Alterations to the water features can contribute to flooding, poor water quality, insufficient water supply, and loss of valuable wildlife habitat.

A collaborative effort by the Northeast Michigan Council of Governments and the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council resulted in the development of the Black Lake Watershed Nonpoint Source Management Plan. The plan, funded by grants from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the Environmental Protection Agency, was completed in 1991. The plan identified road/stream crossings and stream bank erosion as the two greatest impacts to water quality.

The Black Lake Watershed Nonpoint Source Management Plan contains management recommendations for water resource protection and remedial action. The Plan was an update of a similar study conducted in 1991 and was launched due to changes that had occurred in the watershed over the previous decade that were anticipated to change the recommendations of the '91 Plan. The 2002 Plan found that Black Lake and its tributaries provide all the designated uses required for Michigan waterways. Four of these uses, however, are threatened within the watershed: navigation, habitat for indigenous aquatic life and wildlife, partial or total body contact recreation, and cold-water fishery. After identifying potential sources of pollution contributing to these concerns, the Plan presented goals for the watershed area:

- Goal 1: Aquatic life and wildlife-Protect the diversity of aquatic habitats within the Black Lake Watershed by reducing the contribution of sediment, nutrients, and toxic pollutants. Improve the health of the Rainy River.
- Goal 2: Cold water fishery-Reduce sediment and nutrient loads that threaten to harm habitat conditions for the cold-water fishery in the Upper Black River and its tributaries.
- Goal 3: Partial or total body contact-Maintain the excellent recreational opportunities in Black Lake, Upper Black River, and other tributaries by reducing sediment and nutrient contributions.
- Goal 4: Navigation-Maintain navigation in Black Lake and its tributaries by reducing any sediment inputs.

### **Lake Water Quality**

Lakes can be classified into three types based on water quality or the level of productivity. *Oligotrophic* lakes have very little nutrient accumulation and, as a result, have little aquatic plant and algae growth. The water is very clear, and the lakes can support cold-water fish. In *Mesotrophic* lakes, there is a greater presence of nutrients, which results in lowered clarity and the presence of aquatic plants. *Eutrophic* lakes have large amounts of aquatic plants due to higher nutrient levels. The presence of suspended algae will cause the water to be turbid.

Dying plants may also produce unpleasant smells, and the thick weed growth will interfere with boating and swimming. The aging or eutrophication of a lake from a high-quality (oligotrophic) lake to a warm,

weedy, poor-quality (eutrophic) lake is a natural process. However, this process can be greatly influenced by human activity. Changes in the watershed can alter the quality and quantity of runoff that, in turn, can significantly increase the rate of eutrophication.

## Wetlands

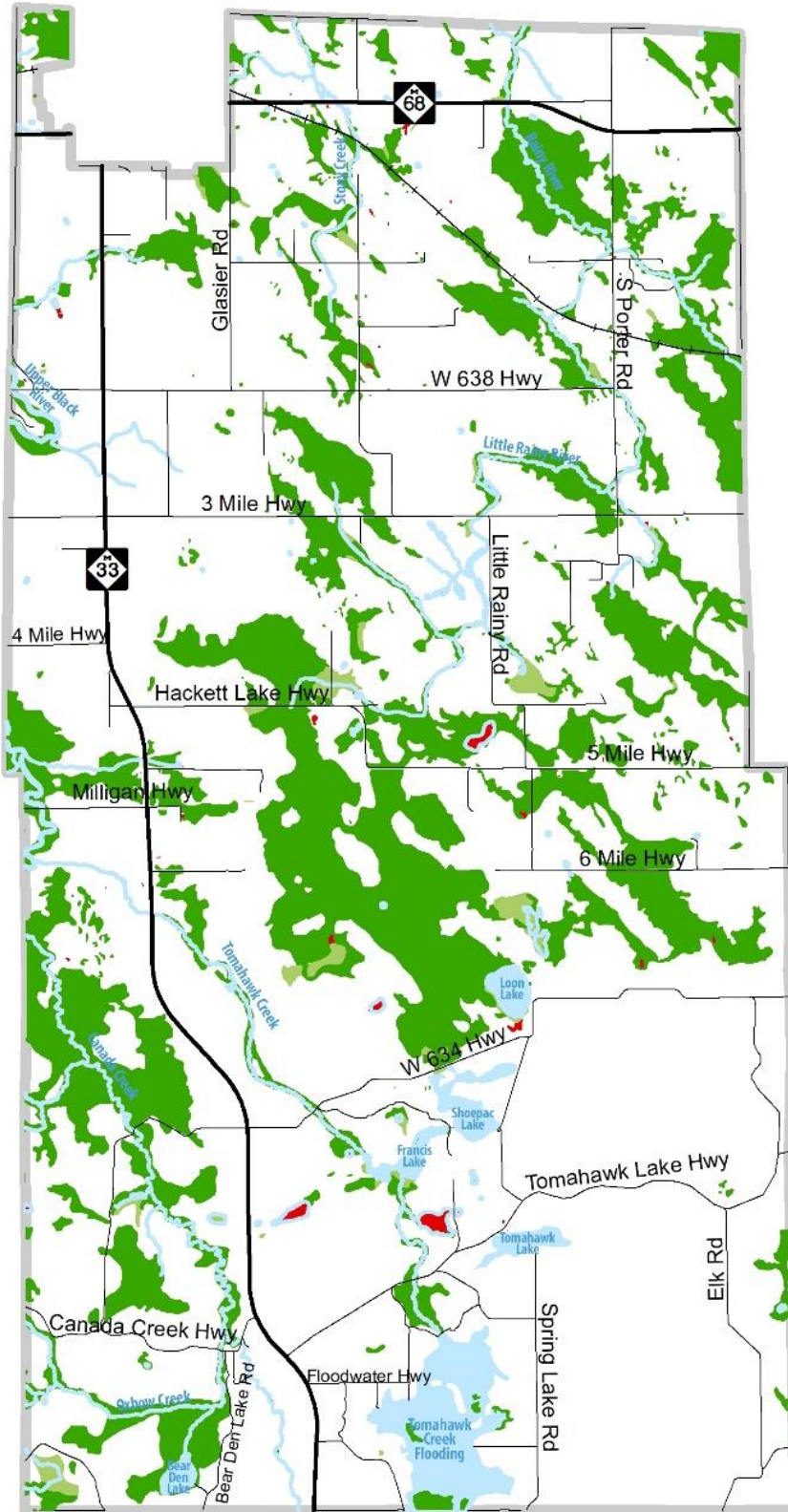
Wetlands are areas where water remains on or near the surface for part of the year, resulting in poorly drained soils and vegetation adapted to saturated conditions. Commonly known as marshes, swamps, and bogs, wetlands are a key component of Michigan's natural systems. They improve water quality by filtering sediments and pollutants, recharge aquifers, provide essential habitat for fish and wildlife, and stabilize shorelines by reducing erosion. Wetlands also contribute to the region's scenic character and support outdoor recreation and biodiversity.

In Allis Township, wetlands are closely tied to historic glacial drainageways that shaped the landscape. According to the MIRIS Land Use Inventory, more than 4,000 acres of wetlands are mapped within the Township, representing an important natural resource that influences land use, habitat conservation, and future development planning.



# Allis Township Master Plan

## Wetlands



- Freshwater Emergent Wetland
- Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland
- Freshwater Pond
- Riverine
- Lake

Map by the Northeast Michigan Council of Governments

Data: National Wetland Inventory, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service



2025

# Fish & Wildlife

Sport fishing is a popular activity in Allis Township, as it is throughout northern Michigan. The Black Lake watershed hosts game species such as brown and rainbow trout, northern pike, largemouth and smallmouth bass, walleye, yellow perch, bullhead, and various panfish.

The Township's forested and wetland areas provide habitat for a wide range of wildlife. Game species include white-tailed deer, elk, ruffed grouse, woodcock, wild turkey, squirrels, black bears, bobcats, raccoons, snowshoe hares, and cottontail rabbits. Trappers also target species like beaver, muskrat, raccoon, and weasel. Common non-game species include foxes, woodchucks, badgers, porcupines, opossums, skunks, coyotes, common loons, and waterfowl. Additionally, many songbird species inhabit the area both seasonally and year-round.

## Deer Management Concerns

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) addresses two primary deer-related issues in Presque Isle County: bovine tuberculosis (bTB) and damage to crops and forest regeneration. bTB is a zoonotic disease that can affect wildlife, livestock, and humans. Presque Isle County remains within the DNR's surveillance zone, with an annual goal of collecting 500 deer samples. Since 1994, nearly 350,000 deer have been tested statewide, resulting in 995 positive cases—22 of them from Presque Isle County—leading to the county's designation as endemic for bTB.

To limit disease transmission, the DNR promotes increased antlerless deer harvest, restricts deer feeding and baiting, and encourages cattle producers to follow strict biosecurity practices. These efforts aim to reduce deer congregation and minimize interactions between deer and livestock.

To address agricultural losses and forest regeneration challenges, the DNR issues out-of-season permits for eligible landowners experiencing significant deer damage. The agency also uses adaptive forestry techniques and coordinated management between wildlife and forestry staff to support healthy habitat conditions, improve timber growth, and reduce long-term browsing impacts.



# Oil & Gas

Allis Township, located in Presque Isle County in Michigan’s northern Lower Peninsula, lies within an area that has supported modest oil and natural gas development. Although the Township does not contain a high density of active wells today, several significant well leases exist within its boundaries, most notably the State Allis and Tennant–State Allis properties.

The State Allis lease contains more than 100 wells and has historically been the Township’s most productive site, with cumulative output of nearly 3.8 million barrels of oil and more than 4 million MCF of natural gas. While production has declined substantially, a small amount of output continued into mid-2024, reflecting the gradual winding down of these older fields.

The Tennant–State Allis lease includes roughly six wells that began operating in the late 1980s. Together, these wells have produced approximately 1.7 million barrels of oil and 1.9 million MCF of natural gas. Production at this site appears to have ended by mid-2024.

Although current activity is limited, these leases illustrate the Township’s historical role in Michigan’s oil and gas sector. They also provide context for evaluating future land-use decisions, surface access considerations, and long-term well-retirement and reclamation needs.



