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St. Joseph Charter Township 2017 Master Plan

Berrien County, Michigan Adopted July 10, 2017

Planning Commission

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Transmittal Letter

3000 Washington Avenue / P.O. Box 147 / St. Joseph, MI 49085 / Phone: (269) 429-7703 / Web: www.sict.org



To the Citizens of St. Joseph Charter Township,

The process of updating the Master Plan began with listening to you, the citizens of the Township. During the community engagement effort, several themes emerged. We heard what many believe: St. Joseph Charter Township is "a community of great beauty, service, and convenience". We are justifiably proud of our community as a great place to live.

The engagement process also revealed we believe our Township has some shortcomings. The physical features of the community, both natural and man-made, create barriers which separate the Township into sections. By addressing those barriers, the identity of the Township can be strengthened and greater social connections established, which will allow a community that is already a great place to live to become even better.

Michigan law requires every municipality that provides zoning have a comprehensive land use plan, referred to as a Master Plan. That plan should be updated every five years to address changes and needs in the municipality. When it is finalized, this document will become the new St. Joseph Charter Township Master Plan.

The plan provides justification for the Township Zoning Ordinance while addressing the needs identified through the community engagement efforts. The Implementation Matrix in the Master Plan contains steps which, when achieved, will lead to continued improvements in the outstanding quality of life already afforded our residents.

Our sincere thanks go to everyone who contributed to this effort. This document will serve as a guide to future development. The Master Plan contains reasonable and attainable goals. While some goals will require more time and effort than others, once they are achieved the Township will be on the path to more fully realizing, "a community of healthy living opportunity connected to nature".

Sincerely,

Denise Cook, Manager St. Joseph Charter Township Roger Seely, Supervisor St. Joseph Charter Township Jonathan Fisk, Chair Planning Commission St. Joseph Charter Township

Patrice Rose, Clerk St. Joseph Charter Township

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN?

A common question is, what is a Master Plan? And even more specifically, what is the role of the Township's Master Plan?

In general, the Master Plan sets a course for future development, reinvestment, and growth within St. Joseph Charter Township. It represents a shared vision about what the community is, what its residents value, and what the community desires it to become.

The Master Plan is an "umbrella document," and brings together plans and studies from other agencies, highlights goals and objectives based on the analysis of strengths and weaknesses, presents a coordinated long-range approach, and provides the framework and basis for sound decision making.

Overall, the St. Joseph Charter Township Master Plan intends to establish clear direction and expectations for the Township and meet the requirements established by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2008.

Purposes of the Master Plan

This Plan serves many functions and can be used in a variety of ways, but its usefulness is determined by the willingness of the Township and others to actively support and implement its vision and goals.

- The Master Plan is a general statement of the Township's vision, goals, and policies.
 It provides a comprehensive view of the community's desires for the future.
- The Plan aids in daily land use decision making. The vision and goals outlined in the Plan are intended to guide the Planning Commission and the Township Board in their deliberations on zoning, capital improvements, and other related matters.

- This Master Plan establishes the basis for the zoning ordinance, parks and recreation, capital improvements, land use policies, and other implementation tools.
- The Plan provides continuity across time, and allows successive leadership a common framework for addressing land-use issues.
 In turn, the community and others will have advance knowledge of its intentions.
- The Master Plan provides a framework to coordinate public improvements and private developments by creating development patterns that are orderly, rational, and provide the greatest benefit for all while avoiding conflicts between land uses.

Right: St. Joseph Charter Township Hall located at 3000 Washington Avenue



Relationship to Zoning

The Master Plan is the long range planning document upon which planning and zoning decisions are based, including creating and amending the Township Zoning Ordinance. Although the Master Plan is a policy document and does not have the force of law, it is the basis of the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map.

The Master Plan is the document that lays out the Township's future, while the Zoning Ordinance provides the day-to-day regulations for land use. Therefore, the land use designations on the Future Land Use Map may not directly correlate with the zoning districts or existing uses. However, the Master Plan reflects the community's long range desires for land development, so as land uses and market demands change, it is expected future re-zonings will be made to conform to the Master Plan.

The areas delineated on the Future Land Use Map are called "land use designations" and are different from zoning districts on the Zoning Map. It is important to note their differences: the land use designation is the desired long range land use, whereas the zoning district dictates what can happen now. Chapter 4 includes descriptions of the proposed future land uses and how they correlate with current zoning districts. This can be used to determine how the Zoning Ordinance can be amended to implement the recommendations of this Master Plan.

Keeping the Plan Current

Fulfilling the vision outlined in the Plan will not occur overnight. The Master Plan provides a sense of direction for the present and is a guide for the future. Understanding this, the Plan should not be rigidly administered; changing conditions that can affect its original intentions should be acknowledged and addressed.

A plan that is not referenced on a continual basis, or one that is outdated, can weaken decisions. Over time, goals may be achieved and new ones needed, or individual zoning decisions may change the direction of development in a certain part of the Township. Where decisions lead to land use approvals contrary to the Plan, it should be amended to reflect these changes.

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act requires the Planning Commission to prepare an annual report to the Township Board concerning its operations and the status of planning activities. As a part of this report, a meeting should be held to review the Master Plan ensuring changes are taken into consideration and amendments are made to keep it current and consistent with Township philosophies. Furthermore, the Planning Commission should periodically solicit public opinion about the Master Plan using surveys, public meetings, or other means to engage the community.

The Planning Act also requires review of the Master Plan at least every five years to determine whether amendments are needed, or if the process for a new Master Plan should be started. An annual review will not only fulfill this requirement but also ensure the Master Plan remains a relevant and useful document.

PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS

Community Planning History

St. Joseph Charter Township has engaged in land use planning and policymaking for over 40 years. The first Comprehensive Plan was completed in cooperation with the Village of Shoreham in 1973. It was revised and updated in 1982, 1993, and 2007. The Comprehensive Plan was updated as changes occurred in the demographics, economy, and as the Township entered different phases of growth and evolution. Historically, the Township has sought to preserve its rural and residential character. Previous master plan policies focused on promoting open space, single family residences, expanding thoroughfare capacity, and insulating residential land uses from conflicting commercial developments.

