

## Chapter 2

### Community Snapshot

#### Introduction

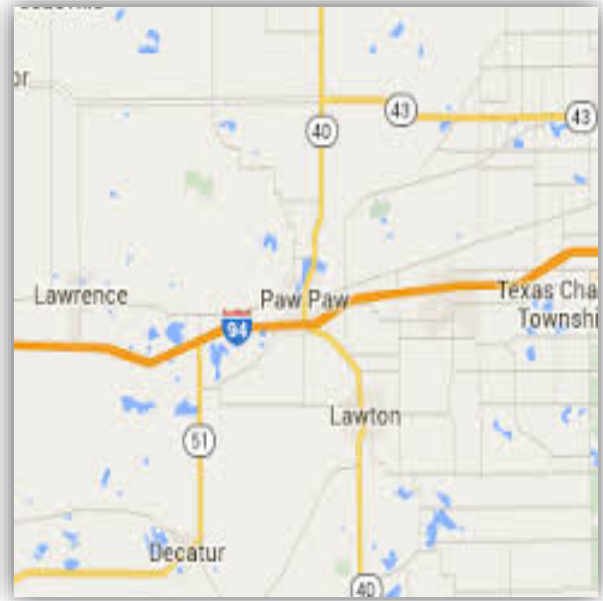
The Community Snapshot provides a profile of the Township and serves as the foundation of the Master Plan. An exploration of the existing conditions of an area . . . and the actions and trends that have created what we see around us . . . help us to recognize cause and effect and position us to have a better understanding of what our 'next steps' can and should be.

Yogi Berra once said, *'You got to be careful if you don't know where you're going, because you might not get there.'*

The community of Paw Paw is approximately 37 square miles in area, of which 34 square miles make up Paw Paw Township. . . with the remaining 2.8 square miles being occupied by the Village of Paw Paw. In addition to the 36 sections typical of a township, a little over a section in the southwest portion of Waverly Township was added to Paw Paw Township 'out of convenience' . . . this part being separated from the rest of Waverly Township by a swamp.

The community of Paw Paw (Village of Paw Paw and Paw Paw Township) is located in east-central Van Buren County, approximately 20 miles west of Kalamazoo. Three major highways (M-40, M-51 and Red Arrow Highway) serve the Township and provide easy access to nearby communities, as well as providing direct links to I-94 and US-131.

The area's transportation network situates Paw Paw in a prime residential and



commercial market area. In close proximity to several significant lakes (Lake Cora, Eagle Lake, and Three Mile Lake) and located an easy distance from South Haven and Kalamazoo, the community of Paw Paw also serves as a recreational and service attraction.

Located within Southwest Michigan's wine and fruit producing region, the community of Paw Paw has established itself as a destination for wine tasting and other agri-tourism opportunities.

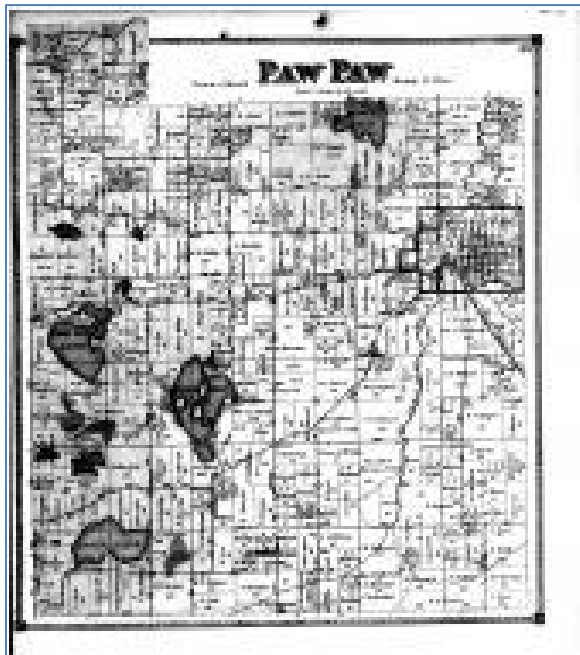


Local industry, as well as local retail and service businesses, remain viable in the community and employ area workers; but the majority of residents commute to surrounding areas for employment. Local

services continue to both support residents and attract visitors. Much of the land within the Township is in agricultural production or open space that is dedicated to providing a base for rural life and agricultural- or recreational-based activities.

## Historical Overview

Paw Paw Township, originally called Lafayette, and renamed Paw Paw in 1867, was formed by act of the Legislative Council on March 26, 1835 and included the whole of Van Buren County (which at that time was temporarily attached to Cass County).



The first township meeting was held in 1836 when Peter Gremps was chosen as Supervisor. In March of 1837, by an act of the State Legislature, Lafayette (or Van Buren County) was divided into seven townships . . of which the present Paw Paw Township retained the name of Lafayette.

The first settlement in the present township of Paw Paw was made upon the site of Paw Paw Village in 1832, when Rodney Hinckley located upon a farm in the northern portion of the present village. In that year, Pierce



Barber, of Prairie Ronde, began the erection of a saw-mill on the river at the west end of the village. Barber soon sold his interest in the mill to Job Davis and Rodney Hinckley, who, however, soon disposed of it (in 1833) to Peter Gremps and Lyman J. Daniels.

These gentlemen bought the mill property, improved it, purchased considerable land in the vicinity, and laid out a village which they called Paw Paw. Daniels lived in Schoolcraft, and never became a settler in Paw Paw. Gremps, who came from the Mohawk Valley, in New York, to find a mill site in the West, returned to his home after purchasing the Paw Paw property, and did not settle permanently on his new possessions until 1835, when he moved into a cabin just west of the saw mill.