# Allis Township Master Plan

## Oil & Gas Wells

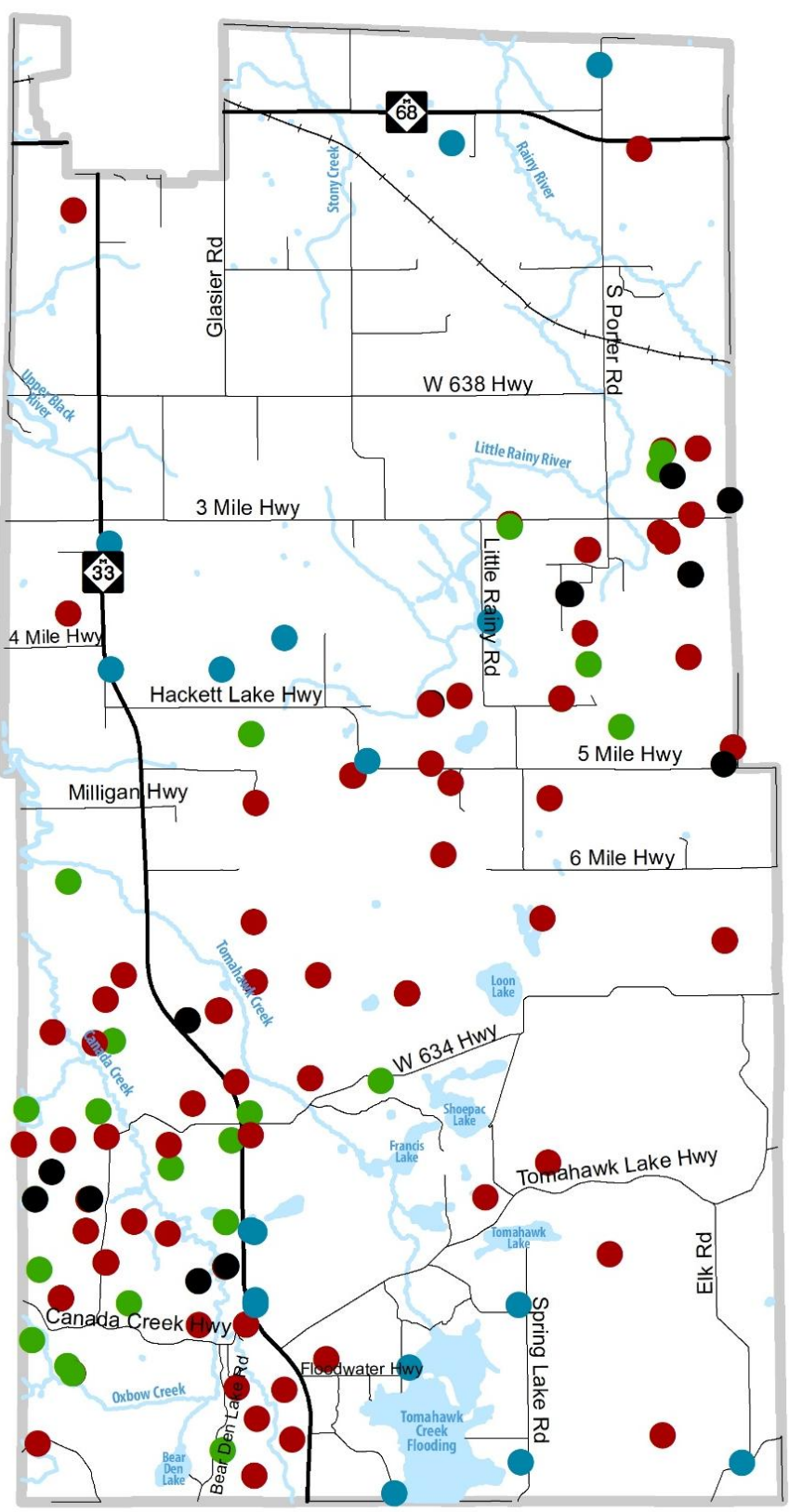
- Dry Hole
- Location
- Oil Well
- Part 625 Test Well

Map by the Northeast Michigan  
Council of Governments

Data: National Resource  
Conservation Service, USDA



2025





This page intentionally blank



# Housing

# Chapter 5

# Overview

Across many communities, both young adults and older residents face housing challenges tied to income levels relative to the Area Median Income (AMI). Young adults often fall below local AMI due to student loan debt and early-career wages, while older adults living on fixed incomes may see their purchasing power decline as costs rise. These income constraints limit access to housing options that are affordable relative to HUD’s guideline that households spend no more than 30% of their income on housing.

When residents earn well below AMI, they are more likely to become cost-burdened, paying a disproportionate share of their income for rent or mortgage expenses. In many areas, households spend 40% to 60% of their income on housing, leaving fewer resources for food, healthcare, transportation, and other essential needs. This mismatch between income and housing costs contributes to financial instability and reduced quality of life for both younger and older residents.

# Household Characteristics

Allis Township has a total of 411 households with an average household size of 2.33 persons. This size is comparable to the state average and larger than both Presque Isle County and the City of Onaway, indicating that Allis Township may have more families or multi-person living arrangements. Approximately 29.0% of households in the Township include at least one person under the age of 18, which is higher than the county and about the same as Onaway, but lower than the state average. Additionally, 42.3% of households include at least one individual aged 65 or older. This figure reflects an older population overall, though it is slightly lower than the percentage in Presque Isle County and just above that of the City of Onaway. The number of individuals living alone is less than half of the state and county averages and nearly three times as small as that in the city, though the percentage of individuals over the age of 65 that are living alone are comparable across all jurisdictions.

Household Breakdown						
Municipality	Total Households	Average Size	Living Alone	Living Alone 65+	With 1 or + under 18	With 1 or + over 65
Allis Township	411	2.33	14.8%	11.2%	29.0%	42.3%
City of Onaway	375	1.79	38.9%	16.8%	29.1%	37.1%
Presque Isle County	6,655	1.96	32.2%	17.0%	19.4%	45.6%
State of Michigan	4,076,369	2.42	30.7%	13.2%	27.1%	32.9%

# Household Income

Based on the income data provided in Chapter 2, income levels in Allis Township generally fall between those of Presque Isle County and the State of Michigan. The median household income in Allis Township is \$71,583, which is much higher than the County median of \$59,321 but slightly lower than the State median of \$72,875. Similarly, the median family income in the Township is \$74,583, which is slightly below the County median of \$77,891 and significantly lower than the State median of \$93,357. Married couples in Allis Township have a median income of \$79,844, trailing behind both the County (\$87,739) and the State (\$110,391). Non-family households in the Township earn a median income of \$29,875, which is lower than both the County (\$37,408) and the State (\$43,188). However, the per capita income in Allis Township stands at \$46,824, surpassing both the County’s \$38,038 and the State’s \$40,735, indicating a relatively strong income distribution on an individual level despite lower household and family medians.

Income in Allis Township primarily comes from earnings, Social Security, and retirement income, with some reliance on public assistance. About 62.8% of households have income from earnings, higher than the County (58.3%) but lower than the State (74.0%), with a notably high mean income of \$144,203. Social Security supports 47.2% of households, and retirement income reaches 32.4%, both lower than the County but higher than the State, though mean payments are lower. Public assistance is minimal, with 11.4% receiving Supplemental Security Income and 5.2% using Food Stamp/SNAP benefits. Overall, the Township has strong earnings but lower retirement and Social Security benefits.



# Current Housing Inventory

The housing stock in Allis Township reflects a diverse range of construction periods, with no new housing units built in 2020 or later. The most common decade for home construction is the 1970s, accounting for 124 units, followed by the 1990s with 84 units. Homes built in the 2000s total 62, while 57 were constructed in the 1980s. Older housing also makes up a significant portion of the Township’s residences, with 60 homes built in 1939 or earlier and 12 more added in the 1940s. The 2010s contributed 50 units, and smaller numbers were built during the 1950s and 1960s, with 24 and 38 units, respectively. Overall, out of the 511 total housing units, a substantial number were built before 1940, indicating a relatively aged housing stock, with more development in the period between 1970 and 2019.

Age of Housing Stock	
2020 or after	0
2010-2019	50
2000-2009	62
1990-1999	84
1980-1989	57
1970-1979	124
1960-1969	38
1950-1959	24
1940-1949	12
1939 or before	60
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>511</b>

The housing stock in Allis Township consists primarily of single-detached homes, which make up 459 of the 511 total housing units, with 363 of those currently occupied. This indicates that single-detached homes are by far the dominant type of housing in the Township. There is only one two-unit structure, which is also occupied. Mobile homes represent a notable portion of the housing mix, with 51 units in total and 47 of them occupied. Overall, out of the 511 total housing units in Allis Township, 411 are occupied, reflecting a mix of traditional single-family homes and some mobile homes, with very limited multi-unit housing.

Housing Types		
	All Units	Occupied Units
Single-detached	459	363
2 Units	1	1
Mobile Home	51	47
<b>Total</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>411</b>

In Allis Township, homeownership is fairly evenly split between those with and without a mortgage. There are 180 owner-occupied housing units with a mortgage and 209 without one. The median value for homes with a mortgage is \$167,200 and the median value for those without is \$130,100. Compared to surrounding areas, Allis Township’s housing values are modest. For instance, the median value of mortgaged homes is only marginally smaller in Presque Isle County at \$156,300 and significantly higher statewide at \$250,500. The City of Onaway, by contrast, has notably lower housing values, with mortgaged homes valued at a median of \$65,600. For homes without a mortgage, Allis Township again falls between Onaway (\$73,500) and the broader State figure of \$200,000. These figures highlight the relatively affordable housing market in Allis Township, particularly when compared to State averages.

Occupancy Ownership				
	Allis Township	City of Onaway	Presque Isle County	State of Michigan
Owner-occupied housing units with a mortgage	180	75	2,719	1,724,865
Median value of housing units with a mortgage	\$167,200	\$65,600	\$156,300	\$250,500
Owner-occupied housing units without a mortgage	209	171	3,186	1,259,325
Median value of housing units without a mortgage	\$130,100	\$73,500	\$143,900	\$200,000



# Occupied Units

Allis Township has a total of 511 housing units, of which 411 are occupied and 100 are vacant, resulting in a vacancy rate of 19.6%. A large majority of the vacant units — 83 out of 100, or 83.0% — are classified as seasonal homes. This indicates that seasonal or recreational use is a major driver of housing vacancy in the Township, a pattern also seen in broader Presque Isle County, where 87.0% of vacant units are seasonal. In contrast, the City of Onaway has a lower vacancy rate of 16.3%, with only 19.2% of its vacant units categorized as seasonal. Statewide, the vacancy rate is even lower at 11.8%, and just under half of those vacant homes are for seasonal use. These figures suggest that Allis Township, like much of the County, has a strong presence of seasonal or vacation properties, which significantly impacts its housing occupancy profile.

Vacancy Status						
	Total	Occupied	Vacant	Percent Vacant	Seasonal	Percent Seasonal of Vacant
Allis Township	511	411	100	19.6%	83	83.0%
City of Onaway	448	375	73	16.3%	14	19.2%
Presque Isle County	9,802	6,655	3,147	32.1%	2,738	87.0%
State of Michigan	4,622,236	4,076,369	545,867	11.8%	253,668	46.5%

In Allis Township, most of the 411 occupied housing units are owner-occupied, and the community is predominantly made up of married couples. Out of 261 married couple households, 246 own their homes while only 15 rent. Single householders without a spouse are far less common; there are 21 male householders living without a spouse, all but 2 of whom are homeowners, and 40 female householders in the same category, 39 of whom own their homes while only 1 rents. Individuals living alone account for a smaller portion of households, with 15 householders under the age of 65 and 46 householders aged 65 or older living alone. Nearly all of these individuals, especially older adults, are homeowners, with 45 of the 46 older solo householders owning their homes, along with all homeowners under the age of 65. These demographics suggest a stable, homeowner-oriented population, with a strong presence of married couples and older individuals living independently.

Demographic of Occupied Units			
	Total Units	Own	Rent
Married Couples	261	246	15
Male Householder – no spouse	21	19	2
Female Householder – no spouse	40	39	1
Householders alone under 65	15	15	0
Householders alone above 65	46	45	1
Non-Family Household	28	25	3

# Household Expenses

Vehicle ownership is nearly universal in Allis Township, with only 1 of 411 occupied households reporting no vehicle. Most households own two vehicles (134) or three or more (175), while 101 have one. In a rural community with little to no public transit, vehicle ownership is essential for work, errands, and accessing services, but it also increases household expenses through fuel, maintenance, insurance, and loan costs. For the 75% of households with two or more vehicles, these costs can place added pressure on lower-income or fixed-income residents. Conversely, having only one vehicle—or none—can limit access to jobs, healthcare, and daily needs, making transportation a key factor in household stability and quality of life.

Vehicle Assets	
Vehicles	Units
None	1
1	101
2	134
3 or more	175

Heating in Allis Township is dominated by natural gas, which serves 245 households and remains the most convenient and cost-effective option where available. Wood heat is the second most common source, used by 83 households, reflecting the Township’s rural character and access to self-supplied fuel. 61 households rely on propane or bottled fuel, and 22 use electric heat.

These varying energy sources influence household budgets in different ways. Natural gas typically offers stable pricing and reliable service, while wood heat can be economical, especially for those who harvest their own fuel, but requires significant labor and maintenance. Propane and electric heating tend to be more costly, particularly during long northern Michigan winters. The mix of heating types highlights differences in infrastructure, personal preference, and the affordability of winter energy needs.

Heating	
Source	Units
Natural Gas	245
Propane/Bottled Fuel	61
Electric	22
Wood	83

# Current Housing Cost

## Construction Cost

The Great Recession initially dampened construction activity, with its economic fallout leading to fewer local job opportunities. Many residents were forced to seek employment elsewhere. (The “Great Recession,” which spanned from late 2007 to around 2009, was triggered by the U.S. housing bubble collapse and snowballed into a global financial crisis, affecting economies worldwide.) More recently, the COVID-19 pandemic has influenced housing trends, as the shift to remote work has made seasonal homes more appealing as permanent residences. The rising costs of construction materials, influenced in part by many recent natural disasters, are also a growing barrier to new building projects.