Today, the community is experiencing pressure from social and economic changes including limited population growth, an aging population, and rising costs to provide existing or new services. Few developable parcels remain with many constrained by their size, shape, and location. Changing preferences include the demand from both young and old for more compact, connected, and amenity-focused environments. The desire for these types of environments are driving the relocation of people, jobs, and ultimately prosperity.

Local and Regional Plans

In addition to the previous Comprehensive Plan, this planning effort reviewed and builds upon a number of other documents such as:

Berrien County Master Plan (2015)

This plan provides overall guidance in managing the growth, preservation, and development of the County, much of which is carried out by local governments.

St. Joseph Charter Township Parks and Recreation Plan (2014)

This plan provides a guide for future park and recreation planning in the Township through 2018. It includes an inventory of all recreational assets along with goals, objectives, and actions for the future.

Southwest Michigan Non-Motorized Transportation Plan (2011)

This plan provides a non-motorized transportation vision for southwest Michigan advocating collobaration, coordinated funding, and connectivity between communities.

Others Plans Include:

- What Moves You, TwinCATS? 2013-2040
 Long Range Transportation Plan
- Development Program for Hollywood Road: St. Joseph Charter & Royalton Townships (2008)
- Moving Forward: A Plan for Public Transit in Berrien County (2014)
- Low Impact Development Manual for Michigan
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (2013)

- City of St. Joseph Master Plan (2015)
- City of Benton Harbor Master Plan (2011)
- Village of Shoreham Master Plan (2009)

CREATING THE MASTER PLAN

A collaborative effort, the Master Plan process began in 2014 and was developed with the input and support of many citizens as well as members of the Township Board, Planning Commission, staff, and advisors. The planning process included the following general steps:







Phase 1 – Project Start-Up and Community Engagement

- Initiate Master Planning process and develop a scheduled work plan
- Establish a steering committee with a mix of Township staff, residents, and consultants
- Discuss issues, opportunities, trends, and community values via community workshop and various steering committee meetings

Phase 2 - Study and Analysis

- · Conduct data gathering and research
- Continue to meet with the steering committee members to refine the community's vision and goals
- Gather input and feedback from the community via publicized information gathering booths as well as a graphic preference survey
- Present the culminating St. Joseph Charter Township Community Vision document and make it available on the Township website

Phase 3 – Master Plan Documentation and Adoption

- Work with the Planning Commission and Township Board to refine goals, objectives, data gathering, and implementation strategies
- Prepare and distribute a draft of the Plan
- Hold a Public Hearing, leading to formal adoption and endorsement of the Master Plan

Common Themes

Throughout the planning process several overriding themes emerged:

- 1. Predominantly a bedroom community, the Township is an established, stable, and attractive place to live. The neighborhood character will be preserved and enhanced; and the natural environment protected and better integrated into the community.
- 2. Township land is nearly 100% occupied. Future growth will be within infill and redevelopment opportunities and in certain areas with increased density where appropriate.
- 3. Projected population within the Township and County predict minimal growth.

 An aging population will desire to age in place with appropriate housing options, convenient access to goods, services, and entertainment. Places with a mix of uses that are distinctive and contribute to the community's overall vitality are preferred.
- 4. A wider range of housing options, both existing and new construction, will be encouraged. Places will be better connected; streets will create an attractive public realm, and more opportunities will be created to walk and bike.
- 5. Future population growth is needed for sustainability. New household growth will bring additional consumer spending and improve economic sustainability for local government services and private business.

6. Cooperation with other communities, agencies, and regional job growth will aid in future economic sustainability. Job growth within easy commuting distances will provide opportunities for increased household incomes for existing and future residents.

Plan Organization

This Plan is organized by subject area. Each chapter, or "plan element", contains relevant data (gathered from the census, other agencies, plans and documents), public input results, discussion of future trends, analysis, and recommendations.

The Township's vision and guiding statement are included along with goals, objectives, and actions to achieve and support the Future Land Use Plan. An implementation matrix provides project priority, timing, potential funding sources, and entities capable or responsible for implementation.

With this understanding, Township officials seek the help and cooperation of its citizens and those interested in participating in realizing the vision set forth in this Plan.

CHAPTER 2. COMMUNITY PROFILE

SETTING AND HISTORY

St. Joseph Charter Township is a community of approximately 10,000 people located on the east shore of Lake Michigan, almost directly across the lake, some sixty miles from Chicago. Situated in the northwest portion of Berrien County, it enjoys a high level of regional and national access due to the area's airport, rail, and highway network.

Besides Lake Michigan, its most significant natural features include the St. Joseph River and Hickory Creek which trisect the Township. The Township is neighbored to the north by the Cities of St. Joseph and Benton Harbor, to the east by Benton Township, to the southeast by Royalton Township, and to the south by Lincoln Township.

The area serves as a hub for the rural districts and smaller adjacent communities. Nearby cities include Michigan City, Indiana; South Bend, Indiana; Kalamazoo, Michigan; and Holland, Michigan.

Right: Regional Setting and Location Map

Settlement and Early Days

In 1675, Jacques Marquette, the first pioneer to set foot in Berrien County discovered the St. Joseph River during his expeditions to map the northern Mississippi River. As settlers located further inland, the river became their link to the outside world. The strategic importance of Southwestern Michigan to the early pioneers is emphasized by the struggle for its control. The old Fort St. Joseph at Niles was owned at various times by France, Spain, and England before it finally became a territory after the Revolutionary War.

The Township's first permanent settler arrived in 1780 but it was another 50 years before true settlement began and the Township incorporated in 1832. In 1836, opening of the Territorial Road and improvements to the harbor increased travel between Detroit and Chicago. Beginning in 1885, the area began to develop its industrial potential which included primarily Foundry, Machinery, and Food Processing industries.



Mid-Century Growth

Organized in 1832, land in the Township was predominantly agricultural until the middle to late 20th century brought more growth as the automobile spurred construction of suburban and highway commercial development. Fair Plain, located in the northeast portion of the Township, followed a more "traditional" pattern of development with a gridded street network and identifiable center at the intersections of Napier and Colfax Avenues. Across the St. Joseph River, several natural and man-made corridors resulted in a more fragmented street network and predominantly residential land use. Commercial and industrial uses were located and spread out along Niles Avenue, Hilltop Road, and Lakeshore Drive (currently within the Village of Shoreham).

