

DRAFT

2024 - 2028

**WATERTOWN TOWNSHIP | SANILAC COUNTY**  
PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A public hearing on the 2024 - 2028 Parks and Recreation Master Plan was held on **December 5, 2022**. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan was adopted by the Watertown Township Board on **December 5, 2023**.

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INTRODUCTION

chapter 1



## INTRODUCTION

Watertown Township has developed its first Parks and Recreation Master Plan (Plan) to serve as a guide for future decision-making regarding recreation facility improvements, and the development of new recreation opportunities over the course of the next five years. This document will be the basis for recreational recommendations and new initiatives that will meet the goals and interests of Watertown Township residents.

Before any Parks and Recreation Master Plan is adopted and enacted, it is first important to understand the needs of the residents, existing recreational opportunities, the demographic characteristics of the area, program initiatives, and projects that are best suited for the community. The basis of this Plan is from community input, suggestions from residents, Township officials, and the Planning Commission with the assistance of Spicer Group. Community input was a key component of this Plan. All the voices in the Township contributed to developing the Parks and Recreation Master Plan with the overall goal of enhancing the quality of life for the community members and visitors of the Township.

The foundation for the development of the Watertown Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan was based on the following goals:

- Involve the community throughout the process of updating the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
- Identify and map existing Township-owned property that could be used for future recreational development.
- Build common ground among the Watertown residents and officials in addressing the recreational needs and priorities of the Township.
- Enable the Township to be eligible for financial assistance based on the Plan.
- Facilitate interagency collaboration in establishing parks and recreation goals, objectives, and actions in partnership with the Township and other local groups.
- Support the implementation of barrier-free access at future recreational sites.

In conclusion, Watertown Township officials intend to use this Plan as a guide for their work on all future recreation developments within the Township. It is also a strategic document that articulates specific goals to various agencies and organizations that fund local recreational and park projects. Specifically, this Plan is developed in accordance with the guidelines for the development of community Parks and Recreation Plans published by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). A five-year, MDNR-approved Parks and Recreation Master Plan is necessary for Watertown to pursue MDNR-administered grants. This Parks and Recreation Master Plan is written for Watertown Township and covers all aspects of recreation within the Township over a five-year period from 2024-2028.

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COMMUNITY PROFILE

chapter 2



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## COMMUNITY PROFILE

### REGIONAL SETTING

Watertown Township is located in the center of Sanilac County in the thumb of Michigan. The Township encompasses 35.25 square miles. Located 80 miles north of Detroit, 70 miles northeast of Flint, and 60 miles east of Saginaw. M-19, located on the western portion of the Township traverses north and south. At the northern border are M-46, the City of Sandusky, and Custer Township. To the east of the Township is Washington Township, with Elk and Buel Townships to the south, and Elmer Township to the west. The Township is primarily rural in nature.

MAP 1 – REGIONAL LOCATION MAP



## DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

In this section, background information from the U.S. Census was used to analyze Watertown Township's current demographic trends and conditions. The information presented in this chapter uses the most recent Census Data from the 2020 Census and 2010 Census, and the 2021 American Community Survey.

The following section analyzes population trends, education, economic information, and housing characteristics within the Township to present an overall demographic analysis.

Understanding the characteristics of the population is helpful when evaluating parks and recreation facilities and Township needs. The table below provides a comparison of key demographic data between Watertown Township, Sanilac County, and the State of Michigan.

TABLE 1 – DEMOGRAPHIC COMPARISON

	Watertown Township	Sanilac County	Michigan
<b>Population</b>			
2010 Population	1,320	44,010	9,883,640
2020 Population	1,262	40,829	10,077,331
Percent of the Population 65 and Older	24.7%	21.6%	18.1%
Percent of Population Under 18	21.9%	23.7%	24.4%
Percent of Disabled Population	16.6%	18.3%	14.2%
Median Age	45.2	45.3	40.2
<b>Education</b>			
Percent with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher	13.7%	15.0%	31.7%
<b>Income</b>			
Median Household Income	\$56,250	\$52,459	\$63,202
Per Capita Income	\$30,236	\$28,408	\$ 35,353
<b>Housing</b>			
Average Household Size	2.3	2.4	2.54
Median Housing Values	\$151,600	\$130,900	\$162,600
Renter-Occupied Housing as a Percentage of Total Occupied Units	14.1%	20.5%	27.8%



Watertown Township's population in 2020 was 1,262, a decrease of 58 residents over the past decade. Exploring all the population's characteristics further allows the Township to understand its specific recreational needs. Today, the census reports that 16.6% of Township residents are disabled. In comparison to the other jurisdictions, the Township has the largest percentage of residents over 65 (24.7%), and the smallest percentage of residents under 18 (21.9%). Older and disabled populations may tend to look for more passive recreational facilities such as trails and multi-use paths that meet their needs. Whereas adults and younger populations gravitate towards active recreation. Even though the Township has a larger population of 65 and older, the Township's median age is only 45.2.

In addition to understanding the population trends it is as important to look at other demographic data. The Township median household income is \$56,250, and the median housing value is \$151,600 which falls between the County and State. Within the Township, 14.1% of the population are renters. Residents in high-density housing have a greater need for open spaces and recreational facilities. These owners may not have large green spaces at home and therefore will rely on parks and recreational facilities for their needs.

Within the Township is a wide range of age groups who all have their own recreational needs. Park facilities can create multigenerational linkage between individuals in these groups, and across all demographic groups. They provide gathering places, make exercise opportunities available, promote civic participation, and improve the quality of life in an area.



## NATURAL FEATURES INVENTORY

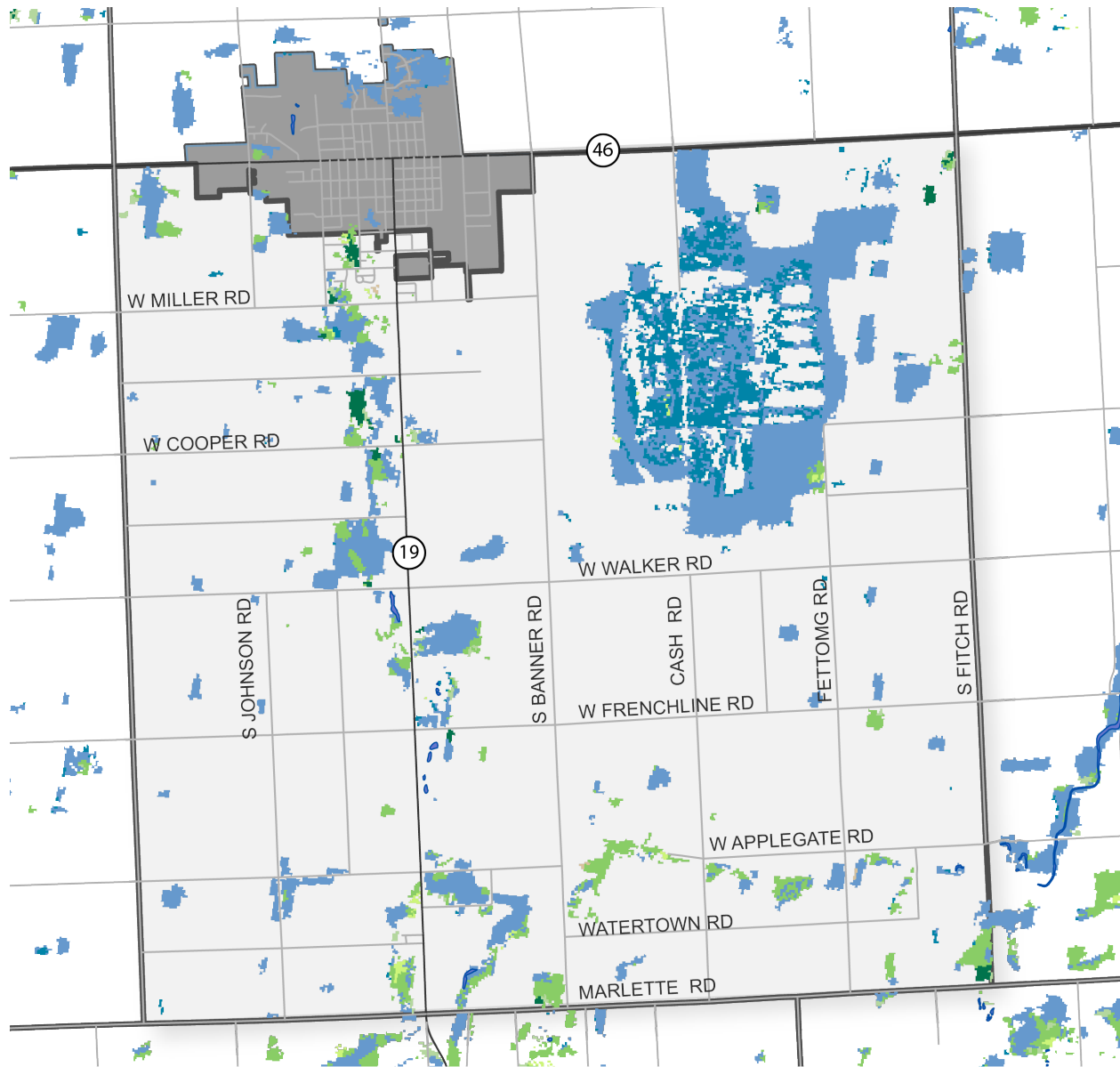
A natural features inventory is useful to recreation planning because it highlights existing resources and can show where gaps may be located. Furthermore, the natural features map, located on the following page, can be used as a guide for any future park acquisitions or park and trail development. Natural features can include things such as wetlands, water bodies, and wooded land. Watertown Township contains very few natural amenities. However, the Township wishes to preserve what natural features they have, while also utilizing them for recreation and relaxation.

The most significant natural resources in Watertown Township are Woody Wetlands and Emergent Herbaceous Wetlands. The largest pocket of wetlands is located in the northeastern portion of the Township and is owned by the DNR. There are other small pockets of wetlands spread throughout the Township.

The second most significant natural feature is Deciduous Forest, which can be found throughout the Township, typically in smaller pockets. Mixed in with the Deciduous Forest are Grasslands, Evergreen Forests, and Mixed Forests.



## MAP 2 – NATURAL FEATURES



### LEGEND

-  Deciduous Forest
-  Grassland
-  Evergreen Forest
-  Mixed Forest
-  Emergent Herbaceous Wetlands
-  Woody Wetlands
-  Shrub/Scrub



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ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

chapter 3



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## ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

### INTRODUCTION

The administrative structure chapter outlines how recreational activities and resources will be governed and administrated within Watertown Township. There are currently no recreational facilities within the Township, therefore to date, they do not have a group that administers recreational items. In the future, the Township would like to create a Parks and Recreation Committee that would make recreation recommendations to the Township Board. This chapter will outline Township bodies and their roles and/or involvement with recreation in the Township.

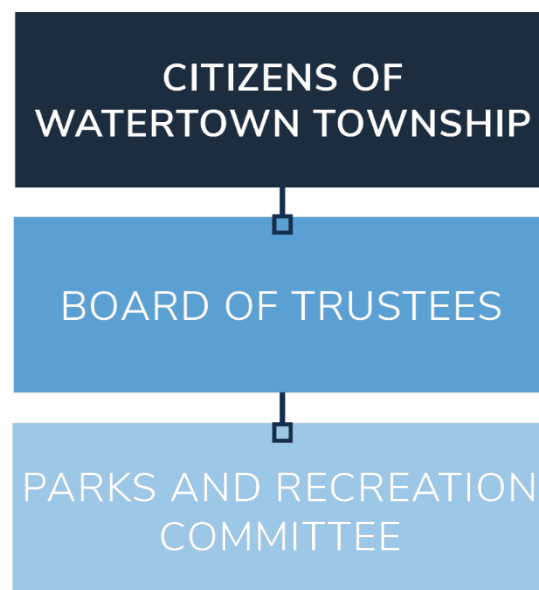
The Township Board is a five-member body, that is elected by Township voters and serves a four-year term. The Board's role will be to annually adopt a budget, that includes a line item for parks and recreation and approve park projects. The Board currently meets on the first Tuesday of the month.

In the future, the Parks and Recreation Committee will help with parks projects within the Township. The goal of the committee is to listen to the wishes of the Township and develop park facilities that will serve the community. The committee will consist of one board member, one planning commission member, and one to three residents.

Future park facilities will be maintained by Township staff and volunteers.

The Township administrative structure is in the figure below. It is crucial to understand how the Township's recreational structure and decision-making process will work in the future.

FIGURE 1 – WATERTOWN TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE



## FUNDING AND BUDGET

The Township's parks and recreation budget is selected by the Township Board on an annual basis. The Township does not currently have any recreational facilities in the Township, therefore there is not a line item for recreational operations. However, the Township Hall expenditures could be used for future park developments. In addition to expenditures and the general fund, the Township will rely on grants and pavilion rentals for recreation improvements.

TABLE 2 – PARKS AND RECREATION BUDGET

	Previous Year 2022	Current Year 2023
<b>Expenditures</b>	\$13,400	\$35,000
<b>Programming</b>	-	-
<b>General Fund</b>	\$723,524	\$723,524
<b>Total</b>	\$739,924	\$758,524

## GRANT HISTORY

The Township has not been awarded any grants through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

## ADDITIONAL RELATIONSHIP

Developing additional relationships can be very helpful in communities where there is a lack of resources. These relationships can not only help generate ideas, but they can also assist with funding and development. Relationships the Township could foster include volunteers, schools, local jurisdictions, local organizations, etc.

There are no current volunteer groups within the Township. When the Township develops a park, they would like to create a group of volunteers who could assist with park projects such as planting flower beds, hosting and planning events, assisting with park improvements, and holding clean-ups, etc. The Township in the future may also explore developing a relationship with the local school system. This relationship could consist of Township residents using their facilities, working together to develop programming for residents, or schools hosting events in the park.

## COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

As parks and recreation continue to develop in the Township, the Township intends to also offer some type of programming and/or events such as Christmas parties and flea markets to its residents. The Township has the space and the need for recreation. The Township will continue to work towards providing more resources to their residents as well as work to create groups that can help with Township recreation opportunities.



## RECREATION INVENTORY

### INTRODUCTION

The following inventory analyzes how recreation could be implemented in the Township in the future. This chapter will cover ADA accessibility, park classifications, Township-owned land, future park development, and regional recreational facilities. The purpose of this chapter is to help the Township determine areas that will be best suited for recreational development, and what that recreational development could look like.

