



# CITY OF GLADWIN



# MASTER PLAN

February  
2020

This Master Plan was written in collaboration with Beckett & Raeder, Inc. with financial assistance through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation



# CITY OF GLADWIN

## MASTER PLAN

FEBRUARY 2020



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**RESOLUTION**  
**CHANGE IN MASTER PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Gladwin has undertaken a periodic review of the Gladwin City Master Plan pursuant to the Michigan Planning Enabling Act; and

**WHEREAS**, November 04, 2019 the Gladwin City Council directed the Planning Commission to update the Master Plan and subsequently approved sending notice to the adjoining townships, County Planning Commission and Regional Planning Commission of their intent to amend the Master Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, on January 28, 2020 the Gladwin City Planning Commission held a public hearing and received public comment on the proposed change to the Master Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the Gladwin City Planning Commission at their January 28, 2020 meeting made a favorable recommendation to the City Council that the Master Plan which includes a Zoning Map, Land Use Map, Public Comments, Future Land Use Recommendations and Zoning Plan be revised and adopted.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that at the February 03, 2020 meeting of the Gladwin City Council the updated Master Plan, including future land use maps and public comment was adopted.

The foregoing resolution was offered by Council Member Kile and seconded by Council Member Caffrey.

Roll Call Vote:


Ayes: Bodnar, Caffrey, Crawford, Gardner, Kile, Smith, Winarski  
Nays: None  
Absent: None  
Abstain: None

Resolution declared adopted this 03<sup>rd</sup> day of February, 2020.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kimberly Bruner, City Clerk

**CERTIFICATE**

I, Kimberly Bruner, Clerk of the City of Gladwin, do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and correct copy of the resolution adopted by the Gladwin City Council at a regular meeting held February 03, 2020 at 5:00 PM.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kimberly Bruner, City Clerk

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## PLANNING COMMISSION

Rick Auer  
John Clayton  
Steve Czape  
Carol Darlington  
Joan David  
Jack Emeott  
Ed English  
Lori Stout  
Patricia Wendell

## RISING TIDE STEERING COMMITTEE

Carol Darlington  
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Lori Stout  
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## CITY COUNCIL

Nancy Bodnar  
John Caffrey  
Dave Crawford  
Carol Darlington  
Roger Gardner  
Sarah Kile  
Michael Smith  
Linda Winarski

