

Kalkaska County Master Plan 2023-2027



Springfield Township Recreation Area, Springfield Township

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

(Who to thank)

2023-2027 Master Plan Update

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Kalkaska County Municipalities

Village of Kalkaska
Springfield Township
Rapid River Township
Kalkaska Township
Clearwater Township
Orange Township
Boardman Township
Garfield Township
Excelsior Township
Coldsprings Township
Oliver Township
Blue Lake Township
Bear Lake Township

CHAPTER 1

THE PLANNING PROCESS

(What is this document?)

This Master Plan is intended to guide policy and decision making for future land use, infrastructure, and public service decisions within Kalkaska County. The Plan identifies key planning issues, guiding principles, policies, and action steps that are instrumental to its implementation. Background information, analysis, and recommendations provide a context for informed decisions. This plan is highly graphic to existing land use patterns and how development should be designed.

Proposed future land uses and policies presented in this Plan were developed based on a combination of the natural capability of the land to sustain certain types of development; the important natural functions of unique land and water resources in the area; the future need for residential, commercial and industrial land uses; the existing land use distribution, including the State Forest areas; the relationship of undeveloped lands to existing community character; and the desires of local residents and public officials as expressed throughout this process.

This Master Plan is adopted pursuant to the authority of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act 33 of 2008, as amended. This Act provides for the preparation of a basic plan to promote the community health, safety, and welfare through provision for the use of land and resources and the assurance of adequate public facilities and services. The Kalkaska County Master Plan is prepared as a foundation for, and depends primarily on, the County's Zoning Ordinance, subdivision regulations, and capital improvement program for its implementation. This Master Plan was originally adopted as a 2003 to 2008 five-year policy statement; and was updated in 2010, 2017, and 2022 in accordance with the Act. It is hoped that cooperation with local planning commissions within the County will result in compatible local land use plans so that a coordinated approach will be achieved.

WHEN TO USE THIS PLAN
(ALWAYS!!!)

- As the basis for developing Kalkaska County’s Zoning Ordinance;
- for promoting public interest in and understanding of the planning process and Master Plan implementation;
- as a guide when reviewing, coordinating, or preparing specialized plans which address a particular subject (like housing) or geographic area (like a neighborhood within the County);
- as a guide in reviewing applications for rezonings, subdivisions, variances, and special use permits;
- as a guide when preparing and reviewing capital improvement programs and the public works projects of other local agencies;
- as the basis for more detailed township and village plans and development ordinances;
- as a frame of reference for private investment in the County;
- as a guide to village, township, and county public facility and infrastructure decisions;
- as a guide to the Kalkaska County Planning Commission in fulfilling its responsibility to review proposed public facility expenditures for consistency with the Master Plan;
- as a guide to the Kalkaska County Planning Commission fulfilling their statutory responsibility to review township plans and zoning amendments;
- as a guide to preparing measures to protect sensitive environmental areas;
- as a guide in protecting air and water quality;
- as a guide to improved long-term resource management decisions, especially with regard to renewable resources, and critical plant and animal habitats;
- as a base reference for joint or separate village, township, and county grant activities;
- as an organization plan for county program expenditures;
- to stimulate and facilitate intergovernmental cooperation (i.e., among not only the County and local units of government, but also: private and semi-private organizations, area schools, the DNR, the Soil Conservation Service, adjoining county of governments, etc.),
- to define issues of greater than local concern and establish appropriate mechanisms to deal with those issues, including but not limited to solid waste and recycling facilities; utility, and sewage disposal sites, large-scale developments; fire and emergency services; and affordable housing.
- **Every time the Kalkaska County Planning Commission meets.**

HOW WAS THE PLAN CREATED

(Who wrote this document?)

The Kalkaska County Planning Commission (Planning Commission) is responsible for this document. In 2002 the Planning Commission, with professional planning assistance, developed the Master Plan over the course of several months. Throughout this process, the Planning Commission was presented with several drafts of the various sections to get their input, and the Plan was finalized based on their input and desires. The final version of this Plan reflects the desires and ideas of the Planning Commission concerning the preferred future development of Kalkaska County. The first Master Plan was adopted by the Kalkaska County Board of Commissioners in August of 2003 and was formally adopted in November 2003.

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Act 33 of 2008) requires that the Plan be reviewed every five years. During that review, the Planning Commission must determine if any changes are needed to the Plan. The Planning Commission has been diligent about conducting its reviews and has performed modest updates of this Master Plan in 2010, 2017, and 2022.

Location and Jurisdictional Issues

(What's involved?)

Named in 1843, the County was originally called Wabassee, which honored a Potawatomi chief. Located in the northern lower peninsula of Michigan, Kalkaska County is situated within some of the State's most beautiful natural settings, drawing many seasonal visitors to the area. Traverse City is located only 20 miles west of Kalkaska County and the City of Detroit is 230 miles southeast, or little more than a four-hour drive. Surrounding counties include Grand Traverse County to the west, Crawford County to the east, Antrim County directly north, and Missaukee County to the south. Major transportation routes through Kalkaska County include US-131, traversing the northwest section of the County; M-66, running north and south; and M-72 running east and west.

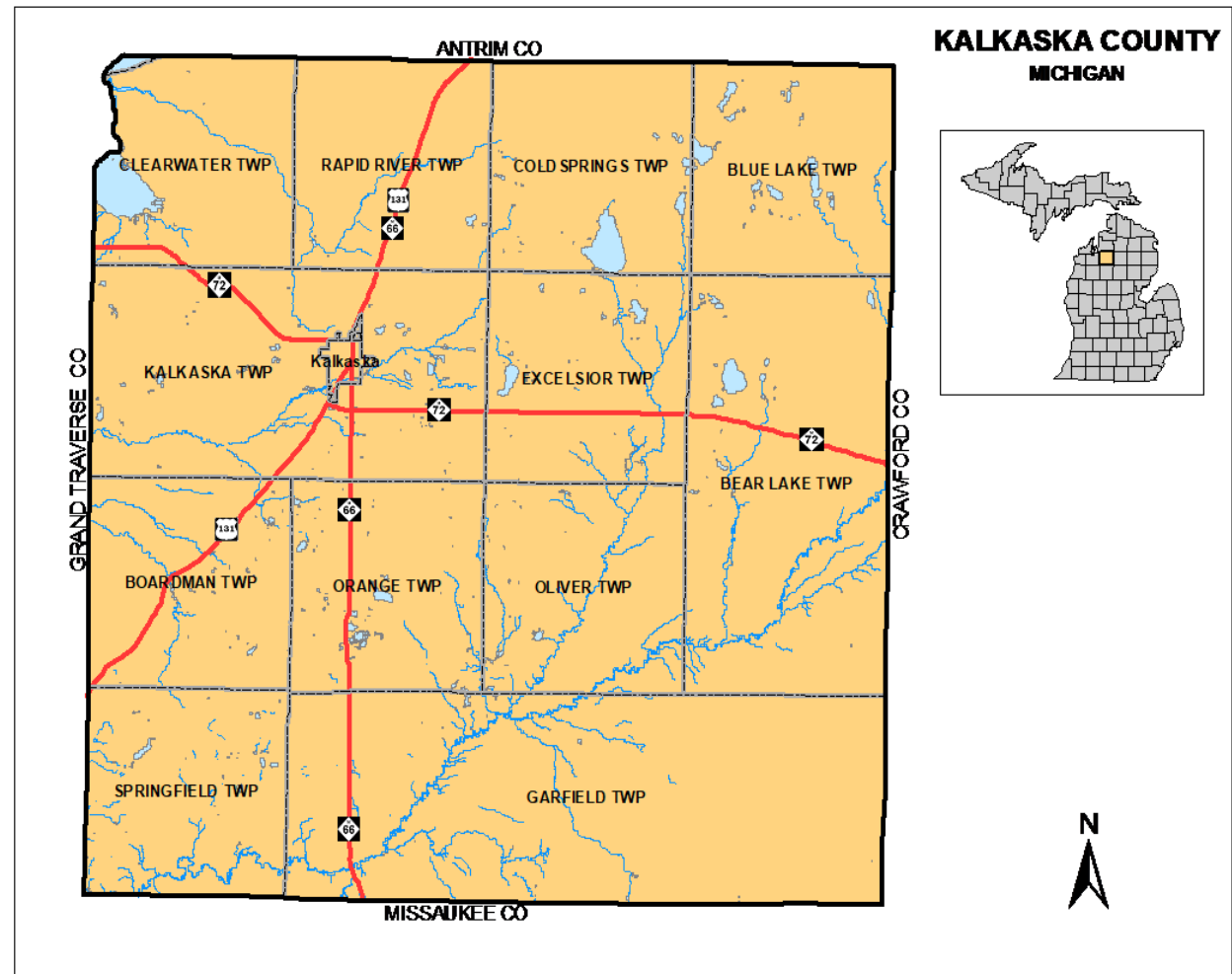
Kalkaska County contains thirteen jurisdictions, namely one village, and twelve townships. Of special significance is the Village of Kalkaska, serving as the commerce center for the County. There is a broad array of issues that extend beyond the boundaries of any one jurisdiction and decisions made by one jurisdiction are often affected by the decisions made by other jurisdictions. For instance, air and water conditions in Kalkaska Township will impact the quality of life and natural environment in Rapid River Township. Conversely, a large-scale industrial development in Orange Township could have significant impacts on Kalkaska and other nearby townships. Intergovernmental communication and coordination are essential when planning for the future of a county. Effective integration of the policies of this Plan with existing regulatory and planning documents in the County will require an ongoing commitment to intergovernmental cooperation.

Zoning issues are also important when thinking in terms of intergovernmental cooperation. It is important to keep all local governments informed of proposed changes to this Master Plan, or its regulatory instruments, and to encourage their input prior to changes. Currently, only three townships (Kalkaska Township, Garfield and Blue Lake) and the Village of Kalkaska have master plans. Five townships (Garfield, Blue Lake, Clearwater, Rapid River, and Boardman) and the Village of Kalkaska have adopted zoning ordinances. Kalkaska County provides zoning services to the other seven townships (Coldsprings, Kalkaska, Excelsior, Orange, Oliver, Bear Lake, and Springfield).

KALKASKA COUNTY

(Who's involved?)

- The Kalkaska County Master Plan affects all of the Townships and Villages in the County.
- Individual Township and Village Master Plans should be compatible with each other and with the County Master Plan.
- Kalkaska County administers the zoning for the following townships: Kalkaska; Coldsprings; Excelsior; Orange; Oliver; Bear Lake; and Springfield.



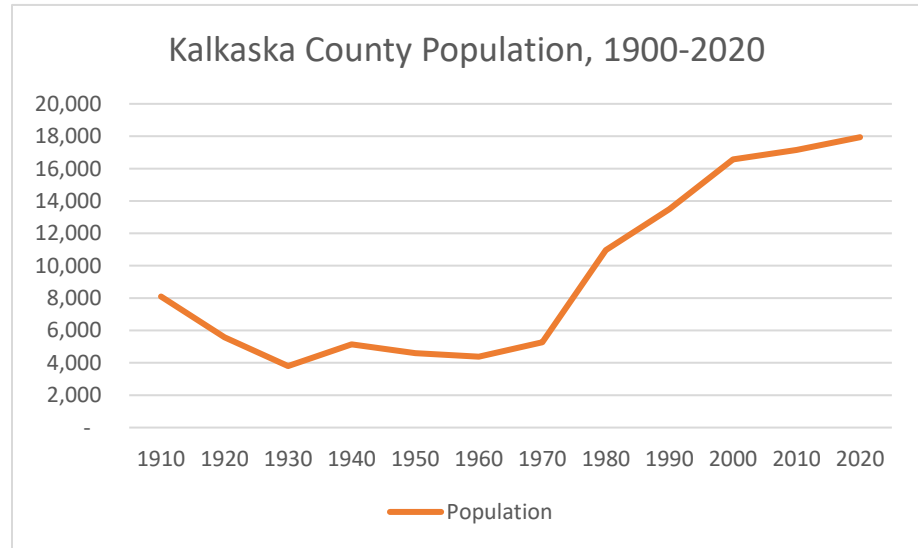
CHAPTER 2

DEMOGRAPHICS

(Who are we?)

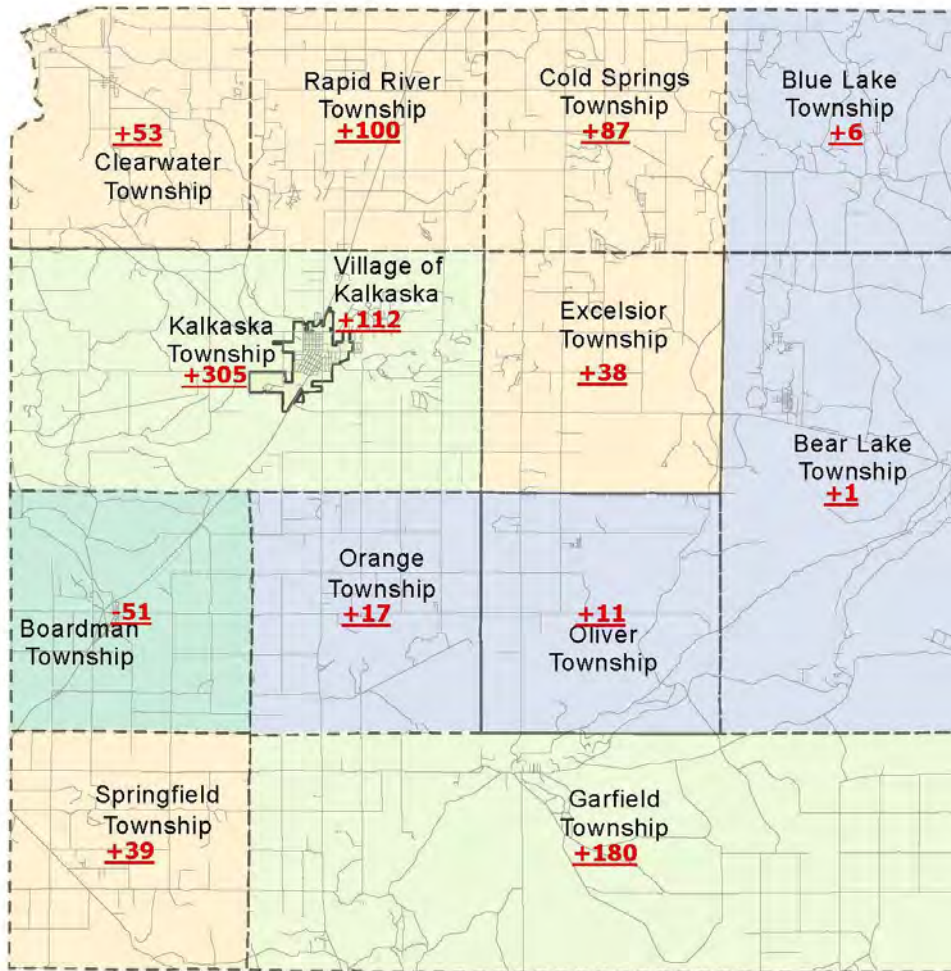
The history of Kalkaska County is directly linked to the natural resources found in the region. During the nineteenth century, when Michigan was experiencing its lumbering boom, Kalkaska County attracted individuals who harvested pine and hardwoods. After clear-cutting nearly the entire County, cutover lands were converted into farms. Potatoes, apples, and agricultural crops became important to the County's economic base. Historical population in the County is illustrated below. During the early 1900s, as the lumbering boom began fading and moving further north, the County population declined steadily until 1960. Population in Kalkaska County began an upward trend beginning in 1970 and has continued to increase every decade since. It is expected to continue increasing into the future.

The County's growing population base attests to the growth of northern migration patterns, especially in and around areas with significant natural resources. With an abundance of natural resources, residents of Kalkaska County enjoy the natural beauty that surrounds the area. Educational services, healthcare services, manufacturing, construction and retail trade are some of the biggest employment sectors for the county. With more than 275 miles of streams and rivers and 85 inland lakes, seasonal tourism and recreational activities provide jobs and contribute to the overall economic well-being of the County.



POPULATION CHANGE 2000-2020

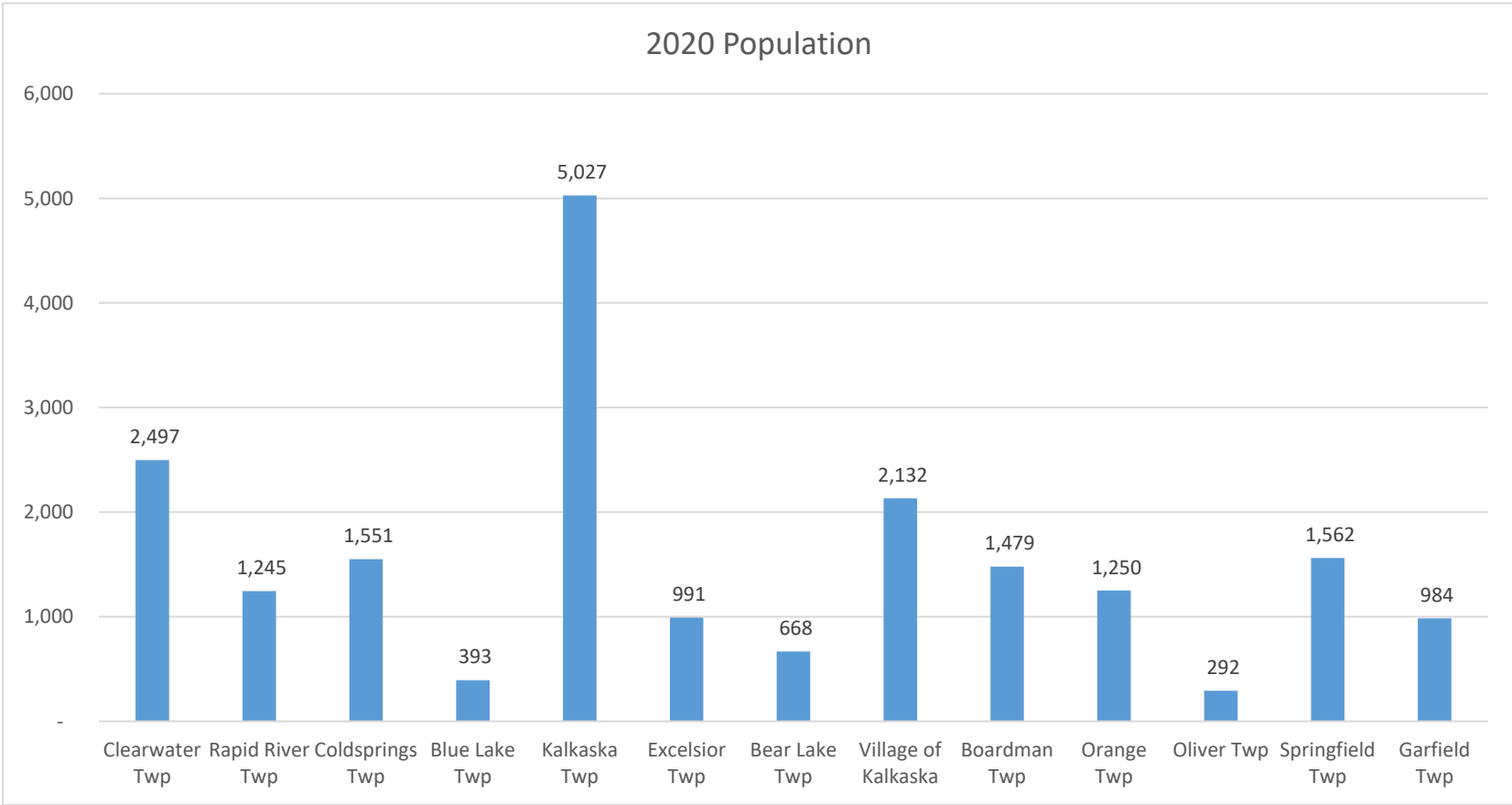
(Did we grow?)



- The 2020 population for the County was 17,939 (population according to 2019 ACS 5-year estimates is 17,585); in 2010 it was 17,153.
- The County grew by 4.6% or 786 people during the last decade.
- Kalkaska Township experienced the largest population increase with 305 new residents. Garfield Township had the highest growth rate of 22.7% since 2000.
- Compared to other townships, Boardman township alone experienced a decline in population of approximately 3.7%.
- Population growth exceeded 10% in Rapid River Township.