### ACCESSIBILITY

When creating a park system, one should make sure that it is safe, accessible, and usable to all individuals, including those with disabilities. A grading system has been developed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to easily identify parks and facilities that are most and least accessible, based on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines. The accessibility grading system uses a five-point system ranging from one (none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines) to five (the entire park was developed/renovated using the principles of universal design). See Table 3, below, for the grading system.

The Township recognizes the importance of equal access for all park users and is dedicated to developing park facilities and amenities with accessibility at the forefront of each design.

TABLE 3 - DNR ACCESSIBILITY GRADING SYSTEM FOR PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Accessibility Grade	Definition
1	None of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
2	Some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
3	Most of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
4	The entire park meets accessibility guidelines
5	The entire park was developed/renovated using the principles of universal design



## PARK SERVICE AREA AND CLASSIFICATION

A recreation inventory is the foundation for developing an understanding of the Township's recreation needs, deficiencies, and future plans. An inventory provides a snapshot of all the available facilities within a community along with details about the types of activities and features. The following classification system is adapted from the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) guide. It categorizes different types of parks based on size, service area, facilities, and user groups. There are five classification types that the Township may consider when developing its first recreational facilities. Understanding each type will help determine who they are reaching. The NRPA classifies several other park types, but they are not all applicable to the Township.

### Mini- Parks

Mini Parks also known as pocket parks are the smallest park type, they are mainly designed to serve a concentrated population or specific age group. Mini Parks are designed for up to a ¼ mile radius of services and are 1.5 acres or less in size. Typically one can walk to this park, therefore there is usually no parking. The purpose of a Mini-Park is to provide recreation to residents where major roads do not have to be crossed, and amenities usually include play equipment or passive activities. They may also include a gazebo, benches, overlooks, picnic tables, and ornamental landscaping. Their service levels are 0.25 to 0.5 acres per 1,000 residents.

### Neighborhood Parks

Parks in this classification are the most basic park unit of a system and serve as the recreation and social focus of a neighborhood. Neighborhood parks are easily accessible to neighborhood populations and geographically centered within safe walking distance and bike access. Typically, neighborhood parks are five to ten acres in size and can service a population of approximately 5,000 residents. The parks have a service location of ¼ to ½ mile distance. National standards recommend one acre of neighborhood parks per 1,000 residents.

### Community Parks

Community parks are intended to provide recreational services for several neighborhoods and usually serve a broad range of uses. The typical park size is 30 acres or more. Parks smaller than 30 acres may still be included in this chapter due to the broad population base they serve and the facilities/intended use of the park. The national classification system recommends five acres per 1,000 residents.

## Special Use Parks

Special Use Parks cover a broad range of parks and recreation facilities oriented toward single-purpose use. These parks could be historical areas, nature centers, marinas, golf courses, amphitheaters, plazas, or community squares.

## Natural Resources / Open Space

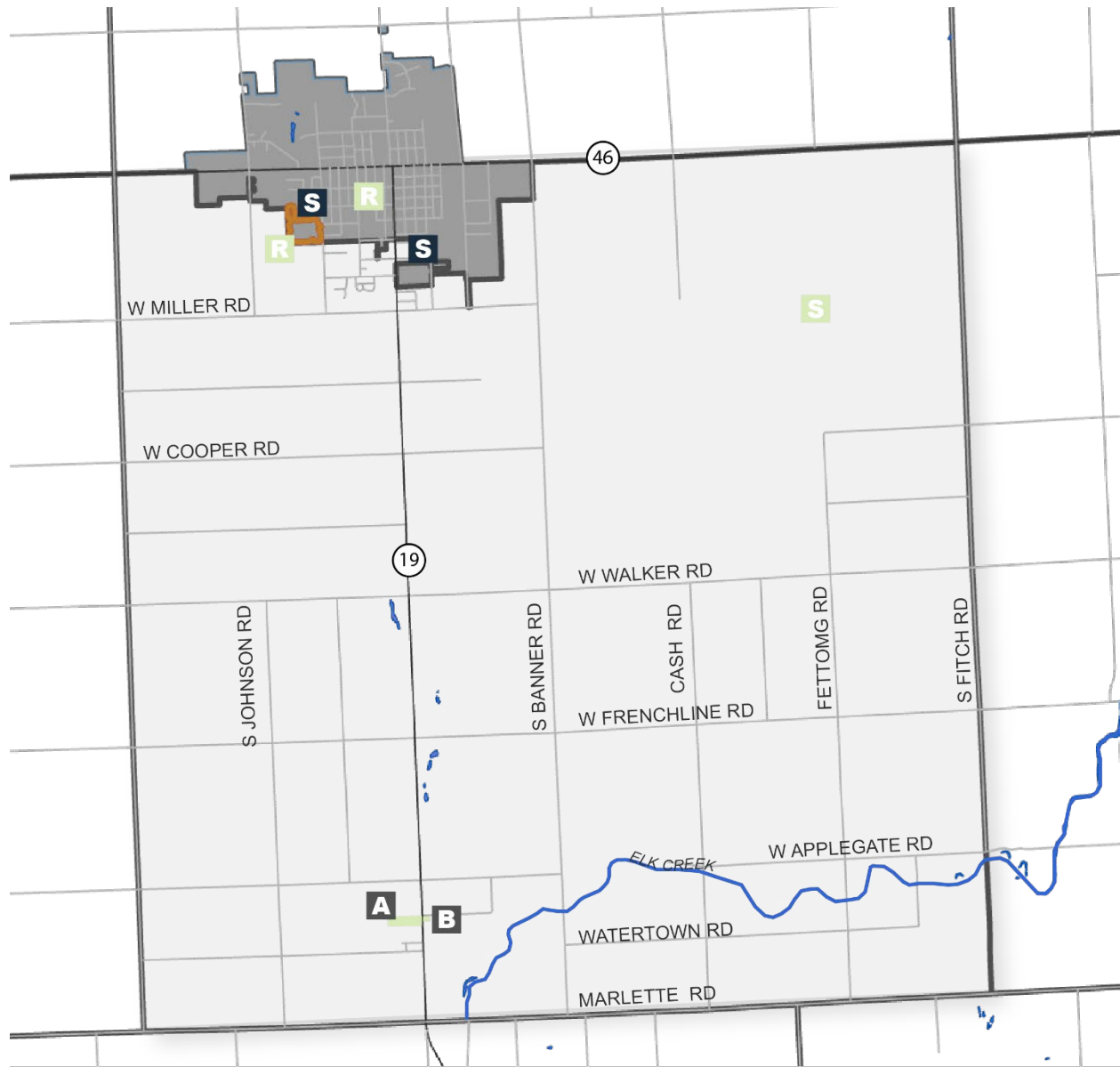
Natural Resource Parks/ Open Spaces are areas of natural quality for nature-oriented outdoor recreation such as viewing and studying wildlife, hiking, camping, or general conservation. They also may provide connections to a bike path system. The lands are set aside for the preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open space, and visual aesthetics/buffering. Examples include wetlands or forest preserves.



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## TOWNSHIP PARK FACILITIES

MAP 3 – CURRENT AND FUTURE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES



LEGEND

- A** Township Hall Property
- B** Township Cemetery
- R** City of Sandusky Parks
- Diamond Park Trail
- S** Sandusky State Game Area
- S** City of Sandusky Schools
- Watertown Township
- City of Sandusky
- Waterbodies



## FUTURE PARK PLANS

Watertown Township does not currently have any recreational facilities. The Township is in the beginning phases of discussing how the two Township-owned properties could be developed for recreational use. The two properties, Property A and Property B, are shown on the map on the previous page (page 18).

### Property A

Property A is home to the Township Hall. The Township would also like to build a pavilion and park on-site and develop a walking path that would wind throughout the property. The path would eventually connect Property A to Property B which is located across the street. Property A is 12.09 acres in size. If possible, the Township would also like to develop a regional non-motorized trail network in conjunction with the City of Sandusky and the Village of Peck.



### Property B

Plans for Property B, which is located across from the Township Hall, include developing a small park. This park would serve the entire community and may include recreational amenities such as play equipment, benches, a memorial pavilion with a picnic table, and parking. The property is 1.05 acres.

### Sandusky State Game Area (Owned by the DNR)

The Department of Natural Resources owns eight parcels within the Townships boundary. The parcels total 1,473.52 acres in size and are located in the northeastern portion of the Township. The site is currently used for wildlife conservation, wildlife observation, and hunting. If the opportunity arises the Township would be interested in working with the DNR to develop additional recreational opportunities such as a trail system for the Township residents.

## REGIONAL FACILITIES

### INTRODUCTION

Regional recreation facilities such as local, county, and state parks provide additional opportunities to Township residents. These additional facilities provide residents with a variety of activities and opportunities that the Township currently does not provide. These include acres of land, lakes, camping, recreation centers, and other recreational activities. A brief inventory of these facilities is below.

#### Local Parks

##### City of Sandusky

- **Diamond Trail** – Located on Maple Valley Street, the park offers a 1-mile paved walking path, exercise equipment along the path, a pavilion, and a sledding hill in the winter months.
- **Doerr Field** – Located on West Speaker Street, the park has 3 baseball/softball fields, batting cages, a basketball court, a playground, a splash pad, and two pavilions which are available to rent.
- **George Haupt Memorial Park** – Located on East Mills Street is the City's newest park, the initial plan is to develop a playground, benches, and landscaping. Future plans may include a pavilion.



##### Moore Township

- **Snover Memorial Park** – Located off M-19 and Freiburger Road, the park has a playground, pavilion, parking, restroom facilities, and open screen space.

## County Parks

Many of the surrounding Counties (Sanilac, Tuscola, and Lapeer) have county-operated parks and recreational facilities.

**Sanilac County** – The County has four park areas, Evergreen, Forester, Lexington, and Delaware Parks. The park in closest proximity to Watertown would be Lexington Park, approximately 20 miles directly east. The other three Sanilac County Parks are over 20 miles away.

**Tuscola County** – Maintains and operates Indian Fields Park, in Caro, approximately 40 miles northwest of Watertown.

**Lapeer County** – Contains a number of facilities with the closest being over 40 miles away.

## State

**Sanilac Petroglyphs Historic State Park** – Located 30 minutes northwest of the Township in Cass City. The park features hiking, historic programs, picnic areas, observation platforms, and water access.

**Lakeport State Park** – Located 30 miles southeast of the Township in Lakeport. The State Park is 560 acres in size and offers a variety of recreational amenities including, swimming, cabins and lodges, a picnic area, picnic shelters, a playground, and water access. There are 54 miles of trails within the park.

There are three state game areas within the County, Sandusky State Game Area, Minden City State Game Area, and Sanilac State Game Area. There are an additional six that are within a 45-minute drive from the Township.

- Sandusky State Game Area, Watertown Township, Sanilac County
- Minden City State Game Area, Palms, Sanilac County)
- Sanilac State Game Area, Greenleaf, Sanilac County)
- Cass City State Game Area, Shabbona, Tuscola County
- Deford State Game Area, Ellington, Tuscola County
- Lapeer State Game Area, Barnes Lake, Lapeer County
- Murphy Lake State Game Area, Juniata, Tuscola County
- Tuscola State Game Area, Caro, Tuscola County
- Vassar State Game Area, Gilford, Tuscola County

## NON-MOTORIZED TRAILS

Communities across the United States are creating regional trail systems in both cities and rural areas to provide a higher quality of life for residents. Trails give residents the opportunity to create a more active lifestyle and healthy habits while offering safety when walking or biking on the roads. Trails are also able to provide additional ways to experience a community and give all users the option of increased mobility in different modes of travel.

### *Why trails are important*

While trails can be a challenge to implement, their positive effects on a community cannot be disputed. It has been proven that trails create a place of pride and a sense of ownership in Michigan residents. Trails are also an important driver in the local and regional economy, they increase property values and provide safe and healthy recreation options. The growing trail trend is across the state of Michigan. Trails and pathways are an asset to every community.

Trail users have a measurable impact on the local economy. Working with the surrounding townships and other jurisdictions is an effective way to connect with existing systems and expand the non-motorized pathway infrastructure. These projects create a long-term, valuable investment in the community and the opportunity to connect the Township to others in the region, which promotes economic vitality, encourages a healthier lifestyle in residents, and creates a safer travel environment.

The Township in the future would be interested in developing a non-motorized trail along the M-19 right-of-way that traverses from the Village of Peck to the City of Sandusky.

## WATER TRAILS

Watertown Township is located less than 20 miles from Lake Huron. Along Lake Huron are numerous water trail access points. The trail is known as the Tip of the Thumb Heritage Water Trail, ten of those points are within Sanilac County. The trail starts in the Village of Lexington and traverses north along Lake Huron, to the tip of the Thumb, and into the Saginaw Bay where it then connects to the Saginaw Bay Water Trail. The closest access points to the Township are Port Sanilac Harbor, Horatio S. Earle Park, and Walker Road. A map of the route is located in Appendix A.

DRAFT

COMMUNITY INPUT

chapter 5





## COMMUNITY INPUT

### OVERVIEW

Watertown Township believes that solid community input should be the basis for recreational decisions and future capital improvement projects. Public input helps community leaders determine the wants and needs of residents and then provides the framework for parks and recreation goals and objectives. To comply with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Guidelines for Development of Community Parks and Recreation Plans, the Township offered two public input opportunities. These included an online community input survey and a 30-day public review period for comments on the draft plan.

The Plan was available for public comment during the required 30-day public review period held between **November 2023 to December 2023** and concluding with a public hearing on **December 5, 2023**, and adoption by the **Board on December 5, 2023**.

### COMMUNITY INPUT SURVEY

Watertown Township created a combined community-wide survey for the Parks and Recreation Plan and the Master Plan. In the spring of 2023, an online survey was available to gather input. The online survey included 23 questions regarding Township conditions, park facilities, and respondent demographics. The community-wide survey received 350 responses.

The survey was assigned the web domain [www.watertowntwpsurvey.com](http://www.watertowntwpsurvey.com). The survey was available on the Township's website and could also be found by scanning the QR code on flyers placed in Township Hall and businesses throughout town. Key points of the survey are summarized on the following pages, and the remaining tables developed for the report can be found in Appendix B.