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# BACKGROUND

## PURPOSE OF A MASTER PLAN

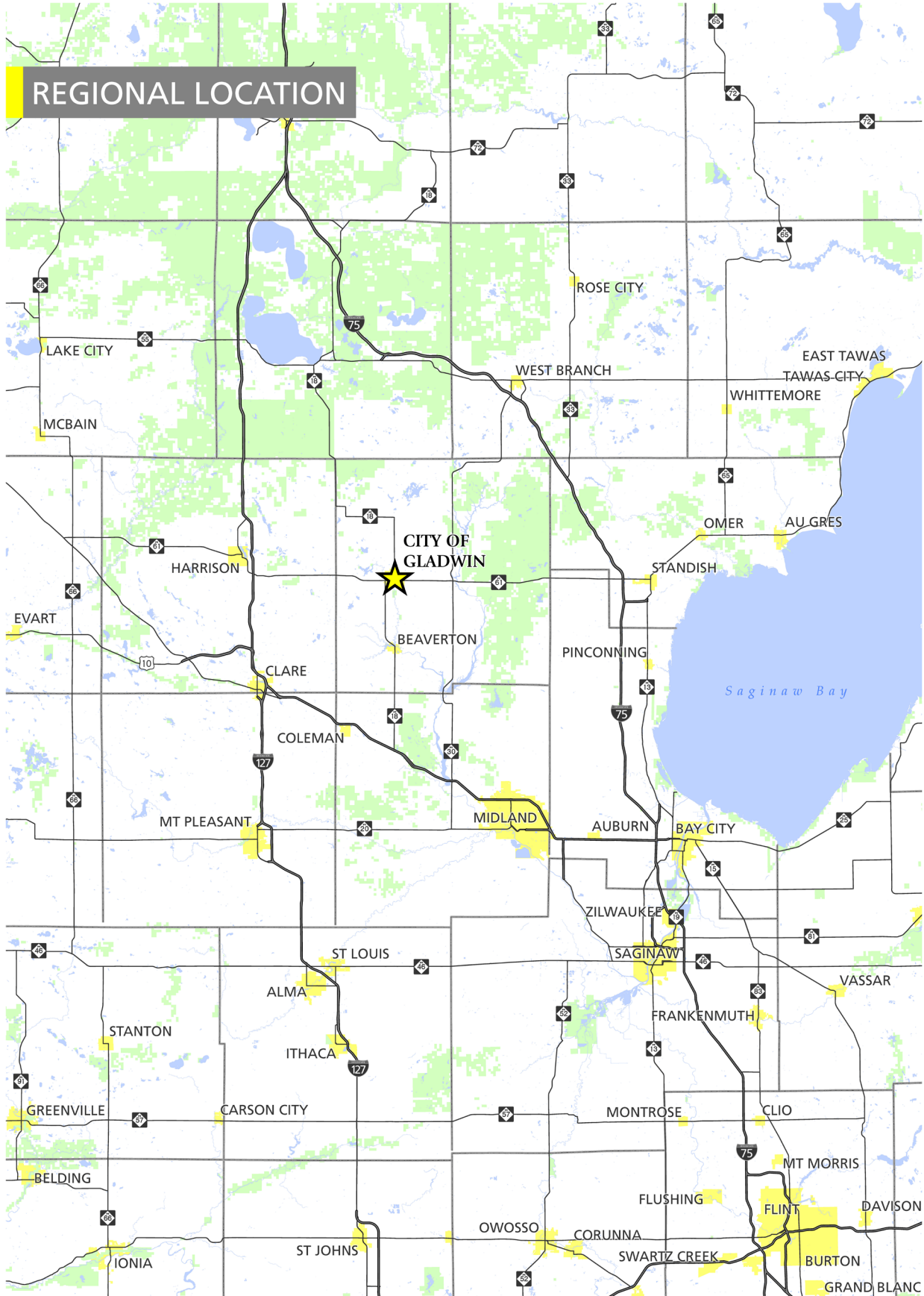
The Michigan Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008) enables municipalities to create a Master Plan that guides decision-makers on future developments that promote the public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare of the community. The Master Plan is a living policy document that features a comprehensive analysis of all the elements that create a community. The overarching goal of a Master Plan is to develop a vision statement for a community so that it can accomplish a social, economic, and environmental balance that satisfies the needs of its current and future residents. The process of creating a Master Plan is dynamic, people-oriented, and focuses on the unique characteristics of the community.

It enables the community to continually assess its strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities to develop goals, objectives, and strategies that lift the community up to its potential.

## REGIONAL CONTEXT

The City of Gladwin is located in the center of Gladwin County and serves as the county seat, covering approximately three square miles of land. Gladwin County is located in the central northeast part of Michigan's lower peninsula and is within thirty (30) miles of West Branch, Houghton Lake, Harrison, Mt. Pleasant, and Midland. It is one of the only two cities in the County, the other being the City of Beaverton, which is located about eight miles to the south of Gladwin. The central location of both cities plays

MAP 1: REGIONAL LOCATION



an active role in serving as a center for recreation and tourism, as well as a commercial and retail destination for adjacent townships.

The greater Gladwin landscape is mostly rural and forested with plenty of small lakes, streams, wetlands, marshes, and wildlife areas. Cedar River is a major river that runs through the City and flows into Tobacco River which eventually joins with Tittabawassee River. Most of the City's wooded lands consisting of broadleaf deciduous forests, are adjacent to Cedar River. The Tittabawassee River is the largest river that runs through Gladwin County and provides recreational and tourism services along on the river and along its impoundments. Water-based recreational activities, sports, and services play a central base for the local economy. Its beautiful surroundings make it a popular seasonal destination during the summer and fall.

The topography of the region is wooded, ranging from level to gently undulating terrain where steep slopes are found along Cedar River. The largest portion of the County is undeveloped land abundant in natural resources that provide habitat to native animals and outdoor recreational activities such as fishing and hiking. Agricultural use covers large portions of Gladwin County, accounting for 37% of total land area, a reflection of its rural setting. But as the county seat, it is home to several important institutions: a hospital, an airport, a community center, a county district library and courthouse, a historical museum, county fairgrounds, and campsites.