Early in the summer of 1835, Gremps sent word to Edward Legrave, of Kalamazoo, that he wanted a carpenter capable of building a good store. Legrave found Williamson Mason (a carpenter from

Wayne Co., N. Y., who had been in the West working at his trade since 1832), and induced him to go over and build Gremps' store.

It was the first store in Paw Paw, and it stood west of Dodge's tavern. Gremps moved his family into the back part of the building before it was entirely finished, and soon afterwards stocked the store with goods which he had brought from New York.



Mason, who later became a resident and manufacturer in Paw Paw, claimed that when he came to the area in July, 1835, it contained 'on the east side of the river Rodney Hinckley's house, Dodge's tavern, and Dr. Barrett's cabin on the west side, Gremps & Daniels' saw mill, David Thorp's turning shop, and the two shanties occupied by Peter Gremps and Enos L. Barrett.'

Daniel O. Dodge's tavern became "one of the principal stopping places" along the entire Territorial Road (present-day Interstate 94). Paw Paw's accommodations also influenced the location of Van Buren's governmental center.

As early as 1833, the Paw Paw River was regarded as navigable and was used as a highway for flat boats between Paw Paw

and Lake Michigan. "The Landing" near Lawrence Village, came to be a place where freight was received for shipment down the river.

However, efforts to use the shallow stream as a water highway



were ultimately unsuccessful and it largely remained a mill stream.

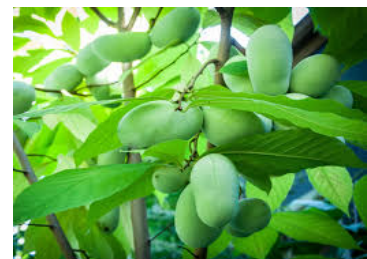
In 1859, the Prospect Hill Cemetery Association was organized for the purpose of providing a public cemetery on Prospect Hill. 'Land was purchased there and laid out with lawns, smooth drives, walks, and other



attractive improvements'. Prospect Hill is one of the highest

elevations in Van Buren County and, in 1875, a 127-foot-high observatory was erected on its summit. It was said that on a clear day . . . 'the waters of Lake Michigan and as many as thirty villages may be seen.'

The Township was named in 1867 after the Paw Paw River, named by the Indians from the paw



paw fruit, an edible fruit resembling papaya, that grew thickly upon its banks.

## Land Use

### Agricultural

Agricultural preservation in the Township dates back to the first Township Plan in 1978. The Plan demonstrated that a vast majority of the land in the Township was used for agricultural purposes and that a portion of that land should remain in agricultural production in the future.

In the 1994 update to the Master Plan, a strong land use policy was established for agricultural preservation and 'Agriculture' became a future land use classification. Specific preservation strategies set forth in the Plan included 'large lot zoning'; a 'no utility installation' policy; the designation of 'prime agricultural lands'; and, support for continued active enrollment in the PA 116 Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act program.

The Township has continued to recognize the preservation of agriculture as a viable economic business



opportunity . . . and has adopted an official Township policy to *'do everything within its power to support agriculture business operations and to preserve certain farmlands for future.'*

After a 2002 tour of Township farmland, a map was prepared that reflected the following three categories of land use: farmland; open space; and rural homestead development. It was then proposed that appropriate zoning tools would be

employed within each category and/or the Township would seek to purchase (or acquire by donation) development rights for identified properties.

### Residential

Residential land use within Paw Paw Township consists largely of single-family housing units located in rural densities and patterns.

Newer, subdivision-style residential development has occurred on a limited basis and has largely located in close proximity to the Village. Multiple family residential development represents approximately 25% of the Township's housing units.

A large percentage of the single-family housing stock within the Township is located on the area's lake frontage, some of which is used only seasonally for recreation and vacation purposes. It is estimated that approximately 10% of the housing stock within the Township is considered 'seasonal housing', with some of the lakeside homes defined as 'lake cottages'.

### Commercial

Commercial land use in the area has developed primarily at the intersection of Red Arrow Highway and Kalamazoo Avenue (M-40). This major intersection has historically served as the 'downtown' of the Paw Paw community and continues as the commercial core in the area. It is occupied by a mix of retail, office and civic uses, intermingled with residential properties.

Generally, commercial development remains near the geographical center of the community, allowing for a vital commercial core and the growth of a strong civic center that includes the Village Offices, Township Offices, a library, post office, schools, and public lands.

The strength of this center has encouraged an active community life and has served to maintain a vital business district – as well as influence and support the surrounding commercial and residential land use pattern in the Township.

A potential challenge to the strength of the community's commercial core is unplanned growth along Red Arrow Highway, the Township's major corridor. Unlimited nonresidential development along Red Arrow Highway will serve to diminish the role of the Village core, destabilizing both the existing business district and the corridor itself.

### 43<sup>rd</sup> Street (CR 671) Corridor

Large agricultural parcels and limited residential land use exist along the 43<sup>rd</sup> Street corridor as it extends from I-94 north to Red Arrow Highway. Accented by random commercial land use at the 43<sup>rd</sup> Street/Red Arrow Highway intersection to the north and the 43<sup>rd</sup> Street/I-94 interchange to the south, the area represents a corridor in transition.

This segment of 43<sup>rd</sup> Street is less than one mile in length and has the potential to serve as a neighborhood commercial corridor for the lake properties. Specific use/design standards will be needed to prevent random patterns of development that

distract from its focus on the convenience needs of nearby residents and visitors.

### Industrial

Significant land area along Red Arrow Highway, just west of the Village of Paw Paw, has been set aside for industrial development, though currently only



partially developed. Several processing plants, including Coca Cola/Minute Maid and Dr Pepper/Snapple, are located along the corridor and serve as employers in the area.

