

HOMESTEAD TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN



The Platte River, Homestead Township

Adopted XXX __, 2023

FOR PC REVIEW

Acknowledgments

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Executive Summary

Homestead and Inland Townships formed a Joint Planning Commission as authorized by the Joint Municipal Planning Act, Act 226 of 2003, as amended, in February 2007. The Commission, operating within the guidelines of the Township Planning Act, Act 168 of 1959 as amended, has prepared a future land use plan to direct future growth within the planning area. This Summary should not be considered as a substitute for the provisions found in the Master Plan contained on the following pages.

While population growth at both the county and township level was 30-40 percent between 1990 and 2000, that rapid growth has slowed to around 10 percent from 2000 to 2005. The bulk of the population is within ages 25 to 54, with almost all residents that seek employment having to leave the township area.

Both Homestead and Inland Townships operate township offices, and provide public services such as cemeteries and parks. Benzie County also provides some emergency and public services within the townships. The Benzie County Road Commission maintains county primary and local roads. US 31 crosses the entire planning area in a east-west direction. The Village of Honor is also located on the western edge of the planning area.

The natural features of the planning area are its most unique and valuable asset. Almost the entire planning area drains into the Platte River. A small portion drains into the Betsie River at Grass Lake. Surface water quality is of utmost importance to the residents and visitors to the area. The soils are predominantly sands and hardwood forests are the predominant land cover. Approximately 50-60 percent of Inland Township and an additional 19 percent of Homestead Township are in State ownership. This public land is administered by the MDNR as the Pere Marquette State Forest.

In looking ahead for the next twenty years, the Planning Commission has generously projected the growth rate at 40 percent. This means that the future projected population of the planning area at 2030 will be about 5,131 persons. The Planning Commission also expects business growth along US 31 as business expansion continues.

The Planning Commission has developed goals in natural resources, open space, recreation, public and community services, transportation, housing, business, employment and agriculture.

The Planning Commission has reviewed the Benzie County 2020 Comprehensive Plan, and incorporated this plan into the townships plan as found practical and appropriate. The basic concept of the Homestead Inland Master Plan is to direct future growth into areas already developing, to provide for future commercial growth along US 31 in clusters or nodes based upon existing developments. Further, the Plan intends to maintain the high quality surface water, rural and forest quality by directing future residential growth into areas already developing and providing a wide variety of housing densities. The Planning Commission intends to recommend implementation of this Plan by utilizing the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act.

Chapter One

Introduction & Purpose

Homestead Township is centrally located in Benzie County in northwestern Michigan. The Township is located approximately 20 miles southwest of Traverse City. The Township is bisected by US-31 running east/west. The Township is slightly smaller than a standard township, only measuring approximately 30 square miles, instead of the standard six miles wide by six miles tall. It only measures five sections wide instead of the usual six sections.

Homestead Township updated its own Master Plan in November 2001. This plan was in effect until 2008 when the Homestead Inland Townships Master Plans was adopted in April 2008. The Homestead Inland Township Joint Planning Commission was established from members from both communities in 2007, after an amendment to the Township Planning Act, Act 168 of 1959 allowed for joint planning commissions.

Until 2005, Homestead Township maintained its zoning ordinance, but turned over administration of zoning to Benzie County control in 2005. Benzie County eliminated the County Planning Department in FY 2009-2010 and repealed the County's Zoning Ordinance.

Prior to this county action, Homestead and Inland Township's formed a Joint Planning Commission in 2007, which functioned until 2020. As a part of the Joint Planning Commission efforts, both Township's adopted the Homestead-Inland Master Plan in 2008.

In 2006, the Board of Trustees for Inland Township inquired if Homestead Township would be interested in taking advantage of the new opportunities afforded under amendments to the Township Planning Act. Two committees were formed to study this issue and identified the following reasons that this arrangement would be beneficial to both communities:

- A joint planning commission between Homestead and Inland townships makes sense in that both townships are rural in nature, very similar regarding demographics and geography as well as the principals of local input, local participation and local control.
- With our rising population, proximity to Grand Traverse County and Traverse City, the committee felt the two townships planning and zoning needs presented a unique challenge that would be better served by developing a local master plan and zoning ordinance, rather than relying on a more general county wide plan.
- Both townships have budgeted funds to prepare a plan and zoning ordinance and retain a part time zoning administrator. This budget also includes funds for a part time zoning administrator (20 hours/week).
- A local planning commission, funded locally, would be more accountable to our local constituents.
- A well implemented zoning ordinance and application process will significantly reduce the potential of lawsuits. This is not a guarantee, but simply the fact that the committee felt the fear of a lawsuit was not a good reason to give up the right to plan and zone at the local level.

The Joint Planning Commission with Inland Township was dissolved in 2020, and Homestead Township reestablished its own Planning Commission in June 2020. One of the Planning Commission's first actions was to begin the process to develop a stand-alone master plan for the Township again, and this document is the results of the 18-month effort.

Purpose

In 2008, the State of Michigan adopted Public Act 33, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act that unified the State's laws governing planning for counties, cities, villages, and townships. For Townships, this replaced Public Act 168 of 1959. This enabling act delegates to local units of government the authority to engage in master planning and adoption of master plans if they wish. The Act specifies how and what is required to be included within a master plan.

The main reasons to engage in master planning include:

- a) Create a 10-20 future vision for the Township
- b) Provide a policy framework to guide decisions by the Planning Commission relative land use and zoning decisions
- c) Provide guidance to the Board of Trustees relative land use and capital planning decisions
- d) Enabling the Township to be able to anticipate service demands and to plan accordingly
- e) Ensure that all development is conducted in an orderly and predictable fashion
- f) Identify and protect locally important assets (environmental, historical, cultural, quality of life, etc.) from future inappropriate development
- g) Ensure fairness and minimize opportunities for favoritism in relation to land use decisions
- h) Provide for the legal basis through which the Township may engage in zoning

The introduction above provides a general history of land use regulations within the Township. This information provides a timeline to how the Township has gotten to having its own Planning Commission once again.

From the 1970s through to 2000, Homestead Township, its neighbors to the east and west (Inland Township and Benzonia Township) and the County all saw steady growth. Since 2000, only Inland Township has seen continued growth with the Village of Honor experiencing growth between 2010 and 2020. These changes mirror what was occurring throughout much of Michigan with growth occurring up to 2000. With population growth statistically stagnate in Michigan since, the Traverse City region has actually seen steady growth continue over the last twenty years. With Inland Township being located the closest to Traverse City, its growth is likely associated to the growth occurring in Grand Traverse County. There are many factors that will impact on how growth will change the Township in the future. The Township will want to understand these factors, so steps may be taken to direct and manage future growth in such a manner that the community values and unique environmental quality of this area may be maintained for future generations.

Benzie County has updated its 2000 Master Plan in 2017, which emphasizes the excellent environmental quality of the County and partnerships, and this Master Plan supports the County's goals. By developing a localized Master Plan, the Township is meeting the County's interest for localized efforts and growth management and regional economic development.

It is the Plan's intent to create a simple, concise, well thought out document, which reflects the best qualities and concepts of the county plan, as well as other plans, and most importantly, the vision of local residents for the future of Homestead Township.

Map 1 Vicinity Map

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Chapter Two

Historical Background

Around 1500, the Potawatomi peoples lived in an area that covered much of the Lower Peninsula excluding the southeastern corner of the State. First contact with Westerners on the East Coast and Canada had ripple effects on tribes all the way west into Michigan and the Midwest. Disease, trade, and dislocation on the Eastern seaboard had far reaching impacts into the territory that would eventually become Michigan. In 1836, the Treaty of Washington D.C., the Odawa (Ottawa) and Ojibwe (Chippewa) tribes ceded the northwestern part of the Lower Peninsula and the eastern half of the Upper Peninsula, including Homestead Township. This action opened up this part of Michigan to European settlement and natural resources extraction.

Prior to Michigan becoming a State, a few traders and settlers had homesteaded throughout Northwest Michigan. According to a history of Benzie County, a French family homesteaded near Benzonia prior to the beginning of settlement by non-Indians, which began circa 1855 and later.

Michigan, originally part of "The Northwest Territory" became a state in 1837. On February 27, 1837, the Michigan legislature separated the southern part of Leelanaw County south of the south line of Township 28 North into Benzie County, but the administration of the county was granted to Grand Traverse County. Benzie County came under local control when the act entitled "An Act to Organize the County of Benzie" was passed by the State Legislature on March 30th, 1837.

Originally, all of the land within Benzie County fell within Crystal Lake Township. While under the supervision of the Board of Supervisors of Grand Traverse County, the eastern section of Benzonia Township was separated and became Homestead Township on October 12th, 1837. The Township of North Climax was later formed on April 10th, 1838 with its name changing to Inland Township in 1839.

Around this time, Northern Michigan was opened for homesteading. Many early pioneers came from "out east" to stake their claim. To successfully stake a claim, the government required \$1.25 per acre as well as five years of homesteading on the land.

The first homesteaders toiled significantly to make a home here. The land consisted of wilderness disturbed only by local Native Americans who often maintained seasonal encampments. The first settlers had to build housing and clear the land. They lived in dwellings that ranged from rudely constructed hovels which were covered with bark stripped from trees to cabins made from inch-thick, two-foot-wide pine boards sawn at local mills. Roofing was comprised of cedar shakes while the water supply consisted of cisterns with rainwater as well as drawing water from adjacent streams, rivers, and lakes.

Homesteaders survived by planting gardens that generally consisted of potatoes and root crops, fishing the local streams and rivers, and hunting game. It is said that the rivers were full of rainbow, brook, and grayling trout that everyone from small children to visiting grandfathers would fish.

The timber industry was in full swing with virgin stands of white pine and dense hardwood. The Village of Honor sprang up as a logging town. With the logging boom, the village filled rapidly

with people, houses and stores with no real roads to get to or from it.

For the most part, travel was primarily along the Old Benzonia Trail that followed along quite closely on the same route as the ancient Indian trail that went from Mackinaw southward along Lake Michigan to Manistee and Grand Rapids, keeping inland far enough to maintain a fairly direct line. Passing through Benzie County, it naturally skirted the Deadstream Swamp and crossed the Platte River where the banks were low and firm enough.

It has been reported that some of these trails were developed by the railroads and lumber companies and soon became main thoroughfares. The now developed roadways allowed for newer types of commerce including “resorters” or people who would come up from the cities for summers on the lake.