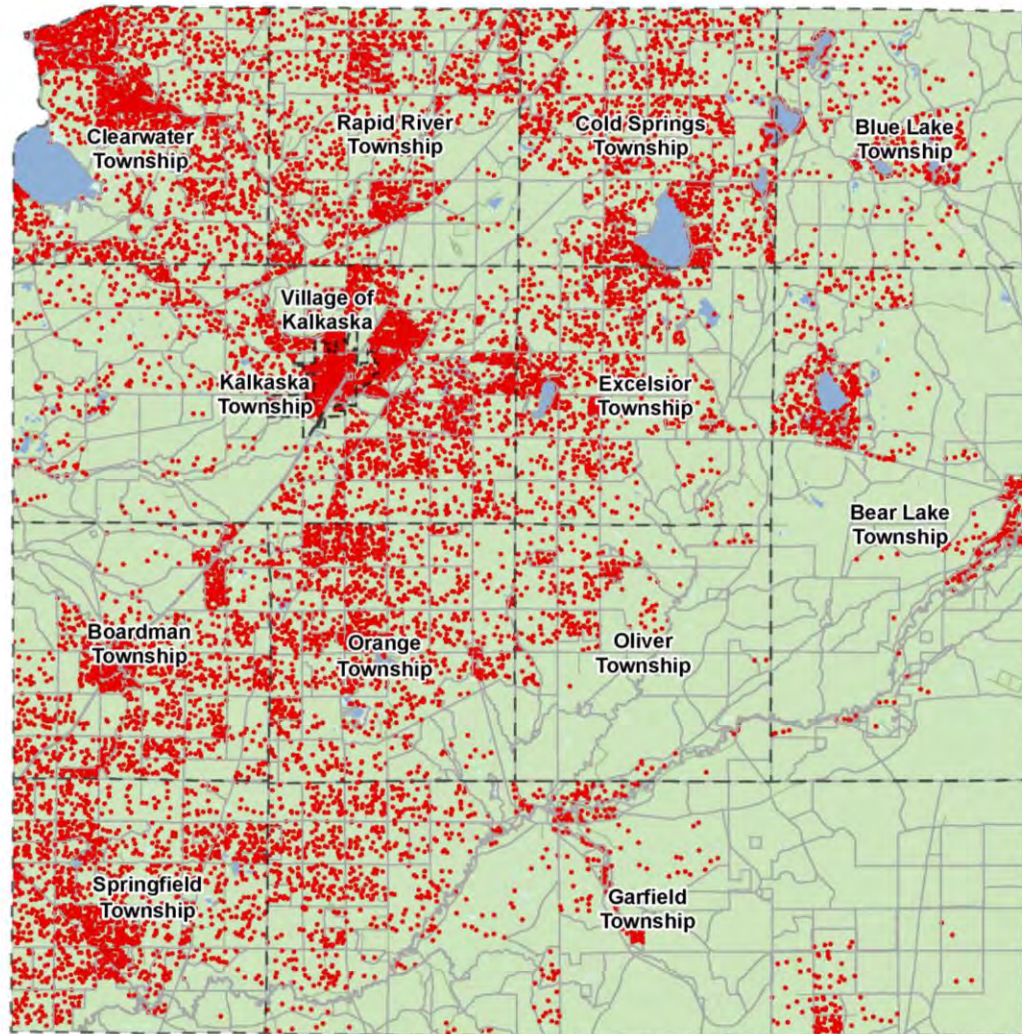
COMMUNITY POPULATION

(What are the populations?)



POPULATION DENSITY

(Where do we live and grow?)



- Higher concentrations of people are near highways and/or natural features such as rivers and lakes.
- The state-owned land restricts growth potential along the east side of the County.
- Previous projections suggested that Kalkaska County would grow by about 4,600 people from 2010 to 2020. However, the county only grew by 786 people in the last decade.
- If the growth rate from 2010-2020 continues to 2030, the County will only add another 822 people.
- More than likely, this growth will follow the existing land use patterns.

Population Density

1 Dot = 1

• Total Population

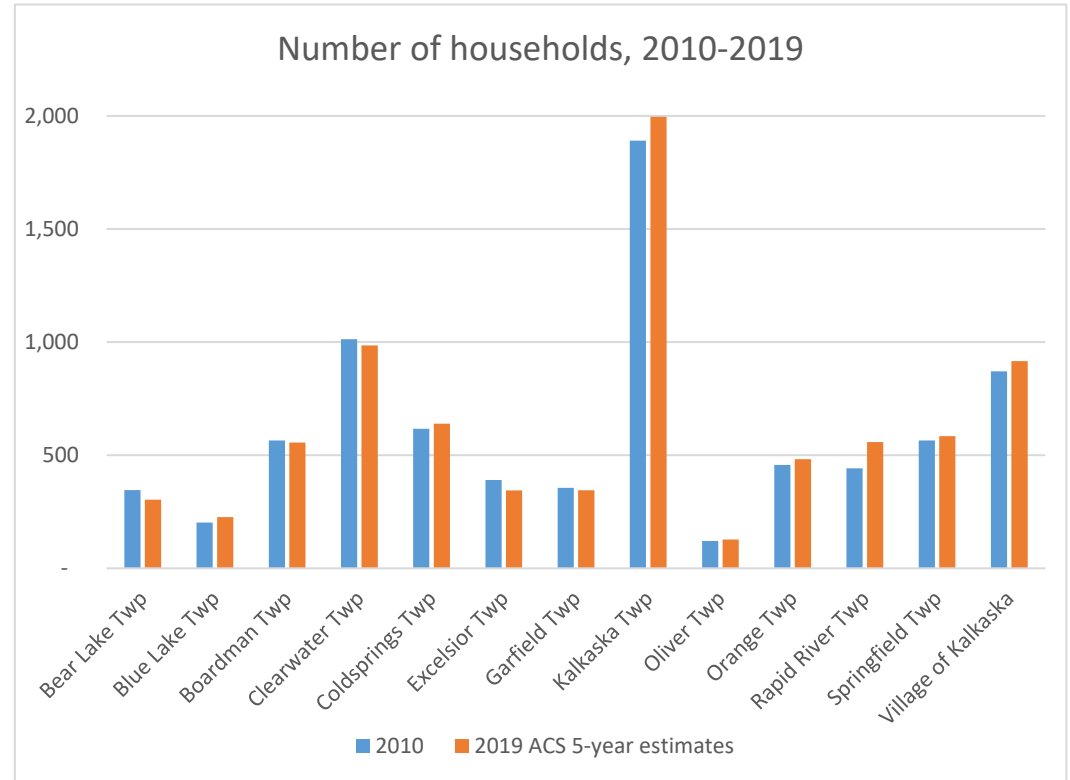
POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLDS

(How much will we grow?)

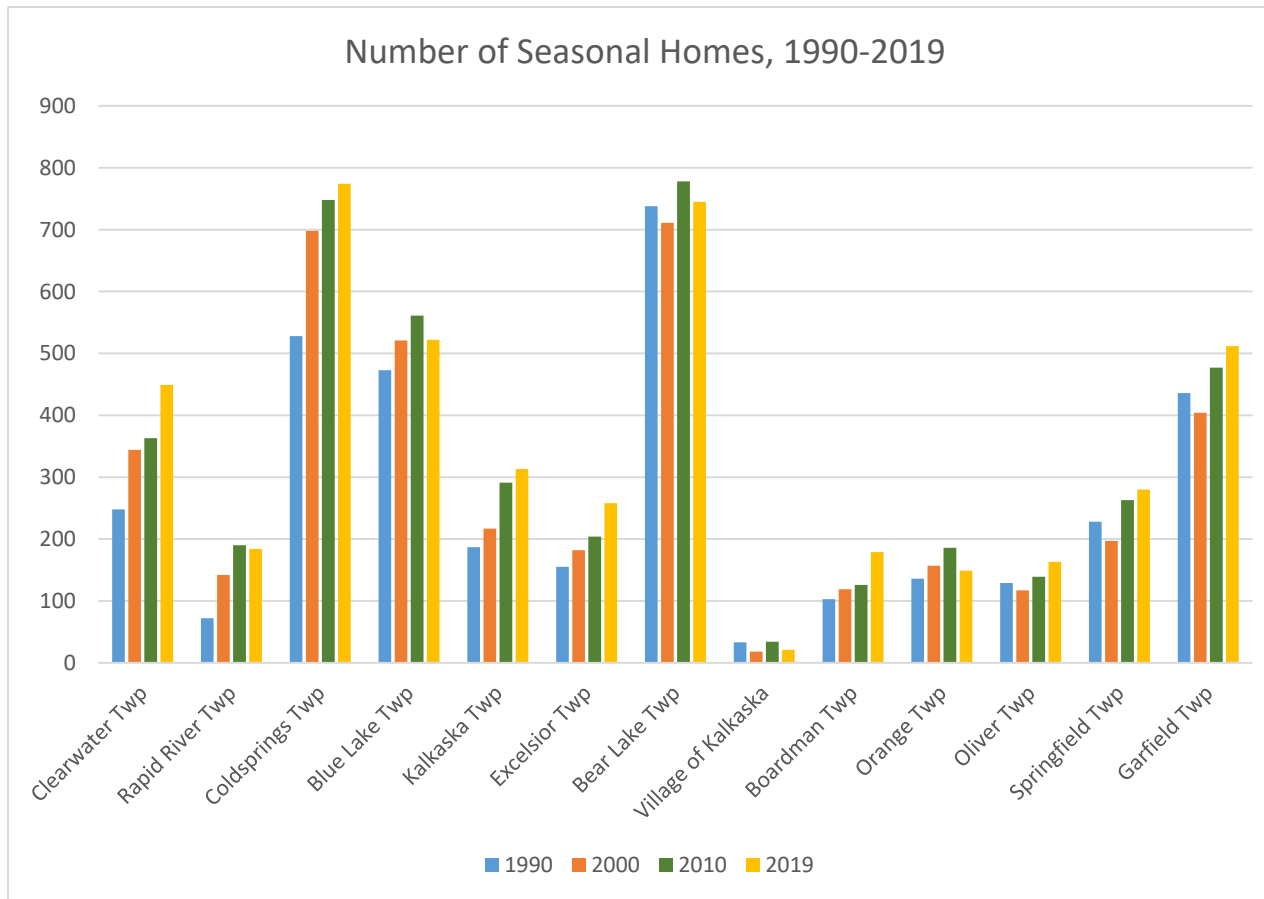
Number of Households (2019 ACS)

Community	2010	2019	Change
Clearwater Twp	1,013	985	-28
Rapid River Twp	442	558	116
Coldsprings Twp	617	639	22
Blue Lake Twp	202	226	24
Kalkaska Twp	1,891	1,996	105
Excelsior Twp	390	344	-46
Bear Lake Twp	346	303	-43
Village of Kalkaska	871	916	45
Boardman Twp	565	556	-9
Orange Twp	457	482	25
Oliver Twp	121	127	6
Springfield Twp	565	584	19
Garfield Twp	356	345	-11

- The total population of Kalkaska County in 2020 was 17,939 according to the U.S. Census Bureau.
- The average household size decreased from 2.55 in 2000 to 2.44 in 2010 but it remained stable in 2019 at 2.44.
- A household consists of all the people who occupy a housing unit, including family and non-family unions (US Census).



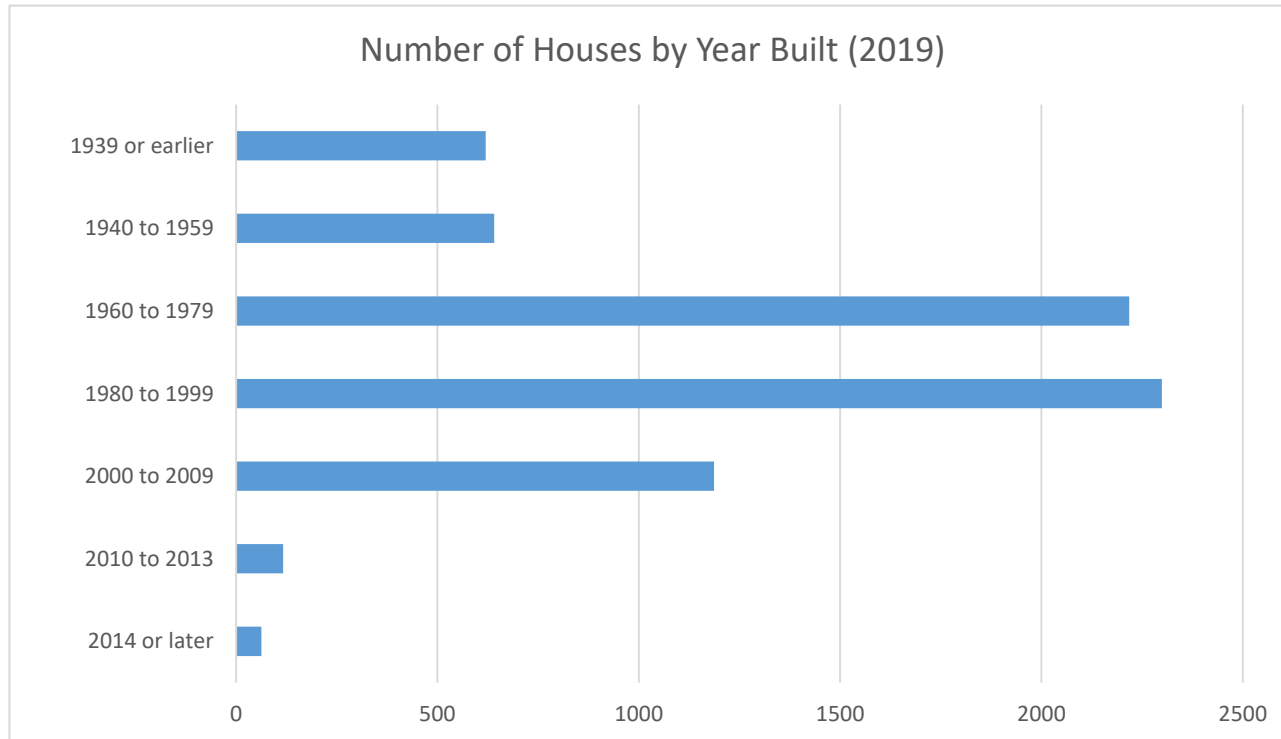
SEASONAL POPULATION *(Where are the seasonal homes?)*



- US Census defines a seasonal home as “a housing unit held for occupancy only during limited portions of the year, such as, a beach cottage, ski cabin, or time-share condominium.”
- In 2000, there were 3,827 seasonal homes in the county. They represented 35.3% of all homes.
- In 2010, there were 4,360 seasonal homes. They represented 35.5% of all homes.
- In 2019, there were 4,549 seasonal homes. They represented 39.3% of all homes.
- The percentage of seasonal homes have been slowly increasing over the years throughout the county.
- The increased popularity of short-term rentals may also be contributing to the increased number of seasonal homes in the County.
- The abundance of natural features and state-owned land make this area a desirable location for seasonal homes.

HOUSING TYPES

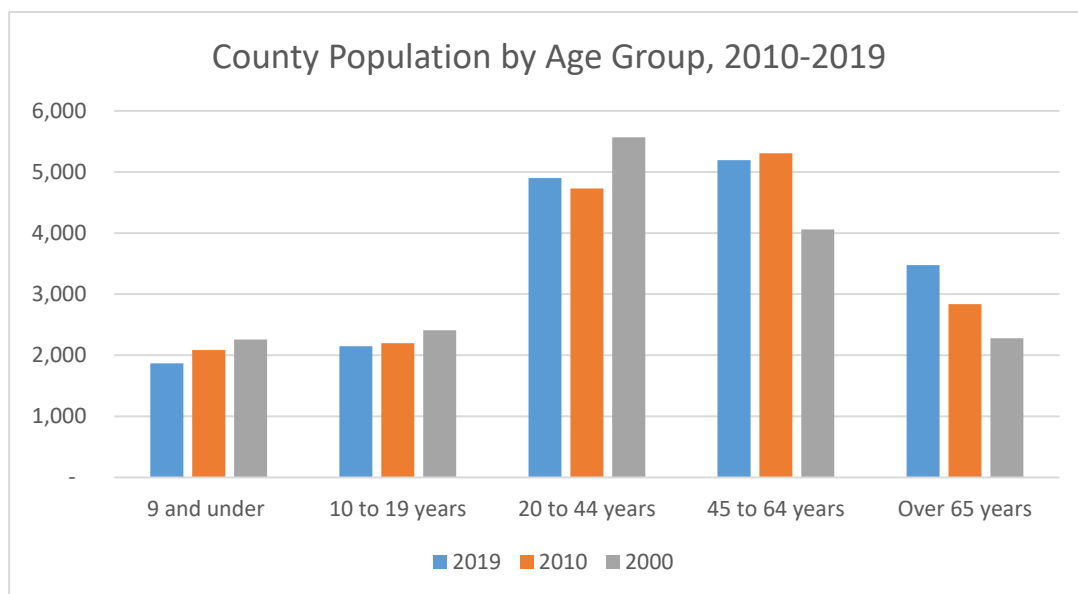
(What are the housing characteristics?)



- 9,662 housing units are single-family homes which makes up about 84% of the housing stock.
 - 61 housing units are duplex units. 40 duplexes were added in the last decade.
 - 575 housing units are multi-family homes.
 - 2,130 housing units are mobile homes.
 - 3 housing units are considered to be boats, RVs, vans, etc.
 - Of the 7,145 occupied homes, 5,901 are owner occupied and 1,244 are rented.
 - The median value of a housing unit is \$115,900. It has grown 22% in the last decade.
- 80% of the housing units were been built in 1960-2009.
 - In the 1970's, there was a housing boom due to the oil and gas industry.

AGE DISTRUBUTION

(How old are we?)



- The median age of Kalkaska County in 2019 was 44.4 according to the US Census. The median age of the State’s population is 39.8.
- 27.9% are between 20-44, representing the working age.
- 29.5% are between 45-64, representing the working age and early retirees.
- 19.8% are over 65.
- 22.8% are under 19.
- The increased number of people over the age of 65 suggests a need for amenities and services geared towards an older population.

Age	Male	Female	Total
9 and under	933	935	1,868
10 to 19 years	1,158	989	2,147
20 to 44 years	2,516	2,385	4,901
45 to 64 years	2,617	2,576	5,193
Over 65 years	1,719	1,757	3,476
Total	8,943	8,642	17,585

Source: 2019 American Community Survey

PERSONAL DATA

(What are our characteristics?)

2019 American Community Survey

- 50.9% or 8,943 are male. (2020 Census)
- 49.1% or 8,642 are female. (2020 Census)

- 16,671 people are white.
- 40 people are black or African American.
- 151 are American Indian.
- 60 are Asian.
- 3 are Pacific Islander.
- 121 are some other races.
- 893 are two or more races.

- There are 7,145 family households.
- 1,709 families have children (under 18 years of age)
- 3,746 are married-couple family households.
- There are 2,308 nonfamily households

- 87.3% of the population over 25 has a high school diploma or equivalency (or higher)
- 11.9% of the population over 25 has a bachelor's degree or higher.

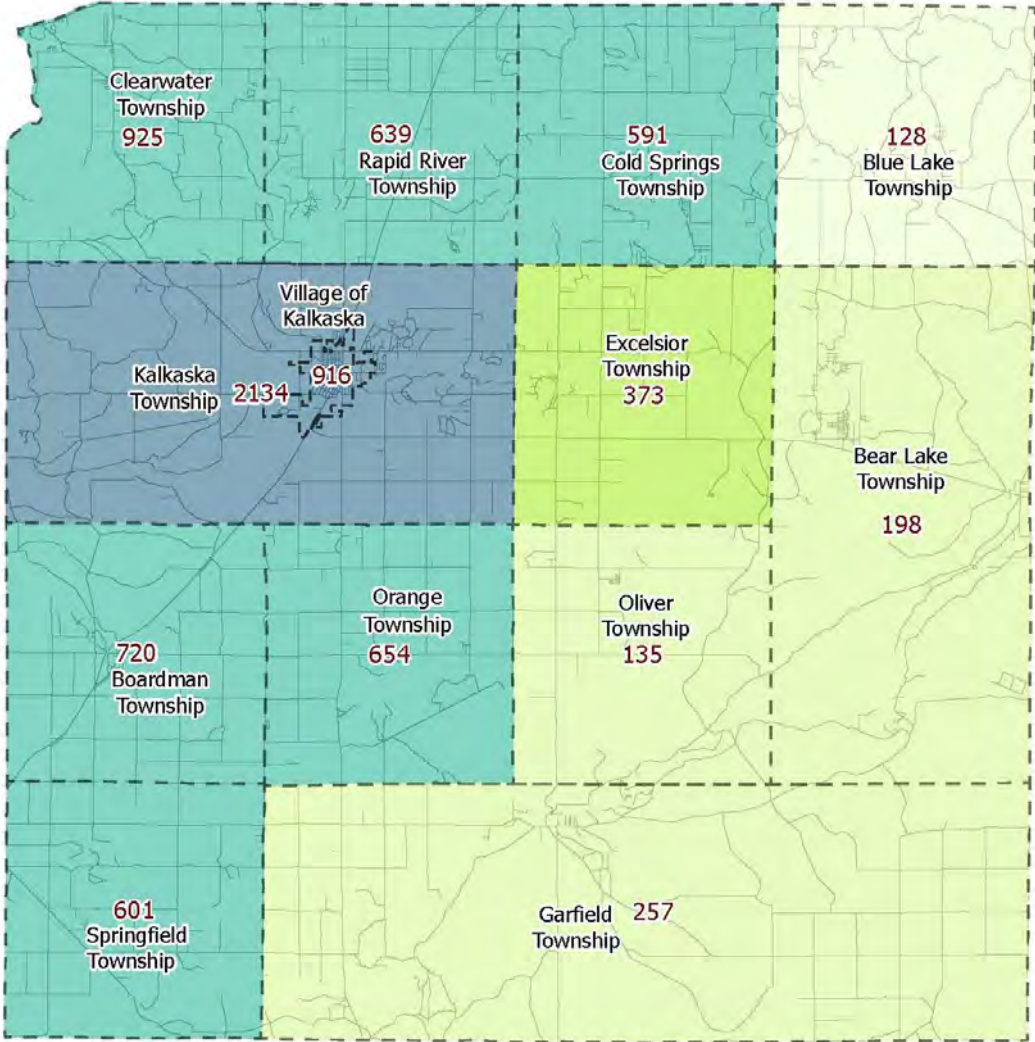


Construction, Village of Kaskaska

EMPLOYMENT

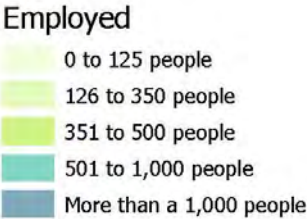
(What do we do?)