Recent History

Recent decades have continued to bring new development to the Township with many businesses and services locating closer to highways and the interstate. And while Township land is nearly built out there are some remaining developable areas. A number of industries are located in its Palladium Drive Business Park, and it seeks to attract more to increase the community's tax base. Property is still available for residential growth but it is anticipated that redevelopment in certain areas aimed at providing a growing need for a variety of housing types will occur. Meanwhile, maintaining the Township's reputation as a quality, upper-class bedroom community is important.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS Land Use

St. Joseph Charter Township has an area of nearly 7 square miles with a mix of land use and development types. Existing land use within the Township includes residential, commercial, industrial, recreation and open space, waterfront, community facilities (public/ semi-public), and some agricultural.

The community enjoys several parks and natural spaces that provide residents with access to local amenities and a quiet, attractive quality of life. The existing land use pattern and future land use plan are to a great extent defined by major transportation and natural corridors. The St. Joseph River bisects the community into two halves - each predominantly residential but with the western half host to much of the Township's industry and businesses. Interstate 94, Hickory Creek, and the railroad further separate areas in the western half of the Township.

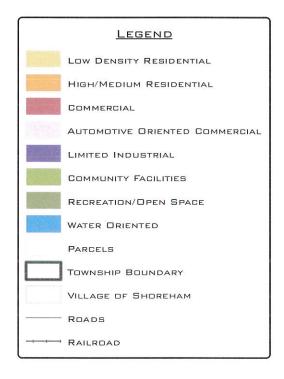
Natural Environment

The area owes its existence, evolution, and present physical structure to the geological forces which shaped Michigan during the Ice Age. As the glaciers advanced and retreated, they left rolling topography and deposited an assortment of soils. Melting ice drenched the land with water which eroded the hills, filled depressions with silt, and cut new ravines as it ran off. The St. Joseph River became the main draining channel in the area emptying into Lake Michigan and establishing the site of the community.

Most of Berrien County is in the St. Joseph River drainage basin. One of the larger drainage basins in Michigan, major tributaries to the St. Joseph River include Coldwater River, Prairie River, Pigeon River, Little Elkhart River, Elkhart River, Dowagiac River, and the Paw Paw River.

The Township is near the 42nd parallel north, which is the circle of latitude 42 degrees north of the equatorial plane. At this latitude, the sun is visible for 15 hours, 15 minutes during the summer solstice and 9 hours, 7 minutes during the winter solstice. The climate of the area is influenced by the prevailing winds from the west which are cooled in summer and warmed in winter as they pass over Lake Michigan. The mean annual temperature for the county is fifty (50) degrees and the mean annual rainfall is thirty-nine (39) inches. This moderate climate contributes to its agricultural diversity and is ideal for fruit cultivation. It is also well known for attracting visitors to the extent that it has been a tourism destination since the late 1800s.

The primary soil types identified in the Township can be found on the Soils Map (page 43). Soils within the Township are predominantly well-drained with moderately well-drained soils in the northwest and southwest corners. The poorly drained soils are mostly located in the flood plain areas of various creeks and the St. Joseph River. These areas are illustrated in the Flood Potential Map located in this chapter (page 11) and the Wetlands Map (page 44).

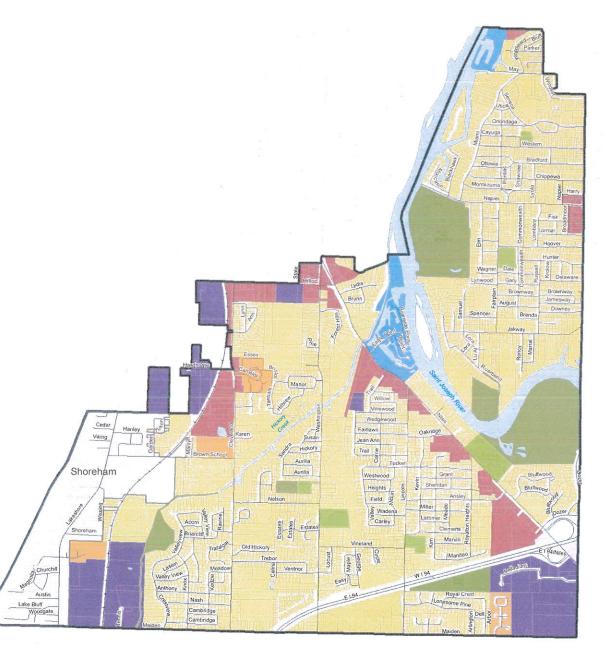


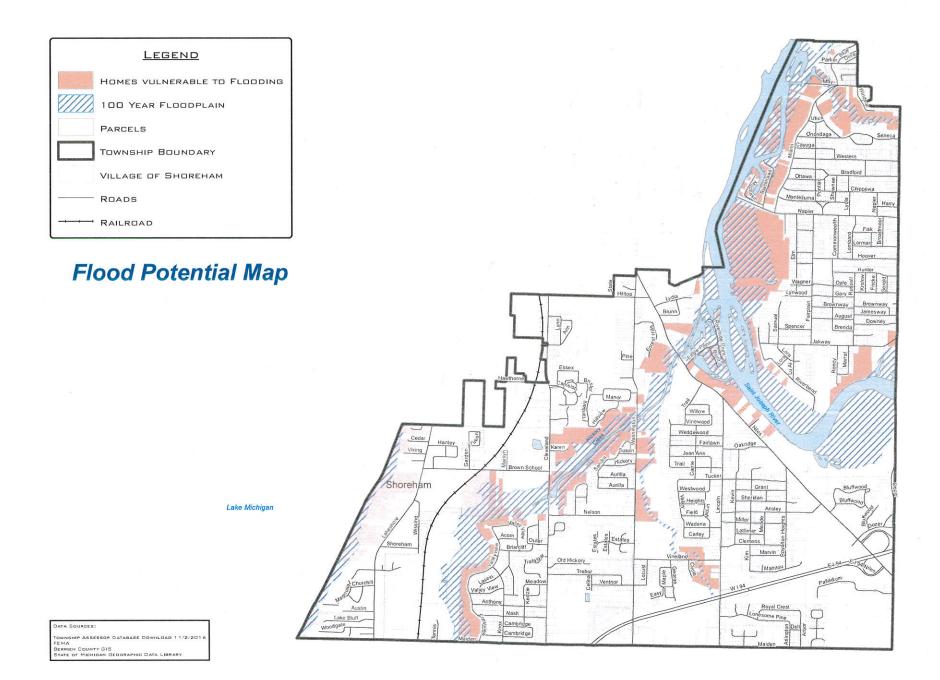
Existing Land Use Map

Lake Michigan

NOTE: REFER TO THE VILLAGE OF SHOREHAM EXISTING LAND USE MAP LOCATED IN THE APPENDIX.