As the stands of pine and hardwood began to dwindle, the mills switched over their machinery for sawing cedar and making shingles. Timbering and agriculture had been the economic base of the townships for its first fifty years. After the collapse of the timber industry, many of the offspring of the early settlers were forced to leave the area to find employment.

Today, tourism, small business, and fruit farming provide the local income in this area which lies in the heart of Michigan’s cherry growing region. Many Homestead residents now commute to industrially and commercially developed neighboring communities for employment.

The Platte River runs primarily east west through the Township with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Fish Hatchery located on the border with Inwood Township. The hatchery produces Atlantic, Coho, and Chinook salmon along with Walleye fry. The Platte River furnishes some of the Midwest’s greatest trout fishing as well. Canoeing and kayaking are also popular pastimes on the beautiful Platte River.

Fall and winter pastimes include ice fishing, snowmobiling, snowshoeing, and cross- country skiing. Hikers and skiers enjoy many miles of marked and unmarked trails throughout the area. The Township becomes ablaze with color in the fall, attracting many color enthusiasts. Waterfowl and deer hunting seasons also draw in many sports hunters.

Prior to railroads serving the area, a stagecoach route traveled daily from Traverse City to Frankfort.

Homestead Township



Honor was founded in November 1884, by E.T. Henry, at that time foreman for the Guelph Patent Cask Company and George Griggs of Wolverine in Cheboygan County. The land upon which it stands was bought from Robert Buchans. About the first of April 1885, E.T. Hendry arrived on the grounds with a crew of men and a small portable sawmill and began to clear a place for a set of camps.

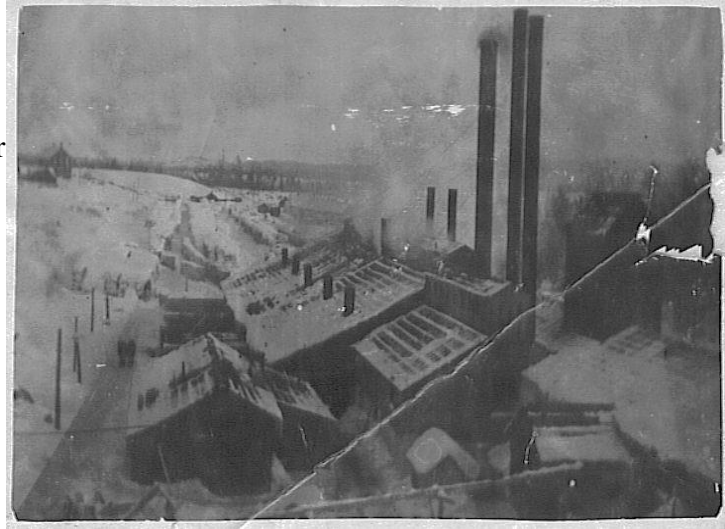
In 1895, the Pere Marquette railroad from the main line at Bendon and the Manistee & Northeastern (M. & N.E.) from Lake Ann brought horses, workmen, tools, and building material to an area near the Deadstream Swamp where largestands of virgin white pine werediscovered. Honor had a station on the railroad line.



By the fall of 1896, a logging mill was ready with the loggers in the woods and a smalltown was emerging. L.F. Lane, who was the first to start a general store, moved the stock from Lake Ann. It was followed by the Case Mercantile Company, J. Crane and others. But the real foundation of the town was laid by Guelph Patent Cask Company of Wolverine which spent a considerable amount of money in the erecting one of its plants, clearing land, and manufacturing its specialties. The name "Honor" was given the town in compliment to the baby daughter of J.A. Gifford, general manager of the Guelph Patent Cask Company.

In the fall of 1896, a \$2,500 schoolhouse was completed with church services commenced about the same time. The village was made the county seat by popular vote in April, 1908 and served as such until 1916 when it was moved to Beulah. It had a population of about 600 in 1908.

The Seymour and Peck Company, successor to the Guelph Patent Cask Company, manufactured lumber and veneer and furnished employment for about ninety men year-round. Their veneer was shipped to Chicago where the firm manufactured boxes, crates, and similar products.



The Desmond Chemical Company Plant was located at Carter Siding. It converted cordwood into charcoal, alcohol, acetate and other wood derivatives. This manufacturing company also employed a large number of local residents. It is now more commonly referred to as Carter Siding.

In 1916, the veneer mill was slowing down, and by the following year, it had closed. In the meantime, the United States had plunged into World War I. The country's entry into the war delayed the collapse of Honor's logging era for several years because the government needed long-timbered red elm, of which there were still some good stands in the Honor area. These would be sawn into forty-foot planking and kiln-dried for the building of "Liberty Ships" to transport war supplies to France. The elm had been left out in the logging because it was of little value in any normal use. The Desmond Chemical Company Plant also experienced an increase in demand of their wares as a result of the war.

When the war was over, the Pere Marquette pulled up its tracks and left. The M. & N.E. soon followed in 1922.

With the Honor lumber boom gone bust, settlers had to move into the clear-cut land and start clearing out the stumps for farms. Since they needed homes, many of the vacated logging buildings were carefully deconstructed and the lumber transported to build new homes.

With the growth of State highways and motoring after World War II and then the construction of the Interstate Highway system in the 1950s through 1970s, working- and middle-class Michiganders began to frequent Northern Michigan for vacations.

Over the last 50 years, tourism has expanded in Benzie and nearby Leelanau and Grand Traverse counties, especially with the designation of Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore in 1970. There has been an increase of resort activities around the Platte Lakes and Honor became a center for providing basic supplies. This summer season brings an influx of seasonal residents and tourists to the area with tourism services playing a major role in the local economy.

In 1972, the Platte River State Fish Hatchery became the state's main salmon hatchery. This facility raises Coho and Chinook salmon and is the main egg taking station for Coho salmon in the Upper Great Lakes. In the 1970's, fishing became an important boon to the Honor economy.



Typical Early 1900's Farmhouse, Homestead Township Owned by Earl & Bonita Baker

Chapter Three

Social and Economic Background

In order to prepare a vision for the future, it is important to have an understanding of the population and economic conditions of both what has happened in the recent past, and what is likely to happen in the near future.

Population Characteristics:

According to the US Census Bureau, the 1970 population of Homestead and the Village of Honor, was 1,136. By 2000, this population increased to 2,377, and in 2020, they had a combined population of 2,329. Since 2000, Honor has increased in population by 38 persons, a growth of 12.7% while Homestead Township has seen a modest drop in population since 2000, declining by 86 persons, a loss of 4.1% over the same period.

Generally, Benzie County saw significant growth in 1970s and 1980s with growth tapering off in Homestead Township by 2000. Since 2010, growth in the County has nearly stopped; however neighboring Inland Township has continued to see significant growth since 1970, growing by 544% during the last 50 years.

Table 1 reports population for selected communities in Benzie County since 1970.

Table 1 - Population Change 1970 - 2020

POPULATION TRENDS						
	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Homestead Township	854	1,290	1,477	2,078	2,086	1,992
Village of Honor	282	281	292	299	266	337
Inland Township	370	843	1,096	1,587	1,934	2,386
Benzonia Township	2,071	2,461	2,405	2,839	2,818	2,734
Benzie County	8,593	11,205	12,200	15,998	17,705	17,970
Michigan	8,875,083	9,262,070	9,295,297	9,938,444	9,952,687	10,077,331
Source: 1970 - 2000 U.S. Census; 2020 U.S. Census, 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates						
*Homestead Township values do not include the Village of Honor						

Modest growth has continued within the Village while the Township has seen population grow to a peak in 2010 and declining by 4.5% in 2020.

Table 2 illustrates a modest increase in diversity within the Township and the Village since 2010. The population of Blacks, Asians, Some Other Race all increased during the period while the number of American Indians declined by six persons. Blacks make up 0.4% of the population of the two communities.

Table 2 – Race Distribution

RACE DISTRIBUTION		
Homestead Township		
	2010	2020
White	2,230	2,143
Black or African American	6	11
Asian	0	9
American Indian and Alaska Native	31	25
Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander	0	0
Some Other Race	0	20
2020 U.S. Census; 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates		

During the same ten-year period, the number of Hispanic or Latino persons increased from 9 to 51.

Table 3 illustrates the detailed breakdown of the age of the population of the planning area according to the 2015-2019 U.S. Census' American Community Survey. By looking at the Age distribution, Homestead has the population that skews the eldest out of the Benzie County and the State of Michigan except for individuals over 65 years of age or older where the County has an over two percent higher rate.

Table 3 – Age Composition of the 2020 Population

AGE DISTRIBUTION						
	Homestead Township		Benzie County		Michigan	
0 - 4 Years Old	3.4%	70	4.7%	836	5.7%	571,094
5 - 19 Years Old	15.8%	329	15.4%	2,714	18.8%	1,875,898
20 - 44 Years Old	25.7%	536	23.8%	4,195	31.5%	3,137,938
45 - 64 Years Old	31.5%	656	30.2%	5,325	27.2%	2,713,992
65 Years and Older	23.7%	493	25.8%	4,545	16.7%	1,666,343
Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates						

When comparing to the State, both the Township and the County have median ages ten years older than the State (see **Table 4**).

Table 4 – Median Age

MEDIAN AGE			
	Homestead Township	Benzie County	Michigan
2010	40.1	44.7	38.1
2019	49.9	50.2	39.7
Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates			

Housing:

In addition to population, another good indicator of the community's land use needs is a clear understanding of the housing market.

Size of the housing market is the typical starting point for gaining an understanding of the housing market. A second important metric is understanding the tenancy within the community. What percentage of owners and renters are there within the jurisdiction?

Table 5 – Total Housing Stock

TOTAL HOUSING STOCK					
	1-Unit	2-4 Units	5 or More Units	Mobile Home or Trailer Units	Total
Homestead Township	908	7	0	100	1,015
Village of Honor	149	1	0	7	157
Inland Township	944	0	0	121	1,065
Benzonia Township	2,046	71	38	9	2,164
Benzie County	11,390	232	286	616	12,524
Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates					
*Homestead Township values do not include the Village of Honor					

An overwhelming majority of the housing stock within the Township are single family structures with only seven units in multi-unit configuration. There are an additional 100 units defined as mobile homes or trailer units, but there is only one small mobile home park within the Township. The remainder of these units are located on traditional parcels. Mobile homes may either be seasonal units or chosen for their lower cost when compared to the average cost of stick-built homes. Eleven percent of Homestead Township's entire housing stock is comprised of mobile homes or trailer units. Neighboring Inland Township has 12.4% of its housing stock consists of mobile homes and trailers while the County has approximately half these numbers at 5.4% of the total housing stock.