Coca-Cola North America has worked to be a responsible corporate citizen in Paw Paw and has supported



environmental initiatives ranging from watershed management to community and home recycling. The juice plant was the

first in Michigan to shut down spray fields and replace them with a \$7 million state of the art wastewater treatment facility.

Significant industrial growth beyond existing planned areas is not envisioned. Largely, the Township intends to continue to rely on adjacent communities who are recognized for their planned industrial development and the availability of utilities to support growth in this sector.

### *Township Assets*

Paw Paw Township celebrates a rich historical and cultural heritage with its Village neighbor. The community's history of wineries and distilleries has provided the area with the renowned annual Wine & Harvest Festival.



Further, the presence of the lakes in both Paw Paw Township and the Village of Paw Paw. . and the numerous related parks and recreational sites located in the center of the community have encouraged continued support of the civic realm within the Village,



as well as a very active community life for community residents and visitors.

Land area within the Township is largely dedicated to agriculture operations, providing the Township with an opportunity to tap into the rising interest and success of Michigan's 'food systems planning' initiative.

The agricultural land use pattern has also somewhat limited unwanted sprawl in the Township through its dominance of the landscape. The Township recognizes its ability to capitalize on these land use limits by identifying areas surrounding the Village of Paw Paw that are in close proximity to services and employment for targeted residential and mixed-use growth.

### *Common Ground*

Paw Paw Township and the Village of Paw Paw not only share a history and common boundaries, they share a common major transportation corridor; community 'gateways'; waterfront areas; and, recreational assets. Their potential for a successful economic future is tied together.

The Township recognizes that collaboration on land use strategies ranging from residential densities . . to storm water management and water quality . . to shoreline preservation . . to 'gateway' streetscape and building design standards . . to non-motorized trail networks . . is possible.

## Transportation

Paw Paw Township is served by I-94 through which it is provided linkage to Kalamazoo and Battle Creek to the east . . . and Benton Harbor, and eventually Chicago, to the west. The Township is also served by Red Arrow Highway, a primary east-west



corridor in the County. This highway effectively connects the Paw Paw community with M-40, a key north-south route and the Allegan and Holland areas to the north.

Red Arrow Highway serves as a through transportation route for truckers and bypass traffic and so this corridor can experience reduced levels of function as it extends through the Township and Village. The remaining street network within the Township consists largely of local roads.

Historically, the Paw Paw area was served by the West Michigan Railroad, a short line that traveled west to Hartford where freight cars were transferred to the CSX main line.



As of 2011, the railroad from Hartford to Paw Paw was all but abandoned. A filing with the Surface Transportation Board in 2012 requested abandonment of 10.67 miles of the line from Paw Paw west to a point west of 56th Street on the west side of Lawrence, Michigan. Since January 2013, a group of local officials has been considering converting the rail line into a rail trail patterned after the nearby Kal-Haven Trail.

In 2015, Pioneer Railcorp sold the capital stock of West Michigan Railroad Co, to an unaffiliated non-carrier entity, Hamilton Hartford Group, LLC, and is therefore no longer in control of WMI. The new owners have identified a dozen potential customers who have expressed interest in hauling freight along the line.

Passenger rail is available nearby in Kalamazoo and Battle Creek via the Amtrak lines west to Chicago and east to Detroit. The nearest passenger airports are located in Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids. Public transit is not currently available within the Paw Paw community.

Having choices in transportation is recognized as providing benefits related to public health, a cleaner environment, economic development and mobility across all ages/abilities.



The adoption of a ‘complete streets’ approach to infrastructure planning and improvements within the Township would provide opportunities to improve safety, access, and mobility for all travelers in the Paw Paw community.

A ‘complete street’ is one that accommodates all people who use a roadway, not just those in cars. It offers a safe way for people to travel, regardless of their age, ability or mode of transportation—whether walking, biking, using transit or driving a car. Where we have ‘complete streets’, people have choices in transportation right outside their door that are affordable and healthy.

### Utilities/Public Services \_\_\_\_\_

The Village of Paw Paw provides public water service and public sanitary sewer

service to the Village and adjacent areas. Paw Paw Township properties are largely served by private on-site sewer and water systems.



The Water and Sanitary Sewer Master Plans reflect the proposed service areas extending out from the Village boundaries, consistent with the planned growth areas of the Township.

Electric and gas utilities are supplied through Consumers Energy, Midwest Energy Cooperative, and Indiana Michigan Power. Broadband is available throughout the Paw Paw community and is provided through Charter Communications.

Paw Paw Township is served by the Van Buren County Sheriff’s Department, with assistance from the Village police department. Fire protection is provided by the Paw Paw Fire Department. Paw Paw is one of the few departments left in the State that is totally volunteer. The Department services all of Paw Paw Township, the Village of Paw Paw and portions of Antwerp, Almena and Waverly Townships . . . covering a total of 88 square miles.

Paw Paw Township is situated almost entirely within the Paw Paw Public School District. District facilities include Early Elementary (K-2) and Later Elementary (3-5) Schools situated on a single campus within the Village of Paw Paw; Paw Paw Middle School; Paw Paw High School and the Paw Paw Performing Arts Center; and Paw Paw Community Education. Paw Paw Middle School is advantageously situated in close

proximity to the downtown area of Paw Paw.

The southeast portion of the Township is within the Lawton Community School District. The District provides a single elementary school, middle school and high school, all located near the Village of Lawton.



## Parks/Recreation

The Township does not currently provide any public park, open space or recreational facility. Facilities owned and operated by the Village are used by Township residents.