DATA SOURCES: 5T, JOSEPH CHARTER TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN BERRIEN COUNTY GIS STATE OF MICHIGAN GEOGRAPHIC DATA LIBRARY





TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

A balanced, efficient, and well-connected transportation system provides access to goods, services, and community resources, and supports land use development through a variety of modes. The primary mode of transportation within the Township is the automobile but residents, visitors, and businesses are also served by a network of developing bicycle and pedestrian facilities, waterways, air, rail, and bus service.

Transportation Planning and TwinCATS

A metropolitan planning organization (MPO) is a transportation policy-making organization made up of representatives from local government and transportation authorities. The Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC) is the designated MPO for the Benton Harbor/ St. Joseph urbanized area, also known as the Twin Cities Area Transportation Study (TwinCATS). TwinCATS develops and maintains the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for the area and develops a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) based on the goals of the LRTP. What Moves You, TwinCATS, 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan, approved in 2013, provides inventories of existing transportation systems, goals for improvement of these systems, and specific project recommendations. For more information about transportation-related issues, please refer to the aforementioned TwinCATS 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan.

Street and Highway Network

Road Classification

Roads within Michigan and across the country are categorized by the National Function Classification (NFC) System. The functional classification determines the type of traffic a street will carry and the level of access it requires to serve adjacent land uses. This hierarchy is related to the number of vehicles (traffic volume) a street is designed to accommodate. The NFC system classifies roads into the following categories:

Principal Arterials

These roads generally carry long distance, through-travel trips. They also provide access to important traffic generators, such as major airports or regional shopping centers. Examples include interstates, freeways, state routes between and within large cities. An example within the Township is Interstate 94.

Minor Arterials

These roads are similar in function to principal arterials, but shorter in length and serve lesser traffic generators. Minor arterials focus on regional connectivity and place more emphasis on land access. Examples within the Township include M-63/ Niles Road and Red Arrow Highway/ Lakeshore Drive (Business Loop 94).

Collectors

These roads provide more access to property than arterials and funnel traffic from residential and rural areas to arterial roads. Collectors in the Township include, among others, Napier Avenue, Colfax Avenue, Hilltop Road, and Cleveland Avenue.

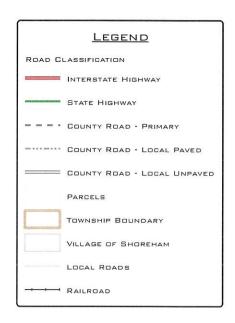
Local

These roads provide access to property and homes and are not designed to accommodate high volumes of traffic. Examples include residential streets and lightly-traveled county roads. Local streets in the Township include, among others, Maiden Lane, Fair PlainAvenue, and Vineland Road.

Among the roads in St. Joseph Charter Township, state routes such as Interstate 94 and M-63 are under the jurisdiction of the Michigan Department of Transportation. Primary and local roads are maintained by the Berrien County Road Commission with the State Motor Vehicle Highway Fund matched by Township funds.

Access Management

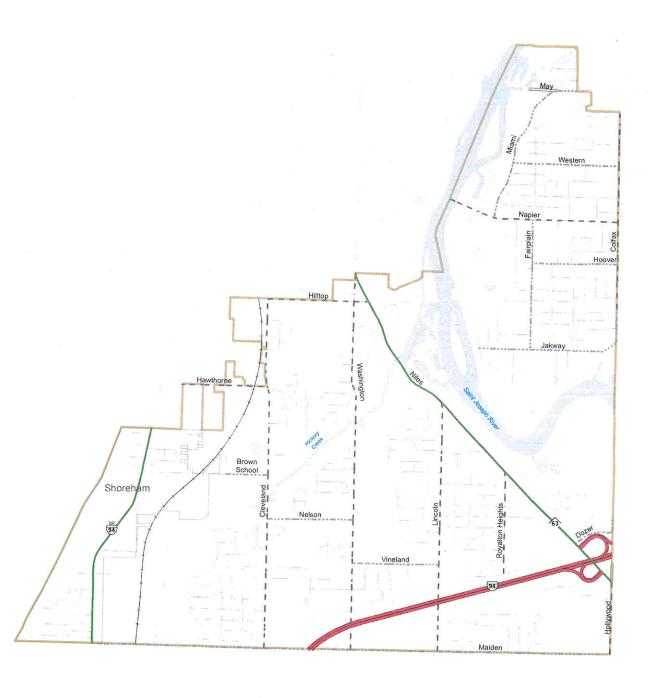
An effective way to improve the character and function of thoroughfares is through Access Management. Many of the existing driveways and parking areas serving commercial and office developments are not interconnected and serve only one parcel. By consolidating driveways and connecting destinations with shared access, the Township could improve safety, traffic flow, and aesthetics. The greatest benefit would come from implementing access management along major routes such as Niles Road, near major intersections, and as new construction or redevelopment site plans are reviewed.



Thoroughfare Classification Map

Lake Michigan

DATA SOURCES: BERRIEN COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION BERRIEN COUNTY GIS STATE OF MICHIGAN GEOGRAPHIC DATA LIBRARY



Pavement Conditions

Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating, or PASER, is a visual test of the surface condition of the road focused on pavement conditions prepared each year by the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission, Berrien County Representatives, and the Michigan Department of Transportation. PASER uses 10 separate ratings to evaluate the distress of pavement and groups the 10 ratings into three categories based upon the type of work that is required for each rating: Routine Maintenance (Good), Capital Preventative Maintenance (Fair), and Structural Improvement (Poor). The Transportation Asset Management Council (TAMC) utilizes the most current data available as of 2016. Where data was not available, the previous year's data was used. As such, some improvements have been made and accuracy of the map is not guaranteed.