Another measure of a community's housing market is the mixture of owner-occupied to renter-occupied units. A stable housing market should have a reasonable mixture of tenancy options for individuals at differing times of their lives.

Often younger and older persons have differing housing needs in comparison to individuals and families raising children. The young often do not have the financial capacity to purchase and maintain a home, the desire for one, or they may be a more transient period in their lives where they do not want to be restrained by the bounds of home ownership. Working families and individuals often have difficulty owning homes because they do not have the financial wherewithal to save the necessary down payment, build up good credit, and may not be able to afford ongoing property maintenance. As individuals age, home ownership may also become a burden as elderly owners may no longer able to maintain the property, or they require money from their home to pay for retirement. The area's current tenancy mix is found in **Table 6**.

Table 6- Household Tenure

HOUSEHOLD TENURE		
	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied
Homestead Township	92.9%	7.1%
Village of Honor	93.5%	6.5%
Inland Township	86.7%	13.3%
Benzonia Township	83.6%	16.4%
Benzie County	89.7%	10.3%
Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates		

Another measure of the housing market is the housing vacancy rate, which can include both the rental and for sale vacancy rates. These numbers do not directly correlate to the number of housing units because units may not be available for sale/rent due to renovation, lack of certificate of occupancy, short-term rental, being held from market, etc. **Table 7** illustrates the occupancy status for the Township, neighboring Townships, and the County.

Table 7 – Occupancy Status

OCCUPANCY STATUS				
	Occupied	Vacant	Seasonally Vacant	Percent Seasonally Vacant
Homestead Township	786	386	360	93.3%
Village of Honor	93	64	64	100.0%
Inland Township	880	185	124	67.0%
Benzonia Township	1,049	1,115	953	85.5%
Benzie County	6,792	5,732	5,102	89.0%
Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates				

In addition to the occupancy status, **Table 7** also illustrates the number of seasonally vacant homes that are within the study area. In Northern Michigan, this seasonally number is significantly higher than most other communities. People use these second homes as summer vacation homes away from their urban/suburban year-round homes, often located in Southern Michigan. These homes may also be used for hunting cabins or winter get-away homes. In Homestead Township, seasonal homes make up 45.8% of the Township's entire housing stock. This percentage is very high, and it is important for the community to recognize this seasonal rate as it will allow the municipality to prepare for seasonal demands for services. The year-round housing vacancy rate is 3.3%.

Table 6 & 7 provide information about the for sale and rental housing markets. A certain supply of available housing is necessary to allow for the housing market to function properly. Limited housing availability leads to increased housing costs as supply is constrained and vacancy rates below three to five percent are seen as a constriction to normal turn-over and a well-functioning housing market. Limited for sale units will lead to increased housing prices while reduced apartment supply will cause increased rental rates.

The housing market can further be evaluated by the cost of owner-occupied housing units as a way

to assess the health of the market. Housing costs are a tool to measure housing demand within the community. High costs are either a function of limited supply or high demand. **Table 8** shows the owner-occupied median home value for homes in 2019.

Table 8 – Medium Home Value

MEDIAN HOME VALUE	
Homestead Township	\$151,500
Village of Honor	\$110,600
Inland Township	\$177,900
Benzonia Township	\$211,300
Benzie County	\$185,500
Michigan	\$154,900
*Data refers to value for owner-occupied units	
Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates	

The home prices in Homestead Township are just about three and a half thousand dollars below the State average, but the average income in the Township lags the State average. In comparison to the surrounding communities, only the Village has lower housing costs.

One final important statistic to measure is the age of housing stock. If the home hasn't received significant renovations, houses over 50 years of age will begin to require significant repair costs. Additionally, homes built prior to 1978 are assumed to contain some lead paint, and any construction work would require consideration on how to address the potential for lead exposure. Newer homes are often larger and provide more of what the current housing market demands in a home. **Table 9** breaks down the housing market into construction periods.

Table 9 – Year Structure Built

YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT						
	1939 or earlier	1940 to 1959	1960 to 1979	1980 to 1999	2000 to 2009	2010 or later
Homestead Township	10.2%	11.8%	21.6%	29.3%	22.4%	4.7%
Village of Honor	35.5%	23.7%	21.5%	8.6%	10.8%	0.0%
Inland Township	2.7%	5.3%	11.3%	39.5%	34.9%	6.3%
Benzonia Township	18.7%	15.9%	14.9%	32.8%	15.0%	2.8%
Benzie County	11.9%	8.8%	18.1%	34.3%	22.4%	4.5%
Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates						

Over fifty-five percent of the Township's housing stock dates from 1980 or more recent. This indicates that the many of the house systems are still in good shape, desired amenities are likely present, and the houses meet most modern codes. These newer houses also will not have lead paint present so testing of children and remediation planning during construction activities isn't required.

Reviewing details about the actual residents through a variety of housing statistics is also an important component of the social and economic background analysis. This information provides details about the residents including household size and composition, educational attainment, and

income

Table 10 shows some general information regarding household characteristics including composition of the households. The basic standard is married-couple households where the householder is over 35 years of age. Other information that is traditionally included with this information includes nonfamily households (where the householder lives alone or shares the home with someone unrelated), households with children under 18, and female headed households.

Table 10 – Household Characteristics

HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS (%)				
	Married-Couple Family (householder 35 years and older)	Nonfamily Households	Households with related children under 18 years	Female Householder, no spouse present
Homestead Township	53.6%	29.4%	21.1%	8.8%
Village of Honor	29.2%	50.5%	19.4%	12.9%
Inland Township	52.2%	34.2%	24.9%	4.5%
Benzonia Township	47.6%	40.0%	17.0%	5.8%
Benzie County	52.2%	33.4%	20.1%	6.7%
Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates				
*Totals will not equal 100.0%				

With the Township located in an area with seasonal visitors, it is important to not only look at the number of vacant houses in the community but to understand the number of homes that are seasonally vacant. Understanding the number of houses that are occupied by part-time residents or rented to vacationers is an important metric. **Table 10** illustrates the number of occupied and vacant homes in the Township and adjoining communities.

Another indicator of the housing market is household size. A higher percentage of households with three or more individuals typically illustrates families while a community with higher rate of 1-Person and 2-Person households typically illustrates communities with higher number of older non-child rearing households.

Table 11 – Household Size 2010 & 2019

	HOUSEHOLD SIZE - 2010				HOUSEHOLD SIZE - 2019			
	1- Person	2- Person	3- Person	4-or- more- person	1- Person	2- Person	3- Person	4-or- more- person
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Homestead Township	22.8%	37.7%	14.8%	24.7%	24.7%	49.9%	11.8%	13.6%
Village of Honor	26.8%	43.1%	16.3%	13.8%	47.3%	32.3%	4.3%	16.1%
Inland Township	25.9%	39.7%	15.6%	18.8%	26.8%	36.0%	14.2%	23.0%
Benzonia Township	32.8%	46.7%	5.3%	15.3%	32.6%	46.0%	8.5%	12.9%
Benzie County	27.9%	42.7%	10.6%	18.9%	27.7%	45.2%	11.5%	15.6%

Source: 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

*Household size for occupied housing units

Homestead Township and the Village mirror the continued decline in American family sizes, which is attributed to smaller family sizes, individuals choosing to live alone, and an aging population. Between 2010 and 2019, Inland and Benzonia Township and Benzie County faced lower household size decline.

Income, Education and Employment

The median household income in 2019 for Homestead Township is \$49,712. The Township had the lower Median Family and Median Household Incomes when measured against the comparison communities. The Village has the highest Median Family Income in the planning area with \$61,000 while Benzonia Township has the highest Median Family Income.

Median family income is typically higher than median household income because of the composition of households. It is good to include both metrics as family households tend to have more people with more of those members in their prime wage earning years; as contrasted with household members who have lesser incomes because they tend to have higher numbers of very young or elderly. The benefit to using household income measures is that they include persons living in nonfamily households, who tend to be disproportionately young or old. Of note, both income measures for Homestead Township lag the other study communities.

Table 12 – Income Levels and Poverty Rates

INCOME and POVERTY				
	Median Family Income	Median Household Income	Total Population Below Poverty Level	65 Years & Over Below Poverty Level
Homestead Township	\$56,691	\$49,712	10.2%	11.8%
Village of Honor	\$62,500	\$61,042	7.2%	7.0%
Inland Township	\$72,250	\$56,500	5.4%	1.2%
Benzonia Township	\$75,481	\$51,417	11.3%	5.7%
Benzie County	\$71,195	\$57,974	9.5%	5.7%
Source: 2015–2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates				

Another important income metric is the poverty rate. The poverty line threshold is the line below which individuals have a difficult time affording the basics of food, shelter, and clothing. The U.S. Census Bureau updates the poverty line threshold annually. The Township has the second highest overall poverty rate of 10.2% and the highest poverty rate for individuals 65 and older at 11.8%. The elderly poverty rate is especially daunting because these individuals may no longer be able to earn income and higher portions of their income is being spent on health care expenses.

Education

Table 12 and **13** illustrate educational attainment. In a more competitive world work environment, it is important to have a workforce that is capable of a variety of more complex work activities, and educational attainment is an important measure of the workforce. **Table 12** illustrates the various levels of academic achievement for over 25-year-olds have attained as reported in 2019.

Table 12 - Educational Attainment by – 2019

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (%)							
	Less than 9th Grade	9th to 12th Grade, no diploma	High School Graduate (includes equivalency)	Some College, no degree	Associate's Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Graduate or Professional Degree
Homestead Township	3.6%	5.0%	41.8%	24.1%	11.3%	10.3%	3.8%
Village of Honor	1.2%	3.1%	43.6%	20.2%	7.4%	15.3%	9.2%
Inland Township	0.8%	3.9%	32.5%	23.4%	17.8%	14.3%	7.3%
Benzonia Township	3.1%	4.1%	29.7%	20.2%	6.8%	22.2%	13.8%
Benzie County	2.6%	4.1%	31.2%	21.8%	10.0%	18.6%	11.6%
*Data refers to the population 25 years and older							
Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates							

Table 13 record the percent of high school and four-year bachelor's or higher graduates by percentage.