Canoeing and kayaking on the Paw Paw River; water sports on Lake Cora, Eagle Lake, and Three Mile Lake; and, picnic areas, fishing sites, and boat launches that dot the shorelines of the area's lakes provide a host of recreational opportunities to residents and visitors.



The Township understands that the area's natural features and recreational lands are valuable common assets that serve both the

residents of the Paw Paw community and its visitors.

## Natural Environment

### Surface Waters

Lake Cora, Eagle Lake and Three Mile Lake are the three largest lakes located in Paw Paw Township. A portion of Maple Lake, as well as several smaller lakes, also help make up the almost two square miles of surface water found within the Township.



Lake Cora is located on the western boundary of the Township and is home to the popular Lake Cora Hills Golf Club. The lake is approximately 200 acres in size with an average depth of 58 feet. Limited water depth makes the launching and retrieving of larger boats difficult . . . but water sports and fishing remain popular recreational activities on the lake. A hard-surfaced public access ramp serves the lake . . . with parking and toilets provided.

Eagle Lake is a spring fed, all-sports lake located in the western portion of the Township. The lake has a maximum depth of 60 feet and a surface area of almost 200 acres for motor boating, canoeing, and

kayaking. White sand beaches ring the lake, making it a great lake for swimming and families. Public access to the lake is from a gravel boat ramp. Eagle Lake is popular for fishing with reported abundant populations of bluegill and largemouth bass.

Three Mile Lake is situated east of Lake Cora and Eagle Lake in the western portion of Paw Paw Township. The immediate 'lake community' consists of Three Mile Lake and Little Three Mile Lake, which are joined by a limited-access channel. Three Mile Lake is an all-sports lake, but it has boating restrictions unique to only a few lakes in the state of Michigan. Little Three Mile Lake has restrictions regarding high-speed boating and the towing of skiers. The combined acreage of both lakes totals 176 navigable acres and approximately 100 acres of pristine wetlands, which are home to many species of wildlife. A well-balanced fish population can be found in the lakes and includes an abundance of bluegill, pumpkinseed, black crappie, yellow perch, sunfish, northern pike, bowfin and largemouth bass.

The Paw Paw River extends through the eastern portion of the Township and flows north into Briggs Pond and Maple Lake.



The Paw Paw River is a cool water system, which provides a refuge for types of fish such as trout and other cold-water aquatic species. It also provides recreational opportunities.

Along the East Branch within the Village - - industrial, public, commercial and residential development is permitted. Upstream of the many residential areas - - in Paw Paw Township - - exists both agricultural and industrial areas with little to no runoff protections.

Along the West Branch of the Paw Paw River, public land occupies much of the surrounding area leading into Briggs Pond. However, continuing south into the Township, there are large tracts of privately-held agricultural land.

Lake Brownwood, (formerly known as Pugsley Lake), is one of the area's smaller lakes with a surface area of 125 acres. It is located in the northeast portion of the Township within 2 miles of the Village of Paw Paw and is popular as a spring-fed fishing and boating lake.

### Topography/Soils

The topography in the Township is varied due to the presence of the water features and glacial landforms. It ranges from flat to moderately sloped embankments around the water areas. With an average elevation of 760 feet above mean sea level, the generally level landscape reaches over 800 feet above sea level at Prospect Hill in the southeast corner of the Township.

The general geology of the area is characterized by glacial deposits overlying a shale bedrock formation. This area of outwash plains and glacial moraines are characterized by well-drained sandy and loamy soils well suited for agriculture.

## Demographics and Housing Trends

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In order to plan for future growth and development, there must be consideration of how many people will be residing in the community; where there is a demand for new land uses; and, who will be shaping the community of Paw Paw in the coming years.

The following analysis focuses on the prevailing trends in Paw Paw Township, as well as Van Buren County and in Michigan as a whole. The County- and State-wide trends are assumed to reflect the situation in Paw Paw Township, and therefore are considered relevant to the planning process.

### Data Sources

All data for 1990, 2000 and 2010 comes from the US Census Bureau's Decennial Census. Taken every ten years, the Census is considered the most reliable source of demographic data. Many categories of information come from 100% counts, while others are derived from sampling.

**Population Trends**

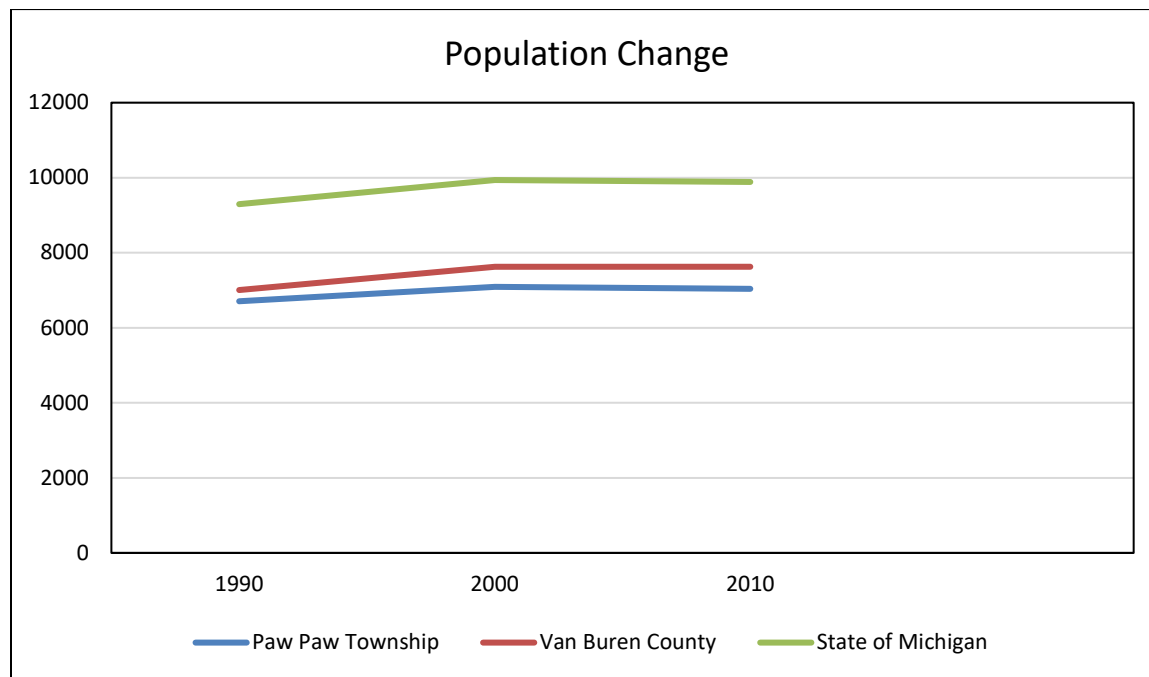
As shown in Table 2.1 and Figure 2.1, after growing much of the 1990s, the population of Paw Paw Township decreased slightly between 2000 and 2010. The growth and decline in population experienced in the Township is consistent with the trends experienced in surrounding communities, as well as Van Buren County and the State of Michigan as a whole.