### ABOUT THE RESPONDENTS

- Of the 350 respondents, 78% are Watertown Township Residents, 9% live within Sanilac County, and 4% live in the City of Sandusky.
- From the 78% of respondents who live in the Township, 43% have lived in the Township for over 20 years. 19% have lived there for 50-plus years, 26% have lived there 6-20 years, and 12% have lived in the Township for less than five years.
- Almost every age cohort participated in the survey. The responses below are listed from highest to lowest percentage.
  - Age 60-69: 28%
  - Age 50-59: 21%
  - Age 70-79: 18%
  - Age 40-49: 15%
  - Age 30-39: 10%
  - Age 80+: 4%
  - Age 18-29: 4%

## SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

Understanding why residents live in the Township is important when determining what kind of improvements to make. The survey asked respondents why they live in the Township, the top five answers are listed below.

- Like rural living: 67.5%
- Close to family and friends: 49.2%
- Like the community: 34.1%
- Jobs: 21.8%
- Affordable housing: 16.7%

It is important to know how residents would rate the quality of living. If residents did not think the Township was providing a good quality of life that would be a cause for concern. Of the respondents, over 50 percent would rate the quality of life good and almost 20 percent would say it's excellent.

*"I like the sense of community. My neighbors are great! We all get along and are willing to help each other out when needed."*

The survey asked respondents what the Township's greatest needs are. Of the responses, a common theme was the need for recreation.

- Road improvements: 52.6%
- Recreational opportunities: 31.7%
- Jobs: 25.4%
- Walking Path: 19.9%

Watertown Township does not currently offer any recreational opportunities to residents. A crucial part of the survey was to determine what recreational facilities are in the area they are using. Therefore, when the Township decides to develop a park or recreational facilities, they know what is liked in these areas and what may be missing. Below indicate which parks Township residents use.

- City of Sandusky Parks: 70.1%
- Sanilac County Parks: 53.5%
- Regional trails: 15.9%

Within those parks, the residents use the following facilities the most.

- Fairgrounds
- Trails for walking, biking, hiking
- Beach access
- School facilities
- Playgrounds
- Splash pad
- Ballfield
- Natural trail
- Sportsfields
- Fishing

The Township would like to create its own recreational opportunities for the residents. To assist the Township in understanding what residents may be interested in the survey asked what additional amenities they would like to see added to the Township.

- [Community trails linking to Sandusky](#): 49%
- [Bike path and walkways](#): 48.1%
- [Campground](#): 25.9%
- [Other write-in](#): 19.8%
- [Parkland](#): 14.8%

#### Other write in

- ATV Trails
- Pavilion by Township Hall
- Nature Trails
- Pool
- Disc Golf Course
- Dog Park

The final questions in the survey were open-ended. The first question asked respondents what they like best about the Township. The second question asked what they would do to improve the Township. These two questions provide a quick snapshot of how residents are feeling.

#### Residents like:

- Agricultural land
- Country Living
- Quietness/Peaceful
- People
- Cost of Living

#### Residents would improve:

- Communication
- Roads
- No solar or wind
- Blight
- Keep out growing facilities
- [Add recreational amenities and a path](#)

Townships may or may not have a long list of improvements they believe should take place, however, that does not always mean that list aligns with what residents would like to see. The final survey question asked respondents what the Township's top three priorities should be. In the end, the list provided the Township with a priority list. The top responses are listed below.

- Blight
- Solar/Wind
- [Parks and Trails](#)
- Land Preservation
- Low Taxes
- Roads



Watertown Township Boundary Signage

# DRAFT

## WATERTOWN TOWNSHIP GOALS

### INTRODUCTION

Developing effective and achievable goals and objectives is an important part of the parks and recreation planning process. Overall, the Planning Commission and Township Board would like to provide high-quality recreation opportunities for the community. More specific goals and objectives are based on the demographic characteristics of the population, the physical and environmental characteristics of Watertown Township, and input from the community.

Goals are the broadest level of ideas. By necessity, they are overreaching and general. Objectives carry out the purpose of each goal. Action Plan items are the most specific level, they identify specific projects and programs to be pursued over the next five years. Action Plan items can include organizational, staffing, programming, public information, and operation and maintenance actions. The consultants with the Planning Commission formulated the following goals and objectives.

### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

#### GOAL 1 | USE PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS TO HELP IMPROVE THE PARKS AND RECREATION IN WATERTOWN TOWNSHIP.

##### Objectives:

1. Collaborate with the City of Sandusky on recreational developments.
2. The Township wishes to work cooperatively with the City of Sandusky on future recreation projects.
3. Continue to seek partnerships with other recreation providers, agencies, and neighboring communities to share ideas and provide complementary programs and facilities. Examples include but are not limited to civic groups, community groups, places of worship, scouts, user groups, etc.
4. Apply for grants and seek donations, endowments, and/or sponsorships for the maintenance and development of facilities that support the vision of the Watertown Township Parks.
5. Continue to coordinate with the school district on shared use of facilities and clearly define facility and programming needs for each party.
6. Maintain a relationship with the DNR.
7. Partner with other federal, state, local, and nonprofit recreation providers within the County to support opportunities for new recreational facilities.

8. Seek and apply for grants to support recreational initiatives through the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and local foundations.

## GOAL 2 | PROVIDE SAFE NON-MOTORIZED TRAVEL IN WATERTOWN TOWNSHIP.

### Objectives:

1. Develop a Township Bike Route that is part of a regional trail and would connect to the City of Sandusky and the Village of Peck.
2. Use public right-of-way along streets, roads, abandoned railroads, or along drain easements for non-motorized, pedestrian, and bike paths where possible and needed.
3. Explore the possibility of working with adjoining communities and other partners to develop the non-motorized path network.
4. Develop walking paths and non-motorized trails in and around the City of Sandusky, the Township Hall, and the M-19 shoulder.

## GOAL 3 | ACQUIRE, RETAIN, AND DEVELOP APPROPRIATE PROPERTY TO EXPAND PUBLIC RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES.

### Objectives:

1. Develop passive recreation opportunities around the former peat bog area in the northeast portion of the Township.
2. Work cooperatively with the DNR to add recreational features to this property to develop it into a passive recreational park.
3. Develop a concept plan for a local park at the Township Hall.
4. Study the feasibility of using and developing Elk Creek as a canoe/kayak trail.
5. Preserve and protect open space and other important natural features in Watertown Township.
6. Identify open space for potential future parkland.
7. If desired, acquire property as it becomes available.

## GOAL 4 | PROVIDE PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES THAT INSPIRE COMMUNITY PRIDE.

### Objectives:

1. Design sustainable and attractive recreation facilities that contribute to community character.
2. Ensure that Watertown Township parks are safe.
3. Utilize the recreation plan survey results as a guide for future park and program development.
4. Develop parks with amenities and facilities to meet the wants of Township residents.
5. Provide recreation facilities to improve health and fitness.
6. Once developed market and promote the new facilities to Township residents and surrounding communities.



## GOAL 5 | PROVIDE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES THAT ARE FUNCTIONAL FOR A VARIETY OF USES AND AGES.

### Objectives

1. Provide outdoor recreation experiences for people of all ages and abilities.
2. Develop new recreational opportunities that can be used by those of all abilities.

## ACTION PLAN

With goals and objectives in place, Watertown Township has developed a five-year Action Plan that will enable the Township to move towards accomplishing specific projects. The Action Plan is used to highlight specific projects which improve the recreational opportunities in the Township.

Each action item relates to a goal/objective from the previous section. Each project was assigned a priority of 1 through 3 with 1 being most important and 3 being least important. The potential capital improvements that are listed in Table 4, have been established to provide a framework for decision-makers and to enable the Township to apply for grant funding for those proposed projects.

The project list is not a fixed element, nor is it exhaustive. It reflects the results of the input received from the Township staff and the online survey. Future circumstances, especially the availability of funding, may influence the order in which the projects are completed.

TABLE 4 – ACTION PLAN

Action Item	Related to Goal/Objective	Priority
Develop a park across from the Township Hall	3, 4, 5	1
Explore using Elk Creek for canoeing/kayaking	4, 5	3
Add a walking trail around Township Hall and connect to the proposed park property	2, 5	1
Exploring using road shoulders for trails	2	1
Develop a Township Trail Network and connect to the City of Sandusky's	2	1
Collaborate with the DNR for park development	1, 3, 4	2
Collaborate with the City of Sandusky on future recreation projects	1	2
Determine where tennis courts could be developed and work with the City of Sandusky	1, 4	1
Explore other Township lands that could be used for park development	3	3



# DRAFT

PLANNING PROCESS

chapter 7



# DRAFT

## PLANNING PROCESS

### PROCESS

In a continuing effort to provide quality recreational opportunities for its citizens, Watertown Township has developed its first Parks and Recreation Master Plan as a tool to guide the development of community parks and recreational facilities over the next five years. The Plan will provide the Township eligibility for grants from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to assist the community in reaching its recreational goals.

Watertown Township contracted with Spicer Group of Saginaw, Michigan to assist with the completion of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The consultant met with the Planning Commission several times during the development of the Plan.

During the development of the plan, two opportunities for input, participation, and review were provided:

- Online community input survey that was available from March 2023 to May 2023.
- 30-day review period and a public hearing held on **December 5, 2023**.

Based on the existing information and public input, the Township developed the goals and objectives for parks and recreation for the next five years. Then, the Township developed its action plan to accomplish the goals and objectives.

### REVIEW AND ADOPTION

Spicer Group completed a Parks and Recreation Master Plan draft which was available for review at the **Township Hall and on the Township's website**. The review period from **November to December was publicized in the local paper**. The final opportunity for community input occurred at the advertised public hearing held before the adoption of the Plan at the **Board meeting on December 5, 2023**. After the public hearing, the Board passed a motion to adopt the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. **On December 5, 2023**, the 2024-2028 Parks and Recreation Plan was adopted by the Township Board.

Copies of the Plan were transmitted to the Eastern Michigan Council of Governments and Sanilac County. The Plan was uploaded to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for approval in **January 2024**. Copies of the noticed advertisements, public hearing minutes, and the resolution are included in Appendix C.



Elk Creek

# DRAFT

## APPENDIX A

WATER TRAIL MAP

# Tip of the Thumb Heritage Water Trail Launch and Landing Map

Our shop is located at the Center of the Huron County portion of the

## Tip of the Thumb Heritage Water Trail.

This trail offers many great places to explore. We love paddling in and around the shallow, natural area of Bay Port; this is a birder's paradise. We also like the rugged shoreline and lighthouses between Grindstone City and Harbor Beach. Let us know where you want to paddle along the trail, and we will get you there. **BE SAFE and HAVE FUN!**



119 East Spring Street  
Port Austin, MI 48467  
989-550-6651 • info@thumbkayak.com  
www.portaustinkayak.com



# DRAFT

## APPENDIX B

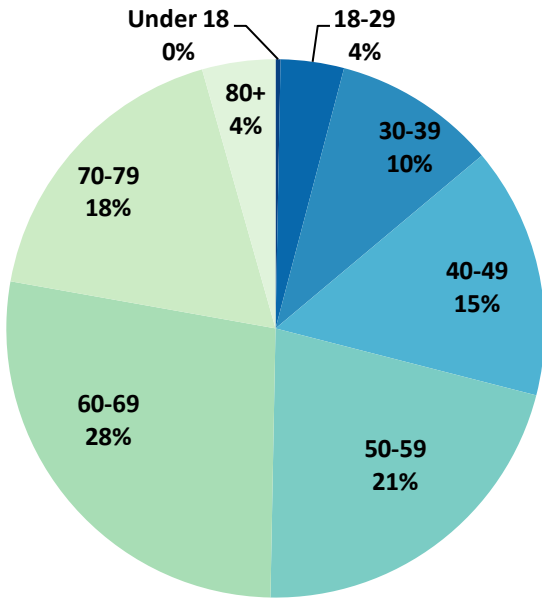
### COMMUNITY INPUT RESULTS

# DRAFT

## WATERTOWN TOWNSHIP 2023 SURVEY RESULTS

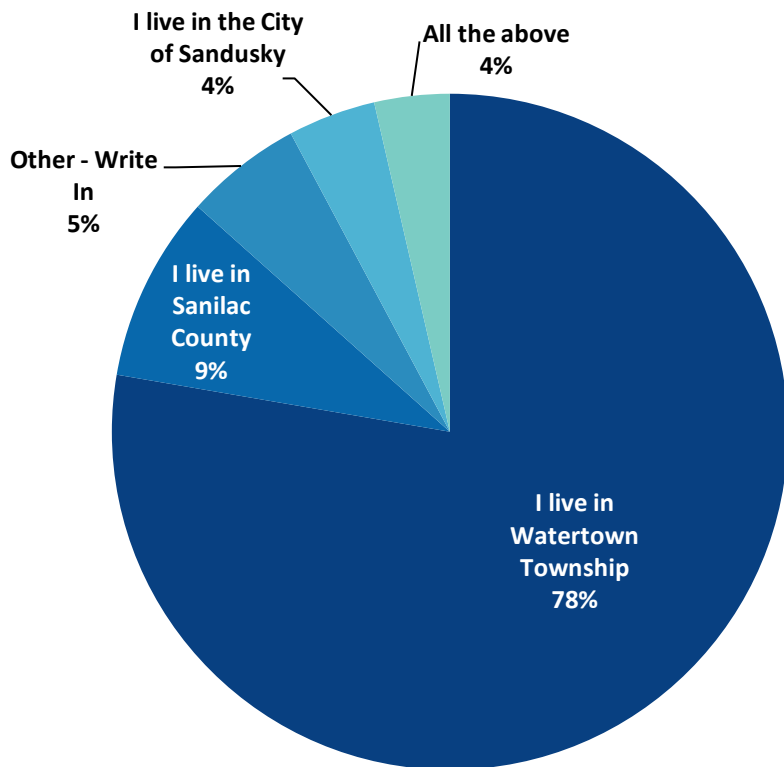
Complete 350, Partial 2 | 202 paper copies mailed in

### 1. What is your age range?



Value	Percent	Count
Under 18	0.3%	1
18-29	3.8%	13
30-39	9.8%	33
40-49	15.1%	51
50-59	21.3%	72
60-69	27.5%	93
70-79	17.8%	60
80+	4.4%	15
Totals		338

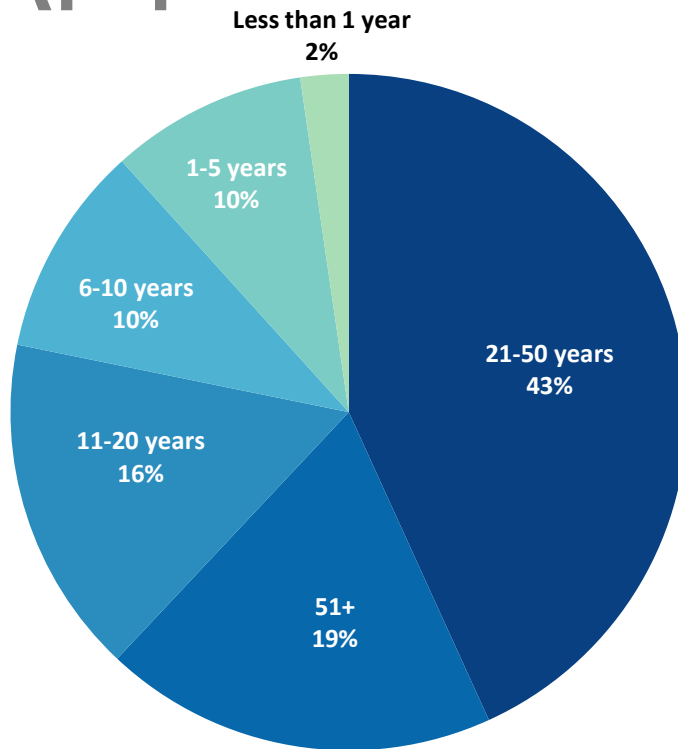
### 2. What is your relationship to Watertown Township?