Table 13 – Selected Educational Attainment Benchmarks – 2019

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT BENCHMARKS (%)		
	High School Graduate or Higher	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
Homestead Township	91.4%	14.1%
Village of Honor	95.7%	24.5%
Inland Township	95.3%	21.6%
Benzonia Township	92.8%	36.0%
Benzie County	92.3%	37.7%
*Data refers to the population 25 years and older		
Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates		

Table 13 demonstrates that Homestead Township lags its neighboring communities and the County for both high school and college graduates. Educational attainment is also a good predictor for income generation. Individuals with higher education diplomas often earn more than their neighbors with less educational attainment.

Employment

An analysis of employment is important to determine the makeup of the community and what is likely the type of future growth and development. **Table 14** illustrates the employment status of the community. This measure of employment is based upon the number of 16-year-olds and older that are in the civilian labor market.

Table 14 - Employment Status – 2019

EMPLOYMENT STATUS					
	Homestead Township	Village of Honor	Inland Township	Benzonia Township	Benzie County
Employed	974	100	1,167	1,004	7,830
Unemployed	67	7	23	52	369
Not in Labor Force	742	80	740	1,196	6,584
Labor Participation Rate	54.6%	53.5%	60.5%	44.6%	53.0%
Employment Rate (of those in Labor Force)	93.6%	93.5%	98.1%	95.1%	95.5%
Unemployment Rate	6.4%	6.5%	1.9%	4.9%	4.5%
*Data Refers to civilian population 16 years and over					
Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates					

In October 2019, Michigan's labor force participation rate was at a ten-year high of 62%. The 2019 is lower in Benzie County most likely due to the higher number of retirees living in the County that are no longer in the work force. The unemployment rate in both the Township and the Village was two percentage points above the County rate of 4.5%.

Additional information about the employment market can be discerned from the Employment by Industry and Employment by Occupation statistics. **Table 15** provides information about the specific industries in which employees work.

Table 15 – Employment by Industry – 2019

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY					
	Homestead Township	Village of Honor	Inland Township	Benzonia Township	Benzie County
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, and Mining	48	0	29	8	180
Construction	69	2	129	118	744
Manufacturing	79	17	147	143	881
Wholesale Trade	18	0	34	0	209
Retail Trade	145	19	156	153	927
Transportation and Warehousing, and Utilities	11	0	29	39	251
Information	15	1	9	2	75
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate/Rental/Leasing	5	5	47	50	280
Professional, Scientific, and Management, and administrative and waste management services	76	14	115	37	550
Educational Services, and Health Care and Assistance	279	15	316	306	2,085
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation, and Accommodation and Food Services	107	15	62	86	916
Other Services, except Public Administration	69	5	42	54	417
Public Administration	53	7	52	8	315
TOTAL	974	100	1,167	1,004	7,830

*Data Refers to civilian employed population 16 years and over

Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Table 16 provides additional information about area's workforce by describing the workforce by five general occupational categories.

Table 16 – Employment by Occupation – 2019

EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION					
	Homestead Township	Village of Honor	Inland Township	Benzonia Township	Benzie County
Management, Business, Science, and Arts Occupations	246	33	383	284	2,514
Service Occupations	209	19	187	211	1,680
Sales and Office Occupations	241	31	271	217	1,544
Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance Occupations	108	2	141	166	968
Production, Transportation, and Material Moving Occupations	170	15	185	126	1,124
TOTAL	974	100	1,167	1,004	7,830
*Data Refers to civilian employed population 16 years and over					
Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates					

Work related travel

Understanding travel times to work and commuter habits provide additional details about the Township's workforce. With few commercial businesses located within the Township, most employees have to travel outside of the Township, which is further illustrated by over ten-minute commuter time, where almost 90% of the population takes that long for their commutes to work.

Table 17 – Travel Time to Work

TRAVEL TIME TO WORK					
	Less than 10 minutes	10 - 29 Minutes	30 - 59 Minutes	60 Minutes or More	Mean Travel Time to Work (minutes)
Homestead Township	10.9%	39.3%	41.7%	8.1%	32.2
Village of Honor	9.7%	64.6%	24.7%	1.1%	20.9
Inland Township	2.3%	53.9%	37.3%	6.5%	28.6
Benzonia Township	33.9%	48.7%	14.8%	2.7%	17.5
Benzie County	13.9%	48.3%	31.9%	5.9%	25.9
Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates					

A second important metric regarding the working population is method of commuting. In communities with high rates of driving to work, costs of car ownership has to be factored into the household budget. Of its neighboring communities, Homestead Township does have the lowest rates of Driving Alone with higher rates of public transit use (3.3%).

Table 18 – Commuting Habits

COMMUTING HABITS					
	Drive Alone	Carpool	Public Transit	Non-motorized (Walk, Bike)	Work from Home
Homestead Township	79.2%	8.1%	3.3%	1.4%	6.4%
Village of Honor	89.0%	3.0%	0.0%	1.0%	7.0%
Inland Township	84.7%	11.0%	1.3%	0.0%	2.5%
Benzonia Township	84.6%	3.1%	2.0%	3.1%	5.9%
Benzie County	82.2%	8.5%	1.2%	2.0%	5.4%
*Totals may not equal 100.0%					
Source: 2015–2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates					

Chapter Four

Community Services and Facilities

Homestead Township Hall



The Township Hall is located on the eastern edge of Honor at 11508 US-31. The township hall facility includes the following:

1. Offices for Homestead supervisor, clerk, and treasurer.
2. Board of Trustees meeting room with attached kitchen.
3. Substation for Michigan State Police post
4. Homestead Fire Department Fire Hall

Township Cemeteries

Homestead Township has two cemeteries

- a. Champion Hill cemetery located on Marshall Road, just south of US-31
- b. Homestead Township Cemetery on Pioneer Road, just south of Homestead Road.

Recreation

The Platte River crosses Homestead Township from east to west direction bowing slightly to the south in the middle of the Township. There are no inland lakes located within the Township. There are three parks located within the Township and two parks located within the Village. There are also several recreational and snowmobile trails located in the Township.

1. Homestead Township Park – 34-acre community park located directly behind Township Hall, four ballfields, playground equipment, skateboard park, pavilions, concession stand, and walking trail
2. Veteran’s Memorial State Forest Campground – 40-acre campground with 1,400 feet of Platt River frontage, 21 camp sites, and carry-down canoe launch
3. Platte River State Forest Campground – 26 tent/RV site campground with 1,350 feet of Platt River frontage, picnic area, and carry-down canoe launch
4. Betsie Valley Trail – 22-mile trail that traverses through the southwestern corner of the Township, connecting the City of Frankfort to the Village of Thompsonville. In winter, the route serves as the Betsie River Snowmobile Trail.
5. Platte River Park – Effort being led by the Honor Area Restoration Project committee to

develop a proposed 52-acre regional park on the northwestern edge of the Village that will include 1,550 feet of frontage on the Platte River

6. Platte Springs Pathway – One-mile-long pathway along the Platte River, starting at the Platte River Forest Campground
7. Maley/Artesian Well Park -Village of Honor maintains a small park on the north side of US 31/Main St at Leelanau St, which includes playground equipment, grills, picnic tables, pavilion, and a natural spring
8. Memorial Park – A miniature park in the Village dedicated to World War II veterans adjacent to the US Post Office at Platte Road and US 31/Main Street
9. Platte River Elementary School – The playground equipment remains even though the school was closed in 2018.
10. Platte River State Fish Hatchery – This state facility straddles the border with Inland Township at the intersection of County Road 669 (Maple City Road) and US 31
11. Platte River Snowmobile Trail – Michigan’s LP-3 trail extends from Maple City south to Thompsonville, and it traverses through the northeastern corner of the Township along Haze and Fewins Roads and along Aylsworth Road along the Township’s southern border.

Emergency Services:

- 1 Dispatch Services - Homestead Township is served by Benzie County Central Dispatch that provides by enhanced 911 Service for the Benzie County Sheriff’s Department, Michigan State Police, Benzie County EMS, and the Homestead Township Fire Department. The state police operate a substation in Honor at the Homestead Township Office.
- 2 Police - The Benzie County Sheriff Department provides policing for the Township and the Village.
- 3 Fire - The Homestead Township Volunteer Fire Department operates from the Township offices. The fire department provides fire protection services to the Village and to Inland Township.
- 4 EMS - Benzie County EMS provides emergency medical services and ambulance transportation throughout Benzie County. The two nearest stations to the Township are Station 1 in Beulah and Station 2, which is located 1901 County Road 669/N. Thompsonville Hwy just south of the intersection with US 31 in Inland Township.

Solid Waste

Individuals and businesses contract privately for solid waste services. Recycling receptacles are located adjacent to Township Hall for resident drop-off.

Utilities

1. Electrical Service – provided by Cherryland Cooperative and Consumers Energy
2. Natural Gas Service – DTE Energy provides natural gas for the Village of Honor and east along the US-31 corridor. Much of the remainder of the Township relies upon refillable propane bottles for heating, hot water, and other needs.
3. Communications – According to Connected Nation Michigan fixed terrestrial non-mobile service maps, dated September 30, 2021, most all of the Township is covered by 10 Mbps download and 1 Mbps upload speeds with a small area south of Cinder Road and North of Aylsworth Road in the middle of the Township that doesn’t have this level of service. For 100 Mbps download and 10 Mbps upland, most of the Township is covered with only the southeastern quadrant without this level of service. The Density of Providers with

Broadband of at least 25 Mbps download/3 Mbps upload shows most of the county Township covered by two providers while nearly the entire Township is covered by at least one fixed terrestrial non-mobile provider. Phone service is provided by Century Tel of Michigan and AT & T. Along US-31 Charter Communications is available which allows for phone, cable TV and high-speed internet access. Century Tel offers DSL high speed internet within the township. In the outlying area of the Township, wired information/data service unavailable, with most residences using satellite for data connections. Fixed wireless is also available throughout portions of the Township. According to the Connected Nation Michigan Mobile Wireless Service (5G and LTE Classified) service areas for mobile customers, all of the Township received LTE level service as of May 2021.

Libraries

Both the Township and Village are not served by a local library. The nearest public libraries may be found in Beulah, Benzonia, and Thompsonville

- 1) Darcy Library of Beulah – 7238 Commercial Avenue, Beulah
- 2) Benzonia Public Library – 891 Michigan Avenue, Benzonia
- 3) Betsie Valley District Library – 14744 Thompson Avenue, Thompsonville.

Historical Resources

The Benzie County Historical Society mission is to connect the residents and visitors to the past through the telling of the vibrant story of Benzie County. The society operates the Benzie County Historical Museum, which is located in the historic 1887 former Congregational Church in Benzonia. The museum includes an archive and serves as the society's home for its county-wide activities.