Table 2.1 Population of Paw Paw Township and Surrounding Communities

Geography	1990	2000	2010	Change 1990 - 2000	Change 2000 - 2010
Paw Paw Township	6,701	7,091	7,041	5.8%	- 0.7%
Village of Paw Paw	3,169	3,363	3,534	6.1%	5.1%
Antwerp Township	9,293	10,813	12,182	16.4%	12.7%
Lawrence Township	3,030	3,341	3,259	10.3%	- 2.5%
Waverly Township	2,188	2,467	2,554	12.8%	3.5%
Van Buren County	70,060	76,263	76,258	8.9%	- 0.007%
State of Michigan	9,295,297	9,938,444	9,883,640	6.9%	- 0.6%

Source: US Census

Figure 2.1



Source: US Census

## Households

Table 2.2 shows that the number of households in Paw Paw Township and Van Buren County, unlike the population, increased from 2000 to 2010. The rise in the number of households in the Township provides some explanation for the reduction in average household size over that same time period as the population began to migrate.

This increase in the number of households is generally consistent with the trend seen throughout the State of Michigan, where population decreased, but the number of households actually increased, primarily due to a decrease in the average household size.

The shrinking average size of a household in the State is considered to indicate a combination of an increase in the number of ‘empty nester’ retirees and in the number of young people waiting longer to marry and having fewer children. Paw Paw Township’s average household size is significantly less than that of surrounding communities but is generally consistent with the trends seen throughout Van Buren County and Michigan.

Table 2.2 Household Characteristics of Paw Paw Township and Surrounding Communities

<i>Geography</i>	<i>Number of Households 2000</i>	<i>Number of Households 2010</i>	<i>Change – Number of Households</i>	<i>Average Household Size - 2000</i>	<i>Average Household Size – 2010</i>	<i>Change – Average Household Size</i>
Paw Paw Township	2771	2895	4.5%	2.49	2.38	- 4.4%
Village of Paw Paw	1417	1499	5.8%	2.27	2.27	0%
Antwerp Township	3764	4457	18.4%	2.80	2.70	- 3.6%
Lawrence Township	1194	1224	2.51%	2.74	2.65	- 3.3%
Waverly Township	912	959	5.15%	2.70	2.66	- 1.5%
Van Buren County	27,982	28,928	3.38%	2.66	2.61	- 1.9%
State of Michigan	3,785,661	3,872,508	2.3%	2.56	2.49	- 2.7%

Source: US Census

## Age

As shown in Tables 2.3 and 2.4, the average age of Paw Paw Township's population is 40.7 years, with almost 30% of the population being between the ages of 20 and 44. This group is generally comprised of young professionals and working families with children that support the local economy and the school district. As such it is seen as an indicator of economic health of an area.

Table 2.3 Median Age

<i>Geography</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>Change 2000-2010</i>
Paw Paw Township	37.6	40.7	8.2%
Village of Paw Paw	36.3	36.4	0.3%
Antwerp Township	35.1	37.3	6.3%
Lawrence Township	35.8	39.3	9.8%
Waverly Township	36.3	39.6	9.1%
Van Buren County	36.6	39.8	8.7%
State of Michigan	35.5	38.9	9.6%

