



GLEN ARBOR TOWNSHIP

Leelanau County, Michigan

[DRAFT] 2015 Master Plan



CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Glen Arbor Township, Michigan

Glen Arbor Township is one of eleven townships in Leelanau County in the northwestern corner of the Lower Peninsula. It is accessed primarily by M-72 from Traverse City and M-22 from Frankfort.

The Township is a prime destination that draws well over a million visitors a year, is the permanent home of about eight hundred people and the seasonal home of another two thousand. Nearly half of the acreage of the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore - a national park - is located within the Township. The small settlement of Glen Arbor, an unincorporated village within the Township, is nestled between the National Park, Lake Michigan and Glen Lake. The local economy is mostly driven by summer tourist season, and tourists provide revenue for a wider range of restaurants and stores than would normally be found in such a small community.

Glen Arbor Township is a tourist attraction largely because of its spectacular beauty and recreational opportunities. There are abundant opportunities for swimming, boating, fishing, hiking, bicycling and many other activities. However, there are few places in the state, or the nation, that can compare to Glen Arbor Township's stunning scenery and natural beauty. So impressive are the Township's natural features that in 2011, Sleeping Bear Dunes was voted "America's Most Beautiful Place" by the viewers of the popular television show *Good Morning America*. The unique combination of breathtaking scenery and the charm of the homes and local businesses give the area its unique appeal and character.



About the Master Plan

The purpose of the Master Plan is to provide a vision for the physical development of the Township over the next thirty or more years. A Master Plan is the official policy guide for development in the Township, and as such it is important for the plan to be rooted in the opinions and perspectives of the people who live, work, and play in the Township. For this Master Plan, public input was received during a number of meetings and events held in the summer of 2014, along with input from local elected and appointed officials, created the foundation for the policies of the Plan.

The Master Plan identifies current trends and needs and presents recommendations for meeting those needs. The plan is the blueprint upon which future changes will be based. By using information gathered by traditional research methods coupled with significant input from residents, the Plan sets forth a vision for development in a manner that preserves all that is highly valued by those who live and visit Glen Arbor Township.

Planning and Zoning

The Plan was developed in accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA), Act 33 of 2008, as amended. It was last updated by the Glen Arbor Township Planning Commission in 2012, and that update was based on the Plan that was completed and adopted in 2005. The plan does not seek to establish a significant departure from previous planning efforts. However, significant demographic, economic and other challenges that have occurred in Glen Arbor Township (as well as much of the state) over the last ten years warrant consideration and are addressed in the Plan.

Furthermore, Michigan law requires that a community's zoning ordinance be based upon a plan. So in addition to serving as the policy basis for the Township's elected and appointed officials, the Plan also serves as a foundation for the Township's zoning and other land use regulations. The Plan is adopted to help provide a stronger legal basis for the Township Zoning Ordinance. As required by the MPEA it contains a Zoning Plan, which sets forth the principal district and use regulations of the Ordinance and how the zoning districts correspond to the future land use designations of the Plan.

In accordance with the MPEA, this Plan was distributed to the entities required by resolution of the Township Board on _____. Then on _____, the Glen Arbor Township Planning Commission held a public hearing on the proposed Master Plan and on _____, the Glen Arbor Township Board adopted The Master Plan.



CHAPTER 2. PEOPLE AND ECONOMY

Population

Total Population

The population of Glen Arbor Township was 859 in 2010. Between 2000 and 2010, the Township grew by 71 people, or 9%. Between 1990 and 2000, the population increased by 22% and 144 people. As is typical with seasonal and tourist localities, it is expected that since 2010, the population in Glen Arbor Township has not changed significantly.

Table 2-1. Population 2000-2010

Municipality	1990	2000	2010	% Change 2000-2010
Glen Arbor Township	644	788	859	9%
Leelanau County	16,527	21,119	21,708	3%

Based on current trends, the population of Glen Arbor Township will continue to add residents at a relatively modest rate; since 1990 the Township has added about 10 residents per year. However, the limited land area available for development and extraordinarily high property values and real estate prices will likely either (1) slow the rate of population growth, or (2) require that the density of residential development increase to accommodate the expanding population.

Age of Population

Like most American communities, the median age of Glen Arbor Township is increasing, due to an increased senior population as the “baby boomers” reach retirement age, families have fewer children, fewer full time jobs, and other factors. Unlike most American communities,

however, the median age of residents of Glen Arbor Township has grown from 53.1 in 2000 to 60.9 in 2010, which is notably higher than that of Leelanau County (50.3 years) in general and even more so than the state of Michigan (39 years).

Further highlighting this trend is that in 2000, 29.3% of the population was above the age of 65, which increased to 40.5% by 2010. This has numerous and significant implications relative to use planning, which will be discussed in greater detail at the end of this chapter.

Table 2-2. Median Age- Glen Arbor Township 2000-2010

Municipality	2000	2010	Median Age
Glen Arbor Township	53.1	60.9	60.9
Leelanau County	36.5	42.6	50.3
Michigan	32.6	35.5	39

Housing

Housing Units

In 2010 there were about 400 occupied housing units, which was a slight increase from 2000, and nearly all of the housing units are owner-occupied. As one would expect, over half (54%) of all households in 2010 were two person households (244), while 30% were single person households (126). There were only 36 renter occupied units in 2010 when the Census was taken, with 75 rental units vacant and available for rent.

Table 2-3. Housing Units Occupied Year Round in Glen Arbor Township 2000- 2010

Municipality	1990	2000	2010	% Change 2000-2010
Glen Arbor Township	303	377	408	8%
Leelanau County	6,274	8,436	9,255	10%

Seasonal Housing

Glen Arbor has a very large seasonal population relative to its year-round population. In 2010, there were 1,102 seasonally-occupied housing units, which means there are about three times more seasonal homes than year-round homes in the Township. However, the number of seasonal homes grew by a much smaller amount between 1990 and 2010 compared to year-round homes.

Table 2-4. Seasonal Housing in Glen Arbor Township, 1990-2010

Municipality	1990	2000	2010	% Change 1990-2010
Glen Arbor Township	1,058	1,068	1,102	4%
Leelanau County	4,172	4,111	4,681	12%

The U.S. Census indicates that only 44 new homes were added in Glen Arbor Township between 1990 and 2010, which is an increase of about 4%. Thus, it is likely that some seasonal homes have been converted for year-round use or razed and replaced with a home for year-round use. Leelanau County also experienced a growth in seasonal homes during the period 1990-2010, with Census figures showing a county-wide increase of 12%. With the "baby boomers" generation beginning to retire, it is reasonable to assume that more seasonal homes in the Township will be occupied on a year-round basis.

Household Size

The size of households in Glen Arbor Township is decreasing, similar to Leelanau County, the State of Michigan and the United States. The average household size in Glen Arbor Township declined 7% from 1990 to 2010, from 2.13 to 1.98 persons. In Leelanau County population per household declined by 12%, but from a larger average size of 2.62 to 2.31 persons, while the Michigan average household size declined 7% to 2.45 persons. The general trend toward smaller family size is due to many factors, including a growing retirement and "empty-nester" population, a general trend of families having fewer children and young people waiting longer to get married. Glen Arbor Township's smaller family size reflects an older population, many of whom are empty nesters, retired, and/or single person households.

Table 2-5. Household Family Size

Municipality	1990	2000	2010	% Change 1990-2000
Glen Arbor Township	2.13	2.09	1.98	-7%
Leelanau County	2.62	2.48	2.31	-12%
Michigan	2.66	2.56	2.45	-7%

Economic Characteristics

Year-round Glen Arbor Township households had a median income of \$64,583 in 2010, which is substantially higher than the County (\$47,062) and the State of Michigan (\$44,667). Only 5 families in Glen Arbor Township were receiving food stamps in 2010. Reflecting the age of the population, 226 persons received Social Security income in Glen Arbor Township in 2010, but no one received supplemental Social Security income.

The estimated labor force of Glen Arbor Township (residents only) was 270 persons in 2010. The estimated yearly average employment was 242 persons, with only 28 estimated to be unemployed, on average, or 10.4%.

Table 2-6. Employment in Glen Arbor

Employment	Total
Labor Force	270
Employment	242
Unemployment	28
Unemployment Rate	10.4%

Assessed Value

Glen Arbor Township's assessed value is primarily based on residential development. In 2011, at a state equalized value (SEV) of \$574,011,351 residential land accounted for 94.7% of SEV of real property. Commercial SEV was \$30,575,500 or only 5.3%. Over the past two decades, agricultural and timber cut-over properties have been reclassified for different uses, and there is very slight industrial assessed value in Glen Arbor Township.

What is notable is that about 95% of real property values in the Township is classified as residential; which suggests that Township services are supported almost entirely by taxes on residential (both seasonal and year-round) development. Also notable is that from 2003 to 2011, which included a lengthy economic downturn, residential properties in the Township still increased in value by about 34%. However, if for some reason the values of residential property in the Township were to fall significantly, it could result in a dramatic reduction in the amount of tax revenues available to support local services.