In Michigan, constructing a 1,500-square-foot home with builder-grade finishes (basic materials, excluding high-end touches like granite or hardwood) can be quite costly. On average, the construction of such a home would cost around \$315,000, not including the land. The average cost of land, statewide, is about \$13,000 per acre; however, this doesn’t account for additional expenses like installing a well or septic system or connecting to municipal water and sewer systems. A typical 4-inch well installation averages \$9,500 statewide, while a septic system can cost around \$11,000. Connecting to municipal sewers typically costs between \$1,300 and \$5,000, and connecting to water lines ranges from \$1,000 to \$5,000. Connecting to the electric grid can range from \$1,000 to \$30,000, and hooking up to a natural gas line typically costs between \$500 and \$2,000. Depending on whether a property requires a well and septic system (approximately \$37,250) or can be connected to municipal services (averaging \$22,900), these infrastructure costs will significantly impact the total cost of building a house, estimated at \$337,900 to \$352,250, not including the cost of land.

There are currently seven buildable lots for sale within the Onaway School District, which includes Allis Township. These parcels average 7.7 acres each and are priced at approximately \$74,000. Because most of Allis Township lacks access to municipal water and sewer, new construction would require a private well, septic system, and utility hookups. When combining the average land cost of \$74,000, estimated construction costs of \$315,000, and about \$37,250 for infrastructure, the total cost to build a home comes to roughly \$426,250. A construction loan for this amount would require a 20% down payment, or \$85,250, which is nearly \$14,000 more than the median household income in the Township. The resulting monthly mortgage payment would be around \$2,380, which would require a household income of approximately \$96,000 for the home to be considered affordable.

## For Purchase Housing

Currently, there are 14 homes for sale within the Onaway School District, with an average listing price of \$234,000. This price sits at the upper limit of what an average family in the area could afford, aligning closely with the threshold for attainable housing. While it is slightly above what the average household earning \$71,583 annually could comfortably manage, some households may still be able to afford these homes. However, many of the available properties require repairs to be viable as long-term residences, and most were not considered accessible housing in their current condition.

## Final Costs

A frequently overlooked aspect of housing affordability is the cost of monthly utilities. While earlier estimates focused on core expenses, such as mortgage payments, property taxes, and homeowners' insurance, they did not account for basic utility services like electricity, gas, internet, and phone. Even when using a modest estimate of \$100 per month per service, these utilities add approximately \$400 to a household's monthly expenses. Once this ongoing cost is included, the picture of what's truly affordable changes significantly. For a family, the maximum affordable home price decreases from \$240,000 to roughly \$180,000. For the average household in Allis Township, it drops even further, from \$220,000 to about \$155,000. When it comes to new home construction, these additional costs push the required household income from an estimated \$96,000 up to at least \$112,000 per year. This underscores the need to evaluate housing affordability through a comprehensive lens that includes not only purchase prices but also the full cost of living. Without factoring in these recurring expenses, estimates can paint an overly optimistic view of what residents can realistically afford.

## In Conclusion

The current cost of homeownership in Allis Township presents significant challenges for average-income households, whether they are looking to purchase an existing home or build a new one. Construction costs, driven higher by material prices, infrastructure needs, and limited access to municipal services, push the total investment required for a new home to well over \$400,000, an amount far beyond what most local families can afford. Similarly, while some homes listed for sale fall near the edge of affordability, many require costly repairs or upgrades that further increase the financial burden. When utility expenses are added to monthly housing costs, the affordability gap widens even further, reducing the attainable price range for many households and pushing the required annual income well above the local average. These figures underscore the critical need for targeted housing solutions in Allis Township. Addressing this issue will require coordinated efforts that include expanding affordable housing options, providing financial support for first-time buyers, and investing in infrastructure and energy efficiency. Without such interventions, homeownership will remain out of reach for many residents, threatening the community's long-term stability and growth.



This page intentionally blank



# Existing Land Use

# Chapter 6

# Existing Land Use

Land use influences the quality of life, community character, natural resources, transportation, and how neighboring land is used. Examining Allis Township’s existing land use activities, patterns, and site conditions will assist Township officials with future land use decisions and infrastructure improvements. Parcel data from the Presque Isle County Equalization Department, tax classifications, and aerial photo interpretation by Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG) were used to analyze the types and location of current land uses within the Township.

**Table 6-1 Existing Land Use**

	Acres	Percent
Agricultural Improved	4289.74	10.14%
Agricultural Vacant	2301.03	5.44%
City	4.82	0.01%
Commercial Improved	320.98	0.76%
Commercial Vacant	290.91	0.69%
County	30.12	0.07%
Industrial Improved	1.44	0.003%
Residential Improved	10482.48	24.78%
Residential Vacant	6962.61	16.46%
Road Commission	7.37	0.02%
State	16689.47	39.46%
Township	6.95	0.02%
Water	878.5	2.08%
Other	29.58	0.07%
<b>Total</b>	<b>42296</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Agricultural Land Use

Agricultural land use represents a significant portion of Allis Township's overall land base. A total of 6,590.77 acres, approximately 15.6% of the Township's total land area, is designated as agricultural land. This designation includes both active and inactive farmland. Of the total agricultural land, approximately 65% is classified as improved agricultural land, which refers to parcels that are currently in active agricultural production, such as crop cultivation, livestock grazing, or other farm-related uses. The remaining 35% consists of unimproved agricultural land, which may include fallow fields, woodlots, or land not presently used for active farming but still zoned or intended for agricultural purposes. This distribution highlights the continued importance of agriculture within the Township's land use framework and underscores the role of active farming in the local economy and landscape.

## Commercial Land Use

Commercial land use in Allis Township comprises just under 1.5% of the total land area, amounting to approximately 612 acres. This category includes properties designated for retail, service, office, and other business-related activities. Of the land classified for commercial use, more than 52% is currently occupied by active commercial operations. These include functioning businesses such as stores, offices, and service providers that contribute to the local economy and provide essential goods and services to residents. The remaining portion, approximately 48%, consists of underutilized or vacant commercial parcels, which may present opportunities for future development or revitalization. The limited share of commercial land, combined with its current usage pattern, suggests a relatively small but potentially growing commercial sector within the Township's overall land use profile.

## Industrial Land Use

Industrial land use in Allis Township is minimal, accounting for only 1.44 acres of the Township's total land area. Despite its small footprint, this land is fully classified as improved industrial land, indicating that it is currently developed and in active use for industrial purposes. This may include light manufacturing, warehousing, or similar operations. The limited extent of industrial land suggests that industrial activity is not a major component of the Township's current land use pattern. However, it also highlights potential opportunities for strategic planning if future industrial growth or diversification of the local economy is desired.

## Residential Land Use

Residential land use represents the largest land use category in Allis Township, encompassing over 17,445 acres, or approximately 41% of the Township's total land area. This category includes all properties designated for housing, ranging from single-family homes, seasonal residences, to rural homesteads. Of the total residential land, approximately 60% is classified as improved residential land, meaning these parcels contain existing homes or are otherwise actively developed for residential purposes. The remaining 40% is considered unimproved residential land, which may include vacant lots, undeveloped subdivisions, or land reserved for future residential development. This substantial share of residential land use reflects the Township's primarily rural character and will play a key role in shaping future land use planning, infrastructure investments, and community services.

## City Land Use

City-owned land use within the Township is minimal, encompassing just under five acres. This entire area is occupied by the Elmwood Cemetery, which represents the sole parcel of municipally managed property within the Township's boundaries. The cemetery serves as a historic and functional land use, with no additional municipal facilities or city-operated public spaces currently present in the area.

## County Land Use

County-owned land within Allis Township consists of a single parcel of vacant land totaling just over 30 acres. This property is located directly behind the County Road Commission Garage and is currently undeveloped. While it is not actively used for public services or infrastructure, its proximity to existing County facilities suggests potential for future public works, storage, or other governmental uses. At present, there are no known plans for development, but its strategic location may warrant further consideration in long-range planning efforts.

## Road Commission Land Use

Road Commission land within Allis Township totals just over seven acres and is entirely occupied by the Presque Isle County Road Commission facilities. This site includes the main Road Commission garage, associated outbuildings, and the surrounding operational yard area. The property serves as a key support facility for County road maintenance and infrastructure services within the region. There is no additional County-owned vacant land in the Township. As a fully developed and operational site, any future expansion or changes in use would likely be limited to improvements or modifications of the existing facilities.

## Township Land Use

Township-owned land in Allis Township totals just under seven acres and is designated for essential local government and community functions. This area includes the Allis Township Hall, a public park, and the Allis Township Cemetery. These facilities serve as key civic and recreational assets for residents, supporting both administrative operations and community gatherings. The park offers open space and recreational opportunities, while the cemetery provides important historical and cultural value. The land is actively maintained by the Township and reflects a focused use of public property to meet local needs.

## State Land Use

State-owned land accounts for over 39% of the total land area in Allis Township, encompassing approximately 16,689 acres. This substantial public landholding plays a critical role in shaping land use, development potential, and conservation efforts within the Township. The majority of this state land is concentrated in the southern portion of the Township and is part of the expansive Mackinac State Forest, a multi-use forest managed for timber production, wildlife habitat, recreation, and environmental protection.

In addition to the forested areas, Allis Township also includes the Shoepac Lake State Forest Campground, a public recreation site that provides access to camping, fishing, boating, and other outdoor activities. These state-managed lands contribute significantly to the Township's rural character, support the local economy through tourism and outdoor recreation, and limit the extent of private development in certain areas. As such, state land ownership is a major factor to consider in land use planning, infrastructure development, and natural resource management within the Township.

## Water

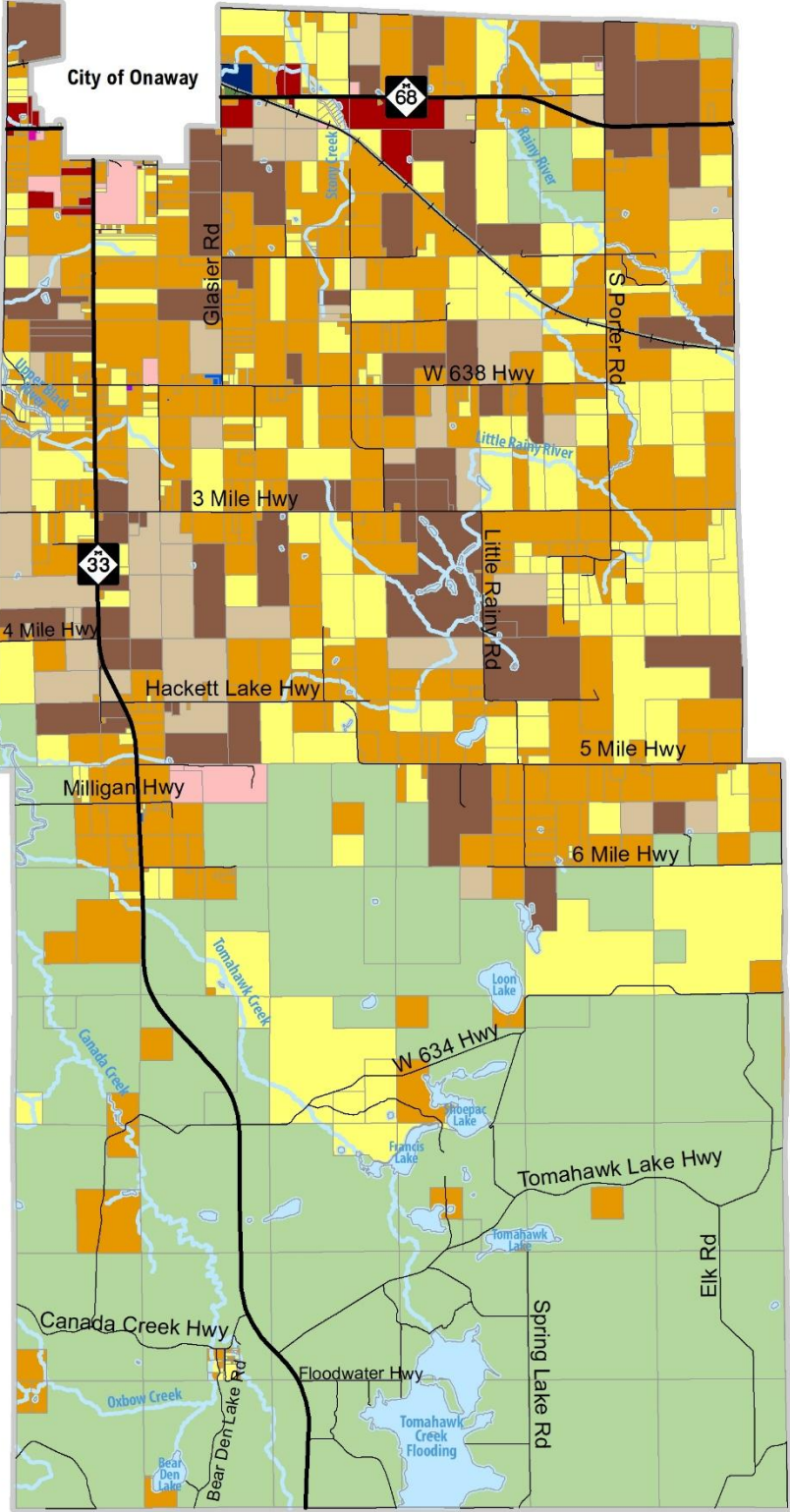
Open water covers approximately 878 acres in Allis Township, making up just over 2% of the total land area. This includes lakes such as Tomahawk, Francis, Shoepac, Loon, and Bear Den, as well as the Tomahawk Creek Flooding. Major waterways include the Rainy River, Little Rainy River, Upper Black River, Canada Creek, Tomahawk Creek, and Stony Creek. Numerous unnamed streams and ponds are also present throughout the Township. These water resources contribute to recreation, wildlife habitat, and natural drainage, and play a role in shaping land use and development.