Source: US Census

Table 2.4 20-44 Age Group Percentage

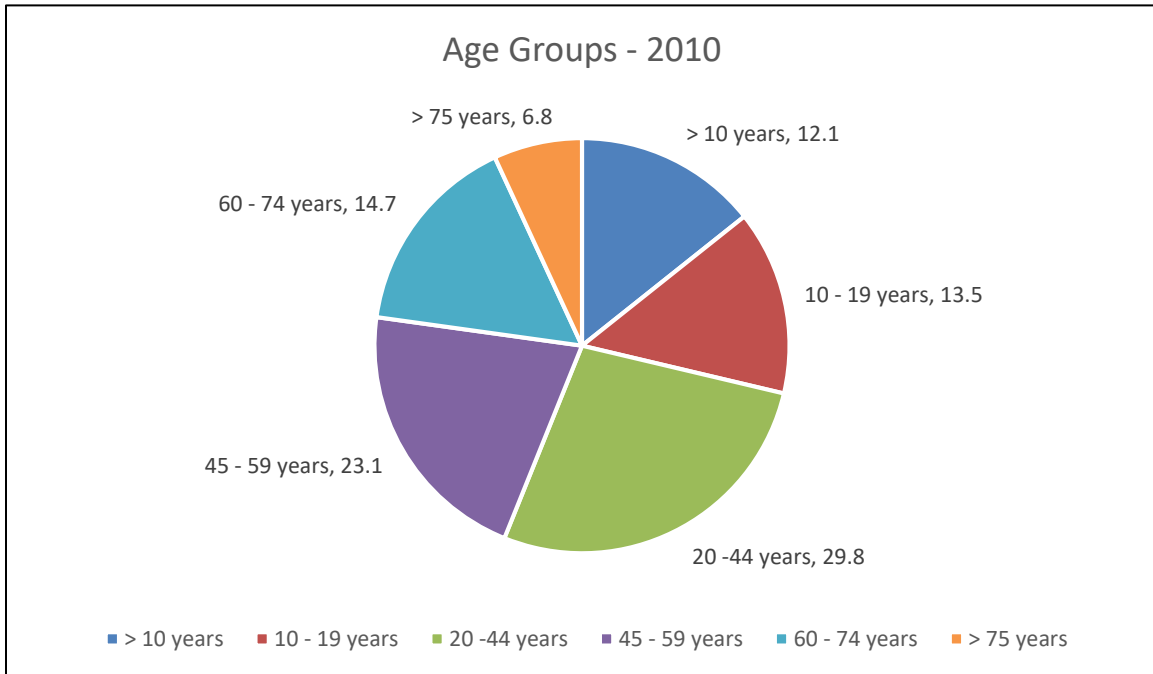
<i>Geography</i>	<i>% of Total Population 2000</i>	<i>% of Total Population 2010</i>	<i>Change in % of Total Population 2000 - 2010</i>
Paw Paw Township	33.7%	29.8%	- 3.9%
Village of Paw Paw	37.4%	34.0%	- 3.4%
Antwerp Township	34.4%	31.2%	- 3.2%
Lawrence Township	32.0%	28.3%	- 3.7%
Waverly Township	36.3%	27.7%	- 8.9%
Van Buren County	33.2%	28.9%	- 4.3%

Source: US Census

Table 2.4 suggests that many communities in the area are beginning to find it difficult to attract and retain residents in the 20 to 44 age group. However, overall the Township and surrounding communities have maintained relatively stable numbers since 2000, similar to Van Buren County as a whole.

Figure 2.2 illustrates the age profile of Paw Paw Township residents and reveals that, in addition to the Township’s stable percentage of the 20 to 44 year age group, nearly one quarter of the community’s residents are in the 45 to 59 year age group. This age group is characterized by new empty nesters and retirement age households looking to down-size their living space and seeking services and amenities related to their lifestyle changes.

Figure 2.2



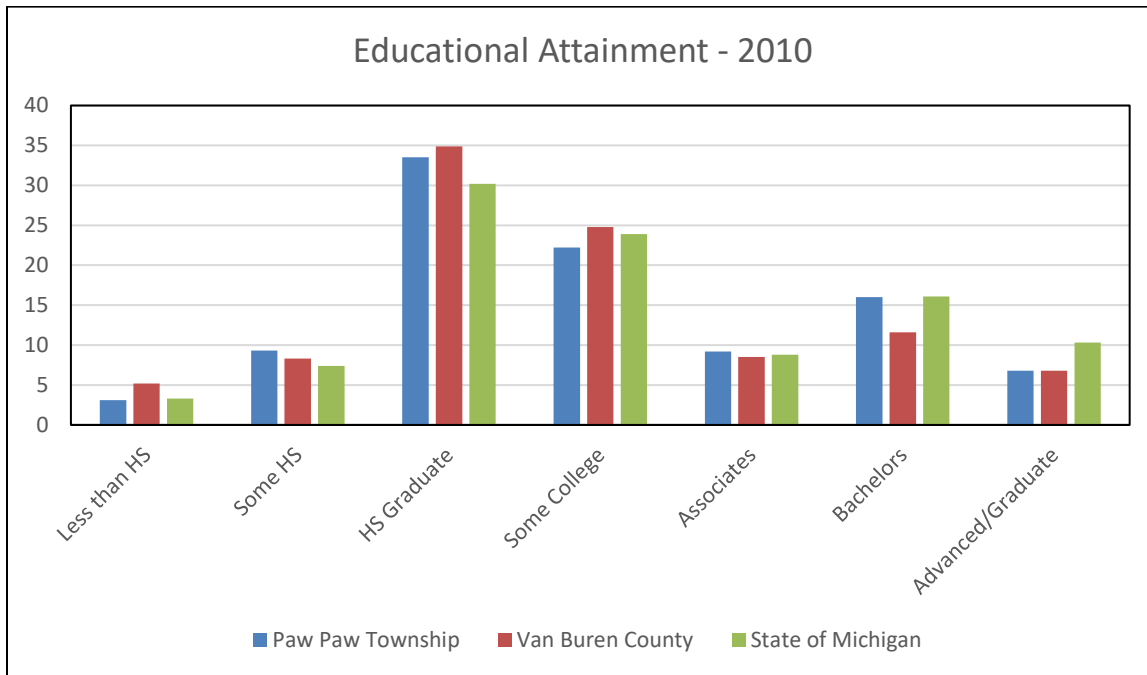
Source: US Census

Providing a variety of high quality single-family options will be important in addressing the future housing needs of a majority of the population in the Paw Paw community. Land use decisions that respond to both the millennial and baby boomer demographics and a desire to retain families will be a priority for both the Township and the Village.