Public Utilities

The Township is not served either water or sewer service. Residents have their own potable water wells and septic sewer systems. The Village of Honor operates its own sewer system with its treatment facility located in the northeastern section of the Village.

Post Office

The local post office is located at 10982 Main St./US 31 in the Village. Post offices serve as important social and community hub, and all efforts should be made to ensure that a local post office remains in the downtown area.

Schools

All of Homestead Township lies within the Benzie County Central School District. The district is served by two elementary schools. The Platte River Elementary School, located adjacent to Homestead Township Hall, closed in 2018. Lake Ann Elementary school is located on Bronson Lake Road while Crystal Lake Elementary School is located on Severance Street in Benzonia. Benzie Central High School and Benzie Junior High are located on Homestead Road just west of the Benzonia/Homestead Township border. The district is one of the largest school districts geographically in the Lower Peninsula, and it is classified as a Class B school.

Transportation

The effectiveness, efficiency, and safety of a local transportation network is vital to the

development and economic vitality of a community. The transportation network is one of the most important parts of a community's infrastructure as the network is necessary for the transportation of goods and services.

In Homestead Township, the transportation network is predominately comprised of a roadway network overseen by the Benzie County Road Commission. As a Township, the local government does not own or maintain roads like in villages and cities in Michigan. In Benzie County, the road commission is responsible for the maintenance of all public roads except for US-31. US-31 falls under the maintenance responsibilities of the Michigan Department of Transportation.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) developed the National Functional Classification (NFC) to group streets and highways into classes, or systems, according to the level of service they are intended to provide. This system was introduced in 1968, and by the 1970s, all streets and highways were required to be classified. Transportation engineers and planners around the country recognize the NFC as the unofficial road classification system for all roads within their communities. The definitions and classifications are based on the Functional Classification Guidelines, as outlined in the 1989 FHWA document. The streets and highways within the Township are classified based on the NFC and its jurisdiction identified below.

Table 20: Federal Roadway Classification of Township Roads

National Functional Classification (NFC)	Road
Interstate	None
Principal Arterial	US-31
Minor Arterial	CR-699/Thompsonville Road
Major Collector	CR 608/Cinder Road (east of Pioneer Road), CR 708/Deadstream Road, CR 677/Ely Road, CR 677/Goose Road (west of Pioneer Road), CR 608/Homestead Road (west of Pioneer Road), CR 679/Indian Hill Road/Marshall Road, Oakley Road, Pioneer Road (south of Goose Road)
Minor Collector	Goose Road (east of Pioneer Road)
Local Streets	All other public streets within the Township

Source: Benzie County Road Commission and Michigan Department of Transportation

Federal Functional Classifications

Interstates and Other Freeways and Expressways: The prominent road type in the NFC hierarchy intended to carry the major portion of trips entering and leaving urban areas, as well as a majority of the trips bypassing the area. Principal arterials have planned rights-of-ways of 120 feet or greater, and provide high speed, uninterrupted travel with limited access or restricted access to regionally important urban areas and amenities, such as airports. This system is a major source for interstate travel and fall under the jurisdiction of the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). No roads are designated as Interstate or Other Freeways& Expressways in the Township.

Principal Arterials: Serve major metropolitan centers focusing on providing a high degree of

mobility and may also serve rural areas. This roadway provides both through and local traffic, and they do provide access to abutting land uses. US-31 is designated as a principal arterial.

Minor Arterials: Serve a similar in function to principal arterials, but they generally carry less traffic and connect to smaller urban centers. The minor arterial system interconnects with and augments the principal arterial system by providing for trips of moderate length with less traffic mobility. Accessibility is greater but stops are more frequent due to signalized intersections. Minor arterial streets are generally spaced from 1/8 – 1/2 mile in the central business district to 2 – 3 miles apart in the suburban fringes but are normally not more than 1 mile apart in fully developed areas. Minor arterial planned rights-of-ways are usually 120 feet wide and fall under the jurisdiction of the Roscommon County Road Commission. CR 699/Thompsonville Road is designated as a minor arterial.

Major Collectors: Provide access and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods, commercial and industrial areas. These streets differ from the arterials in that they usually enter neighborhood areas to distribute residents throughout the entire system to and from their destinations. Collector streets also collect traffic from local streets and channel them into the arterial system. Major collectors are important intra-county travel corridors and provide service to county seats not on an arterial route, to larger towns not directly served by the higher systems, and to other traffic generators of equivalent intra-county importance. Major collectors planned rights-of-ways are generally 120 feet wide. Several roads are classified as Major Collectors throughout the Township, providing north-south and east-west connectivity.

Minor Collectors: Minor collectors are identified to collect traffic from local roads and private property and bring all developed areas within a reasonable distance of a major collector or arterial road. These roads are generally spaced on half section lines. Only a short segment of Goose Road east of Pioneer Road is designated as a Minor Collectors.

Local Streets: Comprises all streets and roadways not identified in one of the higher systems. Local streets primarily provide direct access to abutting land and to minor collector streets. Movement of through traffic is usually discouraged on local streets. All of the remaining public roads in the Township are designated as Local Roads. In the Township, private roads may also provide access to some properties and/or subdivisions.

State of Michigan Act 51 Classification

Michigan's Public Act 51, PA of 1951, as amended, is the mechanism under which the State of Michigan shares state gas tax revenues for road maintenance with its municipalities. Eligible units of government are awarded funds based on the mileage of roadway within their boundaries. Homestead Township does not have jurisdiction over its roads as the Benzie County Road Commission maintains all the non-State highways within the township.

The State of Michigan retains a portion of the gas tax revenues, which are allocated to MDOT for maintenance and upgrading of the interstate highways and state trunklines within the local jurisdictions. The remaining funds are allocated to local units of government by a set formula, and

ultimately, the allocation depends upon the length of roadway in each classification.

Under Act 51, Michigan's roads are divided into five categories – State Trunkline Highways, County Primary Roads, County Local Roads, City Major Streets and Local Streets. Regarding State funding and responsibility, the Benzie County Road Commission is only directly concerned with the middle two categories – County Primary and County Local. US-31 is a State Trunkline that passes through the Township and thus maintained by the Michigan Department of Transportation. County Primary Roads in the Township include: CR 608/Cinder Road (east of Pioneer Road), CR 708/Deadstream Road, CR 677/Ely Road, Goose Road (including section of CR 677 west of Pioneer Road), CR 608/Homestead Road (west of Pioneer Road), CR 679/Indian Hill Road/Marshall Road, Oakley Road, Pioneer Road (south of Goose Road), CR 706/Platte Road, and CR 699/Thompsonville Road. There are 20.54 miles of County Primary roads and 46.64 miles of County Local roads in Homestead Township. The last two designations, for streets, are for cities and villages. Designed to carry higher volumes and heavier weighted vehicles at greater speeds, City Major Streets receive more funding per mile than Local Streets which typically serve only residential areas.

Benzie County also includes local county seasonal roads that provide access to private properties located throughout the State Forest. Under Public Act 51, county road commissions are authorized to develop a system of seasonal roads. The commissions do not have to provide maintenance from November to April, and they may also limit access during these months if they so choose to limit damage to the unmaintained road or to prevent unwarranted access to private vacation homes along these roads.

Railroad Transportation

There is no railroad service into Benzie County. The nearest rail service is located in Grand Traverse, Manistee, or Wexford counties.

Air Travel

The nearest public airport is Frankfort Dow Memorial Airport. The airport has a 75' wide by 4,050' long paved northwest/southeast runway 15/33. Its call sign is FKS. There are several hangers located onsite, and Fuel-100ll is available.

Other nearby airports include:

1. Empire's William B. Bolton Airport
2. Lake Ann Airport
3. Interlochen's Green Lake Airport
4. Thompsonville Airport

The nearest major feeder commercial service airport is located at the Traverse City's Cherry Capital Airport. The closest full-service commercial airline service is provided at Detroit Metropolitan and Grand Rapids International airports.

Bus Service

Intercity Bus Service - There is no intercity bus service through Homestead Township. The nearest major bus route is the Sleeping Bear route that travels from Boyne Falls through to Grand Rapids. The nearest stops are in Traverse City and Cadillac.

Local Public Transit - In 2006, the Benzie County Board of Commissioners formed the Benzie Transportation Authority. The public transportation company was charged with establishing public transportation throughout Benzie County that *connects people of all ages and abilities to our community and promotes independence and prosperity through a safe and convenient public transit system*. The Benzie Bus operations facility is located in the Township at 14150 US 31 with a bus stop.

The bus system operates 20 buses and one minivan, and 90% of the fleet operates on propane. The Benzie Bus makes daily trips to Traverse City and Traverse City airport and provides dial-a-ride service. A full price one-way fare is \$3.00. Seniors, children, and persons with disabilities pay \$1.50 each way. In 2021, the Benzie Bus provided for over 67,000 passenger trips.

Nonmotorized Transportation

Currently, the Township's nonmotorized network is limited to the Betsie Valley Trail that runs through the southwestern part of the Township, connecting Thompsonville with Frankfort via Beulah with a limited sidewalk network within Honor.

With one of the goals of this plan to further Honor as the center of the community, additional residential and commercial development is desired both within and surrounding the Village. Additional development within the Village will likely reduce growth pressures within the Township. As a part of plan implementation, it recommends that all new development near the Village be connected via either multiuse paths or sidewalks to the Village.

High on the list of things desired things to do for vacationers is ready access to recreational opportunities as part of their vacation experiences. One of the highest items on a visitor's list is convenient and easy access to walking and biking trails. These users may be as varied as a senior couple going for a short stroll after an ice cream cone on a short paved trail leading to a historic site to a group of younger bike riders using an interconnected multiuse trail network for a multi-day tour.

The Networks Northwest nonmotorized plan envisions a regional network for Northwest Michigan that supports the tourist economy while improving the quality of life for year-round residents. In Homestead Township, the plan currently envisions connecting the Betsie Valley Trail with the Village of Honor. It also envisions a trail encircling Platte Lake to the west of the Township. Since the drafting of the regional plan, efforts to develop a pathway along the length of the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore have matured. This would allow for Honor to be connected to Empire to the north via the Platte Lake circle path along with connections to Beulah/Benzonia from the northwest with a link continuing to Frankfort to the southwest. This pathway would be a significant boost to the Platte River Park that is being developed by the Honor Area Restoration Project (H.A.R.P.) committee.