Table 2-9 Glen Arbor Township SEV, 1990- 2011

Category	1990	1995	2003	2011	Percent of Total Real Property 2011
Agriculture	\$95,000	\$300,000	\$337,500	0	0%
Commercial	\$5,699,700	\$7,704,500	\$19,566,454	\$30,575,500	5.3%
Industrial	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$66,500	0.0%
Residential	\$75,810,650	\$145,367,010	\$403,979,350	\$543,369,351	94.7%
Timber Cut-over	\$314,200	\$0	\$0	0	0%
Total	\$81,919,550	\$153,371,510	\$423,883,304	\$574,011,351	100%

Planning Implications and Issues

The preceding analysis and data can be summarized in the following conclusions that affect the long-term future of Glen Arbor Township:

- Glen Arbor Township can expect its relatively modest rate of growth to continue over the life of the plan, although it may slow somewhat as the few remaining vacant properties in the Township are developed. Due to the limited amount of land available, the Township may need to plan for increased residential density in some areas near downtown Glen Arbor for this rate of growth to continue. For example, the Township may explore single-family housing opportunities near the downtown area.

The previous Master Plan analyzed this issue with a build out analysis that looked at how much developable land remained in the Township. This was conducted in order to determine if the Township had a sufficient amount of undeveloped land available to accommodate enough future residents to support a wider range of year-round businesses to serve the local (i.e. non-seasonal) population. The analysis concluded that many year round businesses were probably not feasible unless supplemented by a more balanced tourist season, or unless most of the Township's seasonal homes are converted to permanent dwellings to accommodate more permanent residents.

Simply stated, unless residential development density increases significantly, it is unlikely that many businesses intended to serve local residents will be able to locate in Glen Arbor Township. Furthermore, if increased density were desired by the Township, it is likely that public sewer (and perhaps water) would be also be needed, which further complicates matters.

- A continuation of current planning and zoning practices in Glen Arbor could result eventually in a slowed rate of growth as the Township reaches build out. Because of the difficulties in locating a wastewater system in the Township due to the unique geography and high capital and maintenance costs associated with the construction of such a system, the intensity of most new development will likely be limited.
- Glen Arbor Township's year-round population is primarily comprised of residents that are near or past retirement age. This results in a community that generally consists of smaller households, fewer children, and thus less demand for full-time employment opportunities. Many of Glen Arbor Township's permanent residents do not depend on the local economy to make a living.

It is likely that the number of seniors in Glen Arbor Township will continue to increase as the "baby boomer" generation reaches retirement age, which may lead to some demand for local businesses or recreation facilities intended to serve an older population. With an aging population, new development and redevelopment should be carefully reviewed to ensure that buildings and properties are easily accessible by seniors, users of assistance devices and disabled persons.

- With more than 95% of the Township's tax base coming from residential uses, the Township is very dependent on residential development, particularly on seasonal homes and the tourism industry. However, this is not likely to change due to the limited amount of land available. This leaves the Township susceptible to economic forces that may affect property values and the tourism industry. In cooperation with similar communities in the region, the Township should consider broad, four-season marketing and promotional efforts to attract low-impact, non-residential development to help diversify its population and tax base, and to attract tourists during non-summer months.



CHAPTER 3. THE NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

This chapter presents information on the characteristics of the natural environment and development of Glen Arbor Township.

Land

Glen Arbor Township consists of approximately 18,000 acres. Of this, South Manitou Island is 5,286 acres and is located about 6 miles from the closest mainland point and generally is accessed by ferry from Leland. The Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore accounts for 79 percent of the Township's area (and includes South Manitou Island). The privately owned land area of the Township amounts to only about 7,600 acres.

The characteristics that are most representative of the Township include the waterfronts of Glen Lake, Little Glen Lake, and Lake Michigan, the Sleeping Bear Dunes, the Crystal River, hilly terrain and the extensive tree cover. These natural features have influenced the major land use patterns in the Township. Residential development is most evident around the Glen Lakes, Fisher Lakes, Lake Michigan, and on high hills, while Glen Arbor village, the Homestead and the Leelanau School are the only concentrations of development. As is common in most communities, lakefront properties act as a magnet for residential development.

Property Classifications

All property in Glen Arbor Township is classified as either residential, commercial or exempt. Nearly 80% of the land area of Glen Arbor Township is tax-exempt because it is owned by the federal government (Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore). Residential properties make up about 20% of the land area in the Township, and commercial properties comprise less than one percent of the land area in the Township. Map 3-1 illustrates the land classifications in Glen Arbor Township.

Table 3-1 Land Classification by Property Class in Acres

Tax Class Category	2000 Acres	Total %	2012 Acres	Total %	2014 Acres	Total %
Residential	3,518	20.1%	3,738	20.1%	3,076	17.5%
Commercial	128	0.7%	123	0.7%	115	0.6%
Agricultural	2	0.01%	0	0%	2	0.01%
Tax Exempt	13,836	79.1%	14,123	79.2%	14,354	81.8%
Total	17,483	100%	17,984	100%	17,547	100%

Note: South Manitou Island accounts for 5,286 of the total tax exempt acres.

Total acres in Table 3-1 are less than the actual area of Glen Arbor Township because inland lakes and road rights-of-way are not included and account for several thousand acres. The exact amount is not known as there are no boundaries for those areas on the parcel map.

Sources: 2003 & 2012 – Township assessment rolls and parcel map.

2014 – Leelanau County GIS parcel map.

South Manitou Island



Lake
Michigan

Glen Arbor Township Master Plan

MAP 3-1 PROPERTY CLASSIFICATION

Legend

- Exempt/Other
- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Residential

1 inch = 5,000 feet

0 2,500 5,000 10,000
Feet

Glen

Lake

Williams & Works

Data Source: Leelanau County and the Michigan CGI

Natural Features

The Township's natural features are the primary characteristic that defines the community. Glen Arbor Township is home to some of the nation's most beautiful scenery, from the rolling, wooded terrain, to the clarity of Glen Lake and the serenity and scenery from Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. A primary consideration of the plan is the preservation and management of these natural features that allow for an acceptable amount of human activity and development, carefully balanced to encourage the preservation of the features that draw so many visitors to the Township each year.

The preservation of natural features, including trees, scenic views and water quality, is one of the leading areas of interest among residents and is a focal point of the plan.

Glen Lake

Glen Lake is a large inland lake with an area of 1,450 acres. Aside from Lake Michigan, it is the predominant hydrologic feature in the Township. Glen Lake is unofficially divided into Little Glen and Big Glen Lakes, connected via a small channel (known as the narrows) under M-22. Big Glen Lake is deeper than Little Glen, but both lakes host a variety of fish and are mostly surrounded by single-family residential development.

Water in Glen Lake is clear and clean, however non-native invasive species remain a concern for the health of a lake ecosystem. The introduction of such species can alter the balance of plants and animals in the lake, causing a decline in desirable species and sometimes negatively affecting recreational activity in the lake.

Studies have been undertaken with regard to the health of Glen Lake. Clearly, the health of Glen Lake is a key priority for Glen Arbor Township.



Crystal River

The Crystal River is a pristine stream that winds from the north end of Fisher Lake (attached to Big Glen Lake) through wetlands, a dune and swale area and woods to discharge into Lake Michigan within the Homestead. It is a popular canoeing and kayaking stream. It is visible within Glen Arbor village and along portions of M-22 and County Road 675.

The dune and swale complex along the Crystal River is an important and sensitive ecosystem, and one of the highest quality of such complexes in Michigan. The National Park Service has noted the importance of this habitat along the Crystal River for migratory birds, ducks, mink and weasels, and threatened or endangered species. The dune/swale complex is located wholly within Glen Arbor Township.

The Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore

The Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore is the dominant land entity in Glen Arbor Township. Its presence assures preservation of much of the Township's natural beauty. The Park attracts more than a million visitors each year, resulting in pressure for additional tourist-related services in the Township and neighboring communities.

Development of the park is guided by the General Management Plan which was approved in 1979 by the Midwest Regional Director of the National Park Service. Drafts of subsequent management plan updates have been adopted.

Physically, the park is divided in two by the Glen Arbor village area and privately owned lands south to Glen Lake. These areas also separate the Dunes and Alligator Hill from the Crystal River, Miller Hill highlands and the meadow and farmlands to the north. Since the business and residential center of the Township lies between these areas, conflicts are created as traffic, both motorized and non-motorized, passes through the village.

A majority of the National Lakeshore's visitor facilities are located to the west of Glen Arbor village. The Pierce Stocking Scenic Drive and the Dune Climb draw a majority of the visitors, and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. When combined with the Coast Guard Maritime Museum, the Glen Haven historic village, the Little Glen Picnic Area, D.H. Day Campground, the Heritage Bike Path, various hiking trail systems, and convenient access to Lake Michigan beaches, Glen Arbor Township is a very attractive destination for visitors.



Glen Lake/Crystal River Watershed Management Plan

The Glen Lake Association and the Leelanau Conservancy developed a watershed management plan for the Glen Lake/Crystal River watershed in 2002 and updated the plan in 2009. The Plan was reviewed and accepted by local governments and the Michigan Department

of Environmental Quality. This latter step qualifies the area for Clean Michigan Initiative (CMI) funding to implement portions of the Plan. The Glen Lake/Crystal River Watershed extends into four communities: Glen Arbor Township, Cleveland Township, Empire Township and Kasson Township. The Plan includes information on pollutants, fisheries management, milestones to guide the plan implementation process, and sets forth standards to evaluate the plan's effectiveness.

Watershed Management Plans are intended to help local units of government, nonprofit organizations and residents develop water quality related projects. The Glen Arbor Township Master Plan recognizes the importance of the region's abundant natural features and the Glen Lake/Crystal River Watershed Management Plan.