As of the 2019 American Community Survey*:



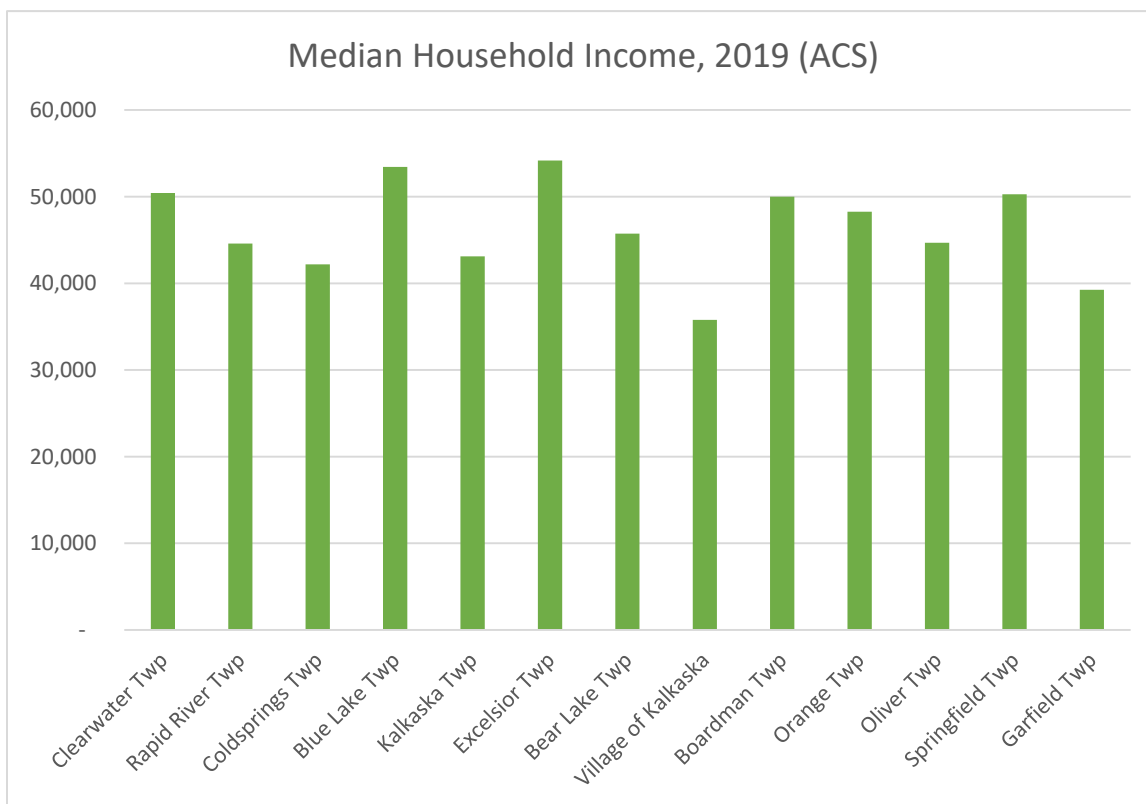
- 7,952 people are in the workforce.
- 7,355 people are employed. There was a 10% increase in employment since 2014.
- 584 people are unemployed. There was a 40% decrease in unemployment since 2014.
- 13 people are in the Armed Forces. 1,454 people are veterans.
- 3,609 people (51.2%) of the labor force are females.
- 44.5% of the population over the age of 16 is not in the labor force.
- The average travel time to work is 28.6 minutes.

Occupation (2019 ACS)	No. of people
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	1,497
Service occupations	1,613
Sales and office occupations	1,517
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	1,292
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	1,436



HOUSEHOLD INCOME

(How much money do we make?)

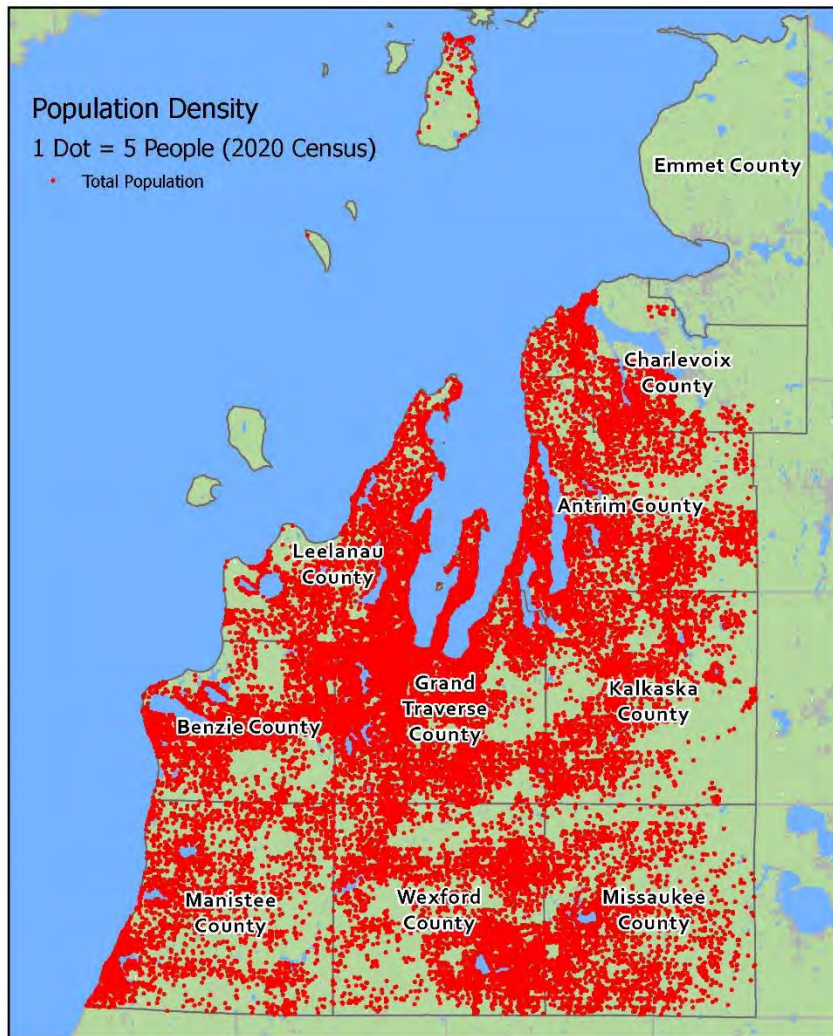


- The median household income for the entire County is \$46,898.

Household Income	Number of Households
Less than \$10,000	543
\$10,000 to \$14,999	379
\$15,000 to \$24,999	807
\$25,000 to \$34,999	843
\$35,000 to \$49,999	1,258
\$50,000 to \$74,999	1,522
\$75,000 to \$99,999	779
\$100,000 to \$149,999	707
\$150,000 to \$199,999	171
\$200,000 or more	121

NORTHWEST LOWER MICHIGAN

(How do we compare with our neighbors?)



2020 Regional Population Count

County	1990	2000	2010	2020
Antrim County	18,185	23,110	23,580	23,431
Benzie County	12,200	15,998	17,525	17,970
Charlevoix County	21,468	26,090	25,949	26,054
Emmet County	25,040	31,437	32,694	34,112
Grand Traverse County	64,273	77,654	86,986	95,238
Kalkaska County	13,497	16,571	17,153	17,939
Leelanau County	16,527	21,119	21,708	22,301
Manistee County	21,265	24,525	24,733	25,032
Missaukee County	12,147	14,478	14,849	15,052
Wexford County	26,360	30,484	32,735	33,673
Total	230,962	281,466	297,912	310,802

Northwest Lower Michigan gained 12,890 residents this past decade and grew an average of 4.3%. All of the counties, except Antrim County, gained in population, which is consistent with the statewide trend of people moving into this area from other parts of the State. Out of the 10 Counties, Kalkaska has the second smallest population (above Missaukee County). Higher populated counties are along Lake Michigan, displaying the desire of people to live near water. Kalkaska is the US-131 gateway to the region, and showcases the recreational and rural characteristics of the area.

CHAPTER 3

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

(What are the natural features?)

A review of the physical environment in Kankaska County provides the opportunity to look behind the scenes to review the conditions and factors that have influenced, and will continue to influence, the patterns of land use and development. These natural features offer aesthetic beauty, environmental protection, recreation, and functional land development options which can continue to reward present and future generations of residents for years to come. Efforts to conserve and protect will help ensure these valuable resources will be present for future generations to enjoy. A description of the individual elements of the County's natural features includes the topography, soils, lakes and streams, wetlands and drainage ways, and vegetative cover.



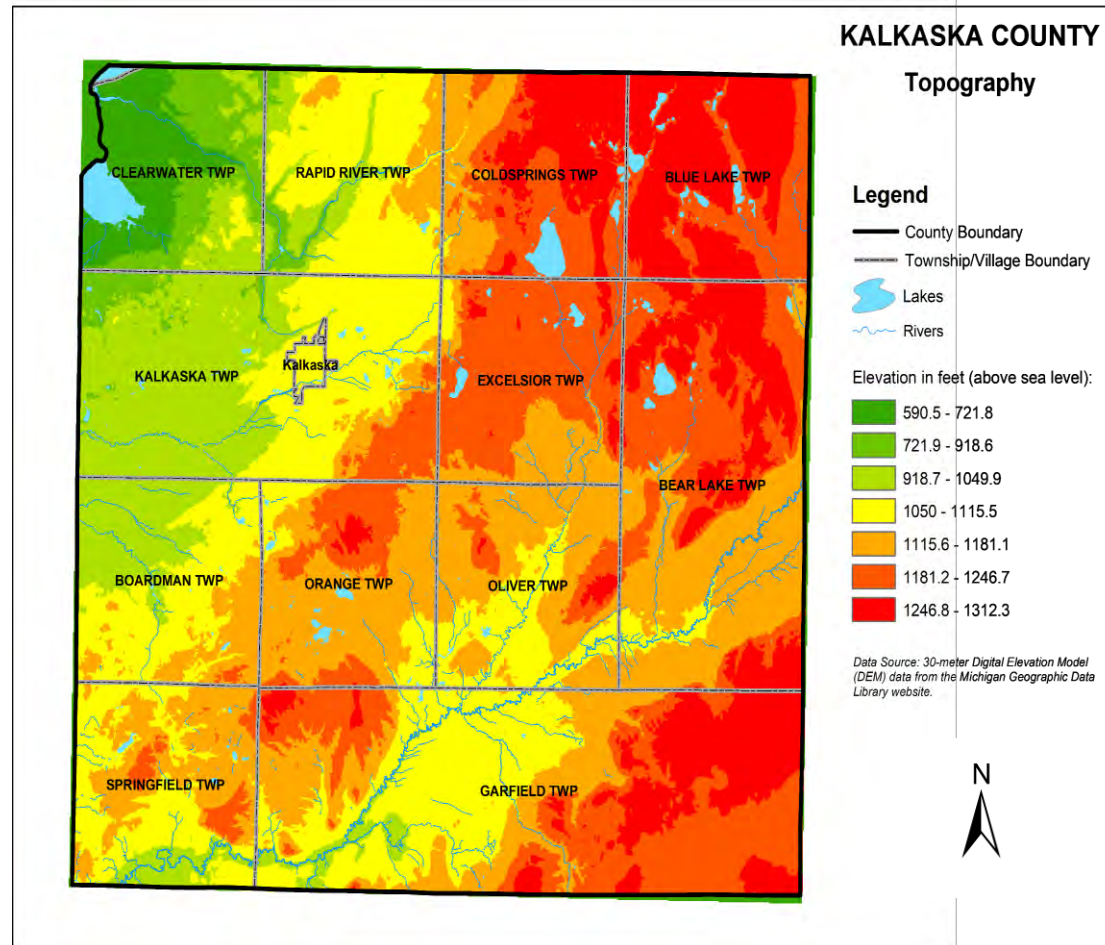
Rugg Pond, Rapid River Township

TOPOGRAPHY

(How is the land shaped?)

- Located over a geological formation known as the Salina-Niagaran Reef, Kalkaska County sits 7,000 feet above one of the most successful oil producing basins in the state.
- Kalkaska County is generally classified as hill-land, plains and upland plains. Level to gently rolling hills and slopes cover the mid-section of the County. Hills and ridges run through the east half and northwest section with elevations from 1,000 to 1,400 feet above sea level.
- A plateau divides the watershed in Kalkaska County from the Manistee River on the southeast and that of the Boardman and Rapid Rivers on the northwest.

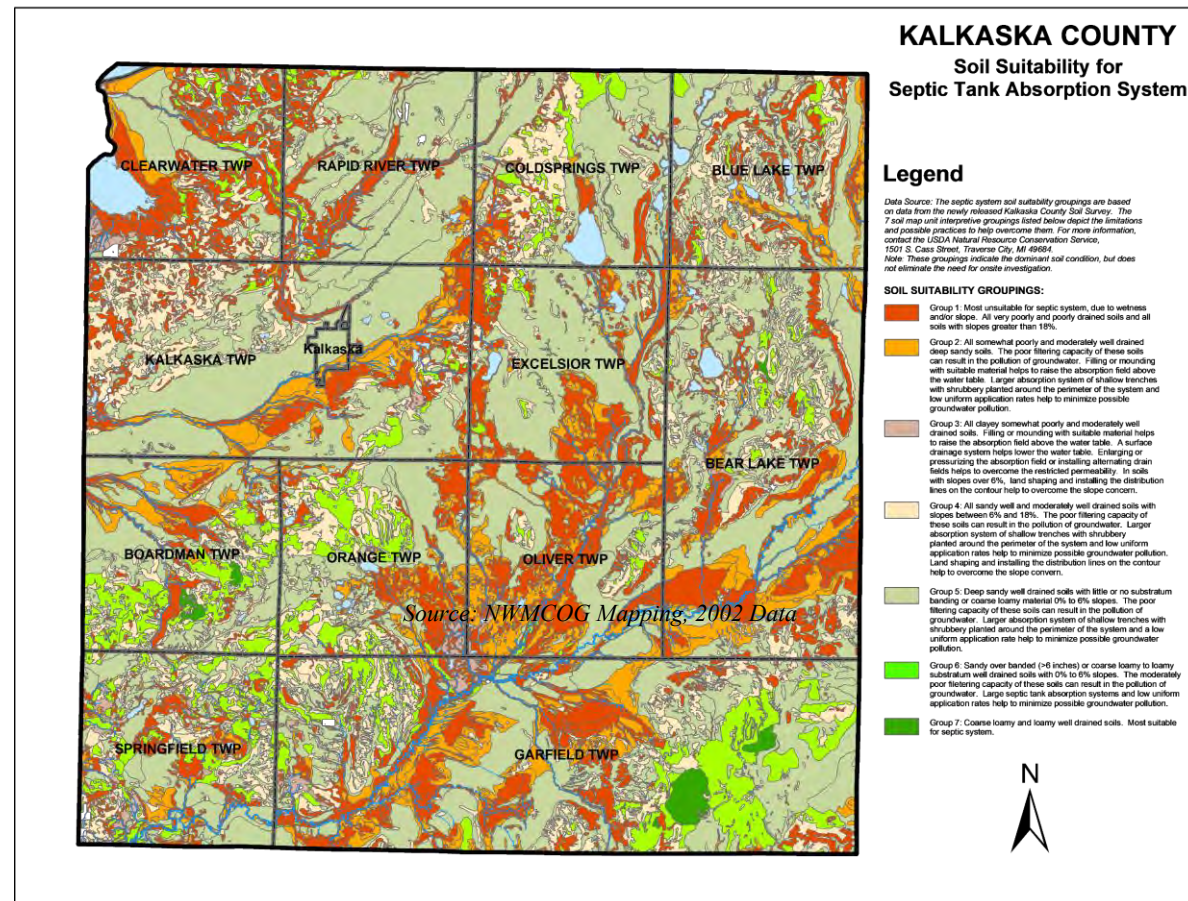
Source: NWCOG Mapping, 2002 Data



SOILS- #1

(How do they affect development?)

- To determine the nature and extent of future land uses in Kalkaska County, soil limitations become an important factor.
- Soil types determine the drainage conditions, erosion hazards, building suitability, plant fertility and the effectiveness of septic tank sewage disposal.
- A majority of the soils along the stream corridors and around the lakes are unsuitable for septic systems.
- The poor filtering capacity of Groups 4, 5, and 6 make them highly susceptible to groundwater pollution.



SOILS- #2

(What did the legend say?)

Data Source: The septic system soil suitability groupings are based on data from the newly released Kalkaska County Soil Survey. The 7 soil map unit interpretive groupings listed below depict the limitations and possible practices to help overcome them. For more information, contact the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, 1501 S. Cass Street, Traverse City, MI 49684. Note: These groupings indicate the dominant soil condition, but does not eliminate the need for onsite investigation.