Longer term efforts that would benefit efforts to support nonmotorized transportation in the Township include the ongoing efforts to extend the Betsie Valley Trail southeast to Mesick, which would eventually lead to a connection into the White Pine Trail in Cadillac. The White Pine Trail serves as one of the main spines of Michigan's developing nonmotorized network.

The Networks Northwest Plan also envisions connecting the Betsie Valley Trail northeast to Interlochen. Once complete, it would be reasonable to extend the trail along the US-31 corridor between Interlochen and Honor, adding another series of links to an interlocking northwestern Michigan trail network, which would support longer bike touring routes in the region.

With the recent growth of e-bikes and other e-assisted small devices coming to market in the past decade, personal transportation is likely to revolutionize both pleasure and daily trips. These devices include e-bikes, scooters, electric skateboards, “one-wheels”, and other devices, which are extending the distances that people are interested in or able to travel without a car. Using an assisted e-bike, most riders would be able to easily ride fifteen miles in little over an hour without exerting a significant amount of effort while still being able to enjoy the scenery. These new technologies will make these longer connections accessible to larger segments of the population.

Chapter Five

Natural Resources and Features

Basic Geology:

The bedrock underlying Homestead Township was laid down during the Devonian age of the Paleozoic Era. The surface geology was formed some 10,000 years ago by glacial activity. Over many hundreds of years, glaciers advanced and retreated resulting in a mix of soils as a result of erosion and depositing of soils.

The planning area enjoys a wide variation of topography. Fairly steep slopes are found as well as gently rolling valleys in connection with stream systems, as well as broad flat areas.

Soils:

The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) has completed a soil survey for Benzie County. Mr. Ben Loosemore, District Conservationist, United States Department of Agriculture, NRCS for Benzie and Manistee Counties, was extremely helpful in providing soils information for the original Master Plan. In addition to the identification of major soils groups, Mr. Loosemore has provided general limitations for soils found in the planning area such as suitability for development, agricultural and forestry, as well as soils where development will likely result in expensive engineering solutions, such as steep slopes and high water table, and poor drainage soils.

In general, the soils of the Township are predominantly sands, with a wide variety of slopes. In the stream valleys the soils contain high organic material such as mucks, and also high watertable soils.

Since the sandy soils often do not contain any impermeable barrier, such as clay in the lower levels, these soils may result in ground water contamination from on-site septic systems. In addition, many of these soils are reported to have poor filtering capacity that is needed for effective on-site treatment of septic wastes.

Sites for on-site septic systems must be selected only after a site investigation; to be sure that eventual ground water contamination will not happen.

The soils maps illustrate the complex make-up of the soils of the Township, and provide a general idea of where new development would have a lower impact on environmental quality.

Map 3 – Homestead Township Soils

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The Most Common Soil Types in the Planning Area:

Soil Name	Limitations
Fogg Benzonia Sands – 0 to 50%	Seepage on slopes
Kaleva Sand – 0 to 50 % slopes	Seepage, poor filtering capacity
Grattan Sand – 0 to 50% slopes	Seepage on slopes
Benona Sands – 0 to 70% slopes	Seepage, poor filtering capacity
Shavenaugh Sand – 0 to 50% slopes	Seepage on slopes
Nessen Sand – 0 to 12 % slopes	Seepage, poor filtering capacity
Nessen-Kaleva Sands – 0 to 35% slopes	Seepage on slopes

It is very important that these sandy soils, especially where there are steep slopes, have vegetative cover to prevent soil erosion. These soils are best suited for the growing of timber and other wood products.

Common High Water Table Soils

Houghton-Adrain Muck	High Water Table
Covert-Dair Complex – 0 to 6% slps	High Water Table
Benzonia Sand – 0 to 50% slopes	High Water Table

Prime Farmlands – Identification of prime farmlands has not been completed in Benzie County; however, the Soil Survey of Benzie and Manistee Counties, Michigan, completed by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service has identified seven soil associations that are indicators of prime farmland. Three of these soil associations are located north and south of the Village along Ely and Zimmerman Roads.

Sand and Gravel Extraction – There is a sand and gravel extraction operation in the Village



Cherry Orchard at U.S. 31 and Lake Ann Road

Woodlands:

Nearly 20% of Homestead Township is owned by the state of Michigan. Most of this land is administered by the MDNR as part of the Pere Marquette State Forest. The MDNR divides up the state forests into management units, and this portion of the Pere Marquette State Forest is located within the Traverse City Management Unit. A majority of the state forest land is located in the northeastern portion of the Township with additional lands along the Platte River east and west of Pioneer Road and some lands in the south, mostly south of Homestead Road in the southeastern and southwestern portions of the Township.



Typical Deciduous Forest on Sandy Slopes

In addition, a major portion of the private land holdings are also forested. The forest cover not only provides wood production, wildlife cover, and recreational uses, but the forest helps hold the fragile sandy soils in place, especially in the steeply sloping areas.

Surface Water:

The Platte River originates in Almira Township directly north and cuts through the northwest corner of Inland Township and travels westerly through Homestead Township to the Platte Lakes and eventually Lake Michigan. The Platte River water shed also drains Collison and Carter Creeks. The Platte River is the only major surface water in Homestead Township with the watershed extending westward from Long Lake in Grand Traverse County to Lake Michigan. It reaches north into Leelanau County and southward covering most of the northern half of Benzie County. The total drainage area is approximately 193 square miles and the Platte River Valley is about 14 miles in length. The Betsie River drains the southeastern corner of the Township while the Cold Creek drains the southwestern corner of the Township.

The largest land coverage, at 82% is forested, open lands and wetlands. Second in land area is agriculture at 12%, followed by urban use at 6%. Approximately 76% of the watershed is publicly

owned as National Park Services and State of Michigan land holdings. Many sections of the watershed are considered sensitive, such as areas of ground water recharge, headwater lakes or streams, steep slopes and water courses have little if any protection from non-point source pollution.



The Platte River near U.S. 31

Groundwater:

Homestead Township includes the Platte River, Cold Creek, and Betsie River watersheds. Both ground water and surface water are of vital importance to the long-term vitality of the Township. The surface waters are a valuable resource for scenic, recreational, fish, and wildlife habitats as well as a recharge area for groundwater. Groundwater is the only source of domestic water supply since there is no central water system within the Township and all residents and businesses rely on private wells for a safe water supply.

Wetlands:

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) has completed a wetlands inventory of Benzie County as part of its statewide wetlands inventory program. The wetlands identified in Homestead are shown along the river, streams, and drainage systems along the Platte River and identified on the Natural Features Map. .

Map 5 Homestead Inland Wetlands

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Chapter Six

Existing Land Use

For this planning effort, an entirely new existing land use map had to be created by members of the planning team. The initial map was built from recent aeriels and “streetview” images that taken periodically by private-sector data companies. This preliminary map was first reviewed by members of the Master Plan Steering Committee for their review. Edits were made and a corrected version of the map was presented to the Open House attendees with further refinements being map to the 2022 Existing Land Use map.

The 2000 Land Cover for Homestead and Inland Township could not be used to analyze the land use changes occurring over the last 22 years. The 2000 map did not provide high enough resolution to make meaningful comparisons between the two maps or provide percentages of land uses to compare changes occurring during those intervening years.

In addition, the 2000 Land Cover Map was divided by ecological categories instead of land use categories. These included: Commercial, Other Development, Cultivated Lands, Grassland, Forest Cover, Palustrine Wetlands, Unconsolidated Shore, Bare Land, and Water.

For the 2022 map, the land was separated into seven different categories based upon land use.

Agricultural – Active Farming Uses

Rural Residential – Large lot residential uses on site larger than 2 ½ acres

Forest/Forest Recreation – State Forest and State Game Areas, and large lot private uses over five acres in size with intended forestry and/or recreational uses

General Commercial – Commercial, retail, and service uses location on main public roads leading into the Village of Honor, to best serve the local public as well as travelers, tourists, visitors, and vacationers

Public/Semi-Public – Public uses that include schools, parks, cemeteries, and larger institutional uses like hospitals

Industrial – Uses related to the manufacture or production of goods or storage and material handling operations

Vacant – Unimproved land without any dwelling or permanent structures

Analysis of the map shows that a much of the land north of Brownell Road and east of North Prospect Road is large parcels identified as Forest/Forest Recreational. This corresponds with the State Forest land. The exception is the land along U.S. 31/Honor Highway that includes a mixture of Rural Residential and General Commercial land uses.

The land uses around the Village are a mixture of Agricultural, Public/Semi-Public, and Rural Residential. The Champion Hill Golf Course is a large Public/Semi-Public land use a couple miles south of the Village on the Township’s western boundary.

Most of the land north and south of Cinder and Homestead Roads is comprised of Rural Residential land uses while the southeastern and southwestern corners of the Township have large State Forest parcels and designated as Forest/Forest Recreational land uses.

Map 6 – 2022 Existing Land Use Map

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Chapter Seven

Trends and Projections

The forecasting of future events has been in the interests of humankind for millennia. Even the most detailed projections and estimates are only educated conjecture about how events are going to unfold in the future. With the ability to analyze larger and larger datasets and artificial intelligence, these projections are becoming more accurate in the short term, but beyond a certain time horizon, the best projections are often only correct in the general. They allow for estimates based upon data, current trends, and best guesses. This section looks at several trends that will be impacting the future development of the Township

Population Projections

Standard population projections are based upon evaluating the age of the population, life expectancy, births and deaths, and migration patterns. Michigan and its local jurisdictions lost population, especially younger individuals after the economic impacts of Michigan's single state recession of the aughts and the Great Recession.

Table 21

POPULATION PROJECTIONS		
	Benzie County	Michigan
2025	18,194	10,202,350
2030	18,826	10,424,509
2035	19,297	10,569,984
2040	19,622	10,646,089
2045	19,626	10,606,197
Michigan Department of Technology, Management, & Budget		

However, without an entity, either governmental or educational, to conduct significant research and analysis, there is little information available at the township level concerning future population growth for most of the State. The majority of the data available is focused at the County level or State level. With growth being steady for much of the second half of the 20th Century, planners and others often simplistically forecasted current growth rates into the future to arrive at estimated populations at the end of the planning horizon.

Since the Millennium, this has been shown to be wildly inaccurate for Michigan. For the 2008 Master Plan, it projected a 40% increase in the population by 2030 to 2,909 Township residents. In actuality, the Township's population peaked in 2010 at 2,086 and has declined to 1,992 in 2020. The estimate was off by nearly 32%.