**Educational Attainment**

Figure 2.3 shows the educational attainment of Paw Paw Township residents over the age of 25, compared to Van Buren County and the State of Michigan. While the majority of residents in the Township over 25 have completed high school (88%) both the Township (32%) and the County (27%) lag behind the State as a whole (35%) when it comes to college degrees.

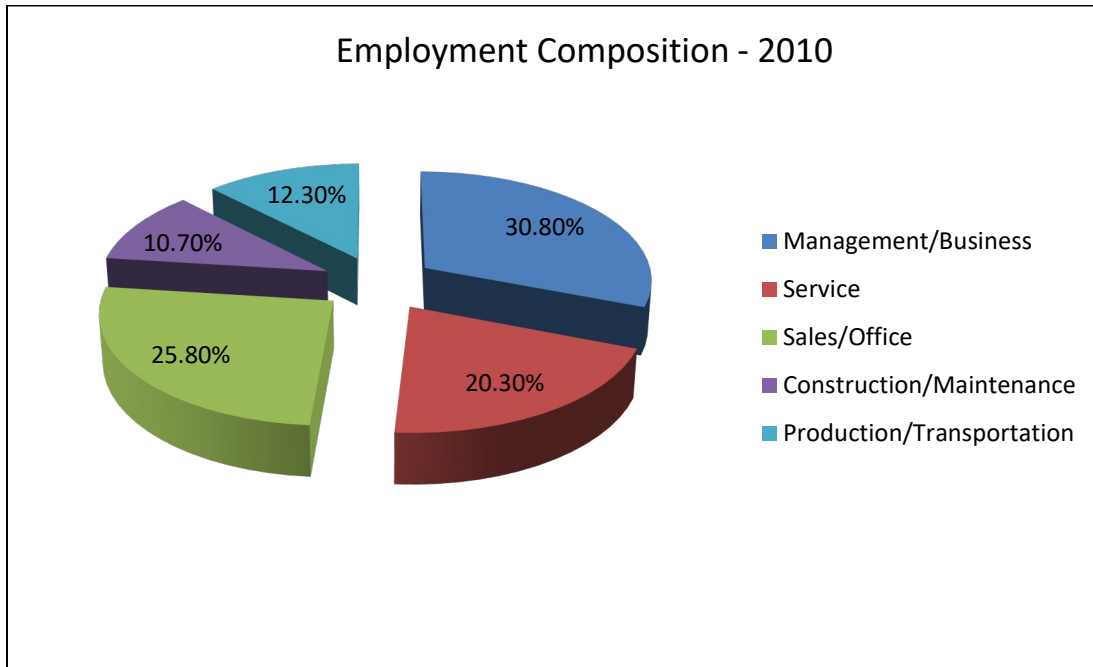
Figure 2.3



## Employment

As Figures 2.4 and 2.5 show, residents of Paw Paw Township are employed in a variety of fields, with the largest proportions being in management, sales, and service occupations.

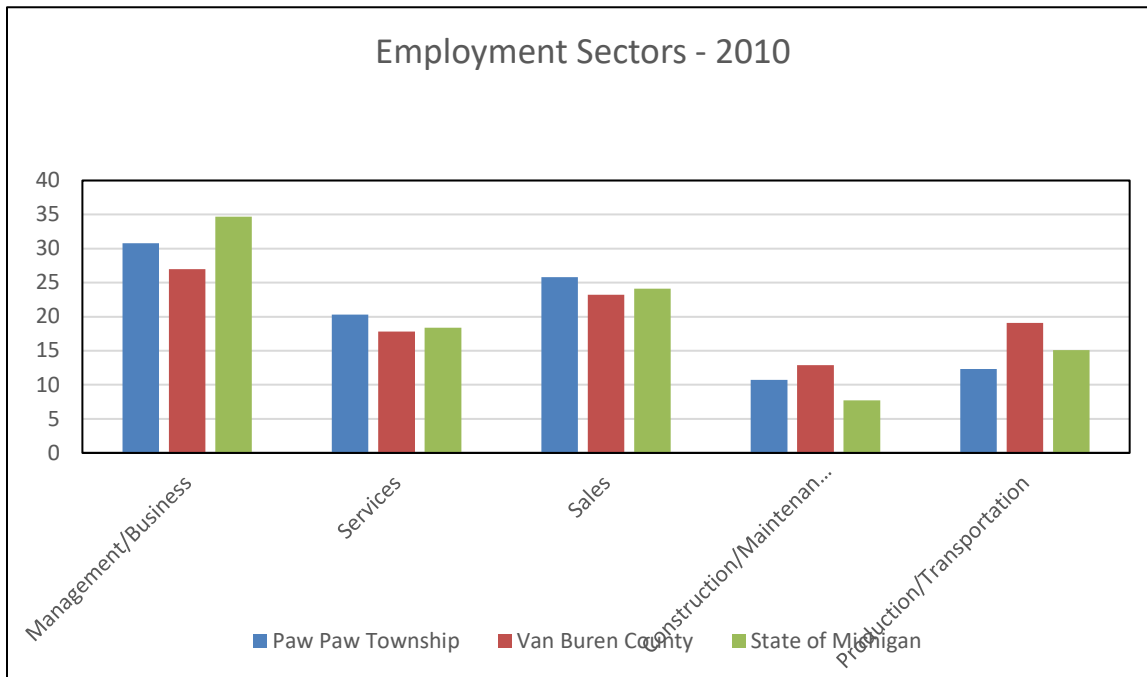
Figure 2.4



Source: US Census

Similar to Paw Paw Township, Van Buren County has a high proportion of its population working in the management and sales sectors . . . consistent with employment equivalents for Michigan that reflect the highest percentage of the State’s population to be employed within the management sector.