Other Transportation Types

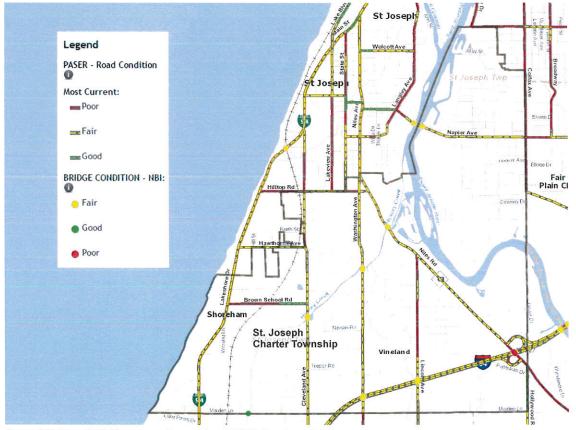
Rail freight service, provided by CSX, runs north and south through the Township with Amtrak offering passenger service in the Cities of St. Joseph, New Buffalo, and Niles. The nearest commercial airports are located in South Bend, Indiana and Kalamazoo, Michigan with smaller general aviation airports in Benton Harbor, Watervliet, Berrien Springs, and Niles, Michigan. The Twin Cities area is also served by both commercial and recreational harbor facilities.

Bus service is available through four separate public transit agencies within the County. Several transit focused studies have called for improved coordination and service. The Township should support these efforts and others as public transportation becomes increasingly important.

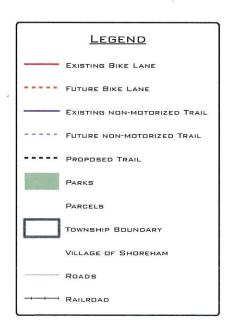
Non-Motorized Infrastructure

The Township is committed to providing a variety of non-motorized transportation options to residents and visitors; and is well positioned to benefit from and support regional efforts to enhance pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Regional initiatives aimed at expanding and connecting non-motorized pathways include efforts by The Strategic Leadership Council Taxpayer Group, SWMPC, TwinCATS, and MDOT.

The Non-Motorized Infrastructure Map, shown right, includes existing and proposed routes within the Township. Locations for potential trail head and pedestrian crossings are illustrated to ensure improvements are coordinated. Within the Township, better pedestrian and bicycle facilities for recreation are very desirable and should be pursued in future planning efforts.



Source: Michigan TAMC, www.mcgi.state.mi.us/MITRP/Data/paserMap.aspx



Non-Motorized Infrastructure Map

PRIORITY PEDESTRIAN CROSSING



PRIORITY TRAIL HEAD



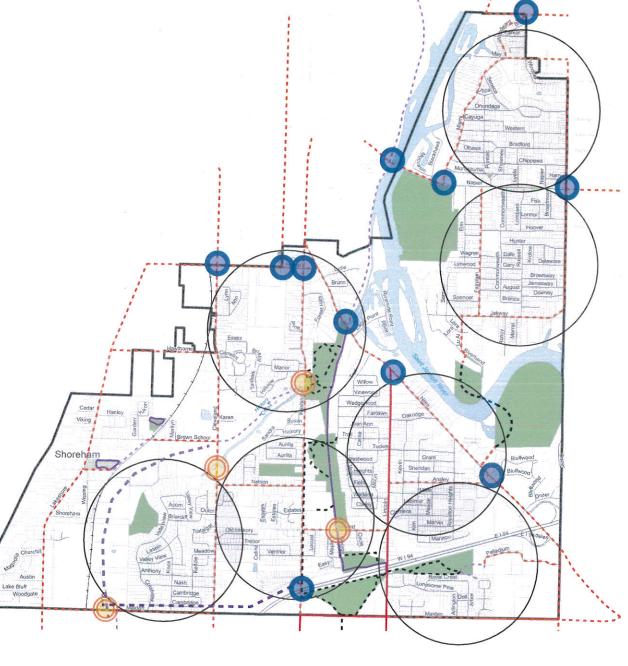
~1 MILE DISTANCE (20 MINUTE WALK)

Lake Michigan

NOTE: MAP INCLUDES INFORMATION AND POTENTIAL PROJECTS PROPOSED BY ST. JOSEPH CHARTER TOWNSHIP.

DATA SOURCES:

ST. JOBEPH CHARTER TOWNSHIP NATURE TRAIL MAP SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN PLANNING COMMISSOON BERRIEN COUNTY GIS STATE OF MICHIGAN GEOGRAPHIC DATA LIBRARY



COMMUNITY FACILITIES

St. Joseph Charter Township offers a wide variety of services and facilities to its residents and businesses. Additionally, community facilities provided by entities other than the Township, such as schools, utilities, and healthcare facilities, play an important role in the lives of citizens. The quality, availability, and cost of these services impact growth and redevelopment in the Township as well as quality of life. A map showing the locations of community services and critical facilities in the Township can be found in this chapter.

Township Hall

All Township governmental and business functions take place at the six thousand (6,000) square foot facility located on approximately ten (10) acres at 3000 Washington Avenue. This building includes a meeting room complex, presently meets all requirements, and is anticipated to do so for the foreseeable future.

Schools

The educational facilities and school systems which serve the residents are vital factors in the growth and development of the Township. The community is served by the St. Joseph Public Schools, Benton Harbor Area Schools, Berrien County Intermediate School District, Lakeshore Public Schools, and various Parochial Schools.

Recreational Facilities

In January, 2014, the St. Joseph Charter Township Parks and Recreation Committee updated the Park and Recreation Master Plan for the Township. An inventory of these existing facilities can be found within the document available at the Township Hall; their locations are illustrated on the Community Facilities Map.

Fire Protection

The Township has two fire stations with one located on each side of the river. Built in 1989, Fire Station No. 1 was constructed on the premises of the Township Hall. In 2009, Fire Station No. 2 was constructed in Fair Plain near the Napier and Colfax Avenue intersection. At the time this document was prepared, the St. Joseph Charter Township Fire Department consists of twenty (20) volunteer firemen, including two chiefs. The high quality of their training, equipment, a municipal water supply, and four (4) fire trucks, allows the Township to maintain a good fire insurance rating.