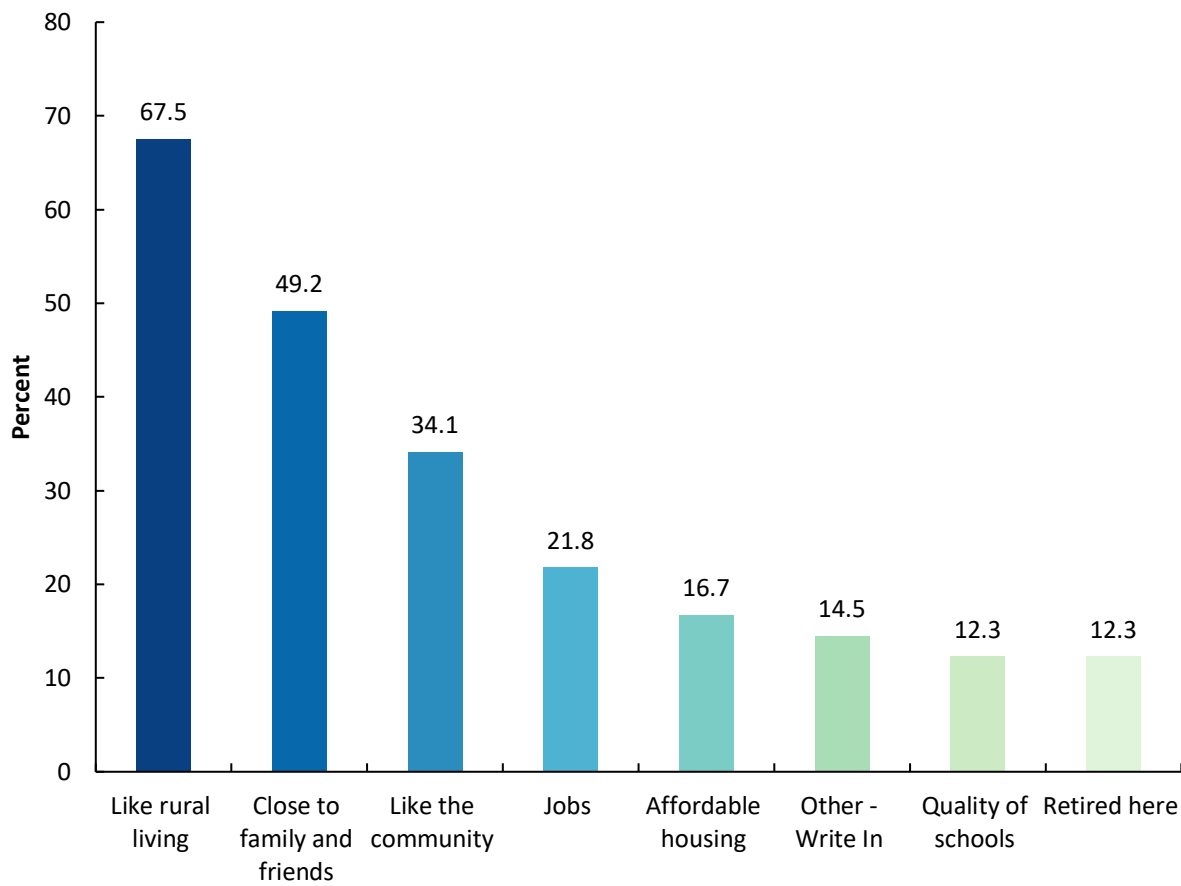
- Other write in -**
- Property Owner
  - I attend a church in Watertown Twp
  - I farm ground in Watertown township.
  - I own land in the township.
  - I own land in the County
  - Own vacant land

### 3. How long have you lived in Watertown Township?

DRAFT



### 4. Why do you live in Watertown Township? Please check all that apply.



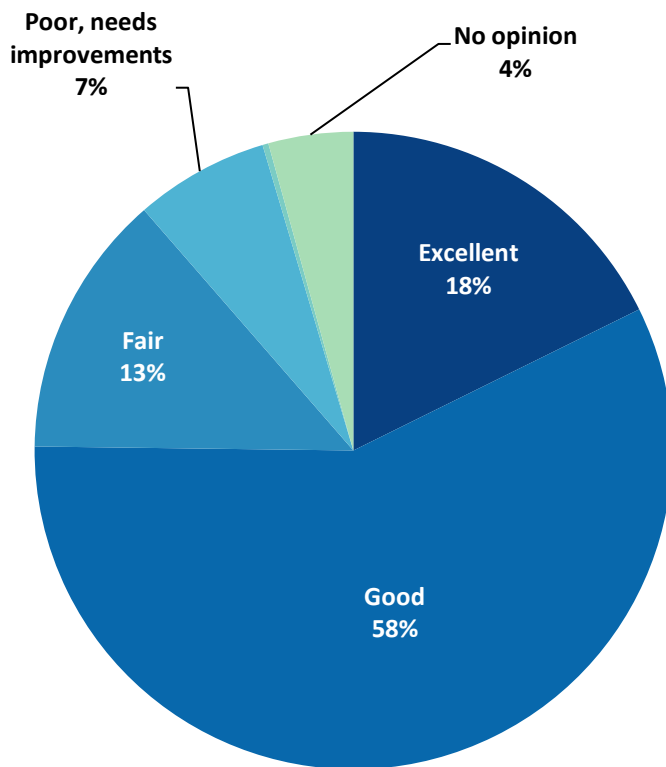


# DRAFT

Other write in -

- Born Here / lived here my whole life (11)
  - Farm (8)
  - Business (2)
  - Own a home (7)
  - Do not live in township
  - My family has owned my land for over 100 years
  - The land has been in my family for over 100 years.
  - We bought a house when we got married thinking my wife would find work in Sandusky while I worked in Lexington.
  - all over lives
  - don't know any better
  - landowner
  - not enough money to leave
  - trying to put a trailer for me and daughter

## 5. How would you rate the quality of life in the Township?

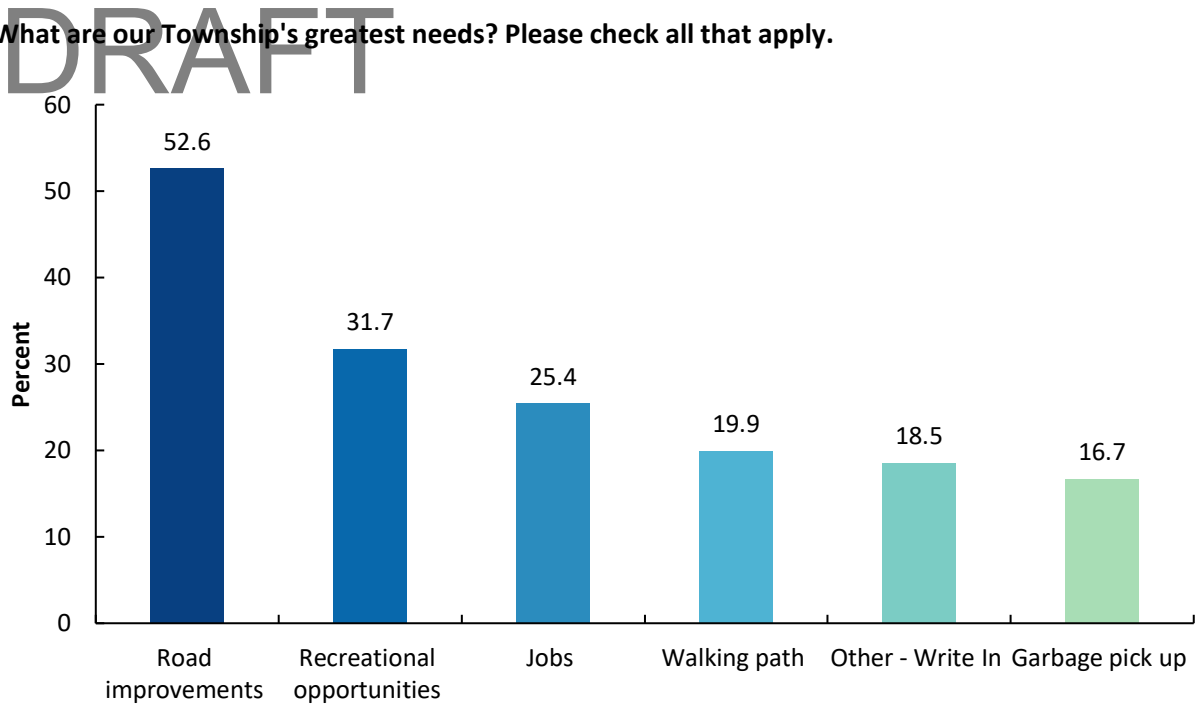


Value	Percent	Count
Excellent	17.7%	57
Good	57.5%	185
Fair	13.4%	43
Poor, needs improvements	6.8%	22
Very poor, needs lot of improvements	0.3%	1
No opinion	4.3%	14
<i>Totals</i>		322

**DRAFT**  
6. If you selected poor or very poor on the previous question please explain why.

- For the people that own farmland they should be able to do with it they want, they paid for it and they pay the taxes on it, it's there's not someone who owns 1 or 2 acres, they should not be able to tell you what you can and cannot do with it.
- Wind farms will destroy property values and country living
- Do not like the greed involved in the solar energy decisions. They absolutely should not be allowed near any residential homes or on main roads. They are an eyesore and will lower property values. That is not fair to the homeowners.
- roads, when I take out the garbage or get the mail, I have to put on muck boots. Put some stone on the roads.
- government officials are completely unresponsive to the taxpayers (will not return calls) vindictive attitude of several board members
- lack of opportunity
- poorly kept roads, no consideration for people that are not a part of farming. Farmers lack of consideration, blocking roads, destroying of roads. area blight is increasing
- if solar farms is built across from my house
- roads are bad
- there really isn't much to do or see here in watertown
- Home and property owners are stuck with paying what ever the board thinks would better our lives. Renters don't pay nothing and make all the mess
- need decent restaurants for family dinners (no fries, baked potato mashed) decent grocery Foodland (did not like taking trees down it certainly in watertown
- average household income is below the median household income
- person in charge of assessing the property taxes keeps raising the taxes w/out even looking first. Does not live even in /sanilac County
- people don't take care of their property
- no jobs, no opportunity
- planning co. is biased on alternative energy needs, gravel roads poorly maintained
- too many dead deers
- Difficult for businesses to make money

**7. What are our Township's greatest needs? Please check all that apply.**

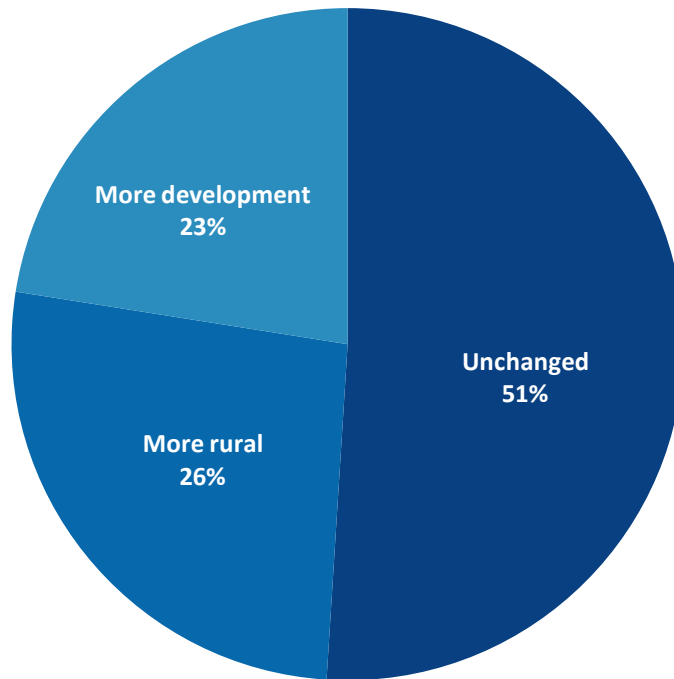


Other write in -

- Solar Farm for (2) / against (2)
- Preserve rural land (6)
- Bike Trail (2)
- WiFi availability (2)
- More Housing Options- all types (4)
- Better government / change in (3)
- Grocery store (4)
- Businesses (2)
  - another department store, large chain restaurant, olive garden, etc.
  - weed / pot shops (2)
- Clean up / improvements (7)
  - Blight
  - Trash pick up
  - New roads
- Better education opportunities/reasons for educated young people to stay or return
- Discgolf course
- Ditch drainage
- Gleason Street and Dell Street always ruddy dirt roads. Asphalt would be nice.
- Great rural space to live. Keep it rural. We do not need garbage pickup. Taxes are high enough. Town is close. They have a park and walking trail.
- Learn how to recycle everything.
- Rail-bed walking path
- dog park
- mental health facility
- public for kids
- school security
- thin some deer out of the township
- township hall that has area for small showers or family gatherings