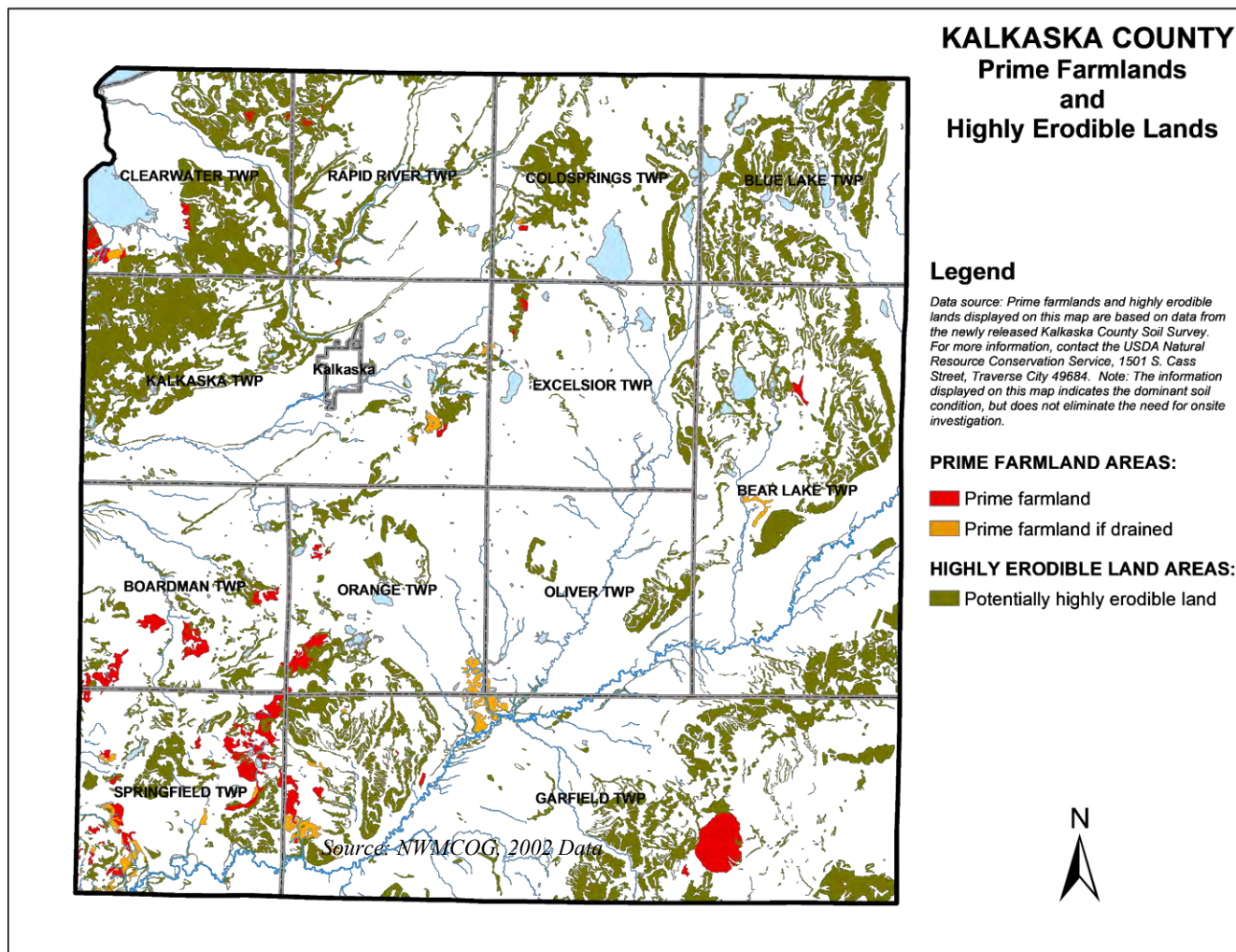
SOIL SUITABILITY GROUPINGS:

-  Group 1: Most unsuitable for septic system, due to wetness and/or slope. All very poorly and poorly drained soils and all soils with slopes greater than 18%.
-  Group 2: All somewhat poorly and moderately well drained deep sandy soils. The poor filtering capacity of these soils can result in the pollution of groundwater. Filling or mounding with suitable material helps to raise the absorption field above the water table. Larger absorption system of shallow trenches with shrubbery planted around the perimeter of the system and low uniform application rates help to minimize possible groundwater pollution.
-  Group 3: All clayey somewhat poorly and moderately well drained soils. Filling or mounding with suitable material helps to raise the absorption field above the water table. A surface drainage system helps lower the water table. Enlarging or pressurizing the absorption field or installing alternating drain fields helps to overcome the restricted permeability. In soils with slopes over 6%, land shaping and installing the distribution lines on the contour help to overcome the slope concern.
-  Group 4: All sandy well and moderately well drained soils with slopes between 6% and 18%. The poor filtering capacity of these soils can result in the pollution of groundwater. Larger absorption system of shallow trenches with shrubbery planted around the perimeter of the system and low uniform application rates help to minimize possible groundwater pollution. Land shaping and installing the distribution lines on the contour help to overcome the slope concern.
-  Group 5: Deep sandy well drained soils with little or no substratum banding or coarse loamy material 0% to 6% slopes. The poor filtering capacity of these soils can result in the pollution of groundwater. Larger absorption system of shallow trenches with shrubbery planted around the perimeter of the system and a low uniform application rate help to minimize possible groundwater pollution.
-  Group 6: Sandy over banded (>6 inches) or coarse loamy to loamy substratum well drained soils with 0% to 6% slopes. The moderately poor filtering capacity of these soils can result in the pollution of groundwater. Large septic tank absorption systems and low uniform application rates help to minimize possible groundwater pollution.
-  Group 7: Coarse loamy and loamy well drained soils. Most suitable for septic system.

SOILS- #3

(How else do soils affect us?)

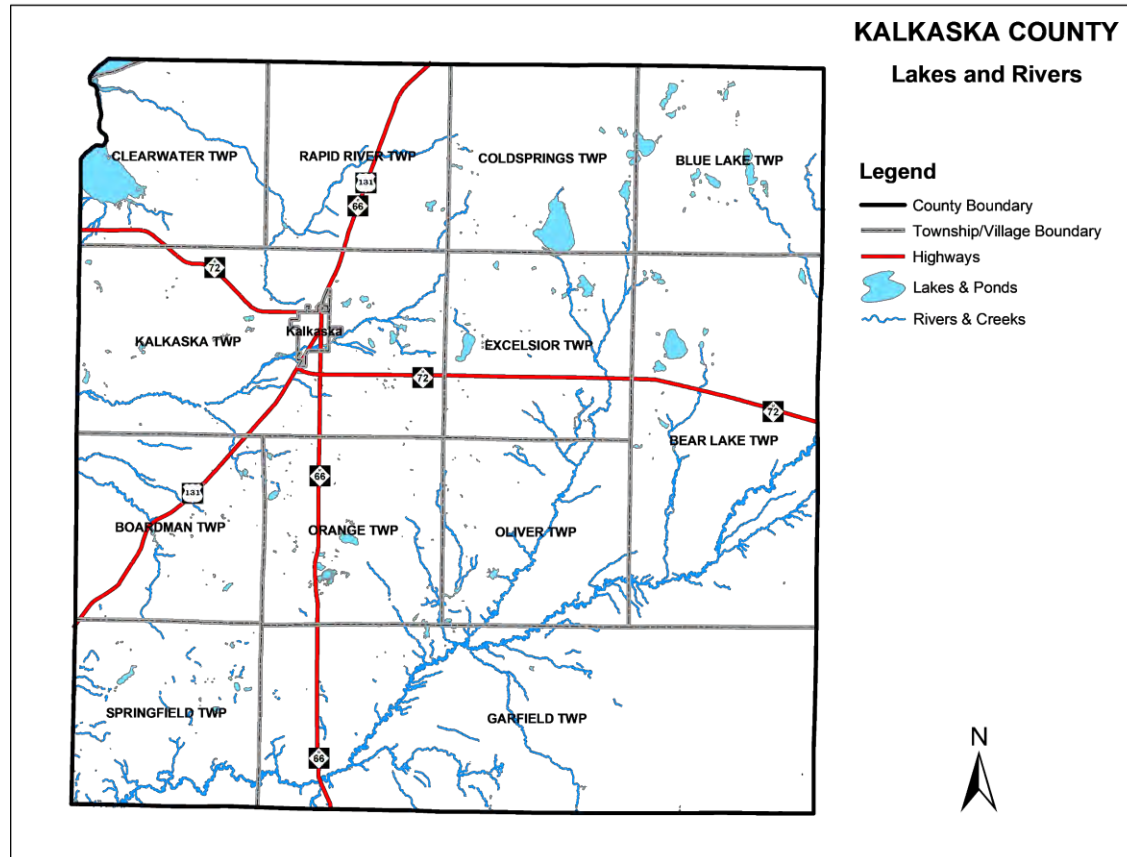
- There are 4,621 acres of prime farmland soil.
- There are 1,717 acres of prime farmland soil if drained.
- 68,193 acres of land are potential highly erodible.
- Current agricultural operations are not occurring in the locations that have been designated prime farmland.



LAKES AND STREAMS

(What lakes and streams?)

- Kalkaska County is a prime recreational area within the State, as reflected in its over 273 miles of rivers and streams and more than 86 lakes.
- Totalling over 6,000 acres, or 2 percent of the County, several of the State's most recognizable rivers flow through its borders, including the Manistee, Boardman, Rapid, and Torch Rivers.
- Foremost among the lakes are Log, Bear, Starvation, Twin, Crawford, Manistee, and Torch. Highly popular with permanent and seasonal residents alike, much of the County's residential activity has occurred along their edges and borders.
- These areas are under heavy growth pressure as new homes are being built near these areas and/or seasonal homes become year-round homes. Therefore special attention to building placement and allowed uses is critical.

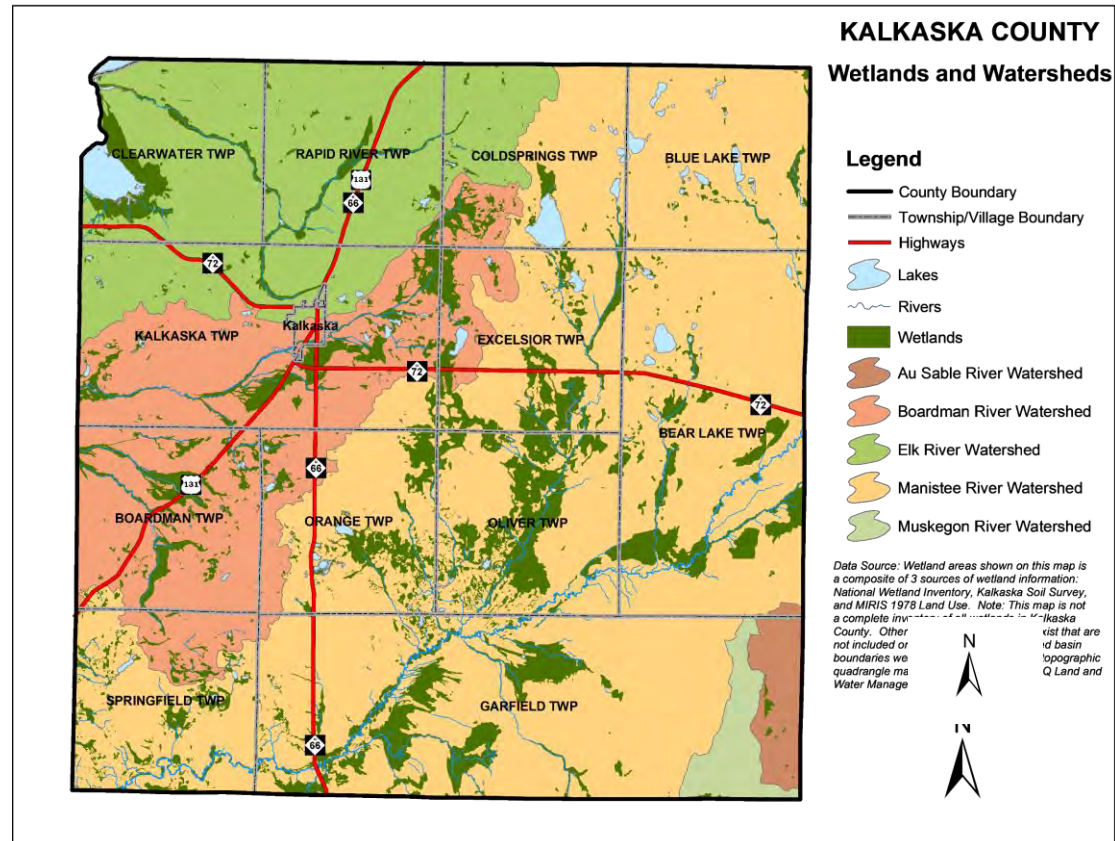


Source: NWCOG Mapping, 2002 Data

WETLANDS AND WATERSHEDS

(Where are the wetlands?)

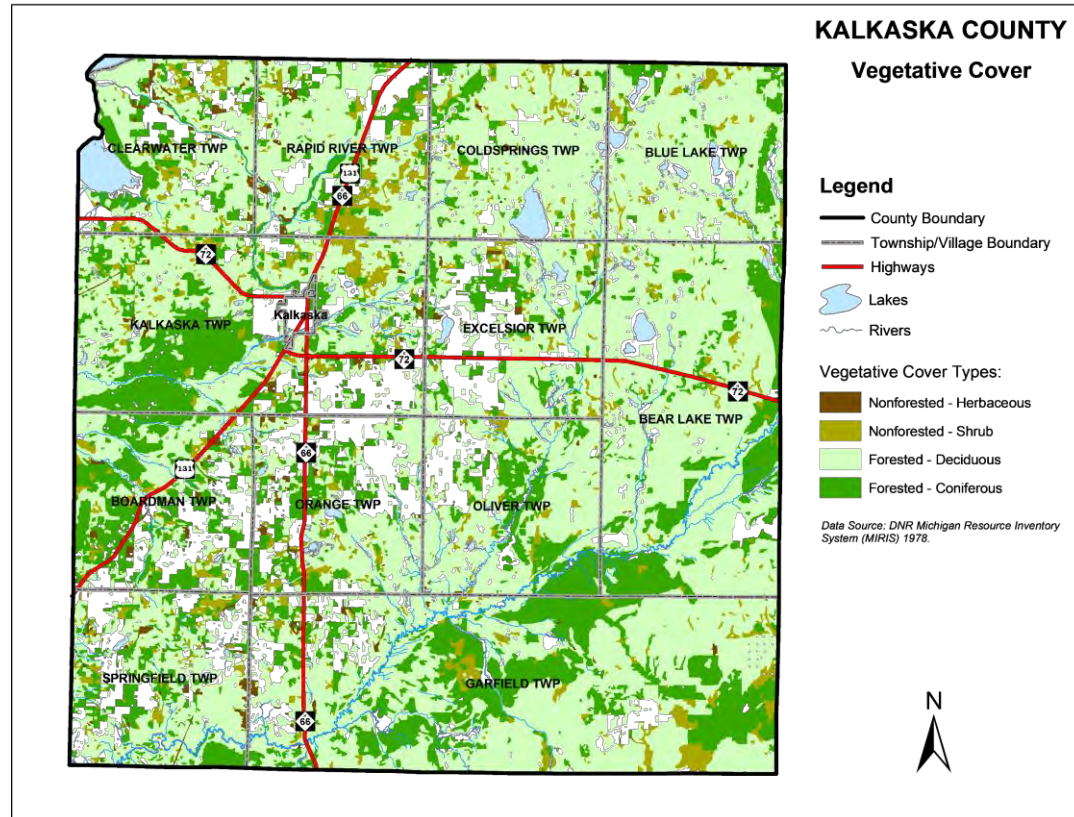
- Scattered throughout Kalkaska County are wetland areas which are important to the biological diversity of plant and animal species living there.
- There are nearly 7,000 acres of wetlands in the County providing a distinctive network of natural areas, most often following rivers and streams.
- The largest portion of wetlands are considered shrub, comprising more than 5,000 acres, followed by emergent wetlands, 1007 acres, flats with 711 acres and aquatic beds of 110 acres.
- Wetlands are natural lowland areas where excess runoff from rainfalls, rivers, and other natural cycles, accumulate and provide habitat for many plants and animals, as well as for a wide-ranging migratory bird population.
- The largest wetland areas in the County are found in Garfield Township, within the State forest system.



VEGETATIVE COVER

(What is the vegetation?)

- Forestland in Kalkaska County is bountiful.
- Originally, the County was covered with heavy timber, primarily maple. Logging in the late nineteenth century cleared most of the timberland, leaving infertile soils and the landscape bare from clear-cutting.
- Much of the forest-covered land is protected by the State as part of the State Forest system.
- 82,513 acres are considered to be nonforested.
- 204,863 acres are forested with deciduous trees and shrubs.
- 77,729 acres are forested with coniferous trees and shrubs.



CHAPTER 4

EXISTING LAND USE

(What exists now?)

It is important to know and understand the current land uses and development patterns for Kalkaska County when planning for its future. As mentioned in previous chapters, current development patterns have been affected by the large amounts of state-owned land, the physical features such as the rivers and streams, and by the location of the highways. These trends are seen in the Existing Land Use Map from 1978 and in the Generalized Land Use Map from 2002. Other factors that influence current development patterns and the future of the County include land division, infrastructure, and the economy. These factors, along with the Transportation Plan, form the basis for the Future Land Plan described in Chapter 7.



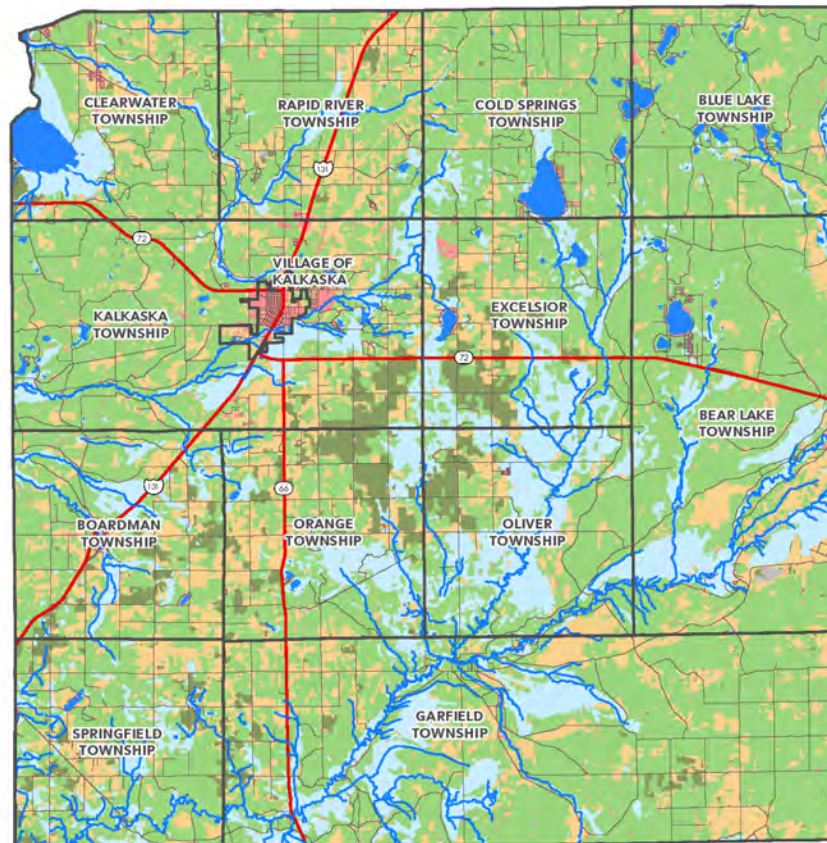
Walnut Street, Village of Kalkaska

LAND USE COVER MAP

(What were the official land uses?)

In 1978, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Land and Water Management Division developed a comprehensive database of statewide land cover and use called the Michigan Resource Information System (MIRIS). The County was separated into Urban, Agricultural, Nonforested, Forested, Water, Wetland, and Barren land use classifications.

- Most of the County is forested. Forested areas are made up of upland hardwoods, pine, aspen, and birch.
- A majority of the agricultural lands is in the center of the County. Orange Township has the highest concentration of farmlands.
- Developed areas are in the Village of Kalkaska, Boardman Township, Clearwater Township, and around the lakes.
- The urbanized area in Bear Lake Township on Howe Road is a military facility.
- Modern development patterns are similar to 1978.

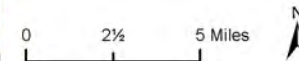


Kalkaska County
Land Cover 2019

Legend

- Township/Village Boundary
- Rivers/Streams
- Highway
- Roads
- Land Cover Categories**
- Open Water
- Urban
- Barren Land
- Forests
- Grasslands
- Agricultural
- Wetlands

Source: National Land Cover Database (NLCD) 2019

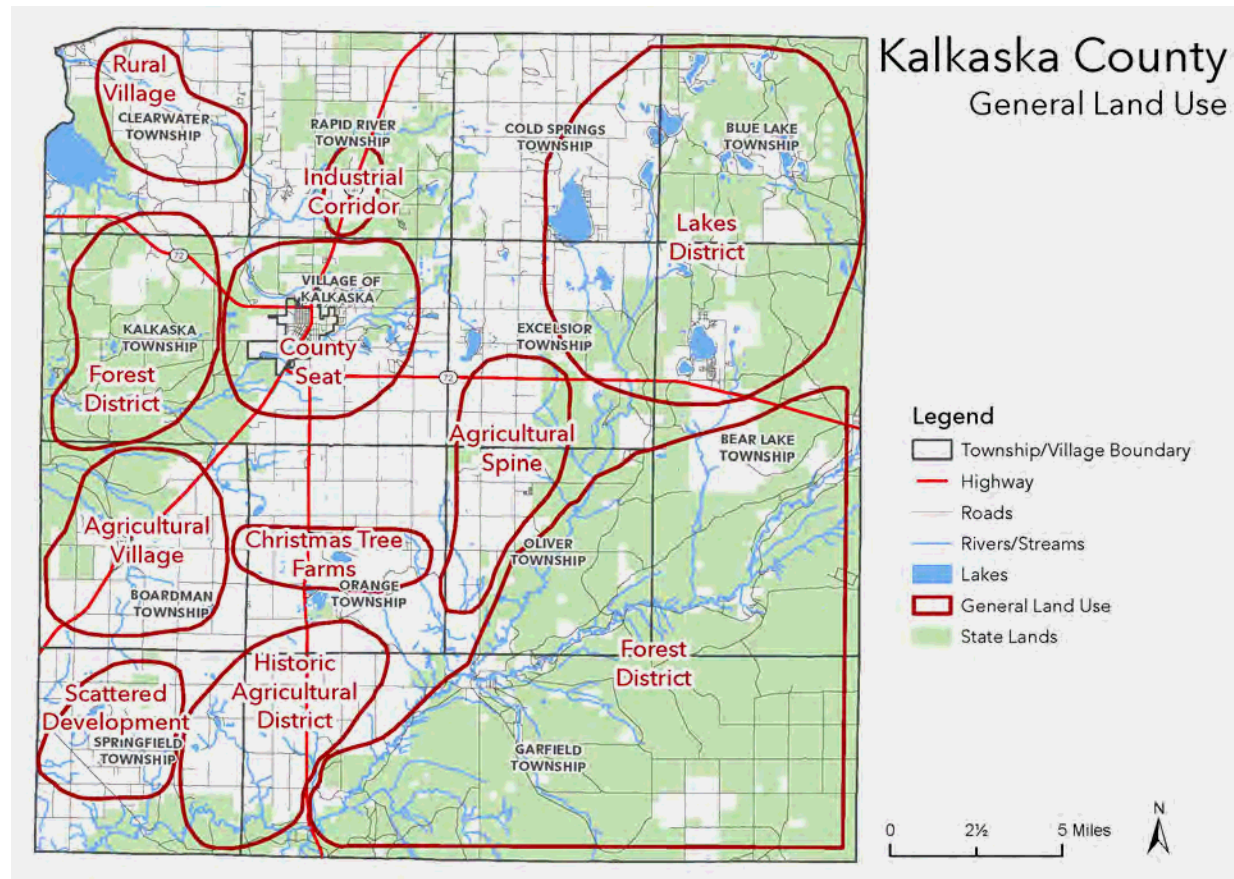


GENERALIZED LAND USE MAP

(What are the current land uses?)