Police Protection

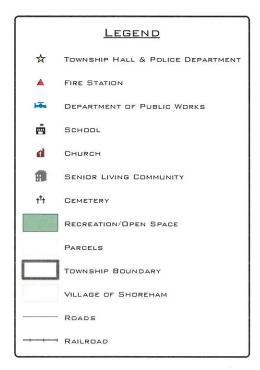
The Township Police Department is located on the premises of the Township Hall. At the time this document was prepared, it was staffed by eleven (11) full-time officers, including the chief, three (3) part-time officers, with five (5) squad cars being used on a regular basis. These officers and support staff provide around the clock service and protection for the Township.

Public Works Department

The Township's public works department is located at Eaton Park. This department's primary areas of responsibility consist of sewer maintenance, parks maintenance and construction, and upkeep on the Township's buildings and grounds. Road maintenance is provided by the Berrien County Road Commission, except for the state highways, which are maintained by the State Highway Commission.

Solid Waste

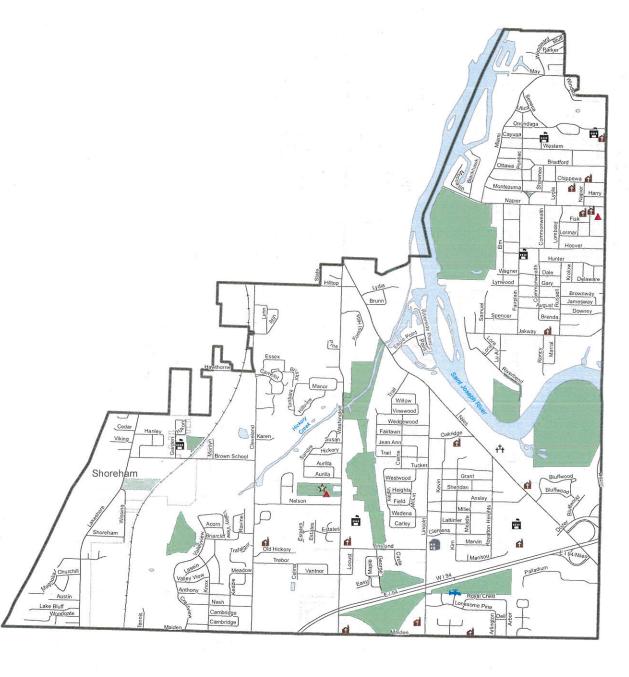
Curb side refuse service is provided for residences by the Township through a contractual arrangement with a private hauler. Commercial and industrial customers have to contract individually for waste collection. St. Joseph Charter Township is a member of the Northwest Berrien County Sanitary Authority.



Community Facilities Map

Lake Michigan

DATA SOURCES:
BERRIEN COUNTY GIS
STATE OF MICHIGAN GEOGRAPHIC DATA LIBRARY
SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN PLANNING COMMISSION
TOWNSHIP ASSESSED CATABASE COMMICOD 11/2/2016



Sanitary Sewers

The Township collection system began service in 1975 and consists of approximately fifty-two (52) miles of 8"-12" internal diameter clay, steel, or PVC pipe and twelve (12) lift stations. The lift stations are all factory-built, steel drywell, concrete well-type with capacities ranging from 100 GPM to 1000 GPM. Maintenance on the system is provided by the Township. The collection system is owned by the Township.

In 2012, the Hickory Creek Interceptor Sewer repair project lined approximately six (6) miles of deteriorating corrugated metal sewer. The interceptor includes sixteen (16) metering stations and was completed in conjunction with Royalton and Lincoln Townships. The Township is one of three member communities of the Southwest Michigan Regional Sanitary Sewer and Water Authority, which owns, and manages the Interceptor and Lift Station that pumps to the Treatment Plant.

The service area includes the entire Township, with the area north and east of the St. Joseph River designated as District 1, and the area south and west of the river designated as District 2. All of this wastewater is treated and disposed of by the Benton Harbor/ St. Joseph Joint Sewage Treatment Plant.

The Benton Harbor/ St. Joseph Joint Sewage Treatment Plant is owned by the two cities, with St. Joseph Charter Township and other area municipalities contracted for treatment services. The plant is an activated sludge type with separate anaerobic sludge digestion, chemical treatment for phosphorous removal, and sludge dewatering by vacuum filtration.

Municipal Water

Municipal water service for the Township is contracted from the City of St. Joseph for District 1 and 2. The majority of the distribution system was constructed in 1971 and is the property of the Township, with operation, maintenance and water treatment/ supply provided by the City of St. Joseph.

Municipal water is available throughout the entire Township, with adequate pressure being supplied by pumping stations and two elevated storage tanks. It is anticipated that some maintenance to the distribution system will be necessary given its age.

The distribution system is owned by the Township and the pumping stations/elevated tanks owned by the Authority.

Stormwater Infrastructure

Stormwater infrastructure within Michigan Townships is not commonly owned or operated by the Township but rather under the jurisdiction of the County Drain Commissioner, County Road Commission, or private entity with regulatory oversight at the State or Federal level. The Township's need or desire to alter this common arrangement will depend on its growth strategies or desire to accommodate development as it would likely result in assuming responsibility for the stormwater infrastructure. Instead, the Township should continue to actively dialogue and engage within the existing framework as much as possible to realize its goals and objectives.

Electrical and Natural Gas Services

Indiana-Michigan Power provides electricity services to the Township and its residents. With Cook Nuclear Plant in Lake Charter Township, electrical energy continues to be in good supply in the foreseeable future. Michigan Gas Utilities provides natural gas services virtually throughout the Township and supply is considered adequate to meet demands.

SAW Grant

Commonly known as the SAW grant, the Stormwater, Asset Management, Wastewater Grant is a program for the Township to inventory and assess their sanitary and stormwater sewer systems. Asset management plans will evaluate the system, analyze funding and costs and establish a framework for the Township to regularly maintain and repair infrastructure. A Geographic Information System (GIS) will be established, using the inventory and assessment data, for the Township. This will provide a tool to sustain, reference, and manage utility information in the future.

The State grant was awarded in conjunction with the Southwest Michigan Regional Sanitary Sewer & Water Authority. Members include St. Joseph Charter Township, Lincoln Charter Township, and Royalton Township.

Awarded in fiscal year 2017, it is to be completed within three years. Next steps include a full inventory of the sanitary sewer assets and assessment of those assets including manhole structures, sewer pipes, and lift stations.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The following section describes the population and socioeconomic statistics, housing, and travel trends of St. Joseph Charter Township.