8. How do you envision the character of the Township in the future?

DRAFT



Value	Percent	Count
Unchanged	51.0%	156
More rural	26.5%	81
More development	22.5%	69
<b>Totals</b>		<b>306</b>

**9. In the following categories, how do you feel Watertown Township has changed in the past five years?**

DRAFT

	Much Better	Better	Same	Worse	Much Worse	No Opinion	Responses
<b>Road conditions</b>							
Count	21	92	166	29	6	14	328
Row %	6.4%	28.0%	50.6%	8.8%	1.8%	4.3%	
<b>Traffic</b>							
Count	2	20	208	70	9	15	324
Row %	0.6%	6.2%	64.2%	21.6%	2.8%	4.6%	
<b>Natural environment</b>							
Count	4	21	224	42	15	17	323
Row %	1.2%	6.5%	69.3%	13.0%	4.6%	5.3%	
<b>Overall quality of life</b>							
Count	3	46	228	28	4	17	326
Row %	0.9%	14.1%	69.9%	8.6%	1.2%	5.2%	
<b>Parks and recreation</b>							
Count	3	36	204	14	3	54	314
Row %	1.0%	11.5%	65.0%	4.5%	1.0%	17.2%	
<b>Schools</b>							
Count		26	169	56	33	34	318
Row %	0	8.2%	53.1%	17.6%	10.4%	10.7%	
<b>Fire protection</b>							
Count	8	56	226	7	3	20	320
Row %	2.5%	17.5%	70.6%	2.2%	0.9%	6.3%	
<b>EMS</b>							
Count	10	57	226	9	2	18	322
Row %	3.1%	17.7%	70.2%	2.8%	0.6%	5.6%	
<b>Police protection</b>							
Count	10	55	208	19	6	16	314
Row %	3.2%	9.0%	66.2%	6.1%	1.9%	5.1%	
<b>Zoning and enforcement regulations</b>							
Count	6	29	168	61	17	40	321
Row %	1.9%	9.0%	52.3%	19.0%	5.3%	12.5%	

**10. If you selected worse or much worse on the previous question please explain why.**

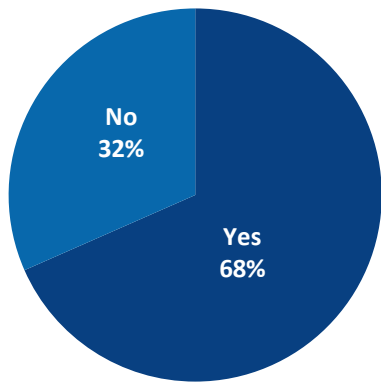
- Not previously known to the area, can't compare
- Schools have gone woke & political! Educate. Blight unenforced.
- Watertown is not progressive and seems satisfied continuing living in the 1960's
- To much of!
- Taxes too high on Nolan's Dome and the bonehead bus driver ramming a vehicle
- Critical race theory being taught along with the nepotism
- Please protect us from poisonous industrial solar complex
- See a lot of blight conditions within twp. Doesn't appear there is any monitoring or enforcement. Is there any ordinances to maintain property?
- You should' have cut down all the trees at Watertown Cemetery
- The school need attention – need to stop accommodating the minority. Need to get the bible back into the schools
- Blight
- More vehicles on the road. More careless drivers
- To much government control
- Schools to involved in politics
- Traffic increasing everywhere – need paving of W Miller to S Gates for Truck bypass. Sandusky schools losing ground
- Building being built where they shouldn't be built
- The school is now woke, I am happy my kids are graduated and out of them
- Hold teachers accountable, no more unions. Zoning and enforcement is based on Board Members personal benefit
- Roads need some repair. Zoning blight areas
- I think things were a lot better in the 70's then they are now. Teachers worked with students one on one. You have to go home to get help with your homework from parents now a days
- Increasing taxes, increasing traffic. Petty crime. Grow houses
- Some things are not enforced
- Zoning admin refuses to enforce ordinances even though he is paid to do so. Afraid of paybacks
- More people = More traffic
- 20 years ago roads were A+, today they are mud 3<sup>rd</sup> world
- Disappointed to see removal of all trees in the cemetery. I thought they gave the area a more rural & environmentally healthy appeal.
- More traffic, too many regulations
- Roads – more traffic has had an affect on local road. Traffic – since COVID people have moved to rural areas affecting several ways of life that we're losing in the thumb area. Environment – to many fence rows/woods ripped off then farms complain about vision issues, also puts stress on drainage ways. Zoning – seems like people are getting away with more since COVID. Probably because others are afraid of repercussions from neighbors or others in this new post COVID world
- Road conditions need no explanation
- More traffic – more stops signs running on side roads. More trees being destroyed to increase acreage – schools that are too liberal & not enough focus on studies. Bullying is allowed even when reported. Lack of respect.
- Traffic just uses the road as an expressway going 70 all hours
- Big AG is a traffic issue. Natural environment is being stripped away. Zoning is run by a group with their hands in each others pockets
- Schools have gone to hell. Don't know why roads and environment have gotten worse. Management I suppose
- Traffic is heavier (trucks)

# DRAFT

- We have nothing to offer here, no parks, no pool, no fishing, no sidewalks, no bike path or walk path
- Traffic has increased greatly. Schools are not teaching basic education and they are incorporating a woke agenda which is unacceptable
- Not allowing the sale of marijuana is single handley crippling the twp
- Sandusky school mascot – change school board problems
- Need to do better on blight
- Road is always full of potholes. Sometimes impossible to drive on with a car
- Certain times of the day are really hard to pull out onto the highway
- Enforcement of zoning & regulations are not there unless you are making improvements to your property, the dumpy places get left alone
- Becoming more liberal
- Natural environmental continue to decline with loss of woodlots, fence rows, big farm equipment using roads like farm lanes
- No progress by planning commission
- Cut down too many trees, now all the deers are getting hit
- Zoning administrators don't seem to enforce blight ordinance
- Gravel roads need serious updates, school administration
- We do not like the amount of farm houses with buildings that have been sold to promote pot growing operations & the lack of upkeep of those homes & property
- Traffic is worse everywhere.
- We teach kids stuff – not to think (basics before technology)
- To much land clearing
- There should more enforcement on people to maintain their property
- The roads are rough and bumpy. Schools are less intrusive on needs on how to live
- Why is some one that doesn't live here growing pot in the house down the road? Young people can't take root here if all the affordable housing is bought up by pot growers.
- If your ambulance people have to call for extra help they shouldn't be on the ambulance. Police if I call twice with a complaint I expect someone to come out and check it out.
- School board, bad teachers to woke
- There's more traffic and no speed limits enforced. Farmers have removed fence rows and woods
- The teacher & leaders have went downhill and quality of education
- Bad admin & leader, school board
- Township makes decisions on issues without resident voting. For example, cutting down trees in cemetery.
- Who authorized the cutting of the trees in the cemetery????? Great job keeping the “natural environment”
- Parents have no say in what children are taught.
- Schools are becoming to woke. Didn't like Sandusky superintendent. Glad he is gone
- Our road is terrible most of the time, dust to poor gravel quality and lack of traffic is worse because of Walmart. The wooded areas of years past are gone. Self explanatory on schools, police are stretched to thin, zoning enforcement is up to the county group
- My side road gets worse. The water from rain just exists on the side of the Rd. No where for it to drain. And the bumps are horrible
- Way too many properties that are falling down and or trashed like E Miller Rd
- The only thing worse for zoning enforcement is I didn't appreciate grow houses in my area with out us getting notified of that business. I had to notify neighbors about my business and put it in the new paper to allow them the chance to deny me.
- Zoning regulations seem to be political tools rather than best interest

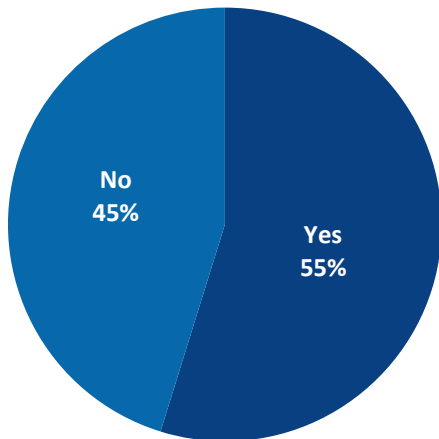
11. Do you currently pay for garbage removal services?

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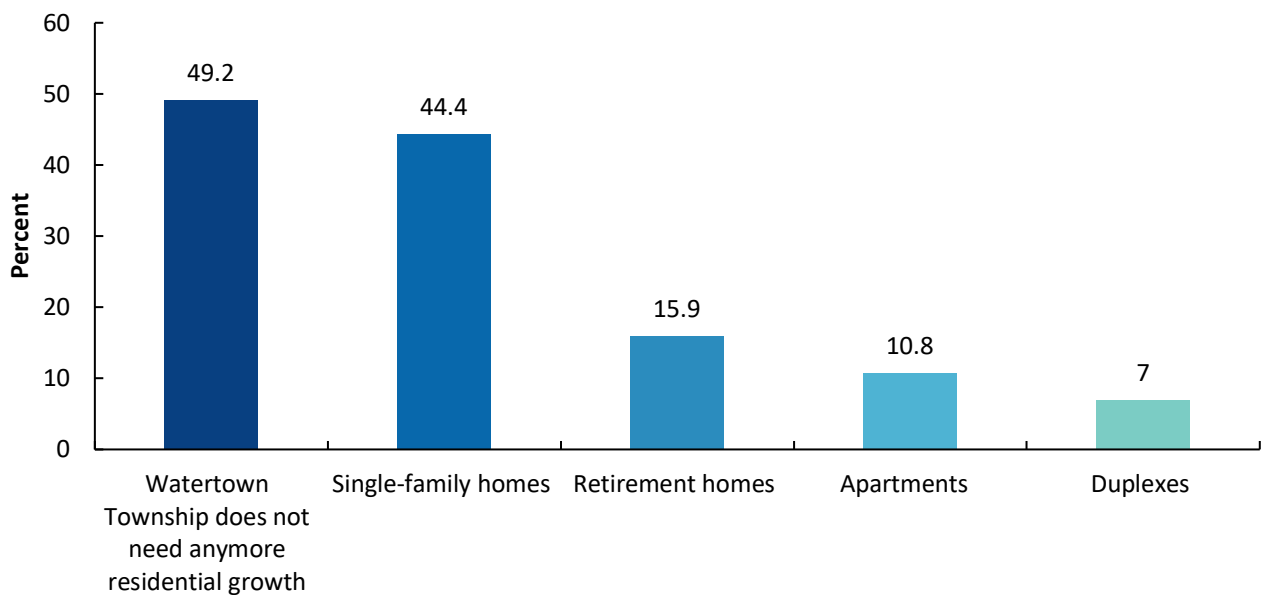
Value	Percent	Count
Yes	68.4%	225
No	31.6%	104
<b>Totals</b>		<b>329</b>

12. Would you support a Township provided trash service?



Value	Percent	Count
Yes	54.8%	172
No	45.2%	142
<b>Totals</b>		<b>314</b>

13. Which housing choices would you like to see more of in the Township? Please check all that apply.



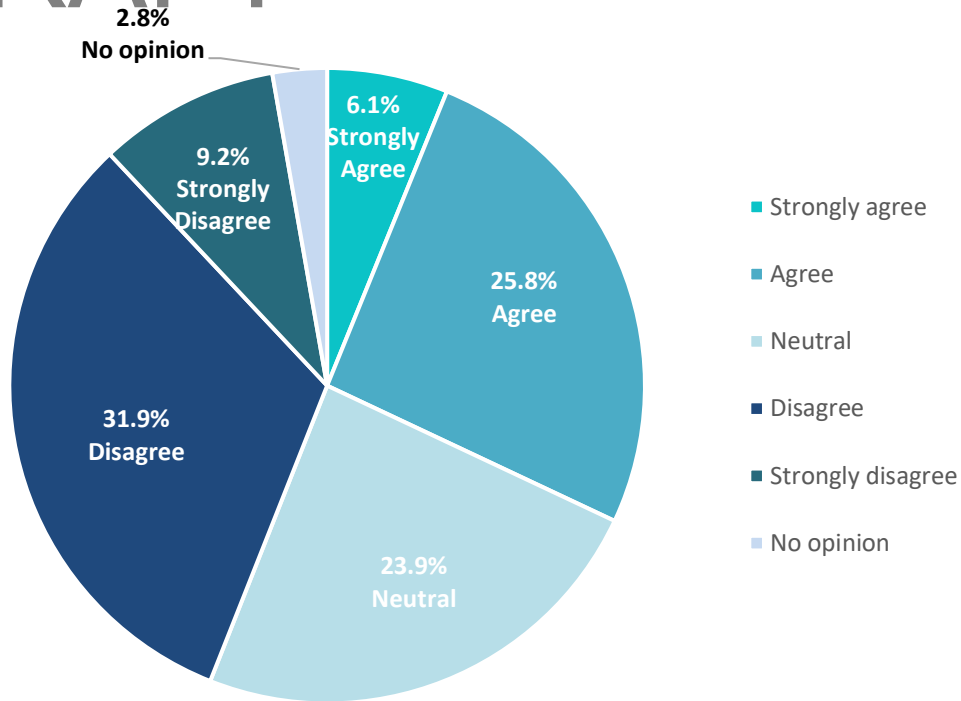


**14. What is your opinion regarding the following agricultural land use statements?**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion	Responses
<b>Agriculture is an important aspect of the Watertown Township economy</b> Count Row %	211 64.1%	82 24.9%	22 6.7%	5 1.5%	1 0.3%	8 2.4%	329
<b>Agriculture is an important aspect of the Watertown Township landscape</b> Count Row %	193 59.0%	84 25.7%	31 9.5%	11 3.4%	2 0.6%	6 1.8%	327
<b>Agriculture land should be preserved</b> Count Row %	200 60.8%	58 17.6%	42 12.8%	18 5.5%	4 1.2%	7 2.1%	329
<b>Using agriculture land for new development is appropriate for accommodating growth and development</b> Count Row %	21 6.4%	61 18.7%	75 23.0%	62 19.0%	101 31.0%	6 1.8%	326
<b>Agriculture land should not be used for large scale solar</b> Count Row %	181 54.5%	41 12.3%	40 12.0%	19 5.7%	44 13.3%	7 2.1%	332
<b>Agriculture land should not be used for wind turbines</b> Count Row %	163 49.5%	48 14.6%	57 17.3%	15 4.6%	39 11.9%	7 2.1%	329