The population projections from the end of the 20th Century now seem quite flawed. In 2019, the Michigan Department of Technology, Management and the Budget's Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives report titled "Michigan Population Projections by County through 2045", Michigan reached peak population was 10,055,315 residents in 2004 with economic related emigration causing the State to decline after that year. Michigan only reached its peak year again in 2020.

This State of Michigan report projects a modest population growth to occur in Michigan as the Baby Boomers retire and people immigrate into Michigan for job opportunities. One drag on Michigan's growth is its natural change (births minus deaths) has declined from 98,000 more births than deaths in 1970 to only 19,450 more in 2015. By 2030, the natural change is expected to go negative as there will be more deaths in the State than births. This is estimated by the age of residents and the birth rate. In-migration is expected to allow Michigan to continue to grow modestly until about 2040 when it is projected to begin to decline again.

This information becomes significantly more volatile when looking at the county data. The estimates see a range of counties shrinking by -17.5% in parts of northeastern Lower Peninsula, the Thumb, and the Upper Peninsula to some counties growing by 12.5% in the southern Lower Peninsula. More rural communities have been facing population stagnation for decades due to many younger people moving to urban areas. This impacts the rural natural change rate by both reducing the population and driving down the number of people in prime child-bearing years while mortality rate increases as the average population age rises.

As illustrated by the 2008 Master Plan, providing population projections in Michigan has been difficult over the last 40 years due to several macro-economic forces that has been impacting the State's economy and its residents that do not easily factor into standard demographic models. These outside factors include: major shifts in the auto industry (Michigan's largest industry); reduction in the manufacturing and construction sectors; younger adults desiring to live in vibrant urban communities; substantial national changes in the development of the American family; and demographic shifts from the American Midwest to the South and Southwest. There are several external factors including ongoing globalization, impacts of technology, spread of broadband, impacts of climate change, and changes to U.S. immigration policy that cannot be factored into these projections either.

Other factors are at play as well including the advent of back-to-the-city movements having success in many of Michigan larger urban areas while also buoying smaller communities' downtowns as well. The long-term land use impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on where people are choosing to live and work has yet to fully mature regarding the ability of people to work remotely as well and affect living choices long term. The resulting resurgence of Michigan metropolitan areas may also impact the natural change rate that isn't covered in these statistics by providing options for young Michiganders to stay in Michigan in their youth instead of migrating out of the state.

With all this broad information identified, there are microeconomic factors operating within the Township and the Grand Traverse region as well that is driving growth into the Township that doesn't fit into these standard models. Traverse City and the region have become a destination for people choosing to live in a smaller region with ready access to the outdoors. Because of this, Grand Traverse County and the surrounding counties are expected to fare better than much if the remainder of Northern Michigan, and the State projections show both Grand Traverse County and Benzie County having slightly larger populations in 2045 than today. We would not expect that the growth projected for Benzie County to be equally shared across all of its jurisdictions. Those communities closest to Traverse City, along US-31, and along the Lake Michigan shoreline to receive higher percentages of the future growth while Colfax, Joyfield, and Weldon Townships

would be expected to receive lower percentages of growth or may modestly decline. The overall expected growth in the County by 2045 is expected to be 7.6%. It would be reasonable to assume that up to 11% increase (199 residents) would occur in Homestead Township over the 20+ year period. At 2.0 persons per household, that would mean an increase of 100 new homes in the Township by 2045. This Master Plan provides for sufficient areas to accept this added growth over the period of the Plan's implementation.

According to the 2020 Census data, there are now 360 seasonally occupied homes in the Township, and the 2008 Master Plan reported that there were 195 seasonal dwellings in both Homestead and Inland Townships. This illustrates a significant increase in the number of seasonal residents, not to mention the number of visitors staying at campgrounds, motels, cottages, short-term rentals, and other temporary accommodations in the Township. As identified in the 2008 plan, Northern Michigan benefits from summer residents retiring to their vacation homes or the communities in which they vacationed during their work life. This internal migration is at work across the Michigan since before the Millennium, further impacting the community's demographics, while skewing the median age even older in the Township.

Changes in Work

The COVID-19 Pandemic greatly increased the numbers of individuals working either fully from home or part-time from the home. This added significantly to the number of home occupations. Traditional home occupations have been businesses that operated within the residence, often professional or specialty skills. Accounting, architecture, and other professional skills as well as modest sales of home-created crafts were typical of home occupations prior to 2020. Usually, the only evidence of such businesses is a small non-illuminated sign identifying the home occupation. There is virtually no external evidence of such a business, and only a small portion of the residence is devoted to such a venture. It is expected that with the continued expansion of high-speed internet, home occupations will likely continue to grow. This was identified in the 2008 Master Plan, and these uses do not appear to have had a deleterious effect on neighboring properties. It would be reasonable to continue to allow these uses and to advocate for continued expansion of broadband internet to support these uses.

Home-based businesses are a relatively new development. These business ventures are different from the traditional home occupations in several ways. With these types of operations, the bulk of the activity operates away from the home. These types of businesses have a wide variety of characteristics. Skilled tradesmen such as electricians, plumbers, etc. may decide to operate out of their homes rather than rent office and warehouse space. Often, there is little evidence of such a business except for a vehicle parked at the residence. Occasionally, a garage or pole barn is erected to provide storage space for supplies and perhaps vehicles used in the business. However, more intensive home-based businesses may have significant off-site impacts. Small excavation and construction type businesses may have other types of equipment that may not fit well into low or moderate density residential settings. Poorly designed and/or operated businesses may have serious visual and noise impacts on neighboring properties. They may cause blight to the surrounding properties. On the opposite side of the equation, these businesses may have great benefits for their operators and the Township at large by providing jobs and tax-base in a region where it is needed. Zoning Ordinance regulations should be carefully crafted to balance the needs and the desires of the business owners with those of the neighbors and the Township. Site plan approval, buffering, neighbor approval through special use approval notices should all be

considered in an effort to strike a balance between the sometimes-competing interests.

Business Opportunities

The U.S. economy has been transforming itself over the last 30 years from a manufacturing-based economy that was focused on competing for the best financial incentives to attract companies to located within the community. With the New Economy, knowledge-based workers are the central point to economic development and job creation. Jobs are more likely today to follow the worker than the worker following the available jobs. Quality of life is now a key metric for companies deciding where to locate their operations.

In this instance, northwestern Michigan has a great advantage as people are desiring to live in locations with easy access to the out-of-doors. Placemaking plays a role in this, and it is important to have unique and authentic places for people to spend their non-working time. Supporting the development of Honor as a more vibrant community is a goal of this plan.

With the impacts of the Pandemic going to ripple through the world economy over the next 5-7 years, the onshoring of manufacturing into the United States will likely occur. New manufacturing technology is allowing for smaller less intensive operations to produce goods, in a smaller footprints and with less environmental impact. To take advantage of these changes, changes to the Township's Zoning Ordinance should be considered that allow for more as-a-right approvals, allow more uses to be permitted within specific districts, and provide review flexibility where appropriate.

Regional Cooperation

The above examination of the trends and projections that are expected over the next twenty years is beyond the ability and realm of the Township to have meaningful impact. Many of these issues are regional in scope and focus on economic development activities that are beyond the focus of a land use planning document.

The following development issues go beyond the political boundaries of the Township, or involve other agencies, and will need to be addressed by regional efforts from many different levels of government, non-governmental agencies, and the private sector:

- ▶ Attainable workforce housing.
- ▶ Green energy development.
- ▶ Livable wages, job opportunities, lack of local employment base.
- ▶ Natural resources protection.
- ▶ Nonmotorized transportation development.
- ▶ Quality of life improvements.
- ▶ Solid Waste and recycling.
- ▶ Sustainability efforts.
- ▶ Workforce development.

Chapter Eight

Goals and Action Steps

Community planning is an accepted course of community action, and as outlined in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, is a process of establishing goals and objectives to arrive at a desirable future end state, a “vision” of how the community wishes to look at a point in the future.

Past approaches to the development of goals and objectives for master plans by professional planners have been to provide a complete shopping list of all of the desired goals and objectives for a community, regardless of the local capacity for implementation. This approach would include many goals that are far beyond the scope of a land use plan or capital plan, and they would be far beyond the capacity of a small community that relies on a few paid staff, elected officials, and a small cadre of volunteers to implement the master plan.

This traditional approach would lead to plans that would be overwhelming to even the most ardent group of local land use practitioners and members of the Planning Commissions, Zoning Board of Appeals, Board of Trustees, and others. These master plans, once adopted, would be filed away where they would rarely be consulted until the next update process. Master planning was an exercise that was completed to allow for the community to have the power to wield zoning, but the resulting plans most often wouldn’t proactively assist the community in reaching its desired land use goals.

These master plans would ensure the planning process wouldn’t lead to any concrete results. A community’s future vision and land use desires may have been formulated, but due to the nature of the good-sounding goals and objectives that were unimplementable, there would be no change in the community’s development trajectory.

This Plan addresses this issue by striving to identify far fewer goals and targeting actionable steps that are implementable by the Township over the term of the Plan. Many of the goals and objectives from the previous plan are nested within the action steps described below with most of the goals to be implemented or directed by the Planning Commission.

The following goals were identified through the community survey that was open from May 9, 2022 through June 17, 2022, the October 26, 2022 Master Plan Open House, and through interaction with the Master Plan Steering Committee.

Retain the Rural Character of the Community – many residents choose to live in the Township because of its rural character, and the protection of this feature and its natural environment is paramount to this Plan and underpins much of the Township economy:

- Revise the Zoning Ordinance to increase buffering requirements for commercial uses from adjoining properties and along all thoroughfares

- Review the Future Land Use map and evaluate land development requirements to allow for lots splits that protect the character of the Township while enabling for land divisions to occur

- Evaluate increasing minimum lots sizes within portions of the Township while considering allowing for smaller clustering of houses

Support Honor as the commercial hub of the Township – residents have identified their desire

for Honor to serve as the community's center with shopping, dining, and entertainment choices:

- Support zoning changes that will allow for more intensive development to occur adjacent to the Village.