## Other

This land use category consists of road rights-of-way, which collectively account for over 29 acres of land within the Township. These areas are dedicated to public transportation infrastructure, including local roads, highways, and associated easements, and play a vital role in supporting access, connectivity, and mobility throughout the Township.

# Allis Township Master Plan

## Existing Land Use



- Agricultural - Improved
- Agricultural - Vacant
- City
- Commercial - Improved
- Commercial - Vacant
- County
- Industrial - Improved
- Residential - Improved
- Residential - Vacant
- Road Commission
- State
- Township
- Water

Map by the Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG)

Data: Presque Isle County Equalization; revised by NEMCOG



2025

A photograph of three directional signs mounted on a metal post. The top sign is blue with white text that says "DREAM BIG". The middle sign is white with black text that says "SET GOALS". The bottom sign is red with white text that says "TAKE ACTION". The signs are set against a background of lush green foliage.

**DREAM BIG**

**SET GOALS**

**TAKE ACTION**

Input & Goals

Chapter 7



## Survey Synopsis

During the winter and spring of 2025, Allis Township, with assistance from NEMCOG, conducted a community-wide public input survey to help guide future planning efforts. The survey was made available online through the SurveyMonkey platform to ensure broad and convenient access for residents. To accommodate those preferring or requiring a non-digital option, paper copies were also

provided at the Township Hall. In total, 73 residents participated, offering valuable perspectives on community priorities, services, and future development. The full set of survey results is included in the appendix, while a summary of key findings is provided below.

- 38% of respondents were over 65, 35% were between 46-65, and 20% were between 26-45.
- 29% of respondents were residents of Allis Township, and 21% were landowners.
- 37% are here for the small town, 33% are here for the beauty of the area, 29% because the Township is clean and safe, and another 27% to be closer to family.
- 47% of respondents enjoy bike paths, 44% hiking trails, and 41% ORV trails.
- 71% of respondents **do not** support the development of Utility-Scale Solar Energy Facilities.
- 74% of respondents **do not** support the development of Utility-Scale Wind Energy Facilities.
- 57% of respondents would approve of a small assessment for the improvement of Township roads.
- 37% of respondents like to see new retail businesses/services in the Township, 29% personal services, 29% restaurants, and 25% would like to see a recreation business.
- 52% would **not** open a business in Allis Township.
- 63% **do not** feel that short-term rentals should be regulated by the Township.
- 83% of respondents felt that single-family housing units were the best option when developing the Township, senior housing was second at 27%, and small apartment buildings, 5-10 units, rounded out the top 3 at 25%.
- 60% of respondents felt that requiring a large lot size to preserve farmland was most important when developing the area, 59% also felt that requiring large lot size to preserve forest land was also important.
- 66% of respondents support garage apartments or accessory dwellings on property.
- 94% of respondents are satisfied with Allis Township as a place to live, own property, own a business, or visit.
- 73% of respondents were satisfied with the current recycling program.
- 86% of respondents were satisfied with police protection.
- 94% of respondents were satisfied with fire protection.
- 82% of respondents were satisfied with Emergency Medical Services.
- 85% of respondents were satisfied with recreational access.

# Environmental Stewardship & Open Space Preservation

Recognize the importance of surface water to the Township and protect the quality of the surface water so that residents and visitors may continue to enjoy its use.

- Collaborate with local and State agencies to support and implement existing rules and guidelines aimed at controlling the spread of invasive species, such as Eurasian milfoil, zebra mussels, and purple loosestrife.
- Control runoff into the water through guidelines for plant removal, slope stabilization, unmowed/undisturbed buffers along shorelines, and/or reduced pavement and impervious surfaces.

Preserve the wetlands in Allis Township.

- Encourage the protection of wetland areas through the use of clustered or open space developments.
- Establish setback standards and buffers from critical natural features, including unregulated wetlands less than five acres, in order to protect them from the impacts of development.

Protect the fragile soils and features of the Township.

- Partner with the local health department to ensure residential development is limited to areas with soil conditions suitable for effective septic system filtration.
- Consider soil conditions and properties, and surrounding natural amenities when reviewing development applications for approval in the Township.

Maintain a good relationship and open communication with the State regarding their plans for and use of their land.

- Consider new approaches to the protection of natural features and farmland as development and economic pressures place demands on these important areas.
- Consider the purchase or transfer of development rights programs for designated areas in the Township.
- Develop a recreation plan with an approach to ensure wise, proactive use of natural resources that will result in their protection and long-term maintenance while also providing for community use and benefit.

# Residential Development & Housing

Achieve a variety of well-planned, quality residential neighborhoods in the Township.

- Maintain and improve the quality of existing neighborhoods.
- Accommodate growth in housing and population without sacrificing the rural/recreational character of the Township or the quality of the natural resources.
- Concentrate the highest densities of residential growth near the City of Onaway, where the existing infrastructure necessary to support that growth can be provided.
- Provide dwelling standards and setbacks that allow property owners to fully utilize their property while also ensuring protection of natural resources and protection of neighboring properties.
- Maintain the integrity and intent of the future land use plan through consistent application of the plan and the community's vision.

# Economic Growth & Industrial Development

Recognize the Township's position in the regional market and position itself appropriately to ensure the development of the most appropriate industrial and commercial businesses.

- Encourage low-impact home occupations to be maintained throughout the Township and continue to be used as a primary source of local commercial activity.
- Maintain important community convenience uses scattered throughout the Township.
- Provide limited areas for future industrial expansion due to a lack of infrastructure and low potential for future expansion at this time.
- Ensure that lighting does not negatively impact drivers, pedestrians, neighboring property, and the dark night sky.
- Reserve the opportunity to designate space for future industrial or commerce use in future when market changes, growth opportunities, development trends, or other similar circumstances dictate.

# Community Facilities & Services

Maintain and enhance existing Township-owned facilities while planning for additional essential services to support public safety and well-being.

- Enhance area emergency preparedness by coordinating with surrounding municipalities to establish emergency shelters and pursuing state and federal funding for their ongoing improvement and maintenance.
- Maintain playground, ball field, and pavilion to ensure recreational enjoyment for years to come.



# Alternative & Renewable Energy

Support the integration of alternative energy sources as a necessary component of future development, while ensuring that such initiatives align with local priorities, land use goals, and regulatory oversight.

- If renewable energy developments are proposed in the Township, encourage developers to work locally with the Township to site needed utility-scale solar, utility-scale wind, and off-site battery energy storage systems.
- Ensure that the zoning ordinance contains renewable energy standards that developers consider workable but which protect non-participating property owners through setbacks, screening, and noise standards, ensure protection of the natural environment including soil, surface water, groundwater, and wildlife, ensure adequate emergency services personnel, equipment, and training are available, ensure decommissioning is planned for, protect prime agricultural land, and protect the Township residents in general.
- Ensure that the development and operation of data centers protect local water resources and do not negatively impact the reliability or capacity of the electrical grid.



This page intentionally blank



# Future Land Use

## Chapter 8

# Introduction

The Future Land Use (FLU) chapter is a critical element of the master plan, articulating the community's vision for the future use and development of land. It offers a strategic framework for managing growth, land conservation, zoning decisions, and infrastructure planning. The Future Land Use map, developed by the Planning Commission, incorporates collective input on the desired changes for the Township, showing how these changes can be achieved through adjustments to land use categories. These proposed modifications align with the goals and objectives outlined in Chapter 7, providing guidance for informed, long-term decision-making. The FLU chapter plays an essential role in shaping future development, ensuring that the Township evolves to meet both present and future needs while preserving its character and quality of life. By clearly defining the vision, goals, and strategies for land use, this chapter helps steer the Township's growth and direction over the long term.

One of the fundamental purposes of a Master Plan is to guide zoning decisions in a clear and logical manner. To do this, it is important to know how the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance districts are related to each other. The Future Land Use categories used in this plan and shown on the Future Land Use map are not the same as the zoning categories. This chart shows how the categories used on the Future Land Use map inform zoning decisions.

Future Land Use	Zoning Districts
Low-Density Residential	R-1: Low-Density Residential District
Medium-Density Residential	R-2: Medium-Density Residential District
Agriculture Residential	AR: Agricultural Resource District
Forest Recreation	FR: Forest Recreation District
Commercial	B1: General Business District
Industrial/ Extractive	M1: Manufacturing District E1: Extractive Industry District



# Low-Density Residential

## Purpose

The purpose of the Low-Density Residential designation is to preserve and strengthen Allis Township’s rural residential character while guiding development toward low-intensity, single-family environments. This designation supports growth that is compatible with the Township’s natural features and existing land patterns, ensuring that the long-term vision of maintaining open landscapes, spacious lots, and a quiet rural lifestyle remains intact.

## District Structure

The Low-Density Residential designation is structured around large-lot single-family development with limited, residentially compatible community uses that complement the rural setting. The district is intended to maintain a predominance of single-family homes while incorporating parks, open spaces, and natural areas as integral amenities. This structure also allows small-scale, state-licensed day care and residential care facilities, along with customary accessory buildings and uses, ensuring that development remains low density, functional, and harmonious within the Township’s broader rural context.

## Character & Intent

The character of the Low Density Residential area is defined by spacious lots, open landscapes, natural vegetation, and minimal infrastructure intensity, all contributing to the Township’s rural identity. This designation intends to protect and enhance these qualities by encouraging development that respects natural features, maintains low traffic volumes, and integrates seamlessly into the surrounding rural environment. This category supports quiet neighborhoods with significant open space and ensures that any non-residential uses remain small-scale and residential in nature.

## Development Standards

Development within the Low-Density Residential designation should reinforce the rural character of Allis Township through standards that promote compatibility with surrounding uses. Primary uses include single-family detached dwellings, with supporting uses such as public parks, open spaces, accessory structures, state-licensed family day care homes, and state-licensed residential care facilities. Density should remain low, with a minimum lot size of one acre to preserve open space and maintain the rural ambiance. Site design should minimize land disturbance, incorporate natural features, and reflect a rural aesthetic through compatible building materials, landscaping, and siting approaches, ensuring a cohesive and visually harmonious residential environment.



# Medium-Density Residential

## Purpose

The purpose of the Medium-Density Residential designation is to provide a residential living environment similar in character to low-density neighborhoods but located in areas of Allis Township that can support smaller lots, increased service capacity, and closer proximity to population centers. This designation is intended to offer a balanced range of housing choices while maintaining compatibility with surrounding land uses. It encourages residential development that is efficient, orderly, and integrated into areas where infrastructure and community services can support a moderately higher density.