In the summer of 2002, a land use map showing the generalized land use patterns throughout Kalkaska County was created. The intent of the map was to take a broad view of the County and to show the existing development and land use patterns. A description of the categories follows this page.

- Development patterns are similar to 1978.
- The highest concentration of population is in the County Seat, which includes the Village of Kalkaska and its outer areas.
- Major development has occurred along the highways.
- Privately owned land along the rivers is being developed.
- Although agriculture is not as prevalent, it still exists in the central part of the County.
- Development in the eastern part of the County is limited due to large amounts of state-owned land.



GENERALIZED LAND USE CATEGORIES

(What are the descriptions?)

These descriptions are not specific. They are meant to be used to give a snapshot of the type of development or land use that currently exists in the specified area. The descriptions are based on what is seen from the road. Much of Kalkaska's existing character is determined by this view. These categories were used as a base to develop the Future Land Use Plan.

- County Seat: Primarily is the area for commercial and industrial uses. This area includes the Village of Kalkaska and the surrounding area. Residential patterns vary from being dense to being more spread out. This location serves as the County's "downtown" area. Government operations are located here.
- Rural Village: The development along Rapid City Road, including Rapid City. Development consists of mixed housing styles and commercial uses. This area functions as the gateway to employment and is a tourist destination.
- Industrial Corridor: Land uses north of Kalkaska Village on US 131 are primarily commercial and industrial. Commercial operations include motels, restaurants, and large size retail stores. Industrial uses include processing operations. Strip development patterns exist.
- Agricultural Village: Includes the South Boardman area, which has a small town feel. It is made of small cottages and homes and contains two schools, a post office, and an old-style windmill. This area is surrounded by farmlands and services their needs. Development around this area is more modernized, including a commercial strip development along US 131.
- Lakes District: Development consists of small and quaint houses along the lakeshores. There are unimproved and gravel roads. Homes are tucked in the woods. This area is heavily forested. Tree canopies align the roads. Small commercial operations serve the nearby population.
- Forest District: The majority of the land is state-owned. This area is heavily forested with mature woodlands. Hunting and fishing cabins are throughout this area, especially along the Manistee River. Residential homes are tucked in the trees. Tree canopies align the roads. Roads vary from unpaved local roads to paved arterial roads.

Agricultural Spine: This area contains active farming. Farm products include potatoes, corn, and wheat. Views from the road are large, contiguous farm fields with barns and silos. Trees surround the farm field edges.

Historic Agricultural District: Remnants of active farmlands remain. Vegetation and topography give a prairie impression. This area has lots of old barns and farm structures. There are various types of homes scattered throughout the area.

Scattered Development: This area is primarily scattered homes mixed with mobile homes. Development in this location is very rural looking.

Christmas Tree Farms: Fields of Christmas trees dominate this area.

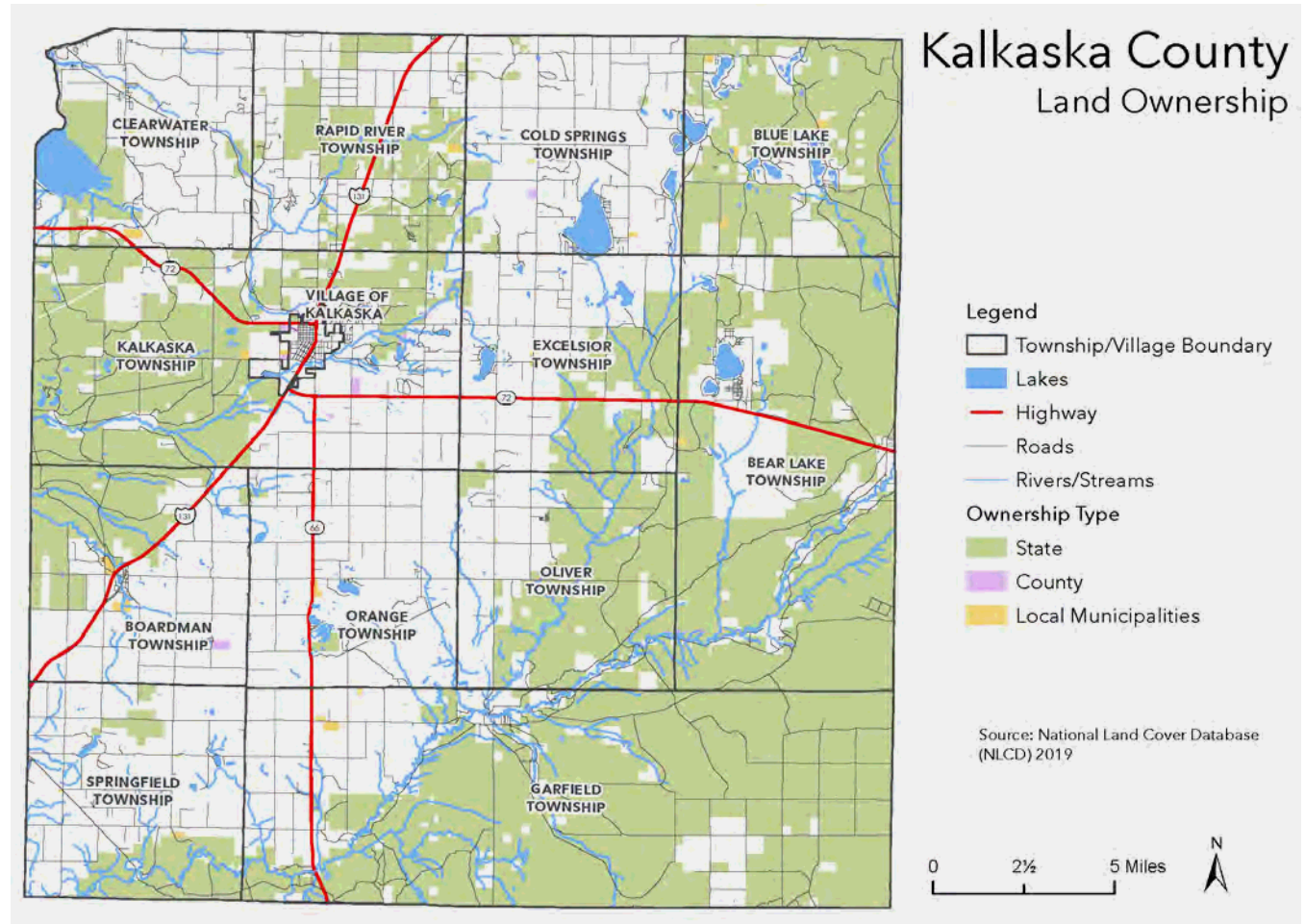


Tree Farm, Orange Township

OWNERSHIP

(Who owns what?)

- Total number of acres in Kalkaska County is 410,455.
- 357,580 acres is dry land.
- 169,708 acres or 41.3 % of the County is owned by the State of Michigan.
- 1,005 acres or 0.2 % is owned by municipalities.
- 361 acres or 0.1% of the land is owned by the County.
- 186,506 acres or 45.4 % is privately owned.

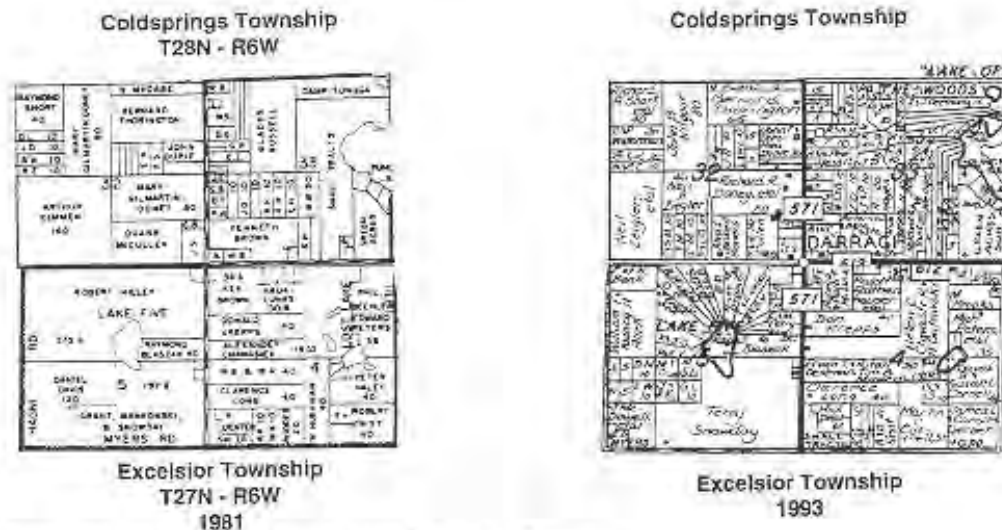


LAND DIVISION

(What is happening to the land?)

The subdivision of large parcels into 10 acre or smaller lots is widespread in Kalkaska. Over time it results in significant landscape change as new homes are built. Because lot lines are not visible on the ground, land fragmentation goes largely unnoticed by the public. Land division patterns largely dictate the opportunities and constraints for accommodating new land uses and preserving those that exist. Land division trends have been expressed in different ways across the County. There are many areas in the County where parcels as small as 10 acres dominate the development patterns, not including the smaller lots associated with platted subdivisions. This pattern of land division is evident in sections 32 and 33 of Coldsprings Township and sections 4 and 5 of Excelsior Township.

Land fragmentation can significantly impact natural resource systems. Woodlands and wetlands function best when they exist in concert with surrounding natural conditions. Fragmenting, followed by road or home construction, often diminishes the benefits natural systems are capable of providing, such as wildlife habitats, flood control, and water purification. Knowing and understanding the results of this pattern is critical when planning for the County's future.



Land Divisions and Ownership in Coldsprings and Excelsior Townships from Plat Maps, 1981 and 1993

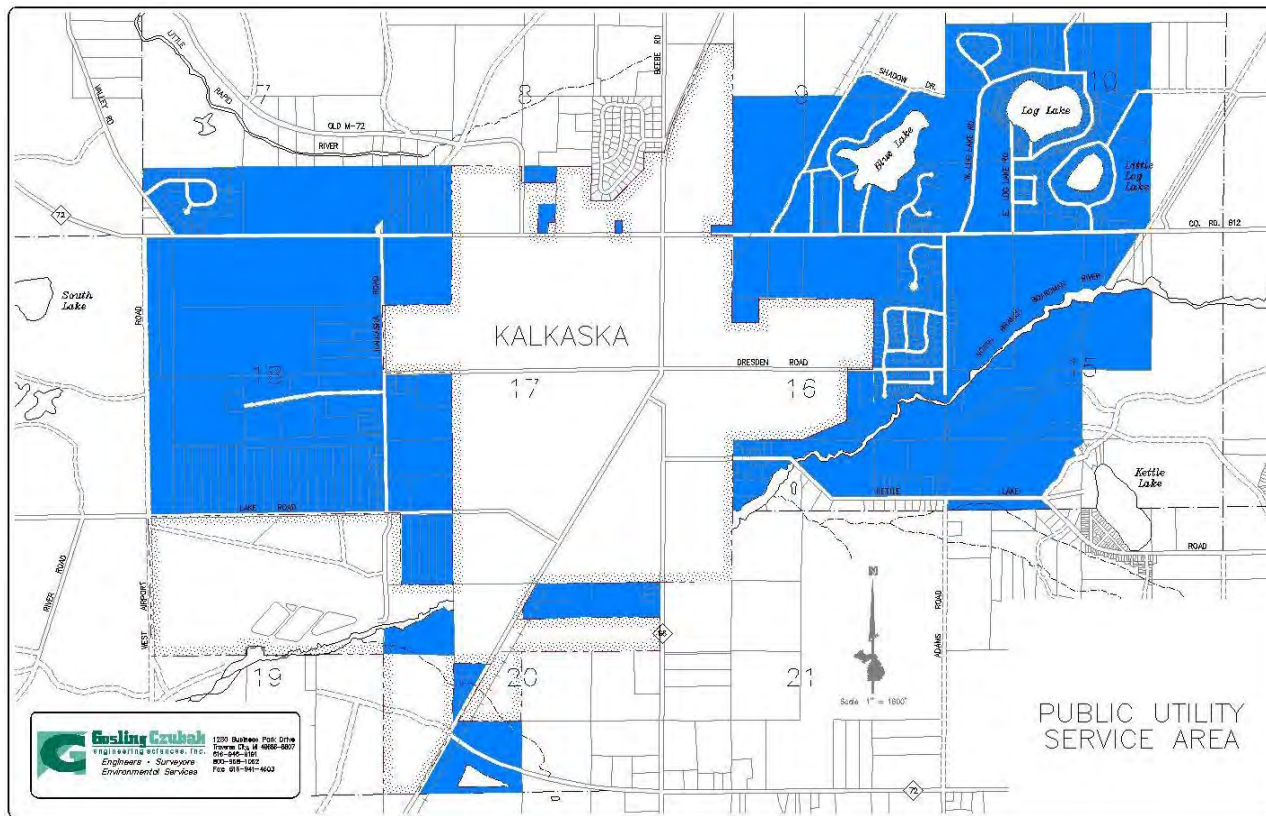
Source: Land Atlas and Plat Book, Kalkaska County, Rockford Map Publishers

INFRASTRUCTURE

(What are the capabilities?)

Public utilities (particularly sewer and water systems), play an important role in determining the nature and type of future growth that can be accommodated within a community. Depending on an individual's perspective, the provision of public services could be either a positive or negative factor in establishing the overall character of a community and its ability to guide growth into some areas and away from others. Consequently, decisions on where to place/offer public services are an important feature of any long-range plan.

The only public sewer and water system in the County is in the Village of Kalkaska. The system has sufficient capacity to meet foreseeable demand. A sewer system plays a key role in accommodating the more intense land development that occurs within the County.



The Village and the Township have an agreement to limit the expansion of the water and sewer system, as depicted in blue on the “Public Utility Service Area” plan. The Village and Township are also considering the installation of a public well within the designated service area to address the increased demand. High-density residential development, large-scale commercial operations, and intense industrial uses will occur within this area, and more than likely not in other parts of the County.

SEPTIC SYSTEMS

(What are the concerns?)

Many residents within the county rely on individual well and septic systems within the limits of the soil capacity. Individual systems offer great flexibility in locational choices for new housing. At the same time, use of private systems imposes certain conditions that must be adhered to if the quality of the physical environment is to be preserved in the future. The health department is responsible for proper placement and functions of a septic system during the permitting process.

ECONOMY

(What are our economic resources?)

Population and economic growth have, to a large extent, occurred as a result of the abundance and quality of natural resources within the County. The lakes, rivers, and public lands offer a wide range of recreational opportunities for the visitor and permanent resident alike. With over 154,000 acres of public land, Kalkaska is truly a year-round tourist and resort center. Hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, skiing, swimming, and boating are all available recreation opportunities within the County. The accessibility of these features is the main reason why people choose to live and work in Kalkaska County.

In 1991, an assessment of the economic climate of Kalkaska County was undertaken with the objective of analyzing forces affecting the economy, changes over time, and opportunities for the future. This assessment was based upon historical data and observations, as well as interviews with County residents, business leaders, and public officials.

A number of locational advantages were identified which have contributed, and will continue to contribute, to Kalkaska's economy into the future. Proximity to Traverse City (within 20 miles) was identified as a major asset. Firms locating in the County can have the benefit of low taxes, little congestion, and proximity to the attractions of Traverse City. Major highways, rail service, pipelines, and the nearby Cherry Capitol Airport were also identified as important assets which shape the area's economy (Refer to the Master Plan for Economic Development, November 1991, Public Sector Consultants, Inc.) Additional locational advantages include a low tax rate compared to surrounding counties; a competitive and capable labor force; lower wage rates compared to other Michigan counties; and less expensive land.

Locational and economic factors are advantages, but not assurances, however, that the County will have a strong and viable economy in the future. The timing and future realignment of US-131 and of other improved infrastructure, however, will greatly affect the economic future of the County. While improving the infrastructure basis for new businesses, and pursuing new business development are important, the County must also strive to maintain its existing employment base. Ongoing population growth and subsequent commercial development will provide the opportunity to strengthen the local economy, as will continuing investment by various entities in infrastructure and enhancement of recreational opportunities.

CHAPTER 5

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

(What is our direction?)

Guiding Principles are statements that guide decision making relative to land use, transportation, and public improvements. The fourteen (14) Guiding Principles were developed by the Planning Commission and are the crux of this Master Plan. Each one is tailored to aid the county in guiding growth. These Principles were developed with input from the Kalkaska County Board of Commissioners. They should be looked at when reviewing development proposals, administering or amending the zoning ordinance, and considering public input. Each principle includes a list of policy statements to be used in following the guiding principle.



North View from Wood Road, Rapid River Township

Where do we go from here?

Guiding Principle #1: Preserve the rural character of the County. Rural character is central to the County’s identity and maintaining it is important to the future. Kalkaska County is not known as an urban area and wants to keep it that way. Understanding and encouraging land use patterns that promote this characteristic is critical.

Policies: The following are the policies to preserve rural character:

- Save as many trees as possible, replace them whenever possible.
- Minimize road infrastructure that would result in excessive widening, paving, and curbing. Design roads to follow the natural contour. Keep roads narrow.
- Discourage outside lighting. Only permit lighting where site-specific safety conditions are a factor.
- Encourage developments to be designed around common elements, such as a park, open space, or civic building, etc.
- Encourage cluster developments.
- Preserve the continuity of natural features and greenway infrastructure such as woodlands and wetlands as a means to preserve permanent open space.
- Promote natural vegetation.
- Establish incentives to encourage the incorporation of desirable views and vistas, woodlands, farmlands, and the protection of ridgelines into development plans.
- Manage and control growth, don’t allow it to control the County.
- Carefully regulate things that could have a negative visual or character affect on the County, commercial operations such as sexually-oriented businesses, wind towers, and communication towers.
- Discourage spot-zoning and “leapfrog” zoning, as these practices are contradictory to the preservation of rural character. Additionally, encourage approval of development applications only when the proposal would not undermine the County’s rural character; and only when the proposal is viewed as a logical expansion of an adjacent district that is consistent with the Master Plan.



Orange Township

Guiding Principle #2: Maintain the rural character and appearance of the highway and road corridors. The views people see while driving on highways and roads affect their feelings about the County. Preserving the beautiful vantage points, forested areas, and rustic settings is one of the highest priorities of the County. Current zoning and land use patterns allow residential development along these corridors, which can change their character. Every effort should be made to protect them from inappropriate development or ill-suited development such as signage, billboards, multiple access points, obtrusive building placement, and ridgeline development.

Policies: The following are the policies to maintain the rural character and appearance of highway and road corridors.

- Hide development. Prohibit structures on ridgelines and discourage development along the roadway in open fields.
- Preserve viewsheds. Don't allow zoning to permit obtrusive development in areas having a high visual quality.
- Preserve the existing tree lines and canopy along the roads. Maintain the trees and replant them when needed.
- Place all structures and buildings within and adjacent to tree lines and wooded field edges and minimize vegetative clearing.
- Keep the long vistas of open space and wooded areas along the roads; don't allow them to be broken up.