Development in Glen Arbor Township

Lakefront Development

Most of the Township's frontage on Glen Lake has already been developed and consists of both year-round and seasonal homes. Three marinas serve the lake: one at the south end of Lake Street, one at the head of the Crystal River (not a full service marina) and one at "the Narrows". There are several lodges, cottage resorts, and a public access point west of M-22 on Day Forest Road. Lakefront lots are characterized by 100 foot widths with varying depths to adjoining access roads which parallel the shorelines. Lots are very shallow between M-22 and Glen Lake. In some areas, the cottages are clustered and do not all have direct lake frontage, a characteristic of some of the older areas. Such conditions are most prevalent near the Narrows, at the western edge of the lake and to some extent near Fisher Lake.



The character of development on Glen Lake has changed in recent years. Smaller homes and cottages have been converted to very large homes, many that can house multiple families at once. This has limited the views of the water from the road and adjacent lots, and has intensified the activity level on the lakeshore.

The Homestead

The Homestead is a resort/residential community located in the Township on approximately 500 acres of heavily timbered land with about a mile of beach frontage on Lake Michigan. It includes over 460 condominiums, 90 lodge units, four restaurants, two conference centers and two large recreational complexes. The facility is the largest single employer and taxpayer in the Township.

The Leelanau School

The Leelanau School is a private college preparatory high school which has operated in the Township since 1929. It is located adjacent to and southwest of the Homestead and together they form an important activity center north and east of the village area. The school is located on 42 acres and has an enrollment of about 64. The campus also contains the Leelanau Library, a greenhouse and the Lanphier Observatory.

Historic Sites

Many sites have been identified in the Township as having historic significance. The sites have been identified from the Inventory of Michigan's 1975 Historic Preservation Plan and various written material regarding the history of Glen Arbor Township and state and federal online historical references. The Township should continue to encourage the preservation of historic buildings and sites. Attention is drawn to the history of the area each year during the Manitou Music Festival, which holds some of its concerts in cultural and historic locations, such as the Leelanau School, and the Thoreson Farm in the Port Oneida Historic District. In addition, the National Park Service and Preserve Historic Sleeping Bear have led to much greater attention to historic resources in the Township.

Glen Arbor “Village”

The village is the business and governmental center of the Township and includes two churches and numerous small businesses. The village is not incorporated, so it is a part of Glen Arbor Township. There is a small park that includes the Township tennis courts, basketball court, children’s playground and Township Hall facilities.

The Township provides public restrooms in a garden setting as a service to visitors in the commercial district.



There is variety in the type and visual character of the buildings in the village. There are residences, businesses, and a few governmental facilities. The Township Hall, post office and fire and rescue department are also located in the village, as are several historic buildings. There are a variety of architectural styles in the village, including many older, rustic buildings as well as newer buildings having more traditional American designs. Previous planning efforts have indicated that the public prefers new buildings to have a “northwoods” or traditional American character. Although it is the center of activity in the Township, the village area remains heavily wooded, and the preservation of this characteristic is important to maintaining the charm and northern Michigan character of the community.

Glen Arbor Township's large seasonal population has a significant effect on the village. In the summer months, the village is often congested as the population increases significantly. In the spring, fall and winter there is less activity, although the community experiences some tourism throughout the year.

Planning Implications and Issues

There are several planning issues pertaining to the natural environment and development that will affect the long-term future of Glen Arbor Township:

- Glen Arbor Township is unique in that most of the land in the Township is unbuildable and therefore remains in a natural state. The Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore and Glen Lake occupy the vast majority of land in the Township and given the Township's hilly terrain, form some of the most breathtaking views in the region. However, care must be taken to carefully govern what development does occur in the Township, as hillside development that was not designed to blend into the terrain could quickly destroy the quality of the view of the hills themselves from other vantage points in the community. Planning and zoning policies should encourage, in a reasonable manner, maintenance of the wooded areas, the ground water, water quality in lakes and rivers, the wetlands and the dune areas, both as ecosystems and as important scenery.
- Glen Arbor Township will forever have the majority of its natural landscape preserved in the National Lakeshore. If residents want to retain nature in the privately owned areas, to protect water quality of the lakes and rivers, and to sustain wildlife populations as part of the nature experience, they will have to be diligent in caring for the pure water and plant and animal ecosystems in the Township. The Township should continue to foster and maintain positive ongoing relationships with the Glen Lakes Association, the Leelanau Watershed Council, various conservancy groups and others who are dedicated to monitoring the quality of Glen Arbor Township's natural resources.
- Over the years, the character of development along Glen Lake has changed as smaller cottages have been replaced by larger homes. While this may not have a large effect in terms of population, it can significantly alter the character of the community as views of the water from the road or from adjacent cottages become limited, waterfront becomes more urban in appearance, and the activity level on the lakeshore is intensified.
- Like most water features, Glen Lake and Lake Michigan have attracted development over the years, and Glen Lake is mostly surrounded by residential development. However, great care must be taken to ensure that development does not begin to degrade the natural features that attracted it in the first place. The Township must remain vigilant in protecting the water quality in the lakes. Limiting the amount of impervious surfaces in the Township, reducing fertilizer use, and working to combat invasive species are all methods that the pristine water quality of the community can be preserved and protected.

- Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore attracts more than one million visitors a year to Glen Arbor Township. While the Township may have little control over the ownership or management of the dunes, the protection of this invaluable feature is clearly in its best interest.
- Most commercial development in the Township is in the “village” of Glen Arbor, and past studies and plans have revealed that many residents prefer the rustic charm and small-town character of village area. It is important that the Township should take great care in preserving the atmosphere of the village to ensure it remains a popular destination for both residents and visitors.
- Parking is a concern in Glen Arbor Township during the peak tourist season. While it may be appropriate for the Township to construct additional parking lots, it should not be at the expense of quality development. It is possible that small expansions or reconfiguration of off-street parking lots can add additional spaces, and there may be additional parking available on local streets. These are options that should be explored before acquiring new properties for parking. With so little land available for new commercial or residential development, utilizing high quality real estate near downtown Glen Arbor is not an efficient or economically responsible use of land, and should be considered only once all other options have been exhausted.



CHAPTER 4. PUBLIC PLACES AND SERVICES

This Chapter discusses the community facilities, schools, utilities and transportation system of Glen Arbor Township. It looks at present conditions and future needs.

Public Facilities

Township Hall

The Township Hall is located at 6394 West Western Avenue midway between Lake and Oak on the north side of the street, across from the old schoolhouse. The building also contains an historic gymnasium with a barn-style roof and is used for a variety of recreational activities.

Located behind the Township Hall is public parking that is used seasonally for tourists, as well as for any other events. Weekly, during the summer, this parking lot is turned into a farmer's market.

Public Utilities

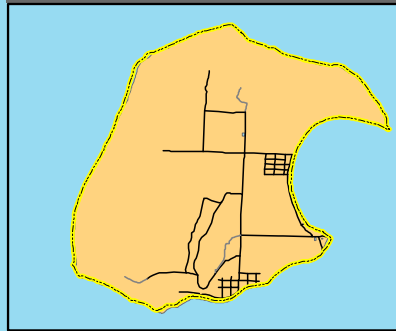
There are no public water or sewer utilities in Glen Arbor Township. The placement of a public sewer system was explored a few years ago and numerous challenges presented themselves. One was the high capital and maintenance costs of operating such a system that would be levied on property owners. With the Township's small population, the operation of a public wastewater system could result in high fees for the end users. Furthermore, additional challenges were discovered relative to the placement of a wastewater treatment plant due to (1) the limited amount of undeveloped land in the Township and (2) the ecological sensitivity of such lands.



Inset 1.



South Manitou Island



Lake
Michigan

Glen Arbor Township Master Plan

MAP 4-1 PUBLIC RECREATION FACILITIES

Legend

- Township Facilities
- Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore
- Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail

1 inch = 5,000 feet

0 2,500 5,000 10,000 Feet



See Inset 1.



Crystal River
Canoe Access

Miller Hill
Lookout Park

Glen

Lake

Little Glen
Lake Access

Williams & Works

Data Source: Leelanau County, TART Trails, Inc. and the Michigan CGI

Fire, EMS and Rescue Services

The Glen Arbor Fire and Rescue Department, which operates as The Glen Lake Fire and Rescue Department (GLFD), is a 24 hour a day, seven days a week service, staffed by a full-time chief and full-time core members, supplemented by a small contingent of part-time personnel. The Department operates from two stations: the Public Safety Building in Glen Arbor and the fire station in Empire. The Department provides many emergency services including high angle rescue at the Dunes and services Glen Lake and Lake Michigan, as well as surrounding properties, in coordination with the U.S. Coast Guard. The department recently added a fire boat for water rescue.

The Department participates with and provides assistance to other county fire departments under a mutual aid agreement. Public education programs and CPR classes are made available to the public throughout the year.



Glen Arbor Township does not have a hospital. Munson Health Care, based in Traverse City, is the major healthcare provider for Leelanau County. Leelanau Urgent Care in Suttons Bay also provides medical services. The Paul Oliver Memorial Hospital located in Frankfort, Michigan is now the next closest hospital to Munson.

Public Safety

The Leelanau County Sheriff's Office provides 24-hour law enforcement to 11 townships and three villages, including Glen Arbor Township. Park Rangers work closely with the Leelanau County Sheriff's Department and provide emergency assistance to county officers when requested. The Marine Safety Unit of the Sheriff's Office patrols the waterways within Glen Arbor Township and Leelanau County. This unit responds to distress and emergency calls.

Parks and Recreation

Glen Arbor Township's location amidst the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore provides numerous recreational opportunities to seasonal and year-around residents and tourists. Activities such as camping, fishing, hiking, skiing, and golfing are all readily accessible within the community. During the summer months, hundreds of thousands of seasonal residents and tourists flock to the area to take advantage of its intrinsic natural beauty and recreational opportunities. The Township last adopted a Community Recreation Plan in spring 2014.