**15. Watertown Township should promote more commercial development in the coming years.**

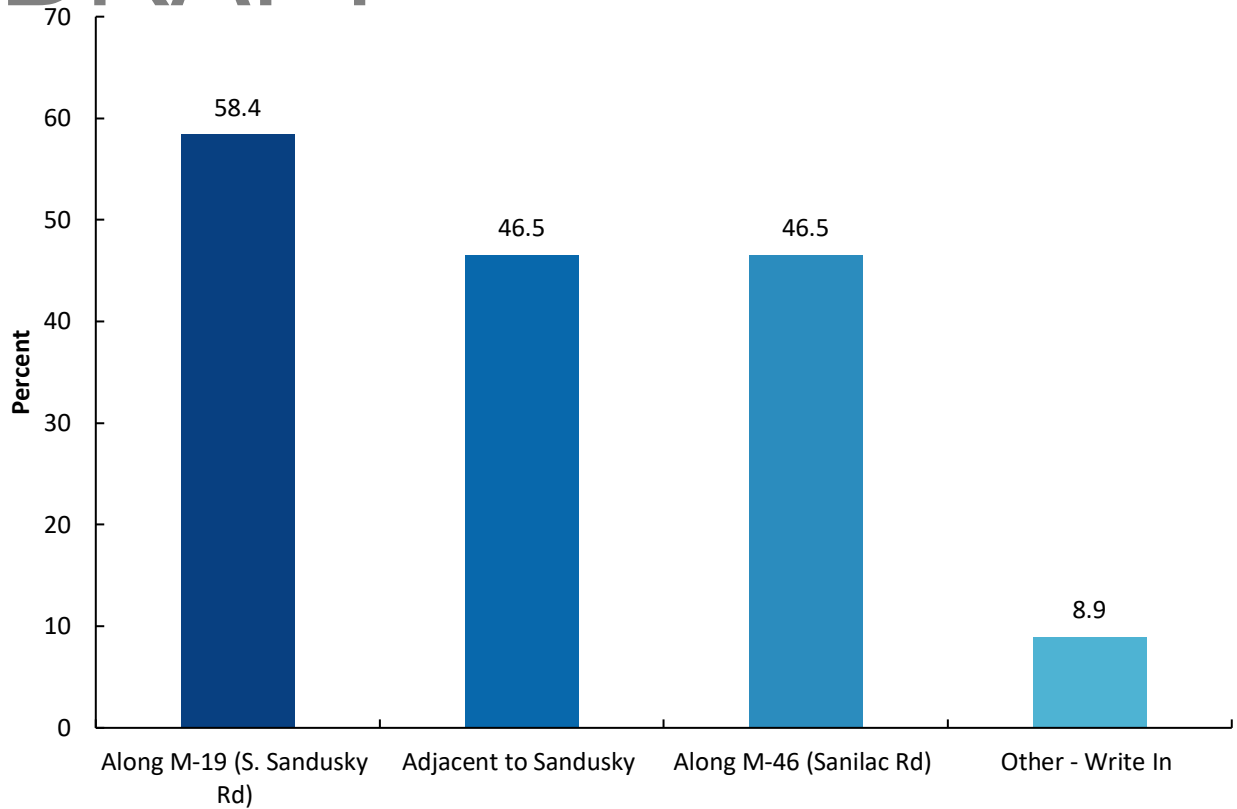
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Value	Percent	Count
<b>Strongly agree</b>	6.1%	20
<b>Agree</b>	25.8%	84
<b>Neutral</b>	23.9%	78
<b>Disagree</b>	31.9%	104
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	9.2%	30
<b>No opinion</b>	2.8%	9
<b>Totals</b>		326

**16. If you selected agree or strongly agree where would you like to see future commercial development?**

DRAFT

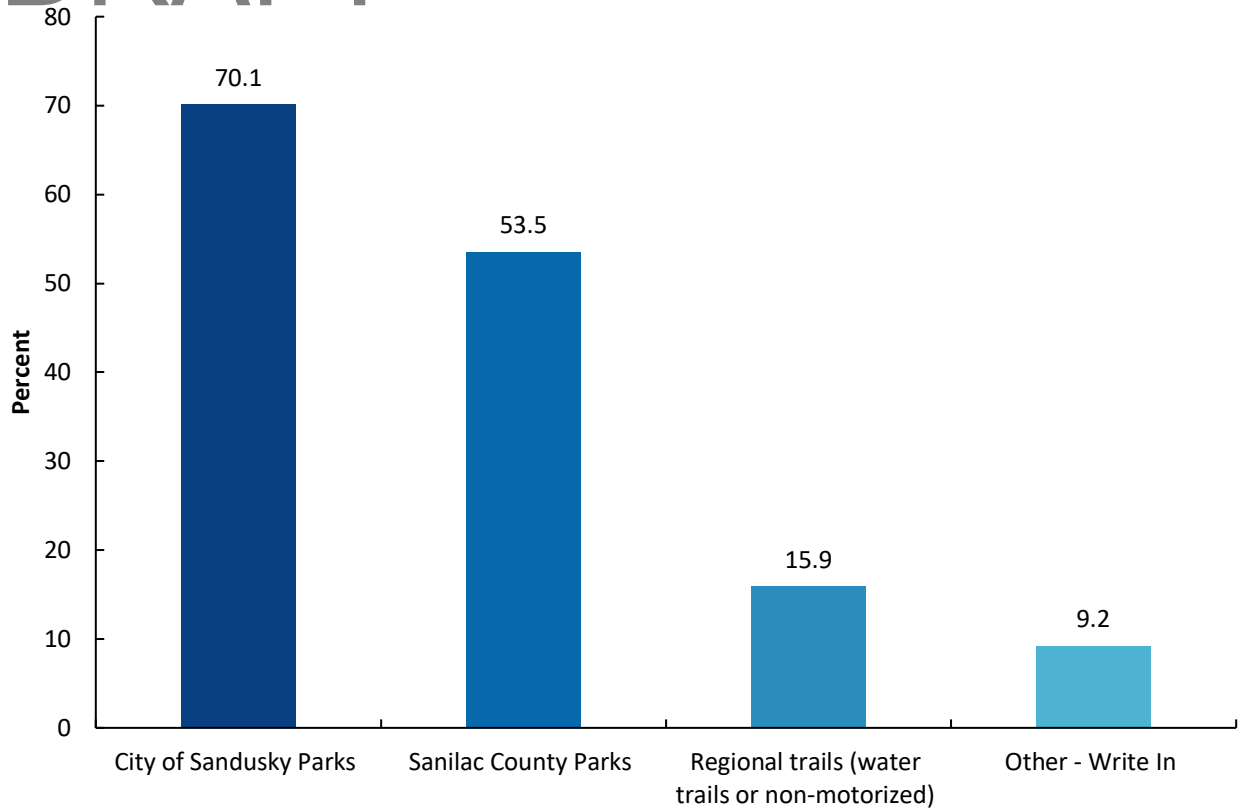


Other write in -

- Any type to grow tax base
- East side
- Fill the empty buildings on M-46
- In commercial zoned areas
- Industrial Park
- Peck and Sandusky we need more grocery stores because Walmart is horrible. They have the highest prices in Sanilac county and talent county is one of the poorest counties when I ask why their prices are so high I was told by the manager they have no competition. Let's bring in some competition with better choices to shop.
- in watertown proper
- industrial park

# 17. Which of the following parks/trails did you use last year?

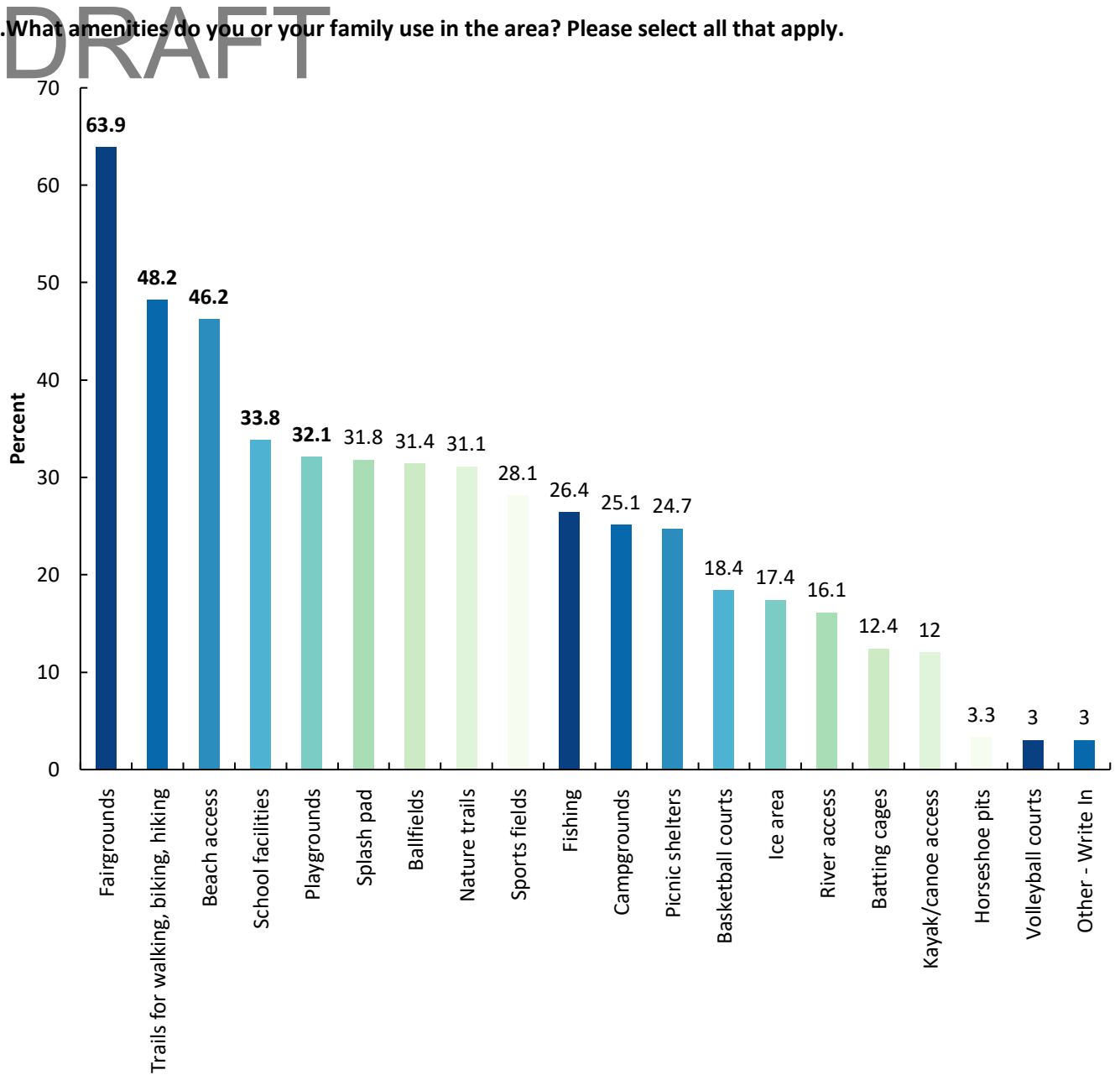
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## Other write in -

- Diamond trail
- I don't use them at all
- I personally don't use the parks or trails.
- My own
- Private owned local trails
- Walking path in Sandusky
- Cass City pool, beach in Cassville
- Driving on the roads are trails
- Just walked in the yard
- Metro parks
- Snowmobile
- State turn offs on M-25
- Walking trail

**18. What amenities do you or your family use in the area? Please select all that apply.**

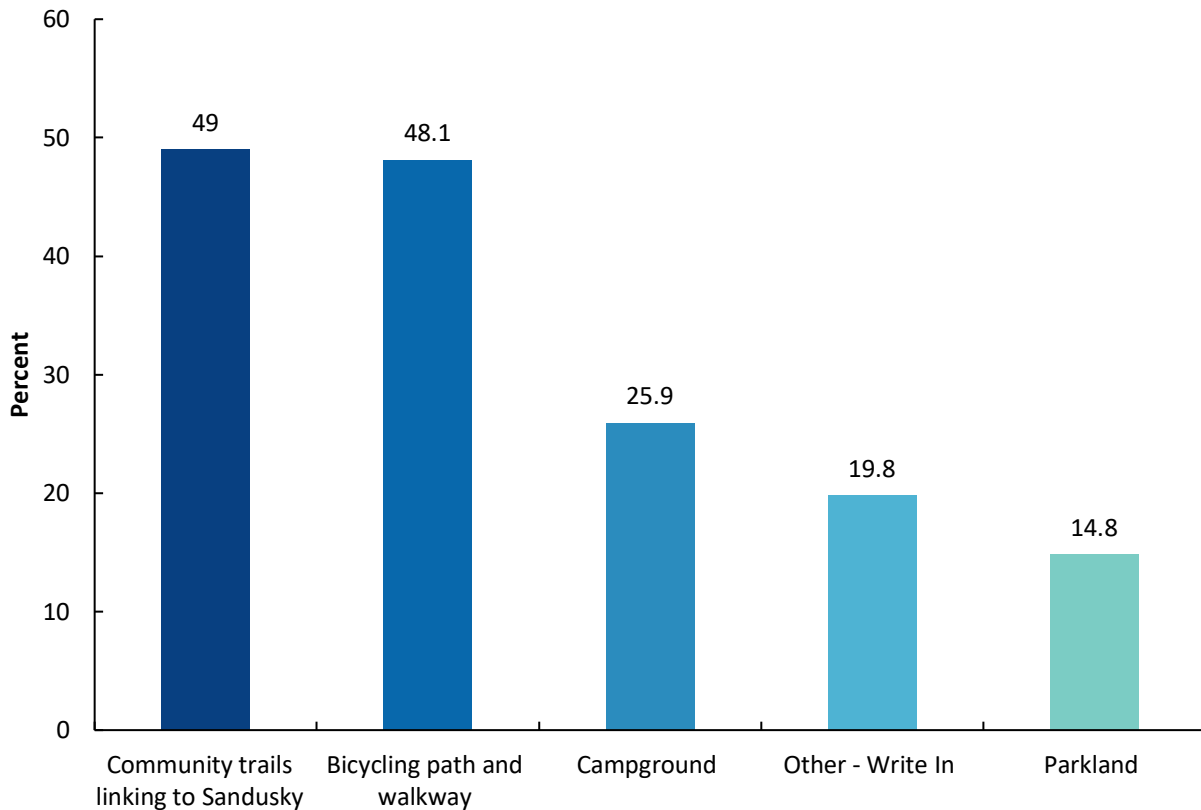


Other write in -

- Any additional that can be made available
- Football fields
- We want a dog park
- hunting should have been added to this list
- more avents for everyone to get involved with besides cort house lawn
- pickleball courts
- there is nothing to do here except the movies if you like to spend midnight out