Off of Rapid City Road, Clearwater Township



M-72 east, Clearwater Township

- Retain the treed area between the structure and the roadway. Incorporate deep setbacks from the road.
- Discourage zone district leapfrogging along roadways.
- Minimize driveway cuts. Implement access management.
- Keep it clean. Control signage and limit billboards.

Guiding Principle #3: Maintain the natural corridors and patterns and weave them into the plan. Natural features and resources add to the quality of life and affect the character of the County. Sensitive areas such as wetlands, rivers, streams, and water bodies are the fabric around which development is formed. Guidelines and criteria that encourage development consistent with air, water, land, woodlands, and sensitive environmental protection objectives are important.

Policies: The following are the policies to maintain the natural corridors and patterns and weave them into the plan.

- Preserve and connect the valuable resources that define Kalkaska County and give it character such as the wetlands, rivers, streams, and water bodies.
- Create a variable width, naturally vegetated buffer system along all perennial streams that also encompass critical environmental features such as the 100-year floodplains and wetlands.
- Enforce measures to preserve natural features, control pollution, and limit erosion.
- Ensure that Township and Village Master Plans address natural corridors and the protection of natural features.
- Respect and protect wildlife corridors and habitat. Respect and protect the unique natural vegetation and sensitive forestlands.
- Provide incentives to establish continuous natural corridors.
- Regulate land uses within this area.
- Encourage renewable energy that is compatible with, and helps to preserve, natural systems in the County. Foster the continual evaluation of methods to improve sustainability and evaluate green technology as it emerges. If and when a private energy-production facility is proposed, it should be located within proximity to critical infrastructure, such as public water and sanitary sewer; railroads; highways; existing high-intensity uses; and away from sensitive natural resources and features.



Boardman River, Boardman Township

Guiding Principle #4: Although agriculture is not a prominent land use, it plays an important role in the history and present life of the County. Existing farming operations are encouraged to continue operation for as long as possible. The large contiguous agricultural lands are an important element of the County’s character and economy. Tree farms also play an important role in the County visually and economically. Barns, silos, and old farm homes are fundamentally important to the appearance of the County.

Policies: The following are the policies for agriculture lands.

- Encourage the incorporation of existing agricultural structures such as barns, silos, and old farmhouses with new developments.
- Promote conservation initiatives such as PA 116, and work with farmland preservation groups and land conservancies to retain the large contiguous agricultural lands.
- When reviewing development proposals adjacent to existing agricultural operations, be sensitive to issues to limit land use conflicts and reduce potential complaints.
- Proactively help farmers continue agricultural operations. Permit uses that allow the sale of agricultural products, bed and breakfasts, and other complementary uses.
- Understand that agriculture is changing; allow nurseries, U-pick operations, and other uses in agricultural areas.
- Permit non-farm development only where it can co-exist with farming and encourages its longevity.
- Work with farmland preservation programs to obtain low interest loans and grants for barns, silos, and farmland restoration.
- Promote farmers and the public on conservation and land stewardship.



Golf Course, Kalkaska Township



Farm on Boardman Road, Boardman Township

Guiding Principle #5: Respect the individual Township and Village needs, but focus on the big picture. Of the twelve Townships, eight are under County Zoning, so respecting their issues and concerns is imperative. However, the County also has the responsibility to consider issues and concerns on a regional level. Decisions, policies, and land use guidelines affect everyone, so always think big picture.

Policies: The following are the policies for Townships and Village relationships.

- Always consider the regional implications of local decisions, no matter how small that decision may seem, and act responsibly in the County's, Village's, and Townships' best interest.
- Understand that no community exists in a vacuum, and what happens in one community goes beyond its borders.
- Support development of open space preservation on a countywide scale.
- When making or reviewing a land use decision, read and be aware of the community's Master Plan and polices. Also, be knowledgeable of the master plans and policies of the surrounding communities.
- Promote development within the Village and recognize it as the political, economic, and social center of the County.
- Plan and communicate infrastructure and road improvements together.



Construction, Village of Kalkaska

Guiding Principle #6: Foster coordination between governing bodies. Coordination and cooperation between the County, State, and local jurisdictions is critical for the well-being and quality of life for current and future County residents. Effective communication is a necessity.

Policies: The following are the policies for fostering coordination between governing bodies.

- Understand that lack of coordination among jurisdictions, boards, and agencies cause inefficiencies in public investment, incompatible land uses, and intergovernmental conflicts.
- Look beyond the borders of the County and beyond a five-year timeline when planning for regional projects. Recognize their overall impact.
- Work with school districts, the road commission, and county agencies, knowing that they all serve the same population.
- Coordinate infrastructure improvements to maximize efficiency and minimize costs.
- Recognize current and future studies, plans, and opportunities promulgated by local and regional entities that may assist, influence, or impact Kalkaska County.



Imagination Station, Village of Kalkaska

Guiding Principle #7: Provide for diverse housing types. Certainly not everyone wishes to live in the same type of dwelling unit. To this end, Kalkaska County recently amended its Zoning Ordinance to reduce the minimum area for dwellings. Similarly, not everyone will want to live in the dwelling unit for as long as they live and then decide to move away from familiar Kalkaska surroundings when their housing needs change. A broad range of housing opportunities that meets the various economic, family, and lifestyle needs of residents and tourists needs to be provided.

Policies: The following are the policies for providing housing.

- Provide opportunities for a wide range of housing types to satisfy the lifecycle needs of County residents in all income levels.
- Know that some areas are better suited for certain residential structures than others.
- Permit mixed type developments and accessory units.
- Preserve and maintain structures having historical importance or extraordinary architecture and craftsmanship.
- Respect historical development patterns. Identify them, understand them, and promote development that complements them.
- Encourage home site locations that allow hunting on individual and surrounding residential properties.



Apartments, Village of Kalkaska

Guiding Principle #8: Respect private property rights, while planning for the public interest. When development occurs, everyone and every property are affected. Maintaining the value of land in the County is important. Policies, guidelines, and land use decisions need to consider the impacts to individual landowners and residents. The basis for these decisions, however, needs to be on the community as a whole and its future.

Policies: The following are the policies relating to private property rights and planning for the public interest.

- Allow people to develop and use the land to their benefit, as long as negative impacts to neighboring properties, the environment, and the community are minimized.
- Enhance land values by minimizing the impact of development on adjacent land.
- Provide a clear understanding of permitted uses and the approval process.
- Provide the flexibility of clustered and mixed-use developments, which allow for the preservation of large continuous open spaces.
- Keep an open mind when listening to property owners, applicants, developers, neighbors, and concerned citizens.
- Keep the public informed of land use issues. Go beyond the normal required public hearing requirements when there is a major issue of concern.
- Program and design public involvement (don't just rely on public hearings) as a regular component of all decision making.
- Understand the whys and wherefores of NIMBYS (Not In My Back Yard Syndrome). Try to address the concerns of individual citizens as much as possible.



Golf Course, Excelsior Township

Guiding Principle #9: Safeguard the historical and significant features of the County. Kalkaska County has a rich history and is full of distinct features that add to its sense of place and character. Among others, the Seven Bridges, the Heritage Farms, the Trout Festival, the Rugg Pond, the Manistee River, and extraordinary vegetation such as the Witness Tree, and the American Chestnut Trees are all critical elements that need to be protected and enhanced.

Policies: The following are the policies for safeguarding historical and significant features of the County.

- Know what is being protected. Inventory all the natural, historical and significant features of the County and keep the information current and available.
- Use planning and zoning to protect these features. Ensure that Township and Village Master Plans address these features and their protection.
- Require development projects to highlight these features as an integral part of their plan and to preserve them for future generations.
- Participate and promote organizations that can safeguard these features, such as Michigan Historical Marker, National Register of Historic Places, Centennial Farms, and local preservation groups.



Seven Bridges area, Rapid River Township



Stone Church, Garfield Township

Guiding Principle #10: Establish a sense of unity in Kalkaska County. The County is known as a rural area and citizens pride themselves on this description. This characteristic helps to distinguish the County from surrounding areas. This sense of pride and the current rural land use patterns need to be promoted to help the various municipalities fashion a unified feeling of the County.

Policies: The following are the policies for establishing a sense of unity in the County.

- Highlight the different qualities of diverse land uses and promote their individualism.
- Reinforce the knowledge that people work, live, and play in different jurisdictions of the County.
- Support the education of children about rural lifestyle and Kalkaska’s history. Help them understand the area and take pride in it.
- Support county and rural events such as the County Fair, Trout Festival, Heritage Festival, and Winter Fest.
- Support Kalkaska County’s individual townships and Village, as they are both an integral part of the County.



Trout Memorial, Village of Kalkaska

Guiding Principle #11: Highlight the fact that Kalkaska County is a playground. People live and visit the County to enjoy the many recreational amenities such as snowmobiling, fishing, hunting, camping, canoeing, hiking, biking, cross country skiing, rafting, and ATV riding. The huge amount of State-owned land and the clean, pristine rivers provide these great recreation opportunities and add to the quality of life. This is a place to play.

Policies: The following are the policies highlighting Kalkaska County as a playground.

- Prevent the over-development of these resources.
- Promote regulations that respect and protect the quality of the land, water, plants, and animals.
- Ensure that County, Township, and Village Master Plans address these amenities and their protection.
- Utilize the Recreation and Open Space Plan when making land use decisions and purchasing land.
- Use land conservancies and conservation easements to protect open space and recreation-oriented areas.
- Be familiar with the State’s plan for State owned lands and support initiatives for land preservation.
- Support eco-tourism (tourism based on natural resources) as an economic support for the County, but don’t overuse the resources.
- Maintain the quality of the rivers and streams to continue to provide pleasant recreational experiences.
- Encourage the development of State, County, and Township improved parks and facilities within the County.



Seven Bridges area, Rapid River Township

Guiding Principle #12: Keep it simple, understandable, and straightforward. Always think real world, what is practical, and what makes sense. Don't overcomplicate things. Have simple and concise policies and guidelines.

Policies: The following are the policies towards keeping it simple.

- Develop ordinances that are easy to read and understand.
- Give consistent, clear directions to developers and to the public.
- Don't over-complicate the development process.
- Tailor zoning districts to fit the specific situations.



Boardman Township

Guiding Principle #13: Common Water Usage. The following policy is designed to protect the natural resources of the County.

- In order to ensure that the general welfare of the residents of Kalkaska County now, and for future years to come, are not infringed upon, the unnecessary removal or use of water from its watershed or aquifers which have no direct benefits to the residents of the County and which do not increase public safety, health, or welfare, shall be prohibited.

Guiding Principle #14: Preserve and Promote the Village of Kalkaska. The following policy is designed to preserve and promote the Village of Kalkaska.

- Promote the area's unique characteristics to enhance visibility and increase tourism.
- Partner with appropriate local and regional entities in promotional efforts to advertise local events, offerings and amenities.
- Identify and support the marketing of cultural, historic and natural resources, local traditions and artists.
- Encourage the Village to adopt design standards related to architectural elements, landscaping, signage and other features in support of the visions expressed throughout the planning process.
- Contemplate and implement additional policies which would encourage innovative industries and business start-ups to locate in the area.
- Support historic preservation efforts.
- Promote policies that foster a unique identity which includes clean, maintained and inviting shopping and employment areas; desirable residential areas; and a charming small-town personality.

CHAPTER 6

TRANSPORTATION

(How do roads affect us?)

In its broadest sense, a transportation system includes all forms of mobility. Vehicular mobility, however, has been the predominant method of movement for residents, businesses and visitors within Kalkaska County. The County's transportation network, like others throughout the State, has been shaped by the fundamental necessities of today, including employment, recreation, schools, shopping, and tourism. The transportation system requires attention in order to maintain an efficient and safe system for everyone.

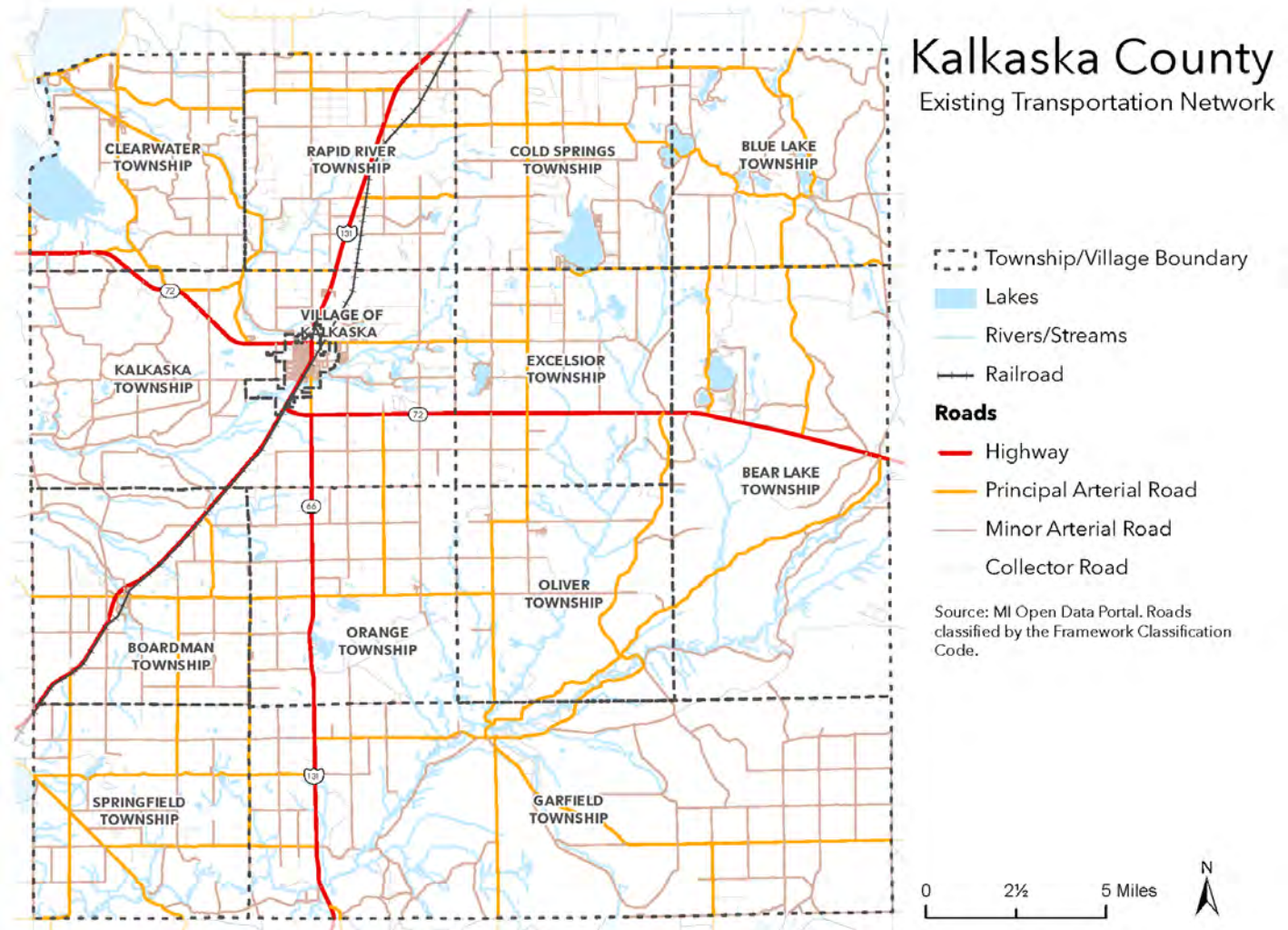


Orange Township

EXISTING ROADS

(Where do they go?)

- Local roads serve as major and minor collectors for area residents.
- Include both paved and unpaved roads.
- Paved roads are generally found leading from lakes or along rivers to the Village of Kalkaska or State Highways.
- 856 miles are County Roads.
- 70 miles are State Highways system.
- 258 roads are paved.
- 598 roads are unpaved.



Source: NWMCOG Mapping

STATE HIGHWAYS

(What are volumes?)

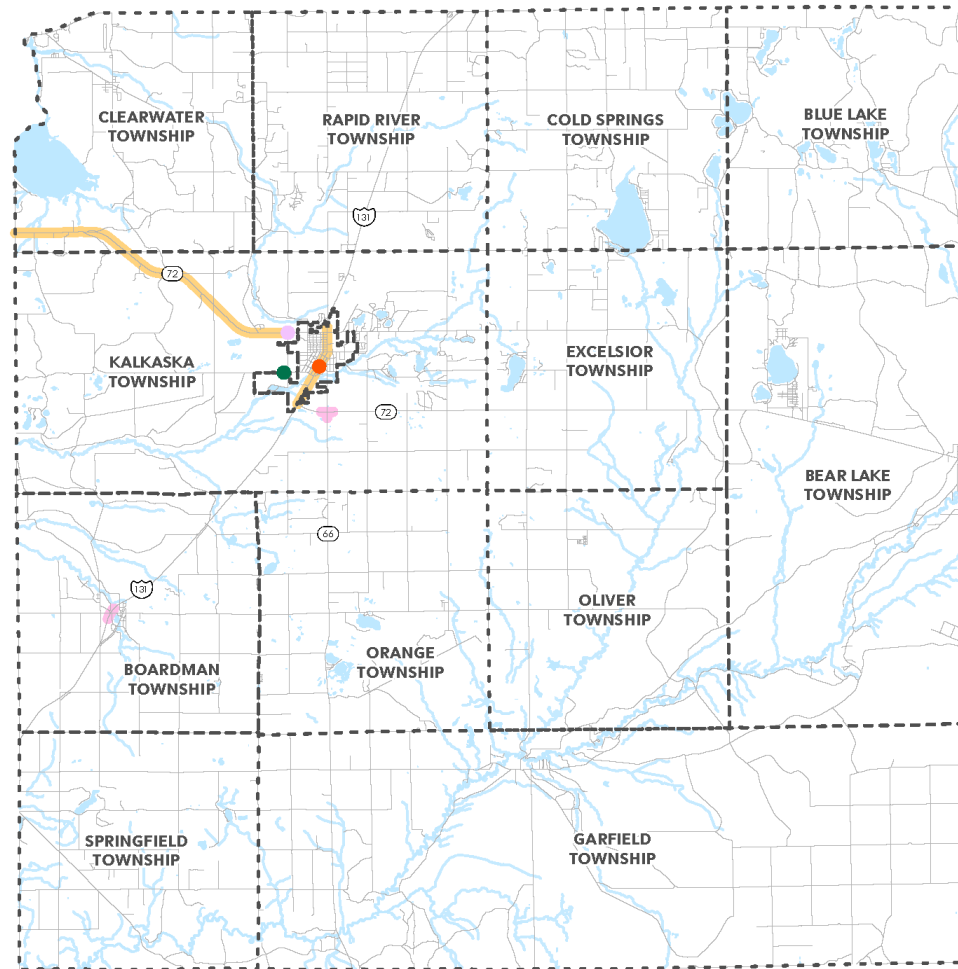
The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has classified roads within the County using the National Functional Classification System. The primary purpose of this classification is to create a uniform criterion that organizes roads by function, right-of-way and design. Two highways within the County are classified as principal non-freeway highways, US-131, and M-72.

- US -131 is a major State trunkline linking the Village of Kalkaska with the City of Petoskey to the north and the City of Cadillac to its south. This highway is undivided and is 22 foot wide with 9-foot shoulders. Average daily traffic along the County's segment of highway ranges from 7,688 south of the Village of Kalkaska to 16,678 north of the Village of Kalkaska as of 2021.
- M-72 is the County's primary east/west travel corridor, connecting to I-75 to the east and Traverse City to the west. Classified as a principal arterial, M-72 is also a two-lane undivided highway with a 24-foot pavement surface and three-foot paved shoulders. Daily traffic averages 4,567 east of junction with US -131 and 5,473 east of the intersection of Sigma Road and M-72.
- In the 2022 – 2026 Five Year Transportation Program, MDOT will be completing a HMA Crack Treatment project in 2022 and 2023 along the western portion of M-72, from the County line to the Village of Kalkaska. A new, modernized signal will be installed at US-131 at 3rd Street and Elm Street in 2022 and 2023.
- A Road Safety Audit will be completed by MDOT in 2022 along the US-131 corridor in the County. A Road Safety Audit is a formal safety performance examination of an existing or future road or intersection by an independent, multi-disciplinary team of transportation professionals. RSAs contribute to road safety by providing a fresh, unbiased assessment of the area to identify issues and solutions.
- Every other year, the Michigan Department of Transportation inventories the condition and operation of the entire State trunkline system. Within the County, this also includes M-66, connecting Kalkaska with Lake City to its south. Roads are evaluated by a point system for a series of categories and then given a score or rating. The entire length of M-72 in the County has been rated as having poor paved condition according to the Network Northwest Kalkaska PASER 2019 report. The pavement condition along US-131 varies, however some is in need of critical repair. The portion of the highway that runs through the Village of Kalkaska and the corridor that runs from the western County line to the center of South Boardman Township is in the poorest condition.
- As part of their trunkline assessment program, MDOT has also compared 1993 traffic volumes for trunklines with projected volumes for the year 2020 and concluded that US-131 and M-72 highways will likely experience dramatic increases in the traffic volumes according to these projections.