- Require sidewalks or bike paths for all new developments adjacent to Honor in the High Density Residential land use areas

Address Blight and Improve Aesthetics – this community development goal scored both highly during the survey and the Open House:

- Ensure that adequate financial and personnel are devoted to Code Enforcement, to reduce the impacts of blight within the community

- Review Zoning Ordinance to ensure that buffering standards for home-based businesses are sufficient to limit impacts to adjoining properties and roadways

Improve the Appearance of U.S. 31 – as the main commercial thoroughfare and transit route for and through the Township, residents identified their concerns regarding the appearance of the corridor and its impacts upon the Township's rural identity:

- Create new landscaping requirements that improve the aesthetic appearance of commercial businesses along U.S. 31

- Evaluate if downzoning of certain properties along U.S. 31 is feasible based upon current and future uses of the properties

Support Economic Development – Northwestern Michigan's near lakeshore economy is heavily reliant on tourism, and efforts are needed to support diversity of jobs within the community and support the increase in wages:

- Review Zoning Ordinance to increase the number of land uses that are permitted as-a-right

- Consider allowing high-tech low impact manufacturing uses to be permitted in Low and Medium Density Residential areas, and Commercial

- Support the development of alternative energy generation by revising the Township's Zoning Ordinance to support wind and solar energy.

Support Regional Cooperation – in rural communities, there is often not sufficient tax or resident base or governmental staffing to fund, support, and use community services individually so regional cooperation is necessary. Moderate density residential is unrealistic in the Township due to lack of services so partnering with Honor is reasonable and should be explored.

- Strengthen relationship with the Village to share resources

- Advocate for regional efforts for job creation and service development, including youth and senior services.

Support development of Accessible Housing Options in the Township – with many of the region's jobs in the service or tourism sectors and with growth from Grand Traverse County impacting housing supply, housing affordability is a serious concern and an economic justice issue:

- Consider restricting Short-term Rentals

- Review restrictions on Accessory Dwelling Units.

Support the development of Nonmotorized Transportation – public engagement showed strong support for the development of nonmotorized transportation facilities within the Township, benefiting both seasonal and year-round residents:

- Adopt a Complete Streets resolution

- Support regional efforts to develop nonmotorized networks that connect destinations within the Township and throughout the region.



The Platte River at US 31



Pasture Scene, Homestead Township



Pioneer Road, Homestead Township



Northern Auto and Tire, Homestead Township

Chapter Nine

Homestead Future Land Use Plan

The foundation of the Homestead Township Master Plan is for the retention of the Township's rural characteristics that many residents strongly support and want to preserve. This plan supports accommodating modest additional residential development in parts of the Township through the implementation of zoning and lot split controls that continue to allow for property splits while reducing their visual impact on the land and allowing for larger contiguous parcels to remain.

Public engagement supported the Village serving as the commercial core of the community as well. The lack of affordable workforce housing is also a significant concern that was identified by the Master Plan survey and further discussions with the Steering Committee. This plan is continuing the recommendation from the Benzie County 2020 Comprehensive Plan and the previous Master Plan to support the development of an urban services boundary around the Village. Access to the Village sewer system will support higher housing densities that will assist in supporting development within the Village while adding users to the Village system.

The Township will strive to maintain environmental quality, open space, and low levels of pollution. This Plan intends to guide population growth to protect natural resources and open space. This can be accomplished in part with a general understanding by the citizens and others of the community goals. A rational management of the Township's development through revisions to the Township's Zoning Ordinance, evaluating the lowering of allowed densities in specific land use designations and other development regulations would support this effort.

The Future Land Use Plan: This Plan is based upon the data generated in Chapters 3 through 8 of the Plan. Information from the demographic, capacity, natural resources, existing conditions, trends analysis, and public input support the Future Land Use Plan that follows.

The officials of Homestead Townships realize what is at stake: The maintenance of the unique and high value environment of the Township in the face of incremental development, that, if not wisely managed, has the potential to degrade not only the natural environment, but result in general urban-type sprawl that will spoil what makes the Township a place where so many of the residents choose to live.

By 2045, it is anticipated that approximately 1,700 additional residents will live in Benzie County, spread across the 19 municipalities located within the County. Each community will have differing shares of these new residents, but it is expected that no community will be unable to accommodate the added year-round residents. Additional seasonal housing is likely to be built through the region as well, and with modest changes to the Township's development requirements, the Township should be able to accommodate the increases in both year-round and seasonal residents. However, left unchecked and unmanaged, this development will likely have a negative impact the Township's desired character.

The planning area is generally divided into four main land use categories. Commercial along the US 31 corridor at points where existing commercial activity is occurring and where it is logical and practical to provide for modest expansion and infill with appropriately designed new uses in these areas. This plan supports residential uses adjacent to the Village in high densities to support

Village development and potentially reduce housing demand in less intensively developed areas. Where larger numbers of relatively small parcels have already been created, it recommends continued moderate density residential. In areas with large amounts of State land or larger undivided parcels, very low density residential or recreation is desired.

Commercial Uses:

The planned commercial uses will serve local residences and regional commercial needs. Light industrial uses are included in this land use category. Density will generally be of one acre or less. However, some uses, particularly those of a light industrial or mixed commercial use may require larger parcels.

A major issue facing the planning area is U.S. 31. If present trends continue, it is likely that typical strip commercial development will gradually overtake this corridor. While U.S. 31 is the logical location for business activity, it is a goal of this Plan to manage future business expansion in a manner sensitive to open space and environmental quality, while still providing an opportunity for business growth.

Business growth will be welcomed, and as a logical expansion of already existing business locations. It is recommended that “nodes” or clusters of businesses be encouraged along the U.S. 31 corridor with generous expanses of open space where soil and other natural resources need to be protected or where site distances and other highway engineering factors may affect development.

Access control, shared service drives, signage, generous landscaping with parking located behind buffering on the side and rear of the developments are all management techniques that are recommended and would be included in the review criteria for future development proposals.

Forest/Forest Recreational Uses

These areas should be retained in larger parcels with a focus on preserving the natural environment and the rural features of the Township. This land includes State land and agricultural and forestry uses. These parcels shall measure 20 acres and larger.

Residential Uses

A wide range of residential densities should be considered, both from the standpoint of providing affordable housing opportunities, but to also retain the rural, open space character of the planning area. While some citizens may wish to have a compact, manageable homesite, others may prefer more spacious acreage for their home.

Low Density Rural Residential Uses

Portion of land within the Township is designated for low density residential uses. This category includes residential uses on larger parcels of land that will assist in retaining the rural character of the Township. These uses will also serve as a buffer to the Forest/Forest Recreational uses

Parcel sizes for residential development may be established at ten acres or more.

Medium Density Residential Uses

The balance of the planning area is reserved for various types of medium density residential uses. This category is shown for areas where parcel divisions have resulted in existing parcels and lots at five acres and less. These lands are designated for medium density residential development. Agriculture and forestry, as well as recreation and tourism uses will also be encouraged.

Parcel or lot sizes for this category would range from 2 ½ acres to ten acres in size.

High Density Residential Uses

These areas are located adjacent to the Village where the highest residential densities are desired with lots ranging from 12,000 square feet and larger. This designation corresponds to the Urban Services Boundary around the Village from previous planning efforts and supports the vitality of the Village, limits on sprawl, and supports the development of attainable housing.

Map 8 Future Land Use

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Chapter Ten

Zoning Plan

According to requirements within Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, all master plans are to include a Zoning Plan when the community utilizes zoning to control land development. This portion of the plan serves as a clear connection between the community's Master Plan and the Zoning Ordinance, which underpins the community's power to regulate land through the Zoning Ordinance. This section provides that nexus between the documents and protects the Township from potential litigation regarding application of the Zoning Ordinance.

One requirement is the Zoning Plan must correlate the zoning district's height, area, bulk, location and uses with the land use designations within the Master Plan while also explaining how the land use categories on the Future Land Use map correlate with the Zoning districts shown on the Zoning Map.

To meet this requirement, the following list matches the Master Plan's land use categories with the Township's Zoning districts, and the height, area, bulk, and uses allowed within the Zoning Ordinance would be appropriate for corresponding land uses.

Land Use Designation	Zoning District
Forest/Forest Recreational	F/R Forest Residential
Low Density Residential	F/R Forest Residential
Medium Density Residential	Rural Residential
High Density Residential	R-1 Single Family, MR Mixed Residential, and MH Manufactured Housing Community
General Commercial	C-1 General Commercial

A second and valuable component of the Zoning Plan is identifying recommendations of the Master Plan that will require changes to the Zoning Ordinance to be implemented.

The first recommendation is that the Planning Commission have a Zoning Ordinance Audit conducted to: ensure compliance with the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act of 2006; compliance with various State and Federal Statutes; ensure consistency with recent court cases; identify fragmented or inconsistent zoning ordinance language; identify incorrect or irrelevant cross references; recognize contradictory or redundant policies; illustrate effectiveness, or lack thereof of, Ordinance to address emerging technologies; verify effectiveness of Ordinance in addressing emerging planning trends including zoning reform efforts; assist with the development of workforce housing; and ensure effectiveness in addressing local issues and concerns.

Following the Zoning Ordinance Audit, utilize the results to draft new zoning language to amend the Township's Zoning Ordinance, which ensures that the goals of the Master Plan begin to be implemented while regulations that do not support the Plan's implementation are removed.

Master Plan topics to be addressed include:

- To reduce the opportunity for blight, review the requirements for home-based businesses, ensuring that there is sufficient buffering of adjacent parcels and roadways

- Review uses allowed within the Low Density and Medium Density Residential and Commercial districts to increase the number of permitted uses, allow more as-a-right approvals, and allow for light manufacturing to occur in certain instances
- Improve commercial district buffering to protect the rural up north character of the Township, especially along the U.S. 31 corridor
- Support rezonings that will better align the Future Land Use map with the Zoning Ordinance map
- Consider revising the zoning around the Village of Honor to allow for more intensive residential uses to be built in proximity to the Village
- Evaluate minimum lot sizes to determine if downzoning would be appropriate in parts of the Township where larger lots currently exist and evaluate if clustering options would be appropriate that would permit some lot splits to occur but require the newer lots to be smaller and laid out in a clustered pattern
- Require sidewalks to be installed within the High Density Residential land use category that interconnect with sidewalks that connect to the Village of Honor's sidewalk network
- Focus new commercial development onto lands currently identified for commercial uses and limit the expansion of commercial uses beyond existing designated commercial properties
- Support the development of a Township Capital Improvement Plan
- Evaluate allowing for accessory dwelling units on all properties identified as Medium and High Density Residential and develop restrictions on Short-term Rentals.

In addition, the townships intend that zoning regulations be crafted so that applicants can easily determine if their proposal is allowed as a use by right, which is proposed to be the predominant condition, or if there are unique factors of their proposal or the proposed site that would require special consideration by the Planning Commission.

While the Zoning Ordinance that will result from this effort will go a significant way towards implementing the concepts of this Plan, additional efforts by the Planning Commission and the Township Board will be necessary to assist in achieving the vision created here.