Population

Based on data published by the U.S. Census Bureau, there were 10,028 people living in the Township in 2010; a decrease of 14 people from the population recording in 2000. **Table 1** presents the population trends from 1970 to 2010, and includes projections through 2050 for St. Joseph Charter Township, Berrien County, and the State of Michigan.

Table 1 - Population Trends and Projections									
	St. Joseph Charter Township	Berrien County	State of Michigan						
1970	9,613	164,191	8,881,826						
1980	9,961	171,276	9,262,078						
1990	9,613	161,415	9,295,297						
2000	10,042	162,453	9,938,444						
2010	10,028	156,813	9,883,640						
2020	10,125	158,489	10,695,993						
2030	10,216	158,922	10,694,172						
2040	10,307	160,184	11,077,809						
2050	10,398	161,238	11,395,423						

Berrien County's population declined sharply by almost 10,000 people between 1980 and 1990. While the population rose slightly in the 1990's, the number of people dipped again by 2010. A very slight increase is projected moving forward. According to the 2015 Berrien County Master Plan, when population trends are analyzed at the municipal level, the data shows population swings throughout the county with hot spots of population explosions, areas of slight increases, and others in decline. Most significantly, the village and urban landscapes in the northern portion

of the county decreased in population while the surrounding rural areas increased, indicating a sprawling pattern of population growth. Similarly, the City of St. Joseph Master Plan, completed in 2015, indicated a declining population projection for the urbanized area which includes St. Joseph Charter Township and the cities of St. Joseph and Benton Harbor.

Although there is no way to predict the population growth with certainty, it is important to consider these forecasts while developing public policy and land use regulations. Because St. Joseph Charter Township is nearly built-out, its best hope is a slight increase in population if current land use and development patterns continue. Much will depend on other factors such as the economy, enhancements that build on the community's character and its assets, and the demand for infill and redevelopment.

Age Distribution

The age distribution of a community can be an important factor in identifying the social and economic trends as well as publics service needs. In St. Joseph Charter Township, the median age was 46.2 in 2010; an increase in 4.1 years from the recording in 2000. As shown in **Table 2**, the Township's median age is higher than both the State of Michigan and Berrien County.

Table 2 - Median Age										
	St. Joseph Charter Township	Berrien County	State of Michigan							
Median Age - 2000	42.1	37.4	35.5							
Median Age - 2010	46.2	41	38.9							
Change in Median Age	4.1	3.6	3.4							

While St. Joseph Charter Township is aging, between 2000 and 2010 the group with the highest growth rate was 85 years and older, followed closely by those 55-59 and 60-64 respectively. **Table 3** describes the change in the percentage of the total population for each age group during that period.

	Table 3 - Age Distribution								
Age Range (Years)	2000	2010	Percent Change 2000-2010						
0-4	534	510	-0.1%						
5-9	638	540	-4.5%						
10-14	804	691	-15.4%						
15-19	618	639	3.4%						
20-24	279	358	28.3%						
25-34	983	939	-4.5%						
35-44	1,645	1,158	-29.6%						
45-54	1,601	1,681	5.0%						
55-59	588	819	39.3%						
60-64	518	699	34.9%						
65-74	953	987	3.6%						
75-84	705	697	-1.1%						
85+	176	310	76.1%						

Source: US Census Bureau 2000, 2010

In addition to the Township, population trends for Berrien County and the US indicate an increasing senior population. Access to appropriate housing, goods and services, particularly health care, and transportation will be a growing concern.

Another concern facing the Township is the loss of residents aged 20-44. This age group is typically comprised of young, educated professionals, and working families with children that support local districts. While all age groups are important to a community, the 20-44 age group can be seen as an indicator for vitality and overall health. Its loss is significant because it represents the prime years for family formation, which, in concert may translate into a decline of school-aged children.

Table 4 - Household Characteristics									
	2000	2010	Percent Change 2000-2010						
Family households	2,949	2,913	-1.2%						
Households with individuals under 18	1,284	1,162	-9.5%						
Households with individuals over 65	1,314	1,410	7.3%						
Households with householder living alone	1,013	1,050	3.7%						
Total number of households	4,094	4,140	1.1%						
Average Household Size	2.45	2.42	-1.2%						

Source: US Census Bureau 2000, 2010

Table 5 - Economic and Education Characteristics									
	St. Joseph Charter Township	Berrien County	State of Michigan						
Median Household Income (In Dollars)	61,082	44,701	49,087						
Per Capita Income (In Dollars)	34,427	24,304	26,143						
% of Families in Poverty	4.9%	17.7%	15.8%						
% with High School diploma or higher	95.6%	88.3%	89.3%						
% with Bachelor's degree or higher	37.3%	24.8%	26.4%						

Source: American Community Survey, 2010-2015

Household Characteristics

Between 2000 and 2010, the total number of households in St. Joseph Charter Township increased by about 1% while the average household size decreased (**Table 4**). This is consistent with trends as more people are remaining single and families tend to have fewer children.

The median household income in St. Joseph Charter Township is more than that of the State and Berrien County (**Table 5**). Educational attainment is greater in the Township while the percentage of the population that falls below the poverty level is lower when compared to the County and State.

Housing in the Township is generally well maintained and the predominant housing type is detached single-family structures. As shown in **Table 6**, 3,642 units, or 88%, are owner-occupied housing with only 498, or 12%, being renter-occupied.

The median value of an owner-occupied home according to the 2010-2015 American Community Survey estimates was \$151,300. This is higher when compared to the median values for the County and State, which are \$131,600 and \$122,400 respectively.