Recreational facilities are located on Map 4-1 and include:

- Glen Arbor Township Hall Gymnasium: Contains indoor basketball court, restroom facilities, and a stage.
- Glen Arbor Township Park: Contains a basketball court, four tennis courts, and a children's play area with a variety of playground equipment.
- Glen Arbor Boat Ramp: Boat launch located on Lake Michigan.
- Beach Facilities: Beaches are located on both Lake Michigan and Glen Lake and provide limited parking.
- Crystal River Canoe Access: A narrow strip of land from the road to the water, accessed off Fisher Road near County Road 675 at the Crystal River dam. Two privately owned canoe outfitters rent canoes, kayaks, and bicycles.
- Little Glen Lake Access at the Narrows: Small beach with large amounts of poison ivy. This is a narrow strip of land from the road to the water with no public parking.
- Miller Hill Lookout Park: A small undeveloped park at the juncture of Miller Hill and the power lines.
- Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore: 26 square miles of National Park containing a campground, numerous historic buildings, a maritime museum, a dune climb and scenic drive, cross-country and snowshoe trails, canoeing and fishing opportunities, and a visitor's center.



Golf Courses

Golfers in the Glen Arbor community have access to several golf courses within Leelanau County. Within Glen Arbor, golfers need to look no further than The Homestead Resort, which features a 9-hole course that is unique in that the golf facility shares the same area as the ski layout during the changing seasons. The Homestead is a par 3 course with a hilly design and an abundance of trees. The variable elevation provides beautiful views of Lake Michigan, Manitou Passage, and North and South Manitou islands. There are several other courses within a short drive of Glen Arbor Township that are available to the public.

School System

Glen Arbor Township is served by the Glen Lake Community School District, part of the larger Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District. Glen Lake Community Schools encompass 200 square miles and serves 6,032 year round residents. Glen Lake schools have a district-wide enrollment of 930 students.

Library

The Glen Lake Community Library, located in Empire, serves Glen Arbor, Empire, and Kasson Townships. The library offers over 19,000 items, including 13,000 book titles, 800 recordings on tape or compact disc, over 2,000 videotapes and DVD's, and nearly 50 periodicals and newspapers. The library also has public computers with high speed internet access. The library provides information materials and services to all community residents and visitors on an equal, publicly funded basis. A Board of Trustees, comprised of residents from all three townships, governs operational and financial matters.

Transportation

Highways

Glen Arbor is served by two state trunklines, M-22 and M-109. M-22 is the major access route into the Township. It passes along the west side of Big Glen Lake and across the "Narrows." The road along Glen Lake winds and is tree-lined. The Narrows is a congregating place for visitors who like the view, for fisherman off the bridge, and for customers at the marina. This attraction sometimes creates hazardous traffic situations.

M-22 serves as both a major transportation artery for the County and as a corridor for viewing some of the country's most scenic vistas. As such, MDOT has designated M-22 and M-109 as a Scenic Heritage Route. The Heritage Route program was initiated through legislation in 1993 and emphasizes cooperation among local residents, their government officials, landowners and interested groups to preserve unique scenic, historic or recreational highways. The Scenic Historic Route designation ensures that the rural character of Leelanau County is preserved and that the inherent qualities of the peninsula continue to be showcased.

In 2002, MDOT helped secure funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation to designate M-22 in Leelanau County as a National Scenic Byway. National Scenic Byway funds enable states to embark on eligible projects along highways designated as National Scenic Byways and state-designated byways. Planning projects to inventory, preserve and enhance the qualities of the byway, safety improvements, construction of bike and pedestrian facilities, and resource protection such as scenic easements are eligible within this program.

M-22 is an arterial road, while M-109, Glen Haven Road (former M-209) and County Road 675 are collector roads. All other public roads are local streets. There are also many private roads that provide access to property like local streets. M-22 and M-109 are maintained by MDOT, while all other public roads in the Township are maintained by the Leelanau County Road Commission.

Traffic

By most traffic engineering standards, traffic, even during the peak summer months, is limited. However, that does not mean that residents are not sensitive to it nor concerned about it. The biggest concerns are on M-22 from the Narrows to Glen Arbor where many homes are very close to the road and there is little road shoulder in many places. Similar concerns exist along M-109 on the west end of Little Glen Lake where most homes are set farther back but speeds are higher. As with many of the challenges in Glen Arbor Township, traffic congestion is generally viewed as a problem mostly in the summer, when seasonal residents and tourists flock to the community.

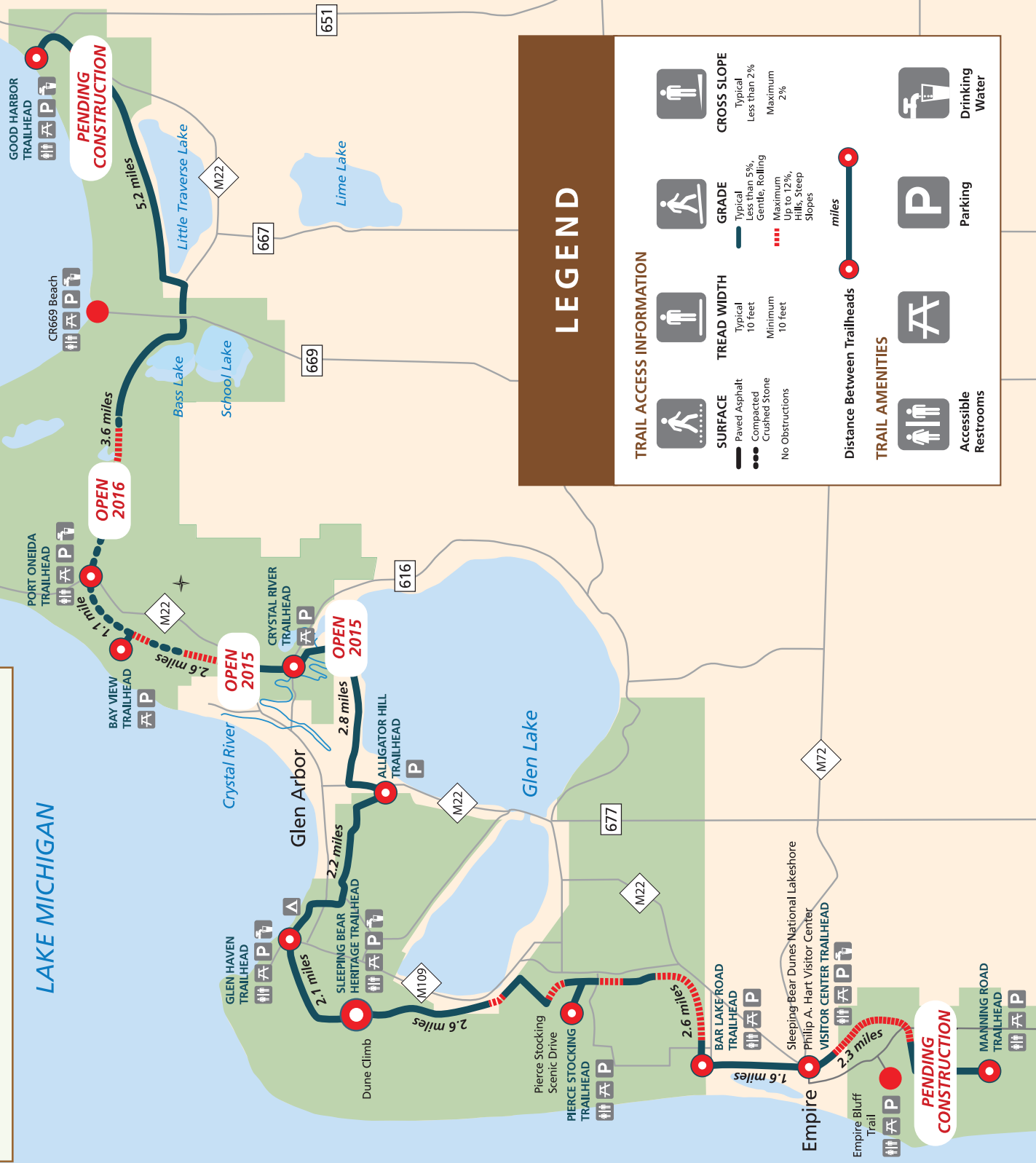
Non-motorized Trails

The Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail is a hard-surfaced multi-use trail paralleling M-22 and M-109 for 27 miles from Empire, through Sleeping Bear Dunes, Glen Arbor and to ending at Good Harbor Bay, between Glen Arbor and Leland. When complete, it will provide a safe, non-motorized, multi-use transportation alternative connecting the Lakeshore's main visitor destinations with Glen Arbor and Empire. The SBHT will give walkers, runners, wheelchair users, bicyclists, cross-country skiers, baby strollers, and rollerbladers a safe, enjoyable and carefree way to access and explore the Lakeshore and neighboring communities.

As of 2014, the trail is mostly complete from Empire to Glen Arbor, with additional segments between Glen Arbor and Good Harbor Bay scheduled to be constructed in 2015 and 2016.

There are no other non-motorized trails in the Township, although the most recent Recreation Plan (2014) recommends the development of a "system of non-motorized paths which will link the Township to adjacent communities as well as linking the Township's residential areas with parks, commercial centers and waterways."