# DRAFT

19. What additional recreational amenities would you like to see added to the Township? Please check all that apply.



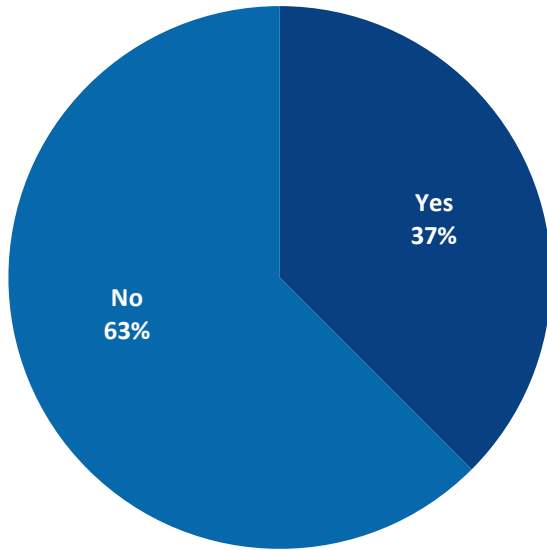
Other write in -

- ATV trails (2)
- small park pavilion by twp hall (2)
- Nature Trails (3)
- None of the above (3)
- Pool (2)
- We have enough (3)
- Discgolf course (2)
- Dog park (2)
- Other trails - Horse trails, Dirt bike orv snowmobile trails (2)
- Non if you want to live in the city, then stay there, this is a FARMING area
- In door walking area
- Kayak canoe access
- Lake front camp improvments
- Picnic style parks with a pavilion and ball field
- Shooting Range
- We have everything in the City of Sandusky
- any large enough property opened for hunting on a permit basis that has small fee. opens more opportunities and twp gets little more income

# DRAFT

- replace trees in zion cemetery
- roads I can drive down
- skateboard park
- what a joke, we have no such facilities

**20. Have you visited [www.watertowntownship.net](http://www.watertowntownship.net) for information about the Township meetings, ordinances, or our Master Plan?**



Value	Percent	Count
Yes	37.5%	119
No	62.5%	198
<b>Totals</b>		<b>317</b>

**21. What do you like best about the Township?**

### Most Common Responses –

- Agricultural land
  - County Living
  - Quietness/Peaceful
  - People
  - Cost of Living
- 
- The agriculture style community
  - Quiet, Comfort
  - Agricultural
  - Supervisor and the board are more fair to all people
  - It's not that great
  - Used to be quiet before drug dealers and city people moved in
  - Country living
  - living here on a FARMING , if people want live like they do in the City, then they need to stay living there, NOT here
  - People
  - Being close to town but still in the country.
  - Wesch gas station
  - The peace & quite

# DRAFT

- Quiet affordable living.
- Quiet, nice people,
- The people and the quiet.
- Quite place to live
- Just living in the country.
- Rural look, rural feel, NO SOLAR!!!
- Rural living
- Rural living
- The landscape
- Safe community
- Country living and it's peaceful.
- The view of fields. The nice people.
- Peaceful, wildlife, be nicer if streets in town were smoother for rideing scooters, streets are pitted and no ways to get from one side to other without being on main streets.
- The peace and quiet
- It is peaceful in the area we live in
- It is quiet
- Quiet country living yet close to town.
- The location
- Quiet rural living
- That it's a rural setting without turbines or solar
- The senery
- Everything
- The rural living
- Like it the way it is. Quite living.
- Low cost of living
- It's rural aspect
- So far people are for preserving farm land and not wanting to look at solar panels. Solar panels do not belong on main roads like M-19. They are an eyesore. Solar panels do not need to be any residential area. It's not fair to the people in the township that pay taxes and have lived in their homes for years. I strongly disagree with the one on M-19 as I would have to look at that from my front yard. It's just not fair.
- Rural, peace and quiet, friendly
- The quietness of a small town.
- Quietness
- Rural peace and quiet.
- The people
- I like the sense of community. My neighbors are great! We all get along and are willing to help each other out when needed.
- It has good farmland and the people.
- There's no wind mills or solar panels in the fields
- It's rural character and agriculture
- The people
- Just far enough from town to be rural.
- Relatively peaceful
- I like that agricultural land will continue too stay ag for conservation purposes



# DRAFT

- I like that it's simple and is a nice representation of what I see as nice looking highly productive farm land with producers taking pride in what we do.
- The community.
- The parts Stoutenburg's don't own.
- Not a lot of people
- It's small community atmosphere.
- Rural
- The cemetery
- Public security, lac of crime
- Everything but it's less every time you dingle nuts start building or tearing stuff apart.
- Rural area, no outsiders. NO CRIME!!!
- Rural
- I loved it before Scott Franzel was in office
- Did love beautiful trees in cemetery whose stupid boneheaded idea was that to debeautify down town
- Small town feel and knowing our neighbors
- It's small, people stay in contact with others, some people speak to others on a first name basis.
- Keeping it rural, keep the small farms productive. Big is 'not' always better... Help the long time local rural people's needs that love this areas and don't appease to city/urban needs. Don't cut all the trees or woods either. Sorry, lot of mumbling from me but you get the drift.
- Keeping it rural, keep the small farms productive. Big is 'not' always better... Help the long time local rural people's needs that love this areas and don't appease to city/urban needs. Don't cut all the trees or woods either. Sorry, lot of mumbling from me but you get the drift.
- Why did you cut down the trees in my ancestors cemetery and where did the money go and who's big idea was that
- Quiet Close to town Good school district
- Rural living, enjoying the farming community, small town living
- Good location
- Quiet...low crime
- The landscape and space.
- Rural area, watching wildlife, close proximity to Sandusky.
- Community minded. Leadership
- Quiet family community
- Better road than other townships
- pleasant place to live, a long way from shopping, cultural events, etc. I often say it takes an hour to get to civilization. Jobs are still low paying and difficult to find without travel.
- Country living. Good place to raise kids
- Quietness, not commercialized
- Quiet/rural setting
- friendly
- Quiet rural community
- Not having people living next door
- nice area good neighbors
- Quiet, safe and friendly
- 20 years ago it was the roads
- Quiet Rural setting
- country living

# DRAFT

- rural living
- born and raised here
- It's very laid back...
- The farming community.
- Rural safe secure living when we lived here 50yr ago, now so much. Now opportunist and drugs being allowed
- I like the people within our community.
- The natural beauty
- This is a safe and Beautiful place to live, I live near corn and soybean fields and it's so nice to have neighbors like I do.
- Being surrounded by farm fields and agriculture. Rural living, corn fields, tractors. Seclusion, peacefulness
- The rural nature
- Nothing to note
- We have loved having the dumpsters available for clean up days. We don't have a truck, so haven't used the free dump uses on Ruth Rd.
- The quiet atmosphere and friendly people
- Good mix of agriculture and residential
- People
- Very quiet area. Rural living but close enough to town for shopping
- It's rural
- Small
- it's outside the city limits
- the people
- friendly, everyone knows everybody. Helpful when needed
- the peace & quiet & the few people that i have met are really nice
- rural setting
- the people, friendships community closeness
- it's a quiet place to live
- the roads are aging. looks good all around
- the rural country setting, yet close to home
- farm ground
- rural conservative
- it's a peaceful space to live
- It is close to Sandusky so we can use it's amenities without payig higher taxes
- rural atmosphere
- quiet rural, no traffic & stop lights everywhere. love the rural area that's why i moved here to get away from the city life, but yet close to town. Don't like the hussle and bussle & it keeps the crime out of here
- county living
- the people
- rural living yet close to town for kids activities
- the people and no solar and windmills. they hurt the land and animals.
- most of the people are very friendly
- people
- welshe's old gas station

# DRAFT

- quiet rural
- i feel safe
- it used to be the rural nature of the township. neighbors look out for neighbors. now its just where we live
- quiet
- rural area
- near town but outside limits, rural location
- I can live in the country and be 1/4 mile from a beer store
- Rural Living
- quiet
- small nice community
- rural community quiet
- no solar panels
- I like the country living
- rural area
- rural ag community
- no solar panels
- nice area
- great people making a difference. small and rural area to raise family. love the agricultural aspects of our area
- no solar
- Rural character and preservation of agricultural
- keep solar out of here
- no solar in township will do awful things here - bring down community standards
- like country living
- it's a friendly place to visit
- neighbors, twp board, farmland
- farmland
- the people
- it's rural but close to town. we have good neighbors
- country side w/ enough commercial
- natural area - streams & wooded areas (the few that are left)
- small town friendly
- the setting and being rural. I think it's very important it stays. I do appreciate the lights that have been placed @ major crossways
- The people
- small town rural living
- it's small so things like voting are quick and easy
- small community and friendly
- adjacent to sandusky, stores restaurants gas stations
- it is close to town but still have country feel
- rural small community atmosphere. close enough to sandusky or larger cities. Definitely notice attitude change of city dweller's moving into neighborhood. Less friendly & overly protective of their land. Not step on my property attitude
- living in the country
- country living

# DRAFT

- affordability
- mom home and my farming way of life. do not want any solar or wind turbines
- quiet and peaceful
- quiet not a lot of traffic. not to many neighbors for country living
- quiet
- rural land
- the township boards desire to follow communities best interests
- The family environment
- It's Quiet
- Peace and quiet
- it is my home
- Good people, quiet place to live, nomcrime
- roads are getting much better
- private land
- close to town but country living
- Friendly neighbors. I use to use many of the amenities before when we raised 2 adopted children and then had 2 foster kids for 3 years, but now we are to elderly to do to much
- It's rural. Keep it that way
- It's rural and want it kept that way
- privacy
- rural atmosphere
- small town feeling but still a lot of growth potential
- peace ad quiet
- nice quiet farming community
- nothing
- see question #4
- I like the rural life
- rural area great place to live
- the country
- rural, farming woodlands
- rural and quiet
- quiet, rural, watching natures floor show
- good people
- rural living, quiet, watching nature
- rural aspects, affordable housing
- rural atmosphere
- that we grow weed in the area
- no opinion
- country living
- keep rural
- the way it is
- retain rural atmosphere
- Rural living

# DRAFT

## 22. What is one thing you would do to improve the Township?

### Most Common Responses –

- Change in leadership
  - Communication
  - Roads
  - No solar or wind
  - Blight
  - Add trees in the Cemetery
  - Keep out growing facilities
  - Add recreational amenities and a path
- 
- Banning all future attempts on development of solar and wind parks
  - Parks, Change of command
  - More shopping, especially a grocery store
  - Fine the way it is
  - Improve walking/bike paths
  - Let solar come in
  - Not allow drug house and cannabis grow farms.
  - Relationship with city
  - A board where all the members listen to the people's opinion and not their own agendas
  - Public water
  - Pave Townline rd. .
  - A bike/walking trail to Sandusky
  - A garbage service would be nice, and a party store.
  - Get a new township supervisor that is transparent, honest, and follows the law over his own personal preferences and biases. Make the township budget viewable to the public,
  - Taxes and our assessor.
  - Township infighting. Crime is increasing. Upsetting to see so many houses and outbuildings used for drug production. How do you improve a community with that kind of activity going on? Would be nice to have a small store back, with food and basic necessities.
  - More press time , a better way of letting the public know what is being planned.
  - Start listening to the residents, end onean rule.
  - Less chemicals on fields
  - Less chemicals used by farming
  - Keep the woods and fencerows
  - Put the trees back in the cemetery
  - Better roads
  - No commercials solar industry parks
  - Really need 2nd grocery store or better conveniences to shop for household foods. South East side of town.
  - Nothing
  - Road improvements
  - A store.
  - I'm happy with the current status of the township.
  - More new tree growth
  - Keep out solar and wind turbines
  - Get a new township board

# DRAFT

- Fix the side roads
- Little more enforcement of ordinances already on the books. Every time a farmer rips out a woodlot or fence row they complain about soil erosion or ditches being cleaned out. Maybe they should have some kind of penalty for that because the rest of us have to deal with their problems
- No solar or wind technology out of the area.
- Clean up the dangerous, horrible-looking property next to the elementary school.
- Keep it simple
- Just keep solar away from main residential areas.
- Get training for the boards so they are more effective, especially the treasurer. Our sewer bills and tax checks are paid on time but she doesn't tell the county.
- Roads
- No more pot growers
- Look into the future of advanced technology
- Keep out solar and wind turbines
- More recreational opportunities. Sports dome like Pigeon has.
- Less housing honestly. I live in the populated part of Watertown that's close to 19. Although I like my neighbors, I have too many of them. Haha.
- I don't like that they cut all trees down in the cemetery it was beautiful now looks depressing
- More limestone on the roads
- Build bike path
- Better living. Community for housing
- Get rid of any Karens.
- More farmers on the board
- We need no renewable energy projects dividing us as a community. We also need no mandatory trash pickup. We also need some trees or plants of some kind put back into our cemetery.
- Roads
- More paved roads
- Plant more trees. Bring back tree lined roads.
- Crime
- Not a goddamn thing
- SPEED LIMIT SIGN IN CASH VILLAGE AND NO CHANGES WITH BUILDINGS. IT BRINGS CRIME
- Fire whoever ordered to cut down trees
- More community events and parks to keep us a close knit community
- Everything should be listened to and treated the same, no matter who is speaking about or on whatever subject. One person's opinion should not have more clout compared to another's opinion dealing with Township issues.
- I want to know why you cut down the trees in the cemetery and who thought they were authorized to do so and where did the money go?
- You haven't answered me why did you cut the trees down in my ancestors cemetery where did the money go and who's idea was it
- Enforce blight laws
- We need to take care of the issues at hand first, prior to spending money elsewhere. Next, we need more living facilities to bring more people in. The taxes for someone to develop this type of property is astounding and therefore we will get no one to come in and put up these dwellings with the taxes that are being thrown at them. We need to be proactive and build a better township rather than reactive.
- We need ditch work and road work done in the sub division.