## District Structure

The Medium-Density Residential designation is structured around a mix of single-family and two-family dwellings supported by parks, open spaces, and accessory structures that serve residential needs. This structure promotes a neighborhood form that transitions between low-density rural areas and more concentrated community centers. The district also accommodates state-licensed family day care homes and residential care facilities, reflecting its role as a flexible, community-oriented residential area. The overall structure emphasizes walkability, proximity to services, and an efficient land use pattern while maintaining a cohesive residential environment.

## Character & Intent

The character of the Medium-Density Residential area is defined by moderately sized lots, a traditional neighborhood layout, and a residential appearance that remains compatible with both single-family and two-family housing types. This designation intends to create neighborhoods that are more compact than rural residential areas while still maintaining a sense of openness, green space, and residential identity. Development in this category is intended to support a diverse but harmonious range of housing options that meet community needs without introducing incompatible land uses. These areas serve as a transition between low-density residential districts and more populated portions of the Township.

## Development Standards

Development within the Medium-Density Residential designation should follow standards that support a balanced residential environment while ensuring compatibility with existing neighborhoods. Permitted uses include single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, public parks, open spaces, customary accessory uses, state-licensed family day care homes, and state-licensed residential care facilities. Lots within this designation should maintain a minimum lot size of 12,000 square feet, ensuring adequate spacing, access, and usability while supporting a moderately higher density than rural residential areas. Site and building design should promote neighborhood cohesion, preserve open spaces where feasible, and maintain a scale and appearance consistent with a medium-density residential community.



# Forest Recreation

## Purpose

The Forest Recreation designation preserves the rural, natural, and largely undeveloped landscapes of Allis Township for outdoor recreation, natural resource protection, and sustainable forestry. It also allows low-density residential development on private lands where it can occur without compromising the district's natural character.

## District Structure

This designation is structured around land uses that emphasize natural resource management, outdoor recreation, and low-impact rural living. It includes forestry activities, wildlife management, seasonal cabins or cottages, and limited single-family development, as well as recreation-oriented commercial uses such as campgrounds, RV parks, private clubs, lodges, and commercial resorts. Accessory uses and seasonal structures are permitted when they support the primary functions of the district and maintain the area's natural character.

## Character & Intent

The Forest Recreation area is characterized by expansive forested landscapes, minimal development, and strong connections to outdoor recreation and natural resource activities. The intent is to maintain the Township's forested identity, support resource-based uses, and allow seasonal and residential structures that remain unobtrusive and compatible with the surrounding natural environment.

## Development Standards

Development in the Forest Recreation designation should protect natural resources and maintain low-intensity land use. Permitted uses include forestry, seasonal cabins with occupancy limits, wildlife management, commercial kennels, portable sawmills, single-family homes, private clubs and lodges, airports, campgrounds, RV parks, commercial resorts, and related accessory structures. A minimum lot size of one acre is required to preserve open space and reduce environmental impacts. Seasonal dwellings must be served by an improved public road or a privately maintained road, and all development should minimize land disturbance, retain natural vegetation, and blend with the surrounding landscape.



# Agriculture Residential

## Purpose

The purpose of the Agriculture Residential designation is to encourage active farm production and preserve agricultural lands that are especially well-suited for the growing, raising, and production of food and fiber. This designation seeks to protect productive farmland from encroachment by incompatible land uses, ensuring that agricultural operations can continue without disruption. It supports the long-term viability of farming in Allis Township by maintaining large parcels, protecting soil quality, and reinforcing the Township's rural and agricultural character.

## District Structure

The Agriculture Residential designation is structured around working agricultural landscapes, supported by single-family homes on large parcels and the accessory structures needed for farming. The district accommodates cropland, pastures, orchards, livestock operations, and buildings required for storage, housing of equipment, and general farm use. Residential development is intentionally limited in scale and density to prevent fragmentation of agricultural lands and is designed to coexist with active farming while supporting rural living opportunities.

## Character & Intent

The character of the Agriculture Residential area is defined by expansive fields, working farms, agricultural buildings, and limited low-density residential development. The intent is to preserve the Township's agricultural heritage, protect the economic role of farming, and maintain open rural landscapes. Residential uses within the district are intended to complement, not conflict with, agricultural operations. This designation is also intended to ensure that farming activities retain legal protection and that new residents understand and accept the presence of typical agricultural practices, such as noise, odors, and farm equipment operation.

## Development Standards

Development within the Agriculture Residential designation should reinforce the preservation of agricultural land and support ongoing farm operations. Permitted uses include crop production, pastures, orchards, livestock raising, and necessary farm buildings such as barns, equipment storage structures, and livestock facilities. Single-family dwellings are allowed on parcels with a minimum lot size of one acre, provided state plat regulations, the Land Division Act, and the Right to Farm Act are adhered to. Accessory uses and buildings incidental to agricultural or residential activities are permitted. All developments should be designed to minimize the loss of productive farmland, maintain rural character, and ensure compatibility with agricultural operations.



# Commercial

## Purpose

The Commercial designation is intended to provide areas within Allis Township that support a wide range of business activities serving travelers, tourists, seasonal visitors, and local residents. This designation focuses commercial development along major travel corridors and within localized nodes where businesses can efficiently meet community needs. Its purpose is to encourage well-planned commercial growth that strengthens the Township's economy, expands services, and supports both recreation-based and resident-serving activities.

## District Structure

The Commercial designation is structured to accommodate a broad mix of retail, service, lodging, food service, and highway-oriented businesses. This includes shops, restaurants, lodging facilities, professional offices, and service establishments that cater to year-round and seasonal users. Auto-oriented uses such as gas stations, repair shops, and sales or rental centers for vehicles and recreational equipment are included, provided they incorporate appropriate screening and site design. The district's structure emphasizes convenient access, adequate parking, well-defined circulation, and compatibility with surrounding land uses to create functional and attractive commercial areas.

## Character & Intent

The character of the Commercial designation reflects active business environments located along major roadways or in community activity centers. These areas are intended to appear orderly, well-maintained, and visually compatible with adjacent land uses, with site designs that manage traffic, minimize nuisances, and contribute to the Township's gateway and corridor appearance. The intent is to encourage commercial development that supports tourism, expands local employment opportunities, and provides goods and services residents need, while preventing land use conflicts through thoughtful design and appropriate siting.

## Development Standards

Development within the Commercial designation should support efficient, attractive, and safe business environments. Permitted uses include retail stores; art and craft studios; barber and beauty shops; financial institutions; restaurants, bars, and lounges; laundromats; gas stations and auto repair shops (with screened rear-yard storage); lodging facilities; museums; golf and recreation services; vehicle and recreational equipment sales or rentals; professional offices; car washes; hospitals; plant nurseries; welding shops; and similar compatible uses, including licensed fundraising activities. A minimum lot size of one-half acre is required to ensure adequate space for buildings, parking, access, and buffering. All developments should incorporate appropriate screening, landscaping, signage control, and circulation design to enhance corridor appearance, protect neighboring properties, and maintain a cohesive commercial character.



# Industrial/Extractive

## Purpose

The Industrial/Extractive designation provides areas for manufacturing, warehousing, distribution, and resource-based operations, including extractive industries. Its purpose is to support economic development and efficient resource use while protecting surrounding areas from potential environmental and operational impacts. Sites are located along major roads and near natural resources to ensure operational efficiency and accommodate higher traffic volumes.

## District Structure

This designation includes two primary types of uses: manufacturing and light industrial operations, and extractive/resource-dependent industries. Manufacturing uses include wholesale and storage facilities, truck terminals, pre-fabrication shops, lumber and building material suppliers, food processing plants, welding and machine shops, research laboratories, and accessory structures. Extractive uses include sand, gravel, and limestone extraction, mining, quarrying, processing, forest-based industries, and accessory structures.

## Character & Intent

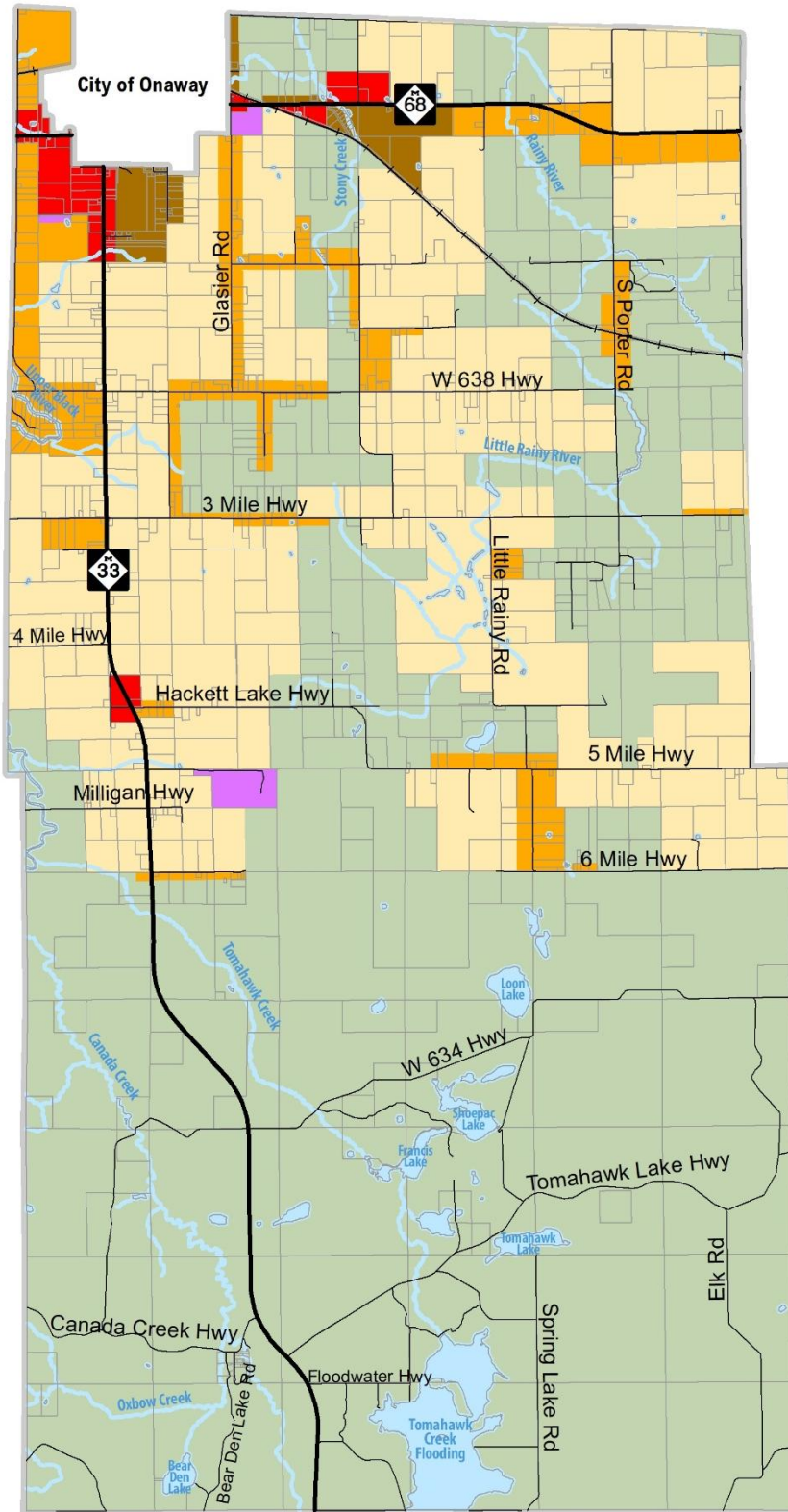
The Industrial/Extractive area is characterized by active production, storage, and processing, with functional layouts, transportation access, and appropriate buffering. Industrial uses focus on efficient operations, while extractive activities are sited to minimize conflicts with surrounding land uses. The intent is to provide sites for industrial and resource-based operations while protecting the Township's environment and neighboring properties.