- LAKE MICHIGAN



Planning Implications and Issues

- The Township has abundant recreational opportunities nearby that attract hundreds of thousands of residents and visitors to the community each year. This Glen Arbor Township Master Plan fully supports the Goals, Objectives and Strategies outlined in the 2014 Recreation Plan for enhancing recreational opportunities in the Township.
- Water and sewer utilities are not present within the Township and it is unlikely that such utilities will become available in the short term. This has the effect of limiting the intensity of development that can be located in the Township. If the Township's population grows to a point where such intensity becomes likely, this issue may warrant further study.
- The road network in the township is unlikely to see significant changes due to the limitations in development and the limited amount of land available.
- The development of the Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail is a positive step in the development of a non-motorized trail network serving Glen Arbor and surrounding Townships. There are numerous funding opportunities available to assist with the development of future trails and the Township could explore ways to construct additional trails to serve residents and visitors, depending on available funding, public support, and land acquisition.



CHAPTER 5. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

As a result of the Township's efforts to form a community consensus opinion about growth and development, the following goal statements have been developed. These goals and objectives are founded on the input received from the public, the Planning Commissions, the Township Board, and the business community.

Each goal is supported by more specific objectives, and the policies of the plan are based on these statements. The goals are intended to describe a desirable end state or the condition of the Township in the future. They are intentionally general but attainable through concerted effort. The objective statements may be regarded as milestones in the journey to achieve the larger goal.

An effective goal serves as a useful guide for policy decisions by the Planning Commission and the Township Board.

Goal 1. Water in Glen Lake, the Crystal River, Lake Michigan and all other water bodies will be clean, and surrounding areas will provide vital habitats for wildlife, while serving as a sustainable resource for low-intensity human recreation and use.

Objectives

1. Review and revise the Zoning Ordinance and map to create buffers or overlays that protect lakes, streams and wetlands in the Township.
2. Expand and strengthen stormwater management standards to reduce the quantity and velocity of runoff, and improve water quality over and above the State-enforced soil erosion control.



3. Provide incentives for new developments to utilize ecologically-friendly building and development standards.
4. Maintain a cooperative relationship with the Glen Lake Association and work toward common goals.

Goal 2. Downtown Glen Arbor will be safe, vibrant and consist of businesses that meet the needs of local residents year-round, while also providing necessary goods and services to seasonal residents and tourists.

Objectives

1. Attract viable small businesses, including retail establishments and personal and professional services, to downtown Glen Arbor.
2. Redevelop and redesign M-22 (Western Ave) and M-109 in downtown Glen Arbor, between Forest Haven Drive and Oak Street to safely accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists. Similar efforts on M-22 between State Street and Western Avenue are also appropriate.
3. Reduce vehicular speeds in downtown Glen Arbor through design solutions, pavement markings and signage.
4. Review and revise the Zoning Ordinance, as appropriate, to ensure land use controls, setbacks, and similar standards are inviting appropriate development to downtown Glen Arbor.
5. Where feasible, develop and maintain public gathering places, such as community greens, plazas or pocket parks, to foster social interaction. Specific attention should be given to places that are conducive to year-round use.



Goal 3. Glen Arbor Township's prominent ridgelines and viewsheds will continue to offer breathtaking views of water features, natural areas and permanently protected habitats.

Objectives

1. Encourage or provide incentives for developers and/or landowners to designate key natural features and ridges as permanently protected open space during the site design or site plan review process.

2. Work closely with the National Parks Service to ensure that management of the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore is managed in a manner that is compatible with community values.



- Goal 4.** Roads in Glen Arbor Township will be smooth, well-maintained and designed to accommodate vehicular traffic at reasonable speeds, as well as bicyclists and pedestrians, where appropriate.

Objectives

1. Working with MDOT, TART, the US Parks Service and other agencies, develop a comprehensive plan for non-motorized transportation in Glen Arbor Township.
2. Invest in educational and wayfinding signage in downtown Glen Arbor to ensure that pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists are using and sharing the roadway in an equitable manner.
3. Work with the Leelanau County Road Commission and residents to identify key road segments in disrepair and develop a plan for their repair or reconstruction.

- Goal 5.** Parking in downtown Glen Arbor will be carefully managed during peak months to avoid overcrowding and to ensure the safety of residents and visitors.

Objectives

1. Improve signage in downtown Glen Arbor to direct residents and visitors to available public parking lots.

2. Review all streets and street rights-of-way to ensure that all areas where on-street parking is viable are being used as efficiently as possible.

Goal 6. New residential development in Glen Arbor Township will be constructed with high-quality materials and accommodate a variety of ages and income levels.

Objectives

1. Work to encourage the development of more affordable, modest-sized homes on small lots that are near downtown Glen Arbor.
2. Revise the time-of-sale septic inspection Ordinance to require repair, rather than simply disclosure, of failing systems

Goal 7. To provide the highest levels of service to its residents, Glen Arbor Township will be a leader in fostering positive and productive relationships with neighboring and regional governments and local stakeholders and organizations.

Objectives

1. Redevelop and redesign M-22 (Western Ave) and M-109 in downtown Glen Arbor, between Forest Haven Drive and Oak Street to safely accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists. Similar efforts on M-22 between State Street and Western Avenue are also appropriate. (*duplicates Goal 2, Obj. 2*)
2. Implement periodic meetings and exchanges with the key stakeholders, and surrounding local and regional governments and plan for capital improvements, recreation facilities and similar ideas.





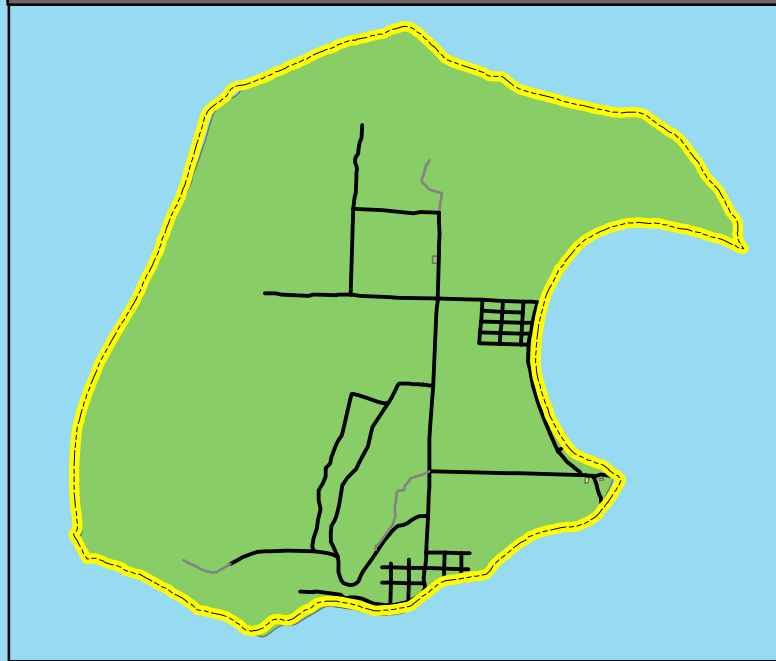
CHAPTER 6. FUTURE LAND USE

The future land use plan is a compilation of descriptions and recommendations for future development and conservation in Glen Arbor Township. It serves as an overall framework for the management and regulation of future development and also serves as the basis for evaluating rezoning requests.

This section of the Glen Arbor Township Master Plan builds upon the goals and objectives and translates the Township's vision into a future land use plan for physical development, improvement and open space preservation. In addition, a zoning plan is provided, which relates the future land use categories to the current zoning districts of the Township, as required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act.

Planning is guiding land uses from a policy standpoint, while zoning is the act of regulating the use of land by ordinance (law). The future land use map and the supporting narrative of this chapter is intended to serve as a guide for the Township as it contemplates zoning and development applications. It is important to note that the Future Land Use map is not a zoning map, but it will help to guide rezoning decisions along with the zoning plan.

South Manitou Island



Lake
Michigan

Glen Arbor Township Master Plan

MAP 6-1 FUTURE LAND USE Legend

- NP, National Park
- CR, Conservation Residential
- LR, Lake Residential
- VR, Village Residential
- R, Resort
- VC, Village Center