PROPOSED TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

(What are the plans?)

- M-DOT's current policy is to implement access management to assist traffic movement and improve safety.



Kalkaska County MDOT Proposed Projects

- HMA Crack Treatment
- Installation of Intersection Collision Avoidance Systems (ICWS)
- Carpool lot lighting and new construction
- Modernize signalized intersection
- Bus purchase for Kalkaska Public Transit Authority
- Lakes
- Rivers/Streams
- Roads
- Township/Village Boundary

Source: MDOT Open Data Portal

Source: MDOT 5-year Master Plan

ACCESS MANAGEMENT

(What can the Planning Commission do?)

Access management is a set of proven techniques that can help reduce traffic congestion, preserve the flow of traffic, improve traffic safety, prevent crashes, preserve existing capacity, and preserve investment in roads by managing the location, design, and type of access to property. Access management focuses on the number, location, and design of driveways as they relate to the following elements within the road right-of-way: travel lanes, medians, by-pass lanes, dedicated turn lanes, and signal operations. Access management should be applied to all county and state roads. The following points should be addressed during development reviews and rezonings:

- Limit the number of driveways to each lot.
- Restrict the number of lots fronting on highways and on busy roads.
- Regulate the location, spacing, and design of driveways.
- Encourage shared access to parcels and consolidate driveways where possible.
- Provide adequate sight distance.
- Separate driveways from intersections.
- Locate driveways away from other driveways.
- Restrict turning movements into and out of driveways.
- Offset driveways.
- Use passing lanes.
- Restrict turns onto the roadway.
- Provide alternative accesses.
- Encourage front or rear access drives (frontage roads).
- Connect streets, roads, and access easements.
- Promote internal connections.
- Adopt an access management provision that limits the number of allowed driveways on a road.

TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

(What else can we do?)

- Play an important role in planned road improvements and will likely have broad impacts on the County's future development.
- Ensure the protection of high quality scenic views and preservation of the critical natural features during any road expansion.
- Promote the adoption of access management practices.
- Encourage the development of non-motorized transportation systems and connection to non-motorized trail systems in adjacent areas.
- Embrace context-sensitive design road standards. Support different design standards for different roads. Know that roads in rural areas should differ from roads in urban areas with respect to their width, placement, and paving.
- Involve the public in road improvement projects.
- Have a curb and gutter in urban areas, ditches in rural areas.
- Use private roads to minimize impacts on the natural environment.
- Work with M-DOT to conform to the policies listed in the Kankaska County Master Plan.
- Support mass transit programs.
- Endorse gravel roads in rural areas.
- Plant and maintain trees along the roads.
- If and when realignment of US-131 does occur, work to ensure impacts of the relocation are positive.
- Work with the appropriate entities to ensure that any future road(s) avoid productive agricultural operations and center pivot irrigations systems.



County Road 612, Kankaska Township

CHAPTER 7

FUTURE LAND USE

(What do we want to see in twenty years?)

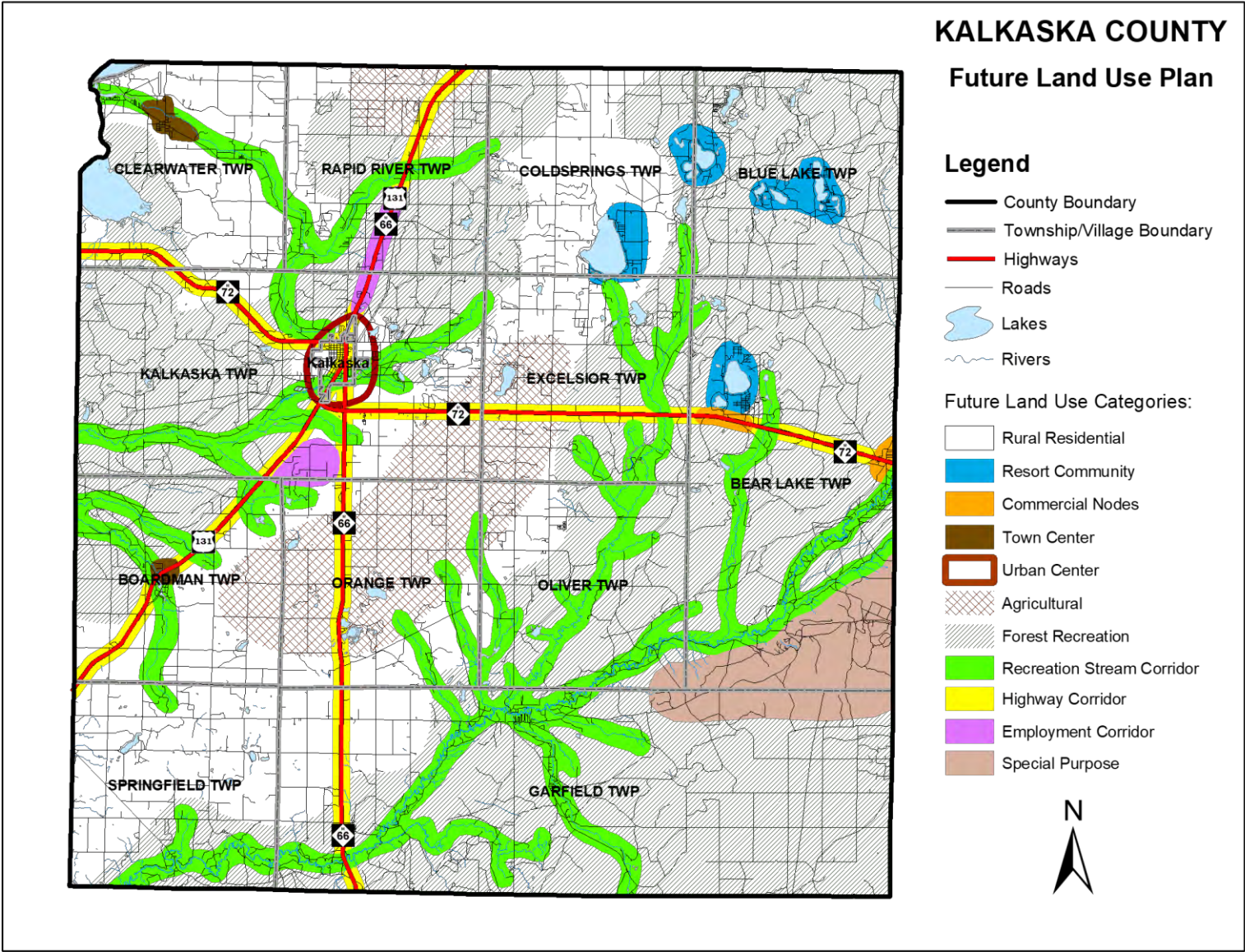
Will you still want to live here in 20 years?



A mystery place.

Is this what you want to see from the roads?

HOW SHOULD WE LOOK IN 20 YEARS?



Map showing desired land uses in 20 years.

FOREST LAND USES

Now	2040
Forest Land characteristics:	What we want to see in 20 years:
Majority is state-owned land and undeveloped.	Majority is state-owned land and is undeveloped
Primary use is open space and recreation.	Primary use is open space and recreation.
Some scattered single-family homes.	Some scattered single-family homes and possibly a few clustered developments.
May be a location for oil and gas exploration.	May be a location for oil and gas exploration.
There is limited access and infrastructure.	There is limited access and infrastructure.
Is a beautiful and heavily forested area.	Is a beautiful and heavily forested area.
Critical area for wildlife and water quality.	Healthy wildlife and excellent water quality.
Miscellaneous privately owned properties scattered within this area.	Minimal development has occurred.
Major factor in defining the County's land use patterns.	Continuing factor in County's land use patterns.



Boardman River Bridge, Boardman Township

What we *don't* want to happen in 20 years:

- Loss of the forested area and natural resources.
- Scattered homes and roads dominate the area.
- Conflicts between developments and recreational land uses, reducing recreation opportunities.
- Kalkaska is no longer perceived as a place to play.

ACTION STEPS:

(what can be done to preserve the forested areas?)

- Limit the visual impact of development.
- Minimize the impacts of development. Use one dwelling unit per acre as a density guide, but allow for increases in density when developments are clustered. Encourage clustering. Allow density bonuses of 50% when the undeveloped land is placed in a conservation easement or irrevocable conveyance.
- In clustered developments, do not have minimum lot sizes. Let lot sizes be dependent on the availability of on-site utility capabilities.
- Limit the number of driveway cuts in clustered developments.
- Screen development from the road. Increase setback requirements, if needed.
- Use the existing vegetation to screen development from the road.
- Minimize infrastructure improvements; only allow them when public health and safety warrants them, not to increase density.
- Promote primitive driveways and roads.
- Encourage gravel roads, driveways, and parking areas.
- Discourage street lighting.
- Control signage and limit billboards.



Existing vegetation minimizes the visual impact of development in forested areas.

House on US 131, Kalkaska Township

AGRICULTURAL LAND USES

Now	2040
Agricultural characteristics:	What we want to see in 20 years:
Active farms are in the middle of the County.	Farming still exists.
Farming contributes to the local economy.	Farming is profitable.
Christmas tree farms play a prominent role in agriculture.	Agricultural lands are productive and fertile.
Old barns, silos, and farmhouses exist and define the area.	Some barns, silos, and farmhouses have been maintained or refurbished.
Large, contiguous open fields are visible from the roadside.	Large, contiguous open fields are visible from the roadside.
Historically, farms and farmers have been an important part of the County's character.	Residential developments have been clustered, preserving large amounts of farmland. These farmlands are actively cultivated and are part of a contiguous open space corridor.
Residents support farming.	Residents support farming.
Permitted uses include agricultural and low-impact single family residential.	Permitted uses include agricultural and low-impact single family residential.



Excelsior Township

What we *don't* want to happen in 20 years:

- All of the farmlands have been developed.
- Loss of large, contiguous open fields.
- Loss of the agricultural landscape as viewed from the road.
- Loss of the farming virtue and character.

ACTION STEPS:

(what can be done to maintain farm lands?)

- Have a separate agricultural zoning designation and continue to allow agricultural operations as a permitted use.
- Minimize the impacts of development. Use one dwelling unit per acre as a density guide, but allow for increases in density when developments are clustered. Encourage clustering. Allow density bonuses up to 50% when the undeveloped land is placed in a conservation easement or irrevocable conveyance.
- Limit the number of driveway cuts in clustered developments.
- Approve PA 116 applications and projects that incorporate farmland preservation mechanisms.
- Have tree buffers between roads and residential subdivision developments.
- Develop an Open Space/Farmland Preservation Plan.
- Control and limit signage



Farm, Excelsior Township



RURAL RESIDENTIAL LAND USES

Now	2040
Rural Residential characteristics:	What we want to see in 20 years:
Developments with natural vegetation exemplify the rural character.	Developments with natural vegetation exemplify the rural character.
Permitted uses include single family residential.	Permitted uses include single family residential.
Scattered homes with gravel driveways.	Scattered homes with gravel driveways.
Homes not visible from the road.	Homes not visible from the road.
Long distances between driveways.	Long distances between driveways.
Serviced by well and septic systems.	Low impact infrastructure.
Homes hidden in the trees.	Homes hidden in the trees.
Exemplify the rural character.	Exemplify the rural character.



Farm, Orange Township

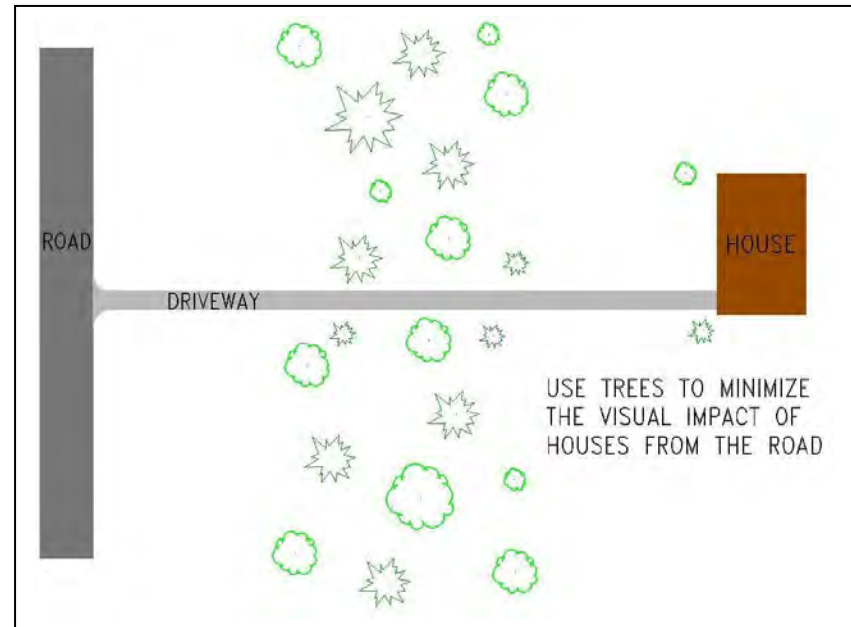
What we *don't* want to happen in 20 years:

- Subdivision developments dominating the landscape.
- House, after house, after house along the road.
- Increases in roadways and paved surfaces.
- Loss of the large, contiguous wooded view from the road.
- Loss of the tree canopy along the roadside
- The costly extension of infrastructure.
- Loss of the rural character and community pride.
- Undeveloped or partially developed Planned Unit Developments and Cluster Developments

ACTION STEPS:

(what can be done to preserve the rural character of the area?)

- Screen development from the road. Increase setback requirements, if needed.
- Use existing vegetation to screen the house from the road. Encourage additional trees between the house and road if needed where no vegetation exists.
- Use building envelopes to minimize site disturbance and to locate development in suitable areas.
- Have wide frontage requirements.
- Discourage street lighting.
- Minimize road-widening projects, keep roads primarily two lane.
- Permit different types of housing.
- Encourage developments to be located out of viewsheds to minimize their visual impact.
- Make clustering an allowed use. Encourage it to reduce the amount of land being developed.
- Control and limit signage.



TOWN CENTER LAND USE

Now	2040
Town Center characteristics:	What we want to see in 20 years:
Rapid City, South Boardman locations.	These areas retain their “small town feel.”
Concentrated population.	Population increased, but sprawl did not occur.
Have unique, identifying characteristics that create a strong sense of place.	Continuation of a strong sense of place.
Rural setting. Provides services for adjacent areas.	Rural setting. Provides services for adjacent areas.
Have historic buildings and sites.	Historic buildings and sites have been preserved.
Mixed residential and commercial uses are permitted in this area.	Residential uses mixed with commercial uses are permitted in this area.
Pedestrian friendly.	Pedestrian friendly.
Local retailers, Mom and Pop shops.	Local retailers, Mom and Pop shops.
Limited infrastructure.	Improved infrastructure.



Downtown South Boardman

What we *don't* want to happen in 20 years:

- Loss of character, uniqueness, and history.
- Homogenous housing developments dominating the area.
- Road dominated developments.
- Big box retailers with large parking lots.
- The existing town-like development pattern being replaced by suburbia-type development patterns.

ACTION STEPS:

(what can be done to maintain the Town Center characteristics?)

- Allow structures to continue the historic building patterns. If buildings have been built along the roadside, allow the trend to continue. Allow greater setbacks when needed, but don't allow them to disrupt the historic building placement patterns.
- Inventory historic and cultural buildings; know where they are and have developments to preserve and maintain them.
- Have a Historic and Cultural Preservation Plan. Use zoning to protect these features.
- Density up to six (6) units an acre.
- Identify boundaries of these areas, control growth in the boundary area with infrastructure services.
- Encourage sidewalks in developments.
- Encourage mixed-use developments.
- Regulate parking lot placement. Landscape parking lots.
- Have a minimum and a maximum size limit for parking lots.
- Control and limit signage.

URBAN CENTER LAND USE

Now	2040
Urban Center characteristics:	What we want to see in 20 years:
Urbanized area of the County.	Urbanized area of the County.
Residential, commercial, and industrial uses are here.	Residential, commercial, and industrial uses are here.
Highest concentration of population.	Major population area of the County.
Central business, industrial, and employment area for the County.	Healthy economic base for the County.
Location for government offices.	Government office headquarters.
Composed of multiple neighborhoods.	Different types of neighborhoods meeting different demands.
Historic downtown.	A vibrant historic downtown area where the buildings have been restored.
High density with mixed uses.	Continuation of higher density with mixed uses.
Crossroads for Highway US 131, M 66, and M 72.	Access management in place. Landscaping along the highways.
Interconnecting sidewalks, pedestrian friendly.	Walkable location.
Has water and sewer.	Water and sewer are efficiently working.
Some contamination of land.	Contaminated lands have been cleaned and/or are productive.
Adequate water quality.	Good water quality.



What we *don't* want to happen in 20 years:

- Sprawl that has diluted the urban character.
- Numerous abandoned buildings.
- Loss of economic activity.
- Homogenous neighborhoods.
- Loss of historic buildings and character.
- Road and parking lot dominance.
- Failing water and sewer infrastructure.
- Strip commercial development.

ACTION STEPS:

(what can be done to keep the Urban Center as a vibrant, critical part of the County?)

- Encourage infill.
- Landscape parking lots. Have a minimum and maximum size limit for parking lots.
- Utilize existing infrastructure of developed areas to its design capacity prior to expansion into undeveloped areas.
- Have landscaping requirements in all new developments.
- Have sidewalks in every development. Develop a sidewalk plan.
- Put parks, open space, or other amenities in developments greater than eight units. Connect these greenways and open spaces whenever possible.
- Discourage homogenous looking housing developments. Have mixed architectural styles in developments greater than eight units.
- Inventory historic and cultural buildings; know where they are and encourage developments to preserve and maintain them.
- Have a Historic and Cultural Preservation Plan. Use zoning to protect these features.
- Identify the urban boundary. Use infrastructure to control growth within the urban boundary area.
- Support Brownfield Redevelopment initiatives.
- Implement beautification/streetscape elements in downtown.
- Support Wellhead Protection programs.
- Recognize that there are vacant and available properties planned and zoned for commercial and industrial activity; and in the future when economic development opportunities appear limited, evaluate the Master Plan and contemplate additional economic development areas.



Village of Kaskaskia

RESORT RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

Now	2040
Resort Residential characteristics:	What we want to see in 20 years:
Areas surrounding the County's inland lakes.	Limited growth of these communities.
Highly attractive, quaint communities.	Highly attractive, quaint communities.
Residential cottages and homes.	Residential cottages and homes..
Historically seasonal occupancy, now intermixed with year round occupancy.	Mixed seasonal and year round occupancy of homes.
Narrow roads, pedestrian friendly.	Narrow roads, pedestrian friendly.
Existing concerns about degradation through shoreline erosion, septic field leaching, and sediment discharge.	Healthy shoreline and pristine water quality.
Shared driveways.	Shared driveways and limited number of driveways.
Minimal infrastructure, no water or sewer services.	Infrastructure has improved, but it has not encouraged growth.
Limited commercial and residential uses are permitted here.	Limited commercial and residential uses are permitted here.
Narrow lots.	Wide frontage along the lakeside.



Sands Park Manistee Lake, Cold Spring Township

What we *don't* want to happen in 20 years:

- Loss of the unique character and community feel.
- Densely populated homes around the lakes.
- Degradation of water quality.
- Road dominated landscape.

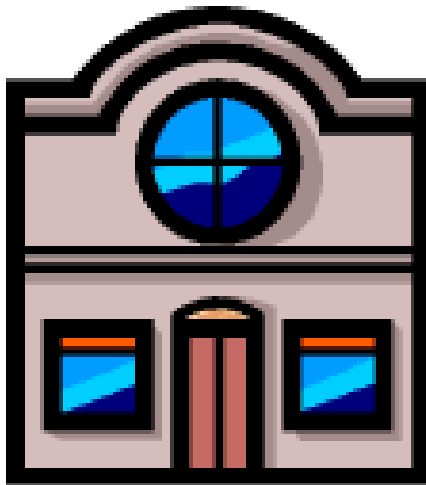
ACTION STEPS:

(what can be done to maintain the Resort Residential as it is now?)