Approximately two thirds of the housing was built prior to 1969 (**Table 7**). Further related information can be found on the Residential Property Age Map (**Page 46**) and Residential Property Value Map (**Page 47**)

Table	e 6 - Hou	sing U	nit Sumn	nary			
	St. Jo Cha Town	rter	Berrien	County	State of Michigan		
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
Total Housing Units	4,434		76,922		4,532,233		
Occupied Housing Units	4,140	93.4%	63,054	82.0%	3,872,508	85.4%	
Owner-Occupied	3,642	88.0%	45,063	71.5%	2,793,342	72.1%	
Renter-Occupied	498	12.0%	17,991 28.5%		1,079,166	27.9%	
Vacant Housing Units	294	6.6%	13,868	18.0%	659,725	14.6%	
For Rent	39	13.3%	2,334	16.8%	141,687	21.5%	
Rented, Not Occupied	5	1.7%	111	0.8%	6,684	1.0%	
For Sale Only	69	23.5%	1,379	9.9%	77,080	11.7%	
Sold, Not Occupied	11	3.7%	282	2.0%	17,978	2.7%	
For Seasonal Use	96	32.7%	7,204	51.9%	263,071	39.9%	
All Other Vacant	74	25.2%	2,558	18.4%	153,225	23.2%	

	Tubic 7	Age of	Housing	, otoon			
	St. Jo Chai Town	rter	Berrien (County	State of Michigan		
Year Built	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
1939 or earlier	395	8.8%	13,752	17.9%	692,147	15.3	
1940 to 1949	209	4.7%	6,591	8.6%	367,451	8.1%	
1950 to 1959	1,149	25.7%	12,899	16.8%	698,088	15.4%	
1960 to1969	1,039	23.2%	11,173	14.5%	552,261	12.2%	
1970 to 1979	647	15.5%	10,204	13.3%	701,671	15.5%	
1980 to 1989	279	6.2%	6,724	8.8%	450,502	9.9%	
1990 to 1999	458	10.2%	7,922	10.3%	584,962	12.9%	
2000 to 2009	279	6.2%	7,259	9.5%	466,547	10.3%	
2010 or later	18	0.4%	286	0.4%	19,090	0.4%	

Employment

A key driver affecting demographics is employment. People follow jobs. The Township like most parts of the country felt the economic impact of the Great Recession.

An indicator of that impact is shown by considering data provided by the U.S. Census Bureau through the County Business Patterns report. The report shows the number of companies and employees in total and by employment sector.

The following table provides information for three years. Shown are 2003 from the Pre-Recession period; 2010 at the generally agreed "bottom" of the Great Recession; and, 2014 during the Recovery period and the latest year for which data are available.

The columns to the right illustrate the changes in employment that occurred between 2003 and 2010 as the economy slid into the Recession. The changes between 2010 and 2014 as the economy recovered and the latest year are shown. Also, the changes between 2003 and 2014 are listed to show the overall shift in the economy.

While overall Berrien County had 475 fewer employers and 5,789 less employees in 2014 than in 2003 the recovery has been significant. Despite a continued loss of companies between 2010 and 2014, there were 3,849 more persons employed during that period.

Looking at the individual employment sectors shows that not unlike most of the country, many of the jobs that were lost were in the manufacturing sector. Over eighty percent of the jobs lost were in that sector. However, manufacturing jobs account for one-third of all jobs restored since 2010. Three other employment sectors; administrative, educational services, and health care combine to restore another one-third of the jobs.

The recovery, while not complete, does show a positive trend in creating jobs lost during the recession in Berrien County.

Conclusion

The demographics of St. Joseph Charter Township follow the cyclical pattern of all communities. As a community develops younger people and their families move in to take advantage of housing and employment opportunities. Eventually, growth slows and the population ages. Older people then begin to "downsize" and relocate to alternative housing and younger people move into the homes being sold by empty nesters and seniors and the cycle begins again.

There is nothing in the demographics to suggest that the cyclical pattern will change. The Township is currently in a "transition" period. After growing during the post-World War II period the population "peaked" in 1980 and declined until 2010. The several decades will see modest growth as younger residents move in.

Overall, during the coming years the Township will experience the following:

- Very modest increase in population
- More households but with slightly fewer persons per household reflecting a nation-wide trend
- A population that is wealthier than average with fewer families in poverty
- A better educated population with a greater percentage having completed a Bachelor's degree or higher

These trends will be driven by a continued growth of employment opportunities in the region and the achievement of the goals outlined in the Master Plan. As those goals are reached the overall quality of life in the Township will be maintained and improved resulting in a community that continues to be a great place to live.

Table 8 - Berrien County Business Patterns	Pre-Recession		Recession		Recovery		Change					
	2003	2003	2010	2010	2014	2014	2003 to 2010	2003 to 2010	2010 to 2014	2010 to 2014	2003 to 2014	2003 to 2014
Employment Sectors	Companies	Employees	Companies	Employees	Companies	Employees	Companies	Employees	Companies	Employees	Companies	Employees
Total for all sectors	4,018	59,155	3,675	49,517	3,543	53,366	-343	-9,638	-132	3,849	-475	-5,789
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	7		2		3		-5	***************************************	1		-4	
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	9	75	7	86	6		-2	an an	-1		-3	
Utilities	13		13		11		0		-2		-2	
Construction	406	2,079	355	1,254	311	1,413	-51	-825	-44	159	-95	-666
Manufacturing	351	13,529	296	7,493	280	8,773	-55	-6,036	-16	1,280	-71	-4,756
Wholesale trade	177	2,034	147	1,579	151	1,828	-30	-455	4	249	-26	-206
Retail trade	621	7,358	572	6,687	560	6,966	-49	-671	-12	279	-61	-392
Transportation and warehousing	87	1,354	92	1,291	76	1,240	5	-63	-16	-51	-11	-114
Information	47	894	47	578	46	526	0	-316	-1	-52	-1	-368
Finance and insurance	226	1,465	210	1,248	218	1,262	-16	-217	8	14	-8	-203
Real estate and rental and leasing	165	652	145	627	140	641	-20	-25	-5	14	-25	-11
Professional, scientific, and technical services	313	2,759	282	2,163	272	1,932	-31	-596	-10	-231	-41	-827
Management of companies and enterprises	24		21		35		-3		14		11	
Administrative/Support/Waste management/ Remediation services	173	2,880	165	2,660	185	3,009	-8	-220	20	349	12	129
Educational services	28	2,227	31	2,379	27	2,720	3	152	-4	341	-1	493
Health care and social assistance	393	8,409	391	8,816	389	9,144	-2	407	-2	328	-4	735
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	73	919	70	852	66	853	-3	-67	-4	1	-7	-66
Accommodation and food services	392	5,384	391	5,470	370	5,348	-1	86	-21	-122	-22	-36
Other services (except public administration)	482	2,770	430	2,386	393	2,390	-52	-384	-37	4	-89	-380
Industries not classified	31		8		4		-23		-4		-27	

Source: US Census 2000, 2010, Berrien County Business Patterns