1 inch = 5,000 feet

0 2,500 5,000 10,000
Feet



Williams & Works

Data Source: Leelenau County and the Michigan CGI

Glen Arbor Township Master Plan

MAP 6-2 DOWNTOWN GLEN ARBOR FUTURE LAND USE

Legend

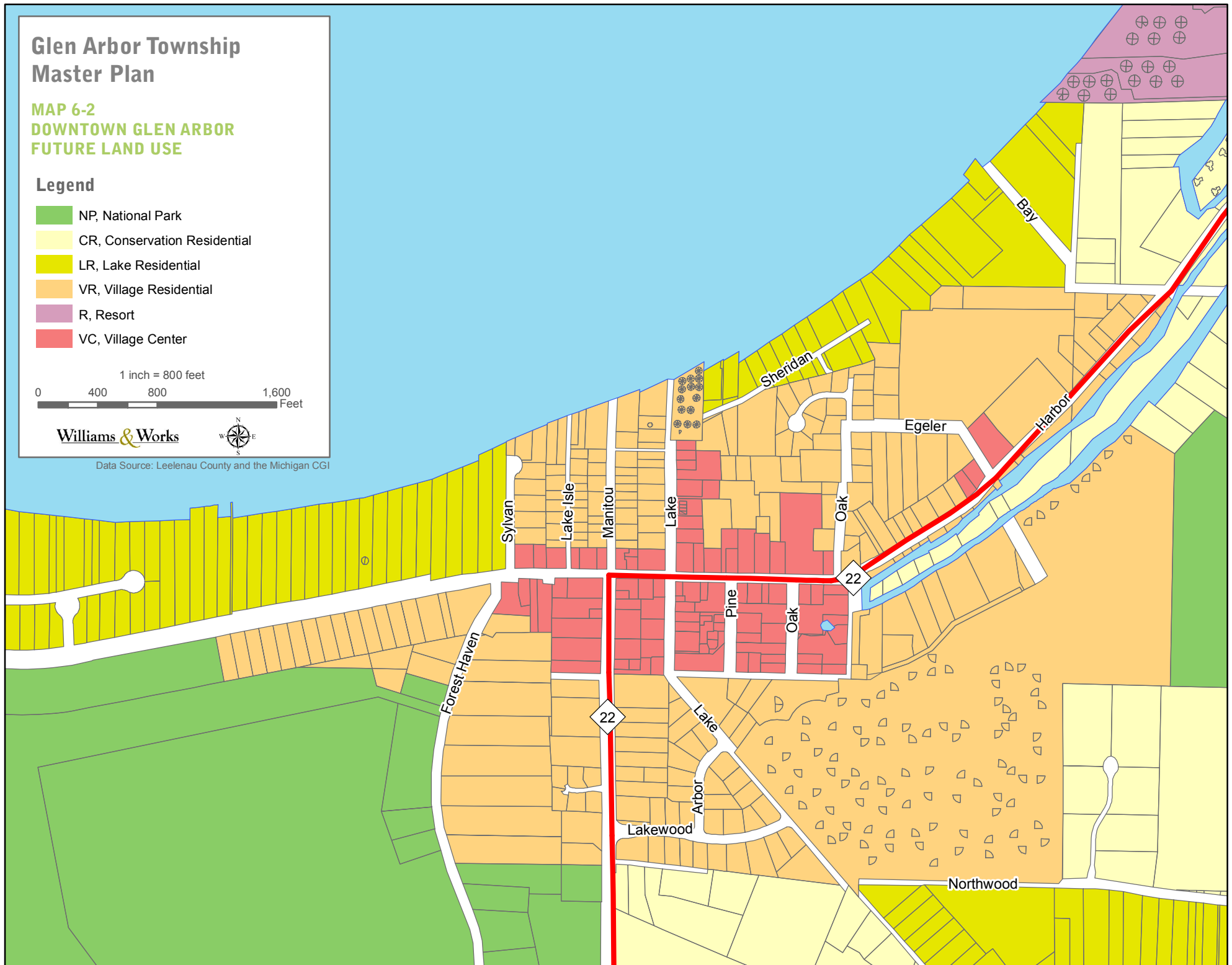
- NP, National Park
- CR, Conservation Residential
- LR, Lake Residential
- VR, Village Residential
- R, Resort
- VC, Village Center

1 inch = 800 feet
0 400 800 1,600 Feet

Williams & Works



Data Source: Leelenau County and the Michigan CGI



Future Land Use Designations

National Lakeshore

One of Glen Arbor Township's defining characteristics is the 8,700 acres of protected lands in Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. The National Lakeshore designation consists of properties owned by the U.S. National Parks Service which is intended for general public use and enjoyment. These lands are a vital component to the Township's rural identity and livelihood. A key element of this Plan is to preserve such lands so that future generations may continue to enjoy the benefits of a well-preserved natural environment.

This designation is founded on the likelihood these properties will all remain part of the National Park, so development of these lands is not contemplated outside of the placement of facilities to serve the general recreational needs of the public. Any development by the Parks Service should meet the intent of the land use and rural preservation policies of the Plan and be designed such that it is well-integrated into the natural beauty of the surroundings and be sensitive to any surrounding privately-owned properties.



Conservation Residential

Conservation Residential is one three primarily residential future land use designations and it is established in recognition of the unique nature of these parts of the Township. This designation occupies about 2,100 acres. Some of these areas, such as those east of M-22 or north of Northwood Drive, are already somewhat developed in very low-density residential patterns, while other areas, primarily in the southeastern portions of the Township, remain mostly undeveloped. Conservation Residential lands are also interspersed within and adjacent to the National Lakeshore properties, which are owned by the U.S National Parks Service.

Lands in the Conservation Residential designation are suitable for low-density residential development if arranged and designed in a manner that preserves scenic views, maintains unique wildlife and ecological areas, and protects the community's idyllic natural beauty that is so important to the character of the Township. Cluster developments are also desirable in this designation to allow development flexibility in order to maintain valuable open spaces. In addition, small-scale institutional and local recreational uses are also appropriate, such as small parks or schools.

Lake Residential

There are about 75,000 feet of privately-owned shorelines in Glen Arbor Township along Lake Michigan, the Glen Lakes and Fisher Lake, and most of this shoreline area is populated with single-family dwellings on fairly small, narrow lots. Obviously, these lakes are substantial recreational amenities and enhance the appeal of the community as a premier destination within the region. Additionally, the lakes are highly valued for their ecological significance and treasured for aesthetic value. As such, lakefront residential areas will warrant special planning attention when implementing this Master Plan, and the Lake Residential future land use designation is created to draw attention to these unique features.

Over the years, the lakes have acted as magnets for residential development and are extremely valuable. They will remain attractive places for both seasonal and year-round residential use and recreation activity for the foreseeable future. Development regulations should recognize existing development patterns while applying realistic standards that support the long-term viability of the lake.

The Lake Residential future land use designation occupies about 900 acres and is intended to remain an area developed with year-round or seasonal single-family homes, with small scale recreational uses also possible, where feasible. While the existing marinas in the Township are also within this designation, further commercial development is not desired in these areas. Development in the Lake Residential designation should be carefully designed and regulated to preserve lakefront and scenic views from the road and adjacent properties. Furthermore, regulations regulating the scale and bulk of new homes are also suggested to prevent “overbuilding” of structures on a parcel. Such massive structures on waterfront lots are not consistent with the character with the shoreline area and could have a negative impact on scenic views and water quality due to increased runoff.

Village Residential

The areas surrounding downtown Glen Arbor consist of relatively high density single-family residential homes on small lots. These homes are within walking distance of the shops in downtown Glen Arbor and many are arranged in a walkable village pattern. Lots in this area are generally less than one acre in area and many are less than 15,000 square feet. Since there are no public water or sewer utilities in the Township, these areas have historically faced challenges regarding the placement of well and septic systems, and these challenges will continue until utilities can be installed.



This designation occupies about 276 acres and its intent is to recognize the more intense residential uses of land in and around downtown Glen Arbor, and to encourage further development near downtown in comfortable, walkable patterns. If public water and sanitary sewer utilities are placed in Glen Arbor Township, most of the properties in this designation should be served.

Future development in this designation should be in similarly compact patterns on small lots, consistent with the surrounding neighborhoods. Smaller homes located on smaller lots improve affordability and are often more attractive senior housing options. Attached or detached dwellings should also be considered in this designation where feasible.

Resort

Glen Arbor Township is home to several small resorts around the lakes. Some of the Township's small resorts have a proud and long heritage that is desired to be maintained, so this designation enables them to continue. Over the years, several small resorts along the shores of the Glen Lakes and Lake Michigan have closed and been replaced by year-round homes, indicating a preference for single family homes on individual lots. There is still a demand for resort uses in Glen Arbor Township, and this designation is intended to accommodate them, as well as The Homestead, located northeast of downtown. This designation occupies about 275 acres.



Due to the challenges associated with well and septic limitations and the public's desire for the protection of scenic views and water quality, future development or redevelopment in this designation should be carefully evaluated in light of this plan's objectives. New resorts, or expansions of large existing resorts like The Homestead could involve a variety of land uses and should be addressed and regulated as planned unit developments under appropriate zoning provisions. The smaller resorts typically involve a narrower range of land uses, but the impacts on adjacent properties can be just as pronounced since lot sizes are smaller. In these cases, special land use standards should guide expansion or redevelopment of small resorts, although the typical variety of lodging and recreational offerings should continue to be permitted.

Village Center

The downtown area in Glen Arbor is the heart of the community and is a significant component of the community's identity. It is a relatively small node of local businesses including a grocer, restaurants and many small retailers and shops generally targeting tourists. These businesses are arranged in a comfortable pattern and many are characterized by shallow front yard setbacks, sidewalks and pedestrian-scaled buildings. The downtown is also the heart of many challenges facing Glen Arbor Township in the near term, including worsening traffic congestion, concerns over parking, and safety challenges associated with conflicts between pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists. Land in the existing downtown area is primarily used for commercial purposes, although mixed use development is also permitted by the Zoning Ordinance.

The Village Center future land use designation occupies 42 acres and is envisioned as a human-scaled mixed-use area with amenities that are typical of small-town “Main Street” environments such as wide sidewalks, multi-modal transportation facilities (instead of only catering to vehicles), street trees, on-street parking, and mixed-use buildings that are built to the front setback or right-of-way with generous amounts of windows on the ground floors. Fortunately, the framework for this kind of development is already in place in downtown Glen Arbor as many local businesses are built with these characteristics in mind. As new businesses are located in Glen Arbor or as vacant properties are developed, these design features should be required to ensure a vibrant and attractive downtown for residents and visitors.