## Development Standards

Development within the Industrial/Extractive designation should be safe, functional, and environmentally responsible. All uses must provide adequate access, internal circulation, loading areas, and off-street parking appropriate to the type and scale of the operation. Landscaping, screening, and buffers should be provided to reduce visual and noise impacts on adjacent properties, particularly residential or recreational areas. Site layouts should minimize disturbance to natural features and water resources and incorporate stormwater management, erosion control, and dust or pollutant mitigation where applicable. Manufacturing uses include wholesale, storage, distribution, pre-fabrication, food processing, and light industrial shops, while extractive uses include mining, quarrying, and forest-based industries. Minimum lot sizes are one acre for manufacturing and 9.5 acres for extractive operations, ensuring sufficient space for buildings, equipment, outdoor storage, processing areas, and environmental buffers. Accessory structures are permitted when incidental to principal uses.

# Allis Township Master Plan

## Future Land Use



- Low Density Residential
- Med Density Residential
- Agriculture Residential
- Forest Recreation
- Commercial
- Industrial/Extractive

Map by the Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG)

Data: Presque Isle County Equalization; revised by NEMCOG



2025



This page intentionally blank



# Adoption & Implementation

Chapter 9

As required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008), as amended, notification of intent to update the Allis Township Master Plan was sent to all adjacent communities and other relevant entities. After the draft plan was completed by the Allis Township Planning Commission, a draft was transmitted to the Township Board for approval to distribute the plan for review and comment. The draft plan was transmitted to the entities notified at the initiation of the plan update. After the required comment period, public hearing, and plan adoption, the final plan was transmitted to all required entities.

## Public Hearing

A public hearing on the proposed Master Plan for Allis Township, as required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008) as amended, was held on XXXXXXX. The purpose of the public hearing was to present the proposed Master Plan and to accept comments from the public.

Section 43 (1) of the Act requires a 15-day notice prior to the public hearing to be given in a publication of general circulation in the municipality. A notice of the public hearing was published in the XXXXXXX (local newspaper). During the review period, the draft plan was available for review by contacting the Township or on the Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG) website.

## Plan Adoption

The Allis Township Planning Commission formally adopted the Master Plan on (Insert Date). The Township Board passed a resolution of adoption of the Master Plan on (Insert Date).

## Documentation

Michigan Planning law requires that the adopted Master Plan be transmitted to communities and agencies that received the review draft. Copies of these transmittal letters appear in the Appendix.

## Plan Implementation

The Master Plan was developed to provide a vision of the community's future. It will serve as a tool for decision-making on future development proposals. The plan will also act as a guide for future public investments and service decisions, such as the local budget, grant applications, road maintenance and development, community group activities, tax incentive decisions, and administration of utilities and services.

# Zoning Ordinance

According to the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, comprehensive planning is the legal basis for the development of a zoning ordinance. Section 203 of the Act states: The zoning ordinance shall be based on a plan designed to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare, to encourage the use of lands in accordance with their character and adaptability, to limit the improper use of land, to conserve natural resources and energy, to meet the needs of the state's residents for food, fiber, and other natural resources, places of residence, recreation, industry, trade, service, and other uses of land, to ensure that uses of the plan shall be situated in appropriate locations and relationships, to avoid the overcrowding of population; to provide adequate light and air; to lessen congestion of the public roads and streets, to reduce hazards to life and property; to facilitate adequate provision for a system of transportation, sewage disposal, safe and adequate water supply, education, recreation, and other public requirements, and to conserve to expenditure of funds for public improvements and services to conform with the most advantageous use of land resources, and properties.

The zoning ordinance is the primary tool for implementing the Master Plan. Allis Township has developed its zoning ordinances to regulate land use activities within the Township. This plan requires the zoning ordinance to be reviewed to ensure consistency with the Master Plan's goals and future land use plan, as well as ensuring it conforms to current State regulations.

# Grants & Capital Improvement Plan

The Master Plan can be used as a guide for future public investment and service decisions, such as the local budget, grant applications, and administration of utilities and services. Many communities find it beneficial to prioritize and budget for capital improvement projects, such as infrastructure improvements, etc. A Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is developed to establish a prioritized schedule for all anticipated capital improvement projects in the community. A CIP includes cost estimates and sources for financing for each project and can serve as a budgetary and policy document to aid in the implementation of the Master Plan.



This page intentionally blank



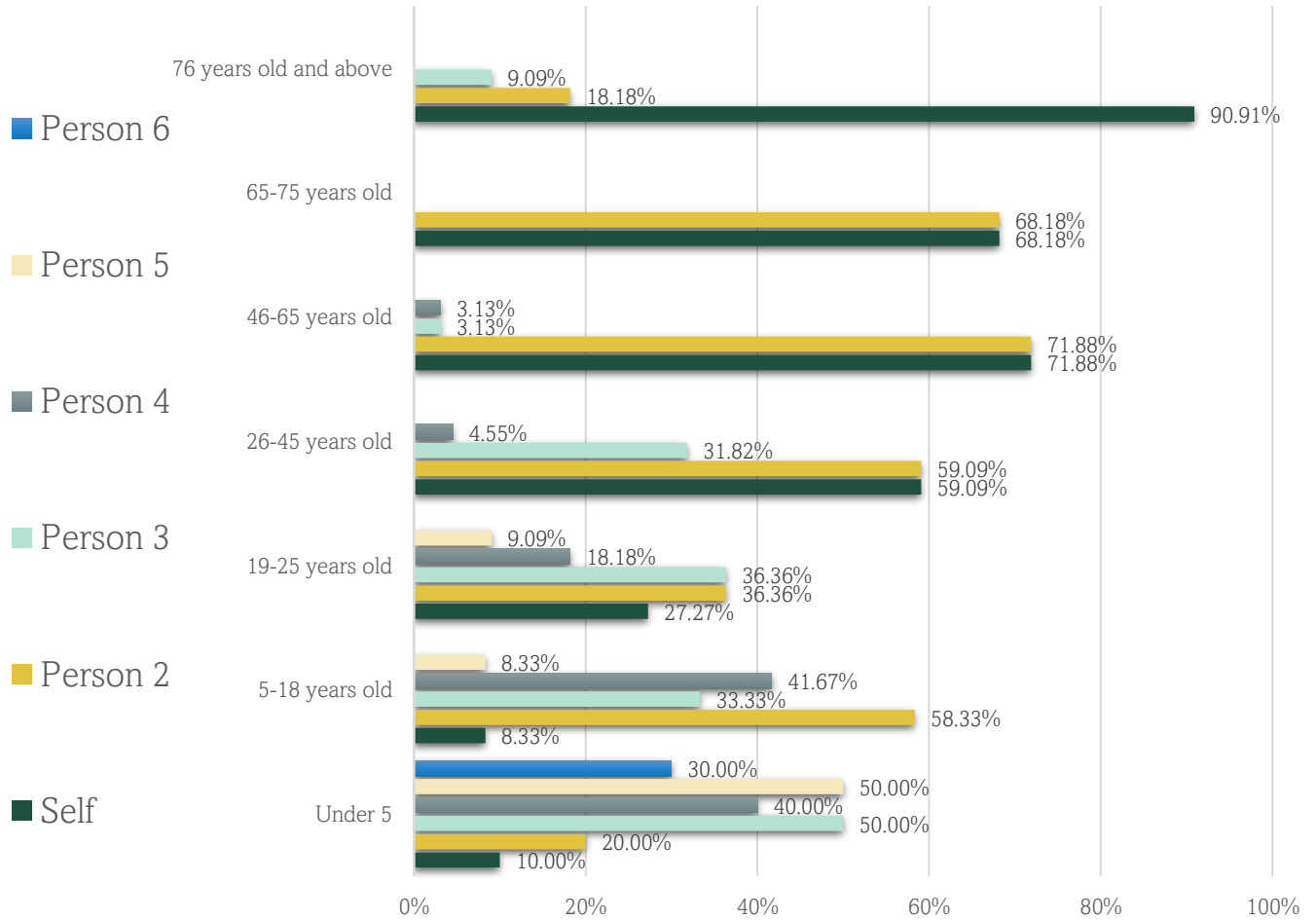
# DOCUMENTS

Survey &  
Documentation

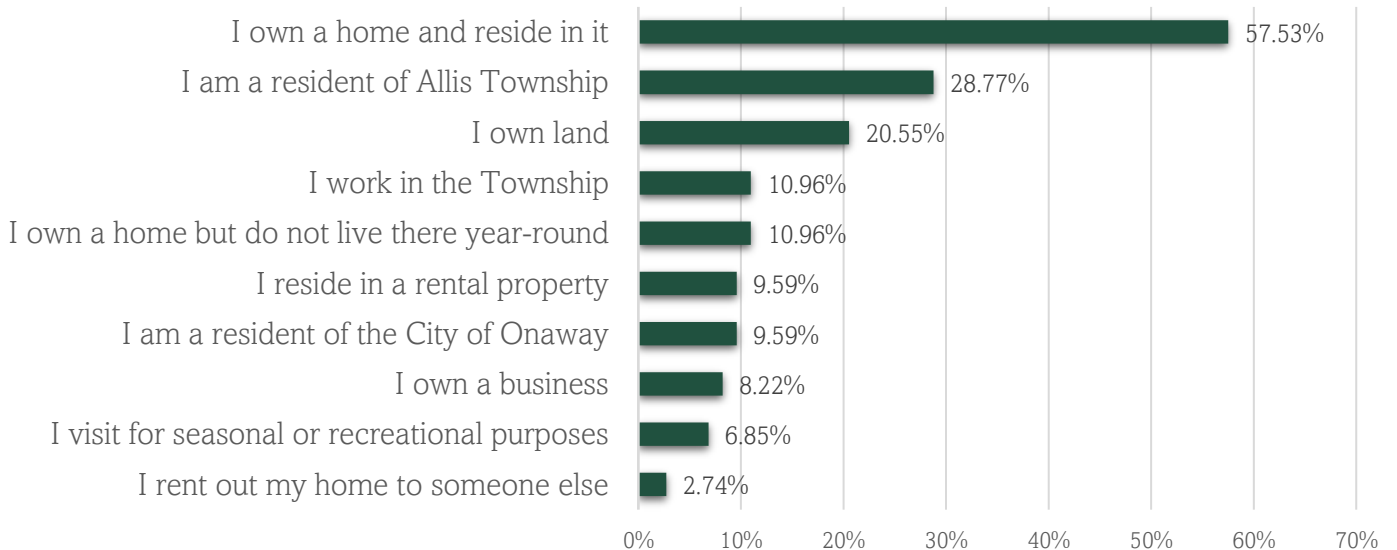
Appendix **A**

# Full Survey Results

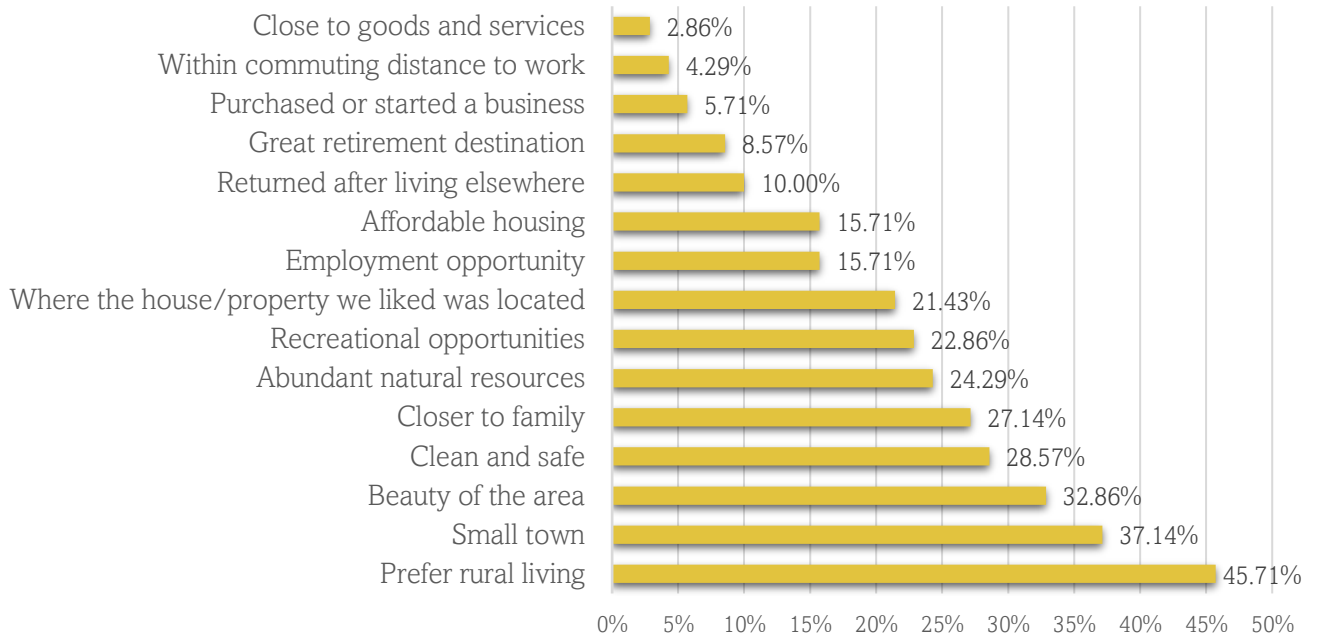
1. Enter the age of the members of your household, including yourself:



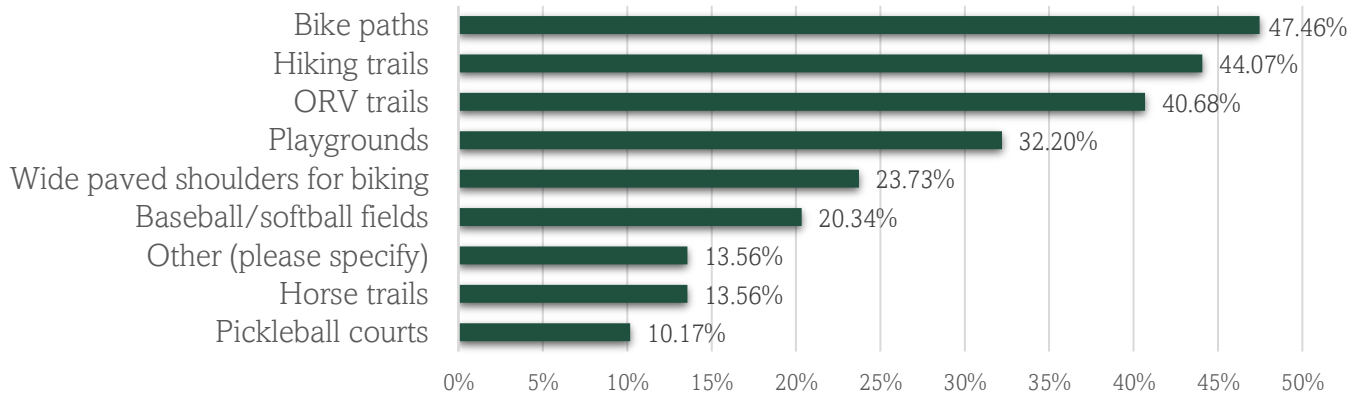
2. What is your property interest in Allis Township?



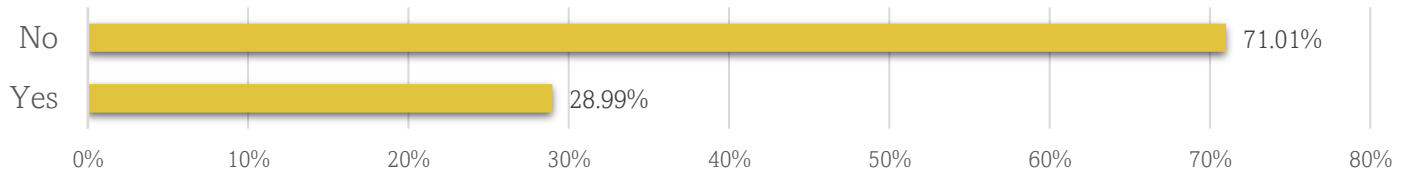
3. Why are you in Allis Township?



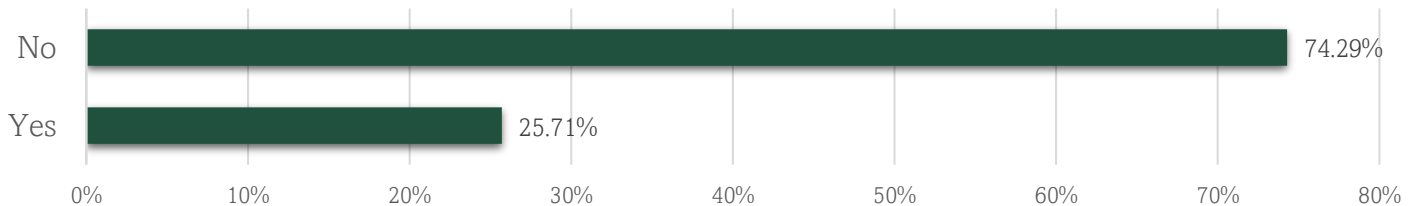
4. What type of recreational facilities do you and your family enjoy or would like to have available?



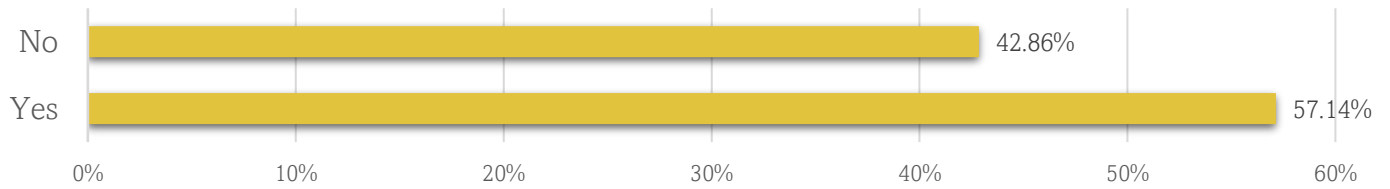
5. Do you support the development of Utility-Scale Solar Energy Facilities?



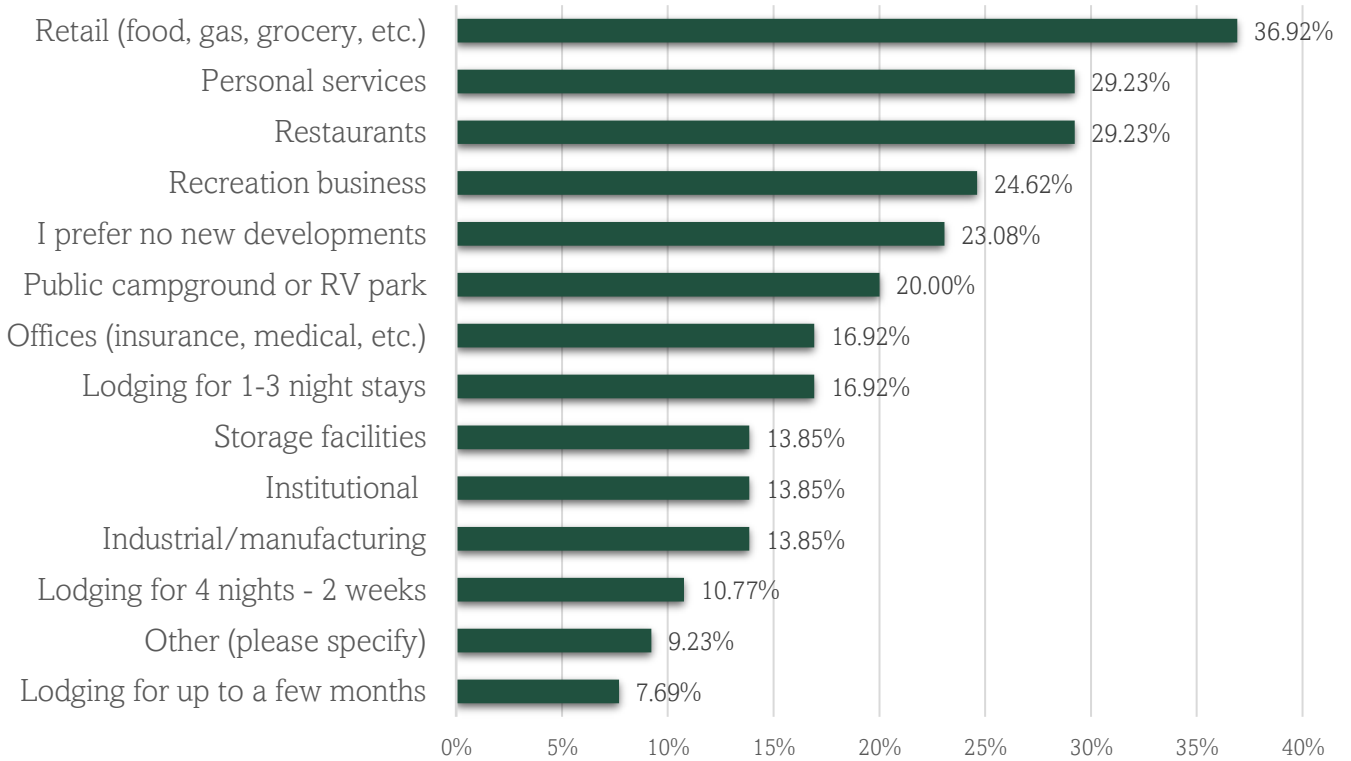
6. Do you support the development of Utility-Scale Wind Energy Facilities?



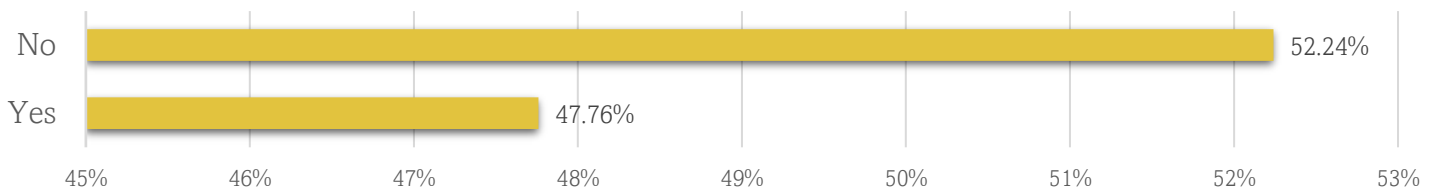
7. As a resident would you approve of a small assessment for the improvement of Township roads?



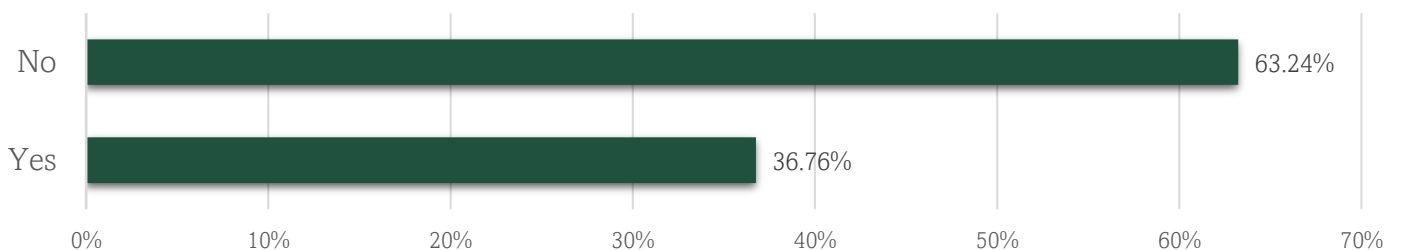
8. What types of new businesses/services would you like to see in the Township? Check all that apply.