# DRAFT

- Improve Townline Rd (pavement)...very high traffic
- Lower taxes.
- Better road maintenance.
- Once or twice a year paper shredding day offered for free for residents
- Stop solar farms on or near residential areas. It's not fair to homeowners. Definately lowers value of their homes and that's just not fair at all
- Plant more trees in the cemetary. Someone cut all the trees down, now the cemetary is ugly. We never had a say, no vote, nothing.
- 
- When 70% of residents are satisfied and resistant to change improving the township is difficult, when we already are perfect. Most residence of waterotwn township think gravel roads were good enough in the 1800's and are good enough forever!!
- Get the marijuana growers out. This should be a wholesome area. Some moved in the place next to mine. I don't like smelling the odor when I go outside to enjoy my property. The township knew what the people wanted the property with the big sheds with when they were sold and still let the sales happen. Should have been shut down immediatley.
- Internet access for all
- Better and more transparent information by the board. Examples, cutting downs trees in cemetary without consulting family members first was unforgivable. taxes being sent out on time is an ongoing issue.
- more limestone on gravel roads. more attention to blight enforcement
- No grow/pot houses in township
- trying to get more commercial restaurants and store and advertise them
- Improve roads
- Lower taxes
- in my subdivision (Gleason M-19) even with occasional grading and adding dirt. Dell St & Gleason are always full of ruts and holes due to school buses and garbage trucks. Asphalt on cement would be nice without constant upkeep.
- roads, roads, roads
- plant trees back in cemetary
- forbid pot/grow houses in the township. improve on enforcing blight
- Twp board be more open (special meetings are almost secret meetings. Have lighted sign to post meetings or special meetings. Are on door sometimes not even able to read them. Supervisor should be removed. His vindictive nature disqualifies him from a leadership position.
- employment
- Dispensarie would benefit it's citizens...
- Keeping the roads up.
- Keep out development that destroys rural communities. Why allow marijuana grow houses into township - why try to install solar/wind mills into residential areas that we have to suffer the consequences if f greed for money to a few - you can't eat solar or wind and survive without precious land to grow
- Jobs
- Keep large scale solar out! We need the jobs that the farm store, farmers, and agriculture businesses provide to all of us!
- To not be overtaken by big companies and industrialization.
- Leave it how it is

# DRAFT

- Will they be planting new trees at the cemetery?
- Put in pickelball courts
- higher standards for blight
- getting rid of the extreme blight in twp
- Nothing at this time
- Would like at least one party store near the township hall
- Reduce weight limits on all roads
- Have people get all the junk out of their yards. Lean it up
- Make it buses stores cheaper for people to rent
- More paved roads
- keep out wind and solar farms
- In my world everything is great. Great place to raise children
- Things to do as a family, camping, swimming, water park, rollerskating park
- Quit selling property to people for use to grow marijuana
- improve roads
- the only thing that i would love to see is a trail from watertown to sandusky
- internet at a affordable price
- taxes seem high for what we have
- township website, being able to view and pay taxes online
- senior center
- have spending more thought out. there are some things that tax money does not need to buy
- ban the use of farmland for commercial development, including wind or solar farms
- dog park
- more forestry woods
- tax rate is too high
- Create a township facebook page where meetings could be live streamed and keep up to date on township news
- Have more stores, grocery, dollar general, family dollar, aldi's. olies, big lots. few more restaurants - culvers, country buffet, golden coral, pizza express
- quarterly billing to monthly
- School Security. At the courthouse we gave a doorway type metal detector and a cop inside with a gun. we need both of these things at our schools. Money would be better spent on this instead of a parking lot or changing the school mascot
- some how provide ways to help residents with alternative energy on individual scale rather than large solar or wind farms
- Farming more of the land
- have owners need to clean up their junk in their yard.
- more parks
- remove pot sheds, houses. all facilities
- board decisions that focus on improving lives of residents without increasing taxes
- the board removed all the stately trees from the zion cemetery. Hired a logger to excavate. Should have hired an arborist to evaluate each tree. The trees need to be replaced. Pehaps the township needs a cemetery advisory board. Use the new sign to post special meetings. Not a small sign on the door.
- paved streets, lighting
- leave rural area & maintain roads & ditches



# DRAFT

- keep status quo
- pave miller road to gates road and gates rd to m-46. pave jean st to maple valley and maple valley down to miller
- roads
- Plant new trees in the cemetery. Not sure who made the choice to cut down all the trees, but whoever did made a terrible mistake. The cemetery looks terrible. shame on any and all who was involved in that decision.
- Better communication for Board Members watertown township clear-cut of the tree in cemetery
- do not ruin with commercial solar or wind projects
- blight in township
- no solar panels
- no solar in the township
- no solar panels
- no solar panels
- I don't want to look at solar panels - go some where else
- Do not bring solar to our community
- no solar
- keep solar out the people in our community are here for agricultural settings people don't know how much the farmers for for the local economic
- no solar panels
- improve by keeping solar out
- leave as is
- put a stop light down by Burger King. when you come out of Mcdonalds it hard to get out of there at certain times of the day
- I'm fine with the status quo
- Encourage farmers to keep tree lines and tress along road way would like to keep county charm
- bit cut down all the trees in the watertown cementery. Everyone is shocked and angry
- Housing
- remove school board & superintendent educate done indoctrinate
- adding trails/bike path/walking path to surrounding towns. Abolish any marijuana growing area. Continue to promote agriculture and areas for retired people. a pavilion would be nice also
- growth of commercial and residential
- garbage pick up to be included in taxes. I think this would help to eliminate many blight/blemishes in our township
- I don't think we have been here long enough to offer an opinion
- communication with the voters of the township needs to be improved
- make or have some type of ordinance for junk/garbage on land/lawns
- Possible more housing for retirement income or a few duplexes. Nothing huge as we are rural and live here because we like country living
- leave it as it is
- leave as is
- have a township place for reunions w/ kids park and gazebo w/ picnic tables. more watertown activities to pull comm together
- have people clean up there yards
- allow more single family homes and mobile trailers. with cost of living some families can only afford mobile trailer/homes
- coordinate development goals with city of sandusky.
- Grocery Store
- make sure the side rd are in good shape. bad side rd are very hard on vehicles

# DRAFT

- keep the marijuana growing facilities out of this township, stop selling every farm or place that has a big shed on it. Stop the real estate sales person/township supervisor from being involved in this.
- rec park fir gatherings of family-friends
- Get rid of all the pot growers
- get rid of self-serving board members. planning board members working for themselves
- decrease in property taxes for seniors
- no solar or wind. Blight control
- More trees & woodlots for windbreaks especially along ditches. I know farmers disagree but I prefer to protect the land & waterways. I would like to see much more CRP for improved wildlife & beautify landscape
- Don't waste money on walking trail, for example. Manage money in a smart way. Have intelligent people on the board making decisions. NO NEED for commercial development of any kind!!! Parks, recreational opportunities, cutting down trees are not necessary
- Keep commercial projects out of Watertown Township
- lower taxes
- continue to improve roads
- young officials/members of board
- senior recreation
- stop the sale of our houses for drug growing
- get rid of the pot houses. if you want the next generation to live out here, we need affordable housing and jobs for them
- Bring pheasants back
- walking path, garbage pick up
- plant new trees in the Zion Watertown Cemetery to replace the more than necessary amount of the trees the board allowed to be removed
- repair roads and encourage more businesses such as groceries or shopping area's
- put the hammer down on people that don't keep up their homes. need more recycle options
- roads and drainage
- limestone, more sideroads, more recreation
- we are very upset about the loss of all pine trees in Zion Cemetery. We understand one fell down during winter storm. Did it cause grave stone damage? why cut down every pine tree and at what cost? was this done by a vote?
- bring in low cost high speed internet to all (rural) better cell phone service to all (rural)
- pave town line rd between marlette rd & m-46
- need affordable broadband internet & better cell phone service for everyone in rural areas
- fix miller road, pave to townline rd
- better internet
- prohibit wind and solar development that kind of development belongs on the michigan peat fields on stringes roads
- wee shop
- no opinion
- road Maintenance on local level, main & primary are good. Who ever made the decision to remove all of the trees from the cemetery needs to step down from the board
- add sidewalks
- keep it rural - no solar
- prevent solar
- more road maintenance pavilion & small play area for kids
- don't destroy more trees - such as zion cemetery - bad decision
- Too many zoning rules for lifestyle of those in the township. Especially rural areas

# DRAFT

## 23. What three priorities should the Township focus on?

### Most Common Responses –

- Blight
  - Solar/Wind
  - Parks and Trails
  - Land Preservation
  - Low Taxes
  - Roads
- 
- No solar. No windmills. Single family dwellings
  - Blight, zoning enforcement and taxes
  - protecting our farmland
  - Support solar walking/ bike trails
  - Listen to the public,
  - Blight Trash Roads
  - Solar, can't put a new home up unless you own at least 40 acres
  - Side road grading using lime stone not gravel only roads get special attention is county officials live on or road bosses
  - Parks and trails Solar Relationship with city
  - Not letting solar or wind turbines in
  - Utilities, walking trail linked to Sandusky
  - Keep land taxes low and reasonable.
  - Recreation, medical services for veterans, trails.
  - Garbage service, more federal dollars dedicated to programs available for wildlife and habitat conservation and less focus on windmills and solar. Our county is TOO SMALL for these "solutions" and will turn Michigan into a DESERT.
  - 1. Get all township officials training so they know how to do their jobs efficiently. 2. New Recreational opportunities like motorized trails and a park. 3. Maintenance of sewer system.
  - Cutting the budget and saving taxpayer dollars. permanent roll off dumpster at the township hall. Getting tough on crime. Please do not add garbage pickup costs to our taxes. People are facing hard times and the township representatives should be focusing on improving the life of residents. If taxes can't be paid, people lose their property. So how can the township impose a utility bill on people who may be struggling with hard times? That's a land grab.
  - No solar No wind turbines Preserve agriculture
  - More paved roads
  - Lower taxes Sustain property values Respect sight lines
  - Stay an agricultural community
  - Land preservation,
  - Keeping the land farming. Protect our water ways. No industrial solar parks
  - Smoother streets, shopping, lower income housing!!
  - Keeping feilds safe keeping it peaceful and the keeping it the same housing
  - A store, a park, and getting RID of the Marijuana houses.
  - Keeping solar out. Keeping wind turbines out. Keeping taxes reasonable.
  - Sustainable energy, water source protection, preventing deforestation
  - No solar No turbines Advertise items coming before the board better.
  - Fixing side roads Keeping solar away Keeping property taxes low
  - Solar should be a priority for the individual home owner rather than a big solar park. How to balance the rural life with development. (I travel the state and country for work and notice that most rural areas get dumped on big cities and companies, including our own. Just because we're "simple people"). Work with the county to improve recycling opportunities for county/township residents

# DRAFT

- Keeping us a rural community. Keeping land owners in check about new technologies. Keeping blighted areas in check
- Stop the solar Stop the wind turbines Get honest board members who care about the people NOT lining their pockets or their family
- Roads, blight.. we need to adapt a blight ordinance.
- Training, put in a park or ORV trail, being fair to all residents not just favorites.
- No windmills.
- Lower taxes No solar No marijuana growing farms
- Solar farms, roads, taxes
- No solar No turbines Keep it rural
- Growth. New business safety
- Dog park/walking trail. There are sooooo many dogs in this community. Blight. A lot of houses are run down and have messy yards. Property taxes. My property taxes are quite high for the lack of amenities offered in my area.
- Fiscal responsibility, efficiency of services and preserving farmland.
- Getting houses cleaned up, more limestone on the roads, and maybe a walking trail
- Preserve rural character Work on bike path
- Water and sewer, encourage farmers to sell land for commercial use, subdivision
- Doing what the citizens want. Always be transparent in your dealings and decisions.
- Don't fix what isn't broken
- Preserving our township Focus on blight individually instead of punishing everyone by making everyone pay Continue to keep the roads in as nice of condition as they can be
- Roads, drainage, bridges
- Allowing people to use their land as they want More commercial along M19 A funeral chapel at the cemetery. Make it nice.
- Growth Walking path Park
- Crime, More trees, visuals
- Public safety, roads, and commercial industry.
- Ag, no solar, no wind
- Pave roads, build solar, deversivy
- Leaving farm land and all land the hell alone
- Better police presence and not changing anything else. Go tear into a different township. We all enjoy how it is
- Housing, job growth and recreational activities/facilities
- The Township should not get involved in other people's business. Everyone should be treated equal, no favoritism should be accepted or witnessed. Working towards capitalizing on green living. Wether we like it or not that is the way things are being changed over to.
- Keep big outside land developers. Meetings where everyone can participate easily, most people work long and at various hours. Keep druggie and solar out of this township...
- Get the solar permit approved. Dragging this out for years is not benefitting the township. Beware of positioning the township to be drug into a costly lawsuit. Marijuana farms and increase in crime related to them. I worry far more about the safety of my family living next to a commercial pot growing business than next to a solar panel. Also, what is the future regarding them as they are already being abandoned.
- Housing, lower taxes for new dwellings for rental complexes (not rental houses), making sure that all board members are completing their jobs and are available as they should be and as stated for citizens of the township.
- Ditch drainage,roads,
- Keeping agricultural land safe Keeping the road maintained No solar or windmills

# DRAFT

- Road maintenance, garbage/recycling pick-up, and small park or convenience store where kids can go for ice cream.
- Dispensarie Keeping farmers happy Environment
- Keeping farm ground in agriculture. Keep blight down. Keeping the roads in good shape.
- Seeking companies that need a place to build their businesses, small or large companies.
- Protection of the key element that put us on the map, farmers! Keep up our roadsides Safety in the community
- Preserving our roots, agriculture, and rural living. Change is not always a good thing.
- Maintaining an agricultural based township, keeping the scenic nature of our area,
- Nothing

# DRAFT

## APPENDIX C

ADOPTION DOCUMENTATION