Future land uses in the Village Center are expected to remain mostly commercial, but residential uses such as single-family, two-family or multiple-family dwellings may also be appropriate as a cost-effective housing option for residents or seasonal workers. While the marketplace will largely determine what types of businesses open in downtown Glen Arbor, pharmacies, financial institutions, real estate and other service establishments, health and fitness facilities and similar professional offices are all desirable. This plan recognizes that the degree of residential and commercial development in Glen Arbor will continue to be heavily influenced by the community’s unique characteristics, and a lack of public utilities will continue to limit the overall intensity of new development.

Zoning Plan

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act requires that Master Plans adopted after September 1, 2008 include a zoning plan to explain how the future land use categories in this Plan relate to the zoning districts incorporated in the Township’s Zoning Ordinance. The following table relates the more general future land use categories to the Township’s existing zoning districts and discusses features and factors to be considered in reviewing requests to rezone lands in the Township to ensure consistency with this Plan.

In considering a request to rezone property in Glen Arbor Township, the Planning Commission shall consider the future land use map and the future land use descriptive narrative of this Plan. Table 6-1 shall be used to evaluate the degree to which the proposed rezoning is, or may be, consistent with this Plan together with an evaluation of the specific request. The proposed rezoning decision should also consider whether the proposed site may be reasonably used as it is currently zoned, whether the proposed site is an appropriate location for any and all of the land uses that might be permitted within the requested zoning district, whether there may be other locations in the community that are better suited to accommodate such uses and any potential detrimental impact on the surrounding property that could result from the proposed rezoning.

In all cases, this zoning plan shall be applied as a guideline for the Planning Commission subject to the appropriate application of the discretionary authority permitted to the Planning Commission and Township Board by statute, case law and good planning practice. Nothing in this zoning plan will preclude the Planning Commission and Township Board from considering amendments to this Master Plan to better serve the public interests of the community.

Table 6-1. Glen Arbor Township Zoning Plan

Future Land Use Designation	Primary Compatible Zoning District	Potentially Compatible Zoning District
NP – National Park	National Park	None
CR – Conservation Residential	Agricultural, Residential 2	Residential 3, Residential 4, Residential 6, Recreational
LR – Lake Residential	Residential 1, Residential 2	Resort
VR – Village Residential	Residential 1, Residential 5	Business
R – Resort	Resort	Residential 1, Residential 2
VC – Village Center	Business	Residential 1, Residential 5

Evaluation Criteria

The Glen Arbor Township Zoning Ordinance has a number of different residential zoning designations, ranging from Residential 1 to Residential 6. Each of these six residential districts offers similar land use entitlements to property owners, generally limited to dwellings and accessory uses. However, the minimum lot area in each residential district varies from 15,000 square feet up to 131,000 square feet, so one of the primary considerations when contemplating a residential rezoning request will be the existing zoning that surrounds the subject property and the existing or desired lot size of the property(ies) to be rezoned.

In areas within the Conservation Residential future land use designation, a zone change to Agricultural or Residential 2 seem most appropriate, depending on the location of the parcel. However, the character and development of surrounding parcels could justify approval of a rezoning request to Residential 3, 4 or 6. Since there are Township-owned recreational parcels in this district, rezoning to Recreational could also be supported.

The Lake Residential Future Land Use designation consists of almost all properties in the Township with water frontage, where many parcels are already fairly small. Thus, the two densest residential zoning districts, Residential 1 and 2, would be most appropriate. Resorts could also be appropriate in the Lake Residential designation, so a request to this zoning district could also be supported. However, given the existing residential densities in the Lake Residential designation, such a rezoning should be carefully considered to minimize negative impacts on adjacent property owners.

The Village Residential designation is most compatible with the Residential 1 and Residential 5 zoning districts, as each of these requires parcels to have a minimum area of 15,000 square feet. In certain areas of the Village Residential district, a rezoning to Business could also be appropriate, particularly on M-22 or on lots very close to M-22.

The Resort designation consists of parcels that currently contain resort uses, so rezoning of these lands is not anticipated. However, if these resorts were to close or be sold and used for a different purpose, rezoning to residential 1 or 2 could be supported, depending on lot areas and surrounding land uses.

The Village Center designation is envisioned as a mixed use district, and since the Township's Business district allows for mixed uses, this is the most compatible zoning district. Zone changes to Residential 1 or Residential 5 could also be considered, as small-scale attached or detached residential uses on small lots could complement existing commercial uses in and around the downtown.



CHAPTER 7. IMPLEMENTATION

For a Master Plan to truly impact growth and development, it must be implemented. The following tasks are established to implement the goals and objectives and future land use recommendations of this Plan. It is recognized that many strategies are long-term in nature and that many entities in addition to Glen Arbor Township will need to cooperate in order to fully implement the recommendations of this Plan. The descriptions of strategies in this Plan are intended to allow the Township the flexibility to prepare specific work assignments and prioritize each strategy as a part of its overall operations.

Primary responsibility for implementing the Plan rests with the Township Board, the Planning Commission, and Township staff. The implementation of the tasks outlined in this chapter will be accomplished using a number of methods that may include plans, ordinances, programs and administrative procedures. Some of the implementation strategies require significant public and private investment. Each strategy is important; as it contributes to achieving the overall vision expressed by the Plan.

Downtown Glen Arbor Transportation Design Plan

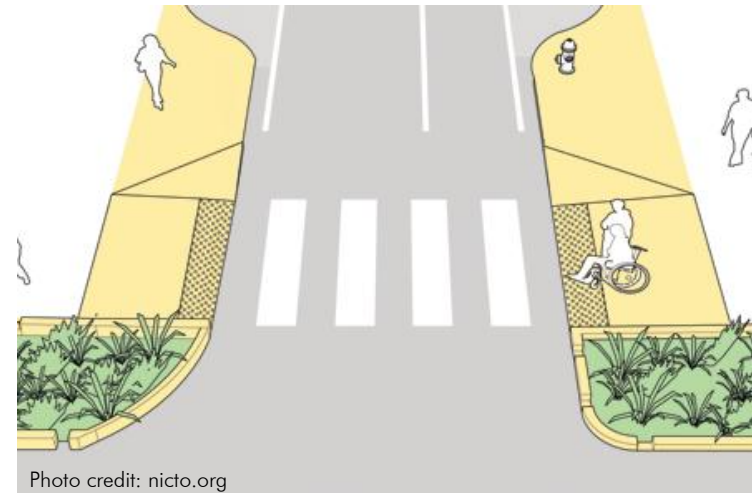
Perhaps no issue facing Glen Arbor Township was discussed in the visioning workshop, open house, survey and during the stakeholder interviews more than the challenges associated with the congestion experienced in downtown Glen Arbor each summer. For eight to twelve weeks, the residential population of the Township grows by several hundred percent, and hundreds of thousands of tourists visit or pass through Glen Arbor on the way to or from facilities at Sleeping Bear Dunes. The sheer volume of people threatens overwhelms the facilities currently available to manage it. Conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists are common, parking is scarce and many feel that public safety is significant concern. To address this growing challenge, this Master Plan strongly recommends the Township complete a comprehensive physical design plan for the transportation corridors in downtown Glen Arbor area, most importantly M-22.

“I feel that the congestion in downtown Glen Arbor during the summer is on the verge of becoming completely out of control.”

- Stakeholder

This plan should set forth recommendations for the design of the street and address the use of the streets by everyone, including vehicles at safe speeds, bicyclists and pedestrians. Traffic calming techniques, such as new crosswalks, bump-outs, signage, traffic control devices and additional street trees or landscaping should be explored. The plan should also address bicycle traffic and include bike lanes or sharrows where feasible. Other aspects, such as educational signage for bicyclists and motorists, bike parking racks, and similar issues should also be contemplated. Pedestrian facilities, such as sidewalks, crosswalks, street lighting and similar matters should all be reviewed.

A good first step in implementing this strategy was accomplished in 2014 when the Township established a subcommittee to work specifically on traffic and congestion on M-22, with some design solutions being implemented in 2015. It should also be noted that this strategy will likely require assistance from a design firm and require cooperation from Leelanau County, MDOT, and other agencies. The Township should actively seek to engage the public, stakeholders and interested organizations such as TART, the National Parks Service, and others.



Curb extensions, or blub-outs, slow traffic and are safer for pedestrians

Downtown Parking Management Study

In order to better determine parking needs in downtown Glen Arbor, a parking study is recommended. Most residents recognize that parking (or a lack thereof) is a temporary problem caused by the influx of tourists and seasonal residents each summer. However, the issue still affects residents, business owners and visitors alike and discourages some people from visiting the downtown area altogether. Thus, the Township should take a thorough look at all parking in the downtown area, both public and private, on-street and off-street. The Township could then implement a multi-faceted strategy to manage parking in the summer. Depending on the results of the study, the strategy could consist of the following:

- Realignment or redesign of existing on- and off-street public parking areas to maximize the number of spaces available
- Addition of signage to direct people to underutilized parking areas.
- The addition of parking meters, a permitting system, or some other strategy to suppress demand and encourage “turnover” of spaces.
- The acquisition of additional property for parking that could be repurposed during non-peak months.

This strategy could be led by the Township Planning Commission or Township Board with significant input from local businesses, residents, MDOT, the Leelanau County Road Commission and others. When the study is complete, the Township Board will be responsible for implementing the needed strategies.

Natural Features Inventory

A central theme of this Master Plan is the idea of preserving natural beauty, significant natural features and prominent ridgelines and viewsheds within the community. The key component for doing so is the preparation of an inventory of important natural features and the identification of the likely trends or conditions that may threaten them. Significant natural features and valuable viewsheds should be documented to help identify preservation priorities that may arise for private conservation or possible land acquisition.