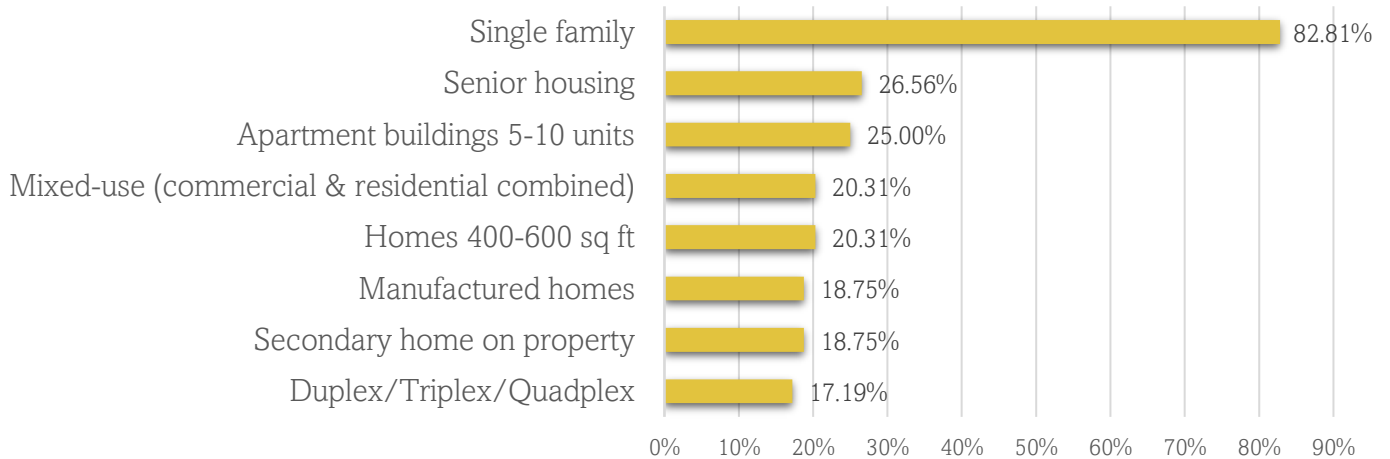
9. If you were going to open a business here today, would you do so here?



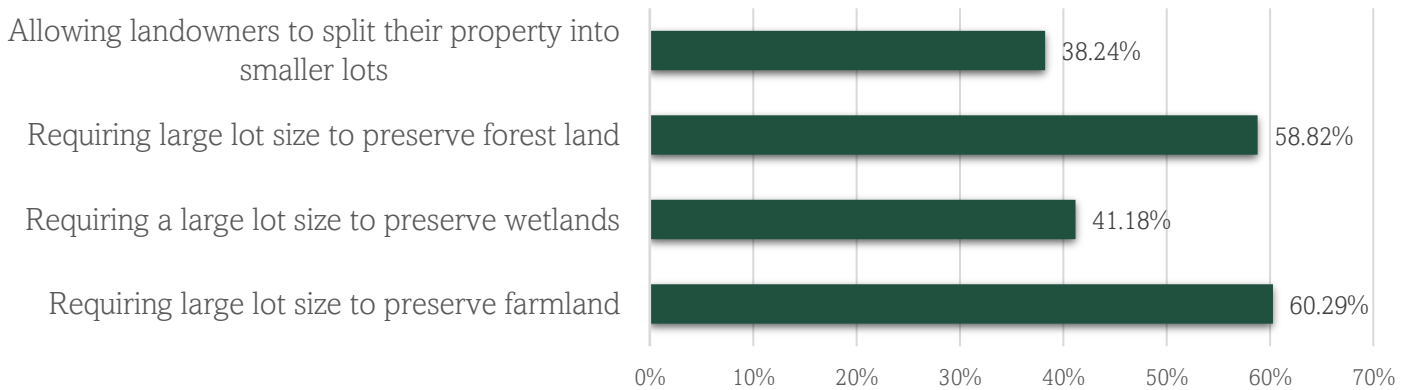
10. Should short-term rentals be regulated by the Township?



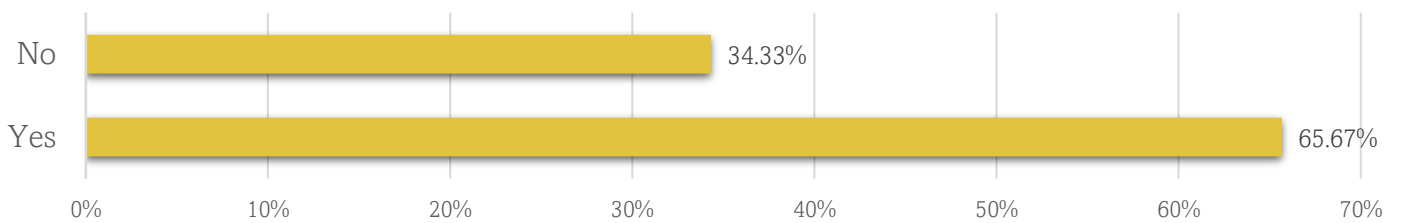
11. Check the following that you feel should be pursued when developing housing in the Township:



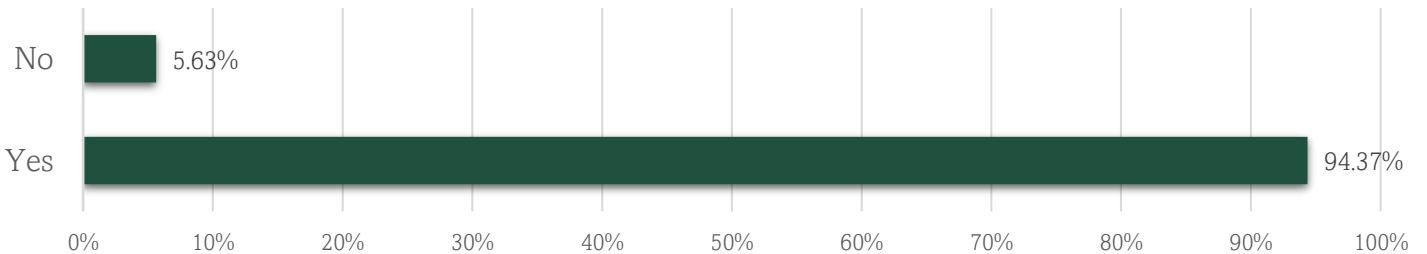
12. Mark the following that are important to you when developing the area.



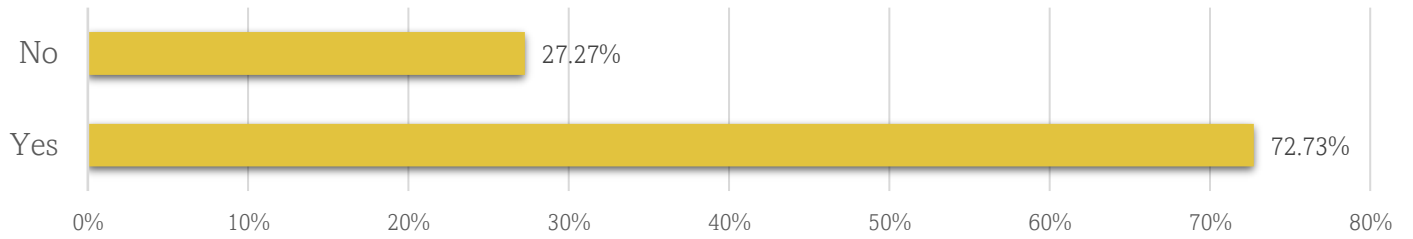
13. Do you support garage apartments or accessory dwellings on a property?



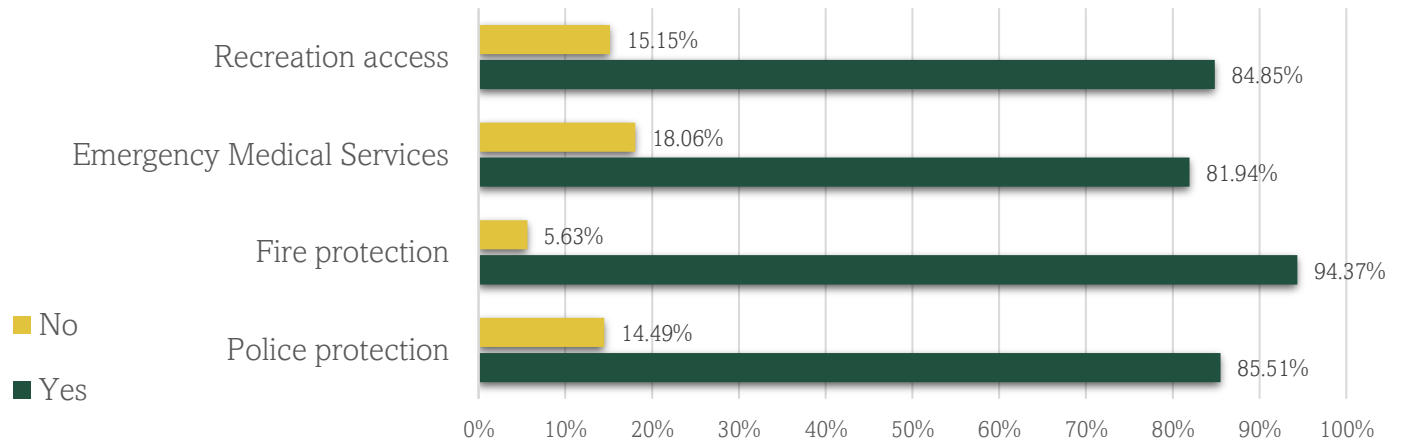
14. In general, are you satisfied here as a place to live, own property, own a business, or visit?



15. Are you satisfied with the current recycling program?



16. Are you satisfied with the following?



# Documentation



## Northeast Michigan Council of Governments

80 Livingston Blvd Suite U-108 | PO Box 457 | Gaylord, MI 49734 | Voice: 989.705.3730 | Fax: 989.705.3729 | nemcog.org

### Notice of Intent to Update Master Plan: Allis Township

November 4, 2024

Allis Township has begun working with the Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG) to update their Master Plan. The Township is coordinating with NEMCOG to update changes throughout the plan, including socio-economic data, housing assessment, goals and objectives and future land use.

As required by Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, notification is being sent to all geographically adjacent governmental entities, utilities, and transportation agencies to request cooperation and comments.

**ADJACENT GOVERNMENTAL UNITS:** Prior to and after adoption of the Master Plan, draft and final copies of the plan will be sent to all adjacent governmental units, as defined in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, for review and comment. The plan will be transmitted via email unless the governmental unit requests a printed copy (please fill out and return the enclosed sheet to notify us of the preferred email address or to request a printed copy).

**UTILITIES, RAILROADS & PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AGENCIES:** Utilities, railroads, and public transportation agencies must request copies and may be charged for copies, and postage (please fill out and return the enclosed sheet to request a copy of the Master Plan update). Note: there will be no charge to utilities and public transportation agencies that choose to receive the plan via email.

Thank you for your cooperation and we look forward to your participation in this important project!

Sincerely,

Heather Runyan, Regional Planner  
Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG)

Regional  
Cooperation  
Since  
1968

Alcona \* Alpena \* Cheboygan \* Crawford \* Emmet \* Montmorency \* Oscoda \* Otsego \* Presque Isle

An  
Equal Opportunity  
Employer

## **AFFIDAVIT OF MAILING**

### **Notice of Amend the Master Plan**

*I, Theresa Huff, certify that the communities and agencies on the attached list were notified of Allis Township intent to amend the Master Plan. The notification was sent on November 4, 2024, by first class mail and in accordance with Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended.*

1. *Michigan Department of Transportation – North Region planner Heidi Phaneuf  
1088 M-32 East  
Gaylord, MI 49735*
2. *Case Township Planning Commission  
5561 Main St.  
Millersburg, MI 49759*
3. *Montmorency County  
PO Box 789  
Atlanta, MI 49709*
4. *Cheboygan County  
870 S. Main St.  
Cheboygan, MI 49721*
5. *City of Onaway  
PO Box 761  
Onaway, MI 49765*
6. *Montmorency Township  
PO Box 457  
Hillman, MI 49746*
7. *Forest Township  
PO Box 633  
Onaway, MI 49765*
8. *Waverly Township  
11133 Twin School Road  
Onaway, MI 49765*
9. *North Allis Township  
PO Box 306  
Onaway, MI 49765*
10. *Presque Isle County Planning Commission  
PO Box 110  
Rogers City, MI 49779*
11. *Presque Isle County Road Commission  
657 S Bradley Hwy  
Rogers City, MI 49779*
12. *Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-Op  
PO Box 308  
Onaway, MI 49765*