Figure 2.5

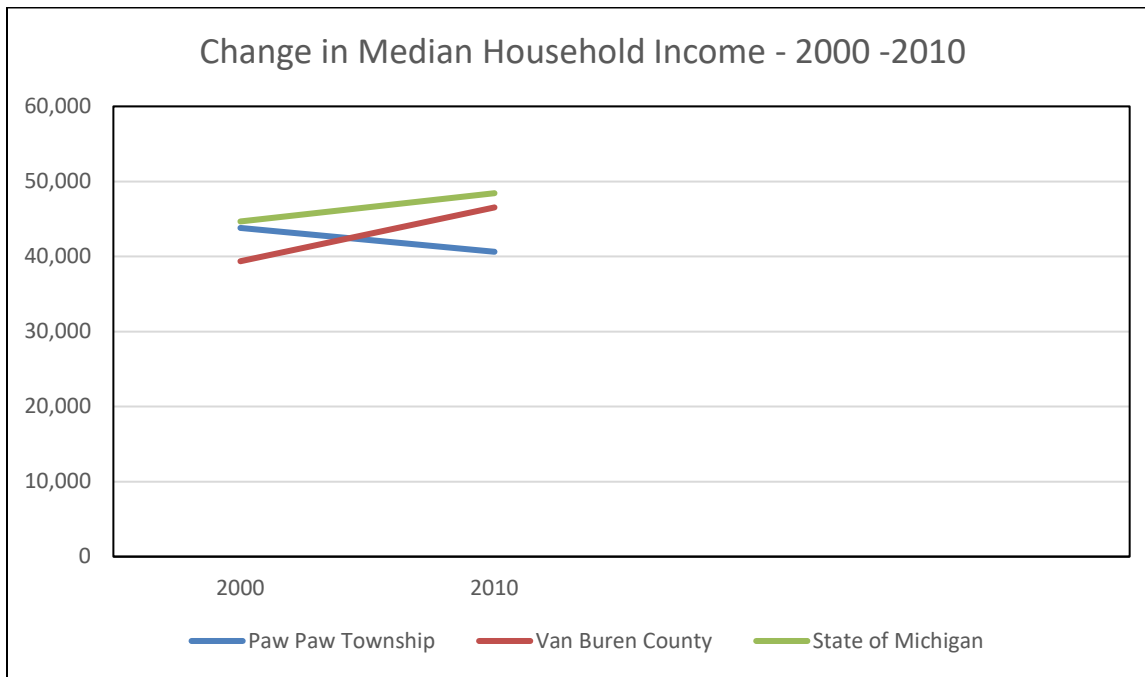


Source: US Census

Income

From 2000 to 2010, the median household income in the Township fell, in contrast with the household income growth that was experienced in Van Buren County and the State as a whole.

Figure 2.6



Source: US Census

Further, the median household income for Paw Paw Township in 2010 was \$40,625 . . . below a median household income of \$46,536 for Van Buren County and \$48,432 for the State of Michigan.

Table 2.5 Median Household Income

Geography	Median Household Income 2010
Paw Paw Township	\$40,625
Village of Paw Paw	\$28,869
Antwerp Township	\$57,869
Lawrence Township	\$42,096
Waverly Township	\$52,143
Van Buren County	\$46,536
State of Michigan	\$48,432

Source: US Census

Housing

As is clearly reflected in Table 2.6, the majority of the housing units in Paw Paw Township are single family detached homes. This is generally consistent with the housing stock in the County as a whole. Though this is supported by the nature of the households prevalent in the Township (2.38 average household size/40.7 years average age), it also demonstrates ‘the missing middle’ housing pattern that has been identified statewide and has become the focus of targeted placemaking efforts.

Table 2.6 Housing Type

<i>Housing Type</i>	<i>Paw Paw Township 2014</i>	<i>Van Buren County 2014</i>
Single Family, Detached	67%	76%
Single Family, Attached	0.5%	1%
Small Multi-Family (2-9 Units)	18%	9%
Large Multi-Family	9.5%	3%
Mobile Homes	5%	11%

Source: US Census

### *Housing Occupancy and Tenure*

In 2000, nearly 15% of the housing units within the Township were vacant. In 2010, the vacancy rate had increased to just over 17%. (Table 2.7) It is significant to note, however, that a majority (57%) of the units in the Township identified as vacant were categorized as *'for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use'*. Less than 12% of the vacant housing units were identified for sale and approximately 18% for rent.

Table 2.7 Housing Occupancy and Tenure

<i>Geography</i>	<i>% Vacant Housing Units 2000</i>	<i>% Vacant Housing Units 2010</i>	<i>% Renter Occupied Housing Units 2000</i>	<i>% Renter Occupied Housing Units 2010</i>
Paw Paw Township	14.7%	17.4%	29.0%	33.1%
Village of Paw Paw	6.2%	10.5%	43.2%	51.1%
Antwerp Township	5.1%	5.9%	15.4%	17.3%
Lawrence Township	21.2%	22.9%	19.8%	20.2%
Waverly Township	8.0%	12.2%	12.4%	11.2%
Van Buren County	17.6%	21.4%	20.4%	22.1%
State of Michigan	10.6%	14.6%	26.2%	27.9%

Source: US Census

The general housing tenure in the Township has remained largely owner-occupied, consistent with the trends in the County and the surrounding townships.

### Housing Value

The median home value in Paw Paw Township in 2010 was \$129,100, below the State of Michigan’s median value of \$144,200 but consistent with the median home value in Van Buren County of \$125,600. Though somewhat consistent with housing values in surrounding communities, it reinforces the need for the Township to focus on maintaining existing single family housing stock and to continue to enforce zoning and general nuisance ordinances.

Figure 2.7