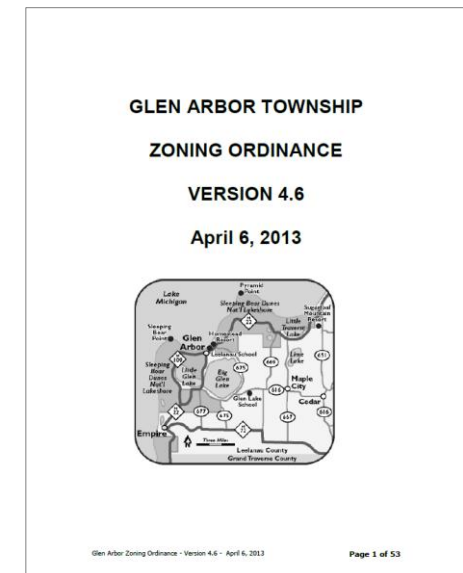
Performing the inventory will likely require support from an environmental consultant with expertise in Michigan wildlife, forestry systems, freshwater biology and viewshed protection. The Township may partner with various environmental agencies, volunteers, and higher education institutions to assist in research, funding, and feature delineation. Further inventory activity may also occur as private property owners submit site plans for review and consideration. Independent and professionally prepared natural features cataloging can be made a required component of site plan submittals for certain critical properties, such as those adjacent to lakes and streams.

This strategy must be led by the Township Planning Commission with outside consultants – planning and environmental – as needed to complete field work. When the inventory is complete, the Planning Commission may use the inventory as a basis for enacting additions to the Zoning Ordinance. These revisions may include additional site plan review requirements, overlay districts, site design standards or others as appropriate.

Zoning Ordinance Amendments

The Zoning Ordinance is the primary tool by which many of the plan’s goals and objectives can be accomplished. This implementation strategy contemplates a comprehensive evaluation of the Ordinance in light of the community’s goals, objectives, and future land use plan. This may include a revision of the Zoning Map, as appropriate, to support the Future Land Use Map, and a revision of some zoning standards to better conform to the future land use designations in this Plan. In addition, the Ordinance should be evaluated for flexibility to address innovative development techniques and for its adherence to modern planning practices and statutes.

During the process of revising the Zoning Ordinance, the Township should consider the addition of form-based standards for properties in downtown Glen Arbor (currently zoned Business). Form-based standards emphasize the design and placement of buildings, rather than land use, and are often more effective in attracting the types of buildings that are consistent with Glen Arbor’s unique charm and character.



The Planning Commission will be the primary entity to implement this strategy. This is likely to be an extensive task with multiple elements – each with unique challenges that may require each activity to be addressed independently – and it is likely that outside support will be needed. Any resulting amendments to the Zoning Ordinance will require the review of the Township’s legal counsel and ultimately adoption by the Township Board.

Wastewater Utilities

In 2008, the Township conducted a feasibility study for a wastewater treatment facility for the downtown area. The study found that there were several problems associated with the construction of such a system, including challenges associated with the location of a treatment facility, high per-user capital and maintenance costs, and the fact that groundwater was not being seriously deteriorated from the use of on-site septic systems. The study recommended the placement of additional groundwater monitoring wells and additional follow-up with local stakeholders.

This 2008 study notwithstanding, the Township should continue to explore options for wastewater treatment in the Township. The ability for the downtown area and surrounding neighborhoods to accommodate increasing demand for residential and commercial development will depend on the availability of sanitary sewer services. If such services can be installed, then additional residential and commercial properties in those areas are likely to develop; if not, the Township may still see some additional development, but it will be limited. Thus, the Township should continue to monitor local conditions and explore creative solutions to wastewater treatment in Glen Arbor Township.

This will likely be an activity implemented by the Township Board, although input from the Planning Commission is recommended due to the relationship between utilities and land use planning. It is also likely that input from local stakeholders, the County Health Department and outside consultants will be needed to determine feasible and creative solutions.

Recreation Plan Implementation

In 2014, the Township adopted a five-year Park and Recreation Plan. The adoption of this plan enables the Township to apply for grants from several sources within the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to improve recreation offerings in the Township. Plan recommendations include the development of four-season recreation facilities, the development of a non-motorized trail network, boat launch improvements and many other ideas. The Township’s five-year Park and Recreation Plan’s recommendations should be implemented to ensure that recreation offerings match local needs, and it should be updated every five years to maintain DNR grant eligibility.

The Planning Commission can work with the Parks Commission in recreation planning activities and should receive direction from the Township Board, since the Board is the final authority on recreation expenditures. It is also likely that some recommendations in the recreation plan may require outside support from designers, landscape architects and others.

Business Recruitment and Retention

Many residents voiced concerns regarding the lack of basic services for year-round residents, such as medical facilities, financial institutions, attorneys, and similar professions. While it is likely that the marketplace will continue to heavily influence the types of businesses that locate in Glen Arbor, the Township should explore partnerships with local and regional economic development agencies to attract new businesses to the community. The Township could also look to incentivize certain types of development with expedited zoning reviews and similar incentives.

The Township Board and Planning Commission will have roles in implementing this strategy, in cooperation with key property owners and regional economic development entities. However, care should be taken to ensure that new development is ecologically sensitive and that buildings and land uses fit the Township's unique character and charm.

Governmental Cooperation and Coordination

Most of the goals in this plan will not be achievable without the cooperation of governmental entities outside the Township. MDOT, Leelanau County and others should be engaged in discussions pertaining to congestion on M-22. This corridor, along with the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, will likely serve as the primary catalyst for local economic development opportunities over the coming years, and the extent to which efforts to attract new businesses and solve some of the corridor's most pressing issues can be coordinated with those agencies will be helpful to the Township and result in a better long-term outcome.

The Township should also work to form alliances with Leelanau County and other regional organizations to attract the business to the Township. The County can also be a valuable asset in developing policies to attract business, protect valuable viewsheds and natural features, and can be an important resource in educating the public about important issues in the Township.



The Township should also continue to foster positive and productive relationships with local community organizations and stakeholders such as the Glen Lake Association and Glen Lake Chamber of Commerce.

Community Education and Outreach

The planning process is persistently changing with shifting social and economic concerns and unique land use challenges. Attitudes of residents toward growth, economic development, traffic, protection of natural resources, and other pertinent land use issues will likely differ from person to person depending on their personal circumstances. Glen Arbor Township certainly benefits from having a highly engaged population, and it is vitally important for Township officials to continue to seek educational opportunities for residents to inform them of the issues of highest priority.

An element of this strategy includes the continued education of Township officials. In addition, the Township should endeavor to educate the public on current planning trends, benefits of implementing the goals and objectives in this Plan, and progress of key projects that will affect the quality of life in the Township.

The Township should also look for ways to provide residents with news and information regarding their Township government. Possibilities include enhancements to the Township's website, and specialized outreach initiatives to engage the large population whose permanent residence is outside the Township boundaries.

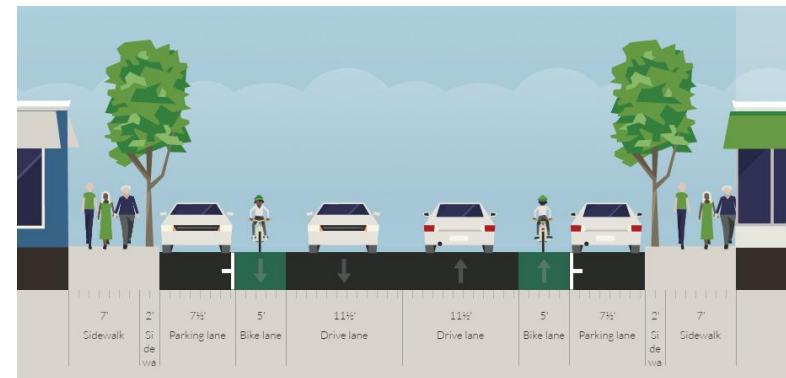
The Township Board, Township Planning Commission, and staff are all responsible for seeking and attending seminars and conferences on current planning topics and passing that information on to the public.

Complete Streets

This Plan supports complete streets policy. Complete streets are thoroughfares that are planned, designed and constructed to allow access to all legal users safely and efficiently, without any one user taking priority over another. Users in Glen Arbor Township include pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and users of assistive devices. Complete streets can result in increased safety for non-motorized users, improved public health, a cleaner environment, mobility equity and enhanced quality of life through increased modal choices and more inviting streets.

In addition, another key motivation to enact complete streets policies is that Michigan law encourages MDOT to give additional consideration to enhancement and other grant applicants with such policies. The Michigan Planning Enabling Act has also been amended to stipulate that transportation improvements be respectful of the surrounding context, further ensuring that more equitable and attractive streets become reality.

The Township's objective will be to work jointly with the other local and regional entities to promote healthy lifestyles for people of all abilities through the development of a non-motorized network. This is especially important in downtown Glen Arbor as summertime congestion has led to numerous concerns regarding conflicts between motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists. Suggested design elements may include enhanced sidewalks on both sides of M-22 and other streets; pedestrian signals and signage; bike lanes; local and regional multi-use trails, and other features. Even though Glen Arbor Township is a rural community, these elements are feasible, particularly near downtown. Several of the implementation strategies in Chapter 7 should be completed with complete streets concepts at the forefront of the planning and design process.



Some complete streets features may be accomplished through simple road restriping and the addition of signage. Other projects may be more involved and may only be practicable when coordinated with major roadway reconstruction. The Township should work with neighboring communities, the County Road Commission, MDOT, and other pertinent agencies in the continued implementation of complete streets policy.