- Minimize infrastructure improvements. Only permit improvements for environmental or public health and safety reasons, and not to increase density.
- Minimize road-widening projects; keep roads primarily two-lanes and, where needed, turning lanes at intersections.
- Disallow increases in density.
- Only allow single-family homes and small commercial operations serving the homes in these areas.
- Use building envelopes to minimize site disturbance and to locate development in suitable areas.
- Have wide frontages (approximately 100 feet) along the lakeshore.
- Be aware of water quality protection plans within the community.
- Prohibit keyholing.
- Have development setback from the water's edge.
- Encourage the use of natural vegetation in developments.
- Divert drainage of impervious surfaces such as driveways, sidewalks, and rooftops away from the water's edge.
- Prohibit exploration or production of oil, gas, brine, sand, gravel, or other minerals that would require the disturbance of the surface within 300 feet of the water's edge.

COMMERCIAL NODE LAND USE

Now	2040
Commercial Node characteristics:	What we want to see in 20 years:
Small-scale commercial operations along M-72.	Small-scale commercial operations along M-72.
Vehicle-dependent operations, such as gas stations, restaurants, and quick stops.	Vehicle-dependent operations, such as gas stations, restaurants, and quick stops.
Serve surrounding community residents and some highway users.	Serve surrounding community residents and some highway users.
Small parking lots and limited visual impact.	Small parking lots and limited visual impact.



What we *don't* want to happen in 20 years:

- Large commercial strip development along MDOT Highways.
- Large scale commercial business operations.
- Becoming a destination commercial center where people travel from the Urban Center to shop.

ACTION STEPS:

(what can be done to keep the Commercial Node characteristics?)

- Limit size of the structures and limit the size of operations.
- Regulate parking lot size and placement.
- Discourage strip development.
- Prevent this area from becoming a commercial corridor by limiting the number of businesses.
- Minimize the amount of area being zoned commercial.
- Discourage further commercial expansion or creep along highway corridors that is not consistent with this Master Plan.

RECREATION STREAM CORRIDOR LAND USE

Now	2040
Recreation Stream Corridor characteristics:	What we want to see in 20 years:
More or less a 100-foot wide area on each side of the Rapid, Boardman, and Manistee Rivers and their tributaries.	Minimal development along the Rapid River, Boardman River, and Manistee River edges and their tributaries.
Visually appealing area.	Visually appealing area.
Intermixed public and private owned lands along river edges.	Intermixed public and private owned lands along river edges.
Initial development was resort and seasonal, now becoming year round residential. Single family uses permitted here.	Mix of year round, seasonal, and resort occupancy. Single family development permitted here.
Bountiful fish in the rivers and streams.	Bountiful fish in the rivers and streams
Sensitive environmental area.	Sensitive and sustainable environmental area.
Critical wildlife corridor.	Critical wildlife corridor.
Natural vegetation exists to provide shade for the rivers and their tributaries.	Preservation of natural vegetation to provide shade for the rivers and their tributaries.



Seven Bridges Area, Rapid River Township

What we *don't* want to happen in 20 years:

- Massive development of the corridors.
- Loss of water quality.
- Loss of wildlife, fish, and natural resources.
- Aesthetically unappealing area.

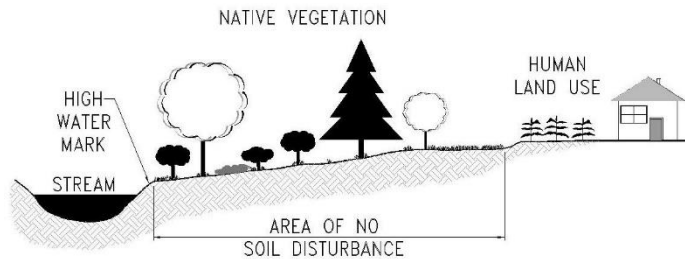
ACTION STEPS:

(what can be done to protect and enhance the recreation stream corridors?)

- Think of the area as primarily open space and recreation, secondarily as residential.
- Proactively connect open space areas. Establish a countywide corridor protection plan.
- Establish a no soil disturbance zone along the water's edge.
- Maintain a natural vegetative buffer area along the water's edge.
- Discourage boat ramps, pumphouses, elevated walkways, docks, or lighting fixtures within the buffer area.



Manistee River, Garfield Township



- Encourage wildlife and water quality protection plans.
- Keep impervious surfaces such as driveways, sidewalks, and rooftops away from the water's edge.
- Minimize infrastructure improvements. Only permit improvements for environmental or public health and safety reasons, not to increase density.
- Prohibit keyholing.
- Utilize zoning to protect these areas.

EMPLOYMENT CORRIDOR LAND USE

Now	2040
Employment Corridor characteristics:	What we want to see in 20 years:
Primarily industrial and commercial operations.	Primarily industrial and commercial operations.
Along MDOT corridors.	Along MDOT corridors.
Adjacent or close to the Urban Center.	Adjacent or close to the Urban Center.
Vehicle-oriented type businesses.	Vehicle-oriented type businesses.
Compact, not strip development.	Compact, not strip development.
Landscaped parking lots. Smaller parking lots.	Landscaped parking lots. Smaller parking lots.
Successful businesses are located in these areas.	Successful businesses are located in these areas.
Meeting market demands.	Meeting market demands.



*Trees minimize view of businesses
US 131 North, Rapid River Township*

What we *don't want* to happen in 20 years:

- Strip development shopping centers along the entire highway corridors.
- Closed and abandoned shopping centers.
- Parking lots dominating the view.
- Spread into forested and/or residential areas.

ACTION STEPS:

(what can be done to enhance the Employment Corridors?)

- Have landscaping between roadways and developed areas.
- Enact access regulations and spacing and encourage alternative accesses.
- Regulate parking lot sizes and placement.
- Landscape parking lots.
- Encourage Brownfield development and redevelopment.
- Encourage activities that can meet the needs of the traveling public without weakening the Urban Center.
- Control signage and limit billboards.



Kalkaska Industrial Park, Village of Kalkaska

HIGHWAY CORRIDOR LAND USE

Now	2040
Highway Corridor characteristics:	What we want to see in 20 years:
More or less, 200 feet on each side of US-131, M-72, and M-66.	More or less, 200 feet on each side of US-131, M-72, and M-66.
Majority of the view is treed. Tree canopies are along the roads.	Majority of the view is treed. Tree canopies are along the roads.
Majority of the development is screened.	Majority of the development is screened.
Many beautiful vantage points along the roadside.	Many beautiful vantage points along the roadside.
Gateway to Northern Michigan.	Gateway to Northern Michigan.
The view from these corridors is how people think of Kalkaska and the region.	Continue the positive view from these corridors making people want to embrace Kalkaska.
Mixed signage.	Small and limited signage.



US 131, Kalkaska Township

What we *don't* want to happen in 20 years:

- Strip development along highway corridors.
- The elimination of trees and tree canopies.
- Billboards and signs dominating the roadside.
- Increased traffic and congestion.

ACTION STEPS:

(what can be done to protect the view from the Highways?)

- Have green buffers between roads and any developments.
- Establish minimum landscaping requirements for every development.
- Inventory vantage points and views from the roadsides, map them, and know where they exist.
- Use zoning to protect vantage points.
- Develop and implement a view preservation ordinance.
- Regulate parking lot placement. Landscape parking lots. Have a minimum and a maximum parking lot size.
- Minimize visual impacts of communication and windmill towers.



Trees help to retain the rural character of the County. House along M 72, Kalkaska Township



Deep setbacks help hide development from the road. House along US 131, Boardman Township

- Implement a Tree Preservation Ordinance to protect tree canopies and forests.
- Develop strong signage and billboard regulations. Regulate the size, location, spacing, and number of signs and billboards. Be proactive with signs and billboards.
- Limit the number of common points of ingress/egress.
- Understand how critical the Highway Corridor is to the public perception of Kalkaska County.
- Discourage further commercial expansion or creep along highway corridors that is not consistent with this Master Plan.

SPECIAL PURPOSE LAND USE

Now	2040
Special Purpose Land characteristics:	What we want to see in 20 years:
Government owned lands.	Government or publically owned lands.
Adjacent to forested areas.	Compatible with the Forested Land Uses.
Used for military purposes.	Reduced military use of land.
Recreation and forested area.	Used recreationally.

What we *don't* want to happen in 20 years:

- Land fragmentation, and the area has become a massive subdivision.
- The area has become abandoned and neglected structures dominate the area.

ACTION STEPS:

(what to do with the Special Purpose Land Use?)

- Know and understand the future plans for the area. Communicate often with the Federal and State government.
- Zone the area to be compatible with the adjacent forested land uses.
- Limit infrastructure improvements.
- Think of this area as primarily recreational and not for residential uses.

Zoning Plan

State statute requires that a Master Plan include a “zoning plan.” The purpose of a zoning plan is to describe how the future land use categories coincide with the current zoning districts of the County. The following table includes the zoning plan for Kalkaska County. However, it is important to note that the designations and the districts may not exactly correspond, and adjustments may be necessary to bring the Zoning Ordinance up to date with the policies expressed in the Master Plan. As such, the following table is simply meant to depict a general relationship between the designations and the districts.

Future Land Use Designations	Corresponding Zoning Districts
Rural Residential	A-R
Resort Community	L-R, R-R
Commercial Nodes	C-1
Town Center	R
Urban Center	R
Agricultural	A-R
Forest Recreation	F-R
Recreation Stream Corridor	L-R
Highway Corridor	C-1
Employment Corridor	C-1, G-I, L-I
Special Purpose	*
* This land is used for military purposes.	

CHAPTER 8

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

(Let's go !)

The generation of a Master Plan is the important first step in a two-step planning process. This chapter discusses the strategy for proceeding with step two of the process: plan implementation.

Achieving the goals, objectives and policies of this Master Plan, represented graphically in the preceding chapter, is dependent upon a multi-faceted implementation process. Effective coordination of local and county efforts is required; public, private and civic support is important; and interaction between agencies responsible for various components of the Plan (public works, economic development, transportation) represents a major element of the implementation formula. As important a benchmark as this Plan is for the County, the ideas, concepts and initiatives it contains can only be carried from concept to reality through the active involvement and support of citizens, elected officials, local and county planners, private business and other administrative officials. Successful implementation of this Plan will be dependent upon a variety of techniques and tools, including capital improvement plans, zoning, and subdivision regulations, as well as the ability to achieve coordination between key public agencies.



Manistee Lake, Cold Springs Township

TOWNSHIPS AND VILLAGE OFFICIALS

(Let's talk!)

This Plan is based upon the concept that each jurisdiction is better able to address its unique economic, social and physical development problems and opportunities if a common framework can be established for making individual decisions. This kind of interdependence can maximize benefits for all through the coordination and cooperation of local governmental units on future land use and infrastructure decisions. The result will be a new direction for land use planning which will enhance the quality of life for all of the residents of Kankaska County.

With the adoption of this Master Plan by the County Planning Commission, all local jurisdictions will be in a position of:

- knowing the future plans of the County,
- knowing the future path the County will take to pursue these plans,
- knowing the priorities being pursued on a County-wide level and,
- knowing the basis behind planning and physical development decisions.

With this knowledge in hand, individual jurisdictions can address local issues on a more informed basis and can prepare for external influences which may affect those decisions. There are a broad array of land use issues in which there are significant public interests that extend beyond the boundaries of an individual jurisdiction. Public interests that are broader than simply local interest include, but are not limited to the following:

- air quality protection;
- watershed management for water quality protection;
- groundwater protection;
- protection of sensitive environments (e.g., wetlands, floodplains);
- protection of natural resources necessary to sustain resource-based industries such as agriculture and forestry;
- sustainable economic development to provide jobs for present and future residents,
- use of public access sites;
- establishment of new public parks and access sites on waterfronts and existing public parks (national, state and local);

- safe, efficient and environmentally sound roads and highways;
- public sewer and water services that extend beyond a single jurisdictional boundary;
- land use along municipal borders;
- a quality community image which reflects the characteristics most desired by residents;
- large-scale developments whose impacts extend beyond local boundaries (e.g., large resorts, industrial facilities, major shopping facilities, and airport improvements and expansions); and
- LULUs (locally unwanted land uses) that meet a regional need (e.g., junk yards, landfills, and communication towers, etc).

Intergovernmental cooperation and coordination are key to successfully dealing with issues exceeding those of local concern. Another key is successful implementation of the respective roles and responsibilities of the various bodies responsible for local planning and land development decisions.

LAND USE REGULATIONS

(Let's coordinate!)

Relationship to Zoning

Many of the recommendations set forth in this Master Plan relate to zoning issues within the County. As an example, the creation of incentives to encourage cluster housing developments in the County is likely to occur within the context of the Zoning Ordinance. Upon the adoption of this Master Plan, the County is in a position to review existing ordinances and to amend these documents, where appropriate, to reflect the contents of the Master Plan. The County's authority for administering a zoning ordinance currently extends to seven townships. In the remaining townships, including Rapid River, Garfield, Blue Lake, Clearwater and Boardman, zoning ordinances are administered independently. The Village of Kalkaska also administers their own zoning ordinance. By virtue of PA 110 of 2006, however, the County does have the responsibility for offering recommendations on individual rezoning or text amendments to those Township's possessing their own zoning ordinances.

Thus, the County has the opportunity to demonstrate the value of this Plan's proposals by effectively implementing relevant changes to the County Zoning Ordinance. By providing technical assistance to the four Townships having their own zoning ordinance, and by review and comment on proposed Township zoning changes, the County can assist these communities in also achieving the objectives of this Plan. The County can only influence land use changes in the Village of Kalkaska by encouraging them to join as partners in pursuit of this common vision, or by offering technical assistance services when requested.

In any event, Kalkaska County will need to update its Zoning Ordinance to implement many of the land use recommendations of this Plan. This activity should be initiated soon after the Master Plan's adoption and following any subsequent Master Plan updates.

Relationship to Subdivision Regulations

The Land Division Act of 1967, also known as PA 288, sets forth the authority of a community to establish design standards and requirements for the orderly layout and parcelization of property within its jurisdiction. Presently, no communities in Kalkaska County have adopted subdivision regulations pursuant to this Act. The consequence of this situation is that in Townships without their own regulations, subdivisions are being reviewed only from the perspective of satisfying County roadway standards, drain commissioner standards, Health Department Standards and State of Michigan standards. Subdivision orientation; parcel configuration and layout; the relationship between utilities, roads, lots and residences; open spaces; the relationship to external activities; and the entry/image and retention of natural features are all subdivision considerations which cumulatively have a significant impact upon community character. Proposed subdivisions, however, are not presently being reviewed with these considerations in mind. Although the authority to regulate these matters rests within each County jurisdiction, it is recommended that a single set of regulations be prepared as a model to encourage

individual adoption of local subdivision and related land division regulations. And if the County were to adopt subdivision and related land division regulations, it would likely prove beneficial to the successful implementation of this Master Plan.

Relationship to Capital Improvement Programs (CIPs)

A capital improvements program is an annual listing of proposed public facilities or major improvements to be constructed generally over a fixed time frame (5-6 years), along with their proposed location, method of financing, when they will be constructed within the time frame, and who is responsible for the specific capital improvement. Many individual agencies and departments within the County prepare physical improvement plans annually for budgetary purposes (such as the County Road Commission for roadway improvements and maintenance). As new growth and development occurs within the County, and as resources for public dollars become more and more limited, it's likely to become critical that individual and county-wide CIP's be prepared, and that future plans (e.g., Recreation Plans, Transportation Plans, and Housing Plans, etc) be consistent with the parameters identified in this Master Plan. Moreover, the County Planning Commission should exercise its legal authority to review all proposed public works facilities, whether or not included in a capital improvements program, once the Master Plan is adopted.

OTHER RESOURCES

(Let's use them!)

A variety of programs are available for use in implementing this Master Plan. Whereas the focus is on grants from State and Federal sources, these sources are limited and are often targeted to address specific programs or problems. Nevertheless, these programs are summarized below for educational and possible future use.

Community Development Block Grant Program

The Community Development Block Grant program was authorized under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974. The Act had the effect of combining several Federal categorical grants such as Urban Renewal and Model Cities into one program. Grants under the program must principally benefit low and moderate-income families. Limited funds are available to rural communities through the Michigan Department of Commerce.

Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) Programs

To help preserve Michigan's older existing housing, Public Act 130 was passed in 1977 to allow MSHDA to begin a home improvement loan program that offers reduced interest rates to eligible low and moderate income families. Consequently, MSHDA created the Home Improvement, Neighborhood Improvement, and Community Home Improvement Programs (HIP/NIP/CHIP). To obtain a loan, residents need to apply to one of the banks, savings and loans, or credit unions that participate in HIP/NIP/CHIP. Elderly housing programs are also available. MSHDA can be contacted through the Michigan Department of Commerce.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant program was authorized by Public Law 88-578, which became effective on January 1, 1965. The purpose of the program is to provide Federal funds for acquisition and development of facilities for outdoor recreation. The LWCF Program is administered jointly by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. To be eligible for support, a Park and Recreation Plan must be submitted to and approved by the DNR every five years.

Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund

The Kammer Recreational Land Trust Fund Act of 1976 (Public Act 204) was passed by the Michigan Legislature and signed by the Governor on July 23, 1976. This Act created the Michigan Land Trust Fund and provides funds for the public acquisition of recreational lands through the sale of oil, gas, and mineral leases and royalties from oil, gas, and mineral extractions on State lands.

On November 6, 1984, Michigan residents cast their vote in favor a State Constitutional amendment to create the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF), Public Act 101 of 1985. The MNRTF officially replaced the Michigan Land Trust Fund on October 1, 1985 and assists State and local governments (including school districts) in acquiring land or rights to land for recreational uses, protecting land because of its environmental importance or scenic beauty, and developing public recreational facilities.

Land Acquisition Grants

Land acquisition grants are available for projects aimed at open space preservation; park creation or expansion; acquisition of environmental resources such as sand dunes, woodlots, or wetland areas; waterfront access sites; and many other land acquisition projects intended for passive or active recreational purposes through the MNRTF. They are administered by the DNR.

Waterways Fund

The Waterways Division of the Department of Natural Resources offers grants for the purpose of developing public boating facilities. The emphasis is on creating boat access sites and supporting facilities.

Road Funds

In 1992, PA 149 was passed to provide a continued source of revenue for cities, villages, and county road commissions. PA 149 replaces Acts 231, 233, and 237 by reducing the State's matching grant provision from 25 percent to 20 percent. Detailed information on PA 149 can be obtained from MDOT's Transportation Economic Development Office at (517) 335-1069.

TEA-21 Funds

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 created a new era of Federal transportation policy, and, as a result, a new opportunity for funding local transportation improvements. Authorized with a 20 percent local match requirement, funds may be sought for construction activities on any Federally-funded roads, bridges, or other transportation related projects, including but not limited to transit, carpool, parking, bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Public Works Financing

In addition to using general fund monies, it is often necessary for a community to bond to raise sufficient funds for implementing substantial public improvements. Bonding offers a method of financing improvements such as water and sewer lines, street construction, sidewalks, and public parking facilities. Special assessments that benefit property owners are another common funding mechanism.

WHAT TO DO

(Let's use and update!)

Listed below are a series of follow-up studies and activities the County Planning Commission should undertake once the Master Plan has been adopted. These activities are listed into two categories, namely immediate priorities and priorities within five (5) years.

Near-Term Priorities

- Distribute copies of Master Plan and any time that it is significantly updated to all local governments and county agencies.
- Review the County Zoning Ordinance to identify if changes are necessary to be consistent with the Master Plan. Secure monies and hire a consultant to perform this work and prepare amendments for adoption.
- Prepare an updated composite zoning map showing the zoning of all land in the County pursuant to each of the zoning ordinances in effect within the County.
- Work with the County Road Commission to prepare private road design standards.

Priorities Within 5 Years

- Prepare a digital parcel map of all parcels within the County in conjunction with the County Equalization Department.
- Identify specific state-owned parcels for possible land exchange or acquisition consideration (particularly near the Village of Kalkaska) that would either establish a logical extension of existing Village boundaries to accommodate new commercial, industrial or residential development, or establish new State land boundaries without internal fragments.
- Institute a full-scale GIS system that serves the county and public in a way that is meaningful and useful.
- Initiate a countywide capital improvement program (CIP) that is reviewed and approved annually to ensure consistency with the Master Plan.

Priorities after 5 Years

- Master Plans must be reviewed every five (5) years OR when a substantial change occurs. At a minimum, the Master Plan should be reviewed and revised, if necessary, pursuant to the requirements of the Michigan Planning Act (Act 33 of 2008).
- A substantial review may also be necessary if the Village of Kalkaska or one of the Townships adopt a Land Use Plan or major zoning change that is inconsistent with this Master Plan.