The City is accessible to large metropolitan areas in Michigan such as Detroit and Lansing through two state highways: M-18 (north-south) and M-61 (east-west). Between these two, the City is connected to US-127, I-75 and US-10 that provides transportation access to larger cities and employment hubs in nearby communities such as Midland, Bay City, and Saginaw.

## HISTORY

The history of the City of Gladwin goes back to the late 1800's when the



*Gladwin Train Depot*  
Source: Michigan Railroads

lumbering industry was growing in the area. Previously, known as "Cedar" named after the Cedar River in 1875, the City had to change its name due to confusion with another community in Leelanau County with the same name. Consequently, the City was re-named to "Gladwin" after the County's name. Gladwin was incorporated as a city in 1883.

The City of Gladwin was host to various industries that emerged in the area and changed over time. The rise of the lumbering era and the establishment of the railroads was the leading force in the City's formation. After a huge fire burned most of the County's lumber, the lumber industry declined, and the City redirected its economic base to agriculture. In 1930, the oil industry developed locally after the discovery of oil in Gladwin County. Buckeye Township, located between the cities of Gladwin and Beaverton, had the highest oil production, making the City of Gladwin an attractive place for the workers to live. These two industries quickly exhausted the natural resources of the County, and once again, the City faced another economic decline. As the regional economy shifted toward chemical and automotive production, the local economy in Gladwin leveraged this opportunity to remain a hub for County employment. Locally, the construction of power dams in Gladwin County brought new opportunities for recreational and tourism services around lakes and rivers of the region. Since the City of Gladwin is centrally located, it sparked various businesses that specialized in sport and recreational products. In recent years, the



*Welcome to Gladwin sign circa 1960*  
 Source: Pure Gladwin County

growth in renewable energy and high-tech industries in the surrounding areas has also provided business opportunities. The history of Gladwin City mirrors the evolution of the State of Michigan from a natural resource-based economy to a production and manufacturing economy.

## PROJECT RISING TIDE

The Rising Tide initiative is a statewide program, envisioned by Governor Snyder and implemented by the Department of Talent and Economic Development (TED). TED is comprised of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), Talent Investment Agency (TIA), and the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA). The mission is to provide at-risk communities with the necessary tools to design and build a successful economic framework. Through the technical assistance provided, the City was able to update its master plan, as well as complete a housing study, and develop a branding strategy, all of which were designed to set Gladwin up with the tools necessary to plan succeed in the long-term.

## PAST PLANNING EFFORTS

### City of Gladwin, 2014 Master Plan

The Master Plan touches on several important topics but lacks an action

plan that lays out what is to be accomplished in the next 10 years and who is accountable for those actions. Stakeholders were surveyed and agreed that the City's park and recreational facilities are adequate for all age groups, that the re-use of vacant commercial structures should be prioritized over new construction, natural resources should be protected, and that manufacturing should grow slowly and steadily. It is anticipated that some of these same themes will be articulated during this Master Plan update process.

### Community Recreation Plan, for the City of Gladwin, 2010

The City is rich with recreation. With the capital improvement schedule embedded in this plan, it is easy to see what the City prioritizes. Between 2010 and 2015, the City was hoping to use general funds and grants to increase accessibility by paving undeveloped paths and constructing a new nonmotorized network that encircles much of the community. The goals of the plan were to improve accessibility, involve a broad group of citizens, expand year-round recreation, and work with other institutions to create ample facilities for its users.

### Gladwin Downtown Blueprint, 2009

With a smaller geographic area to focus on, more specific questions were asked of residents and business owners on they used the downtown. Many downtown characteristics were rated "good" such that the majority of respondents felt that it was safe and clean with quality retail and services. Having said that, survey participants wanted to see greater variety of retail and entertainment options downtown, as well as physical improvements such as pedestrian-friendly enhancements. The market analysis showed that the City was losing potential retail sales to surrounding areas but that it could be boosted if it worked to expand and retain existing businesses and recruit new businesses, increase housing opportunities, and develop more office space.

## Gladwin County Comprehensive Master Plan, 2007-2012

The County's population projections anticipated continued growth. This, of course, has land use implications when deciding how to manage growth responsibly. The County Master Plan outlined goals of drawing in retail and industry incrementally but strategically locating them so that open space and natural features were preserved. Since the County is 70% forested, it is anticipated

that this type of growth will occur where public infrastructure and other facilities were already located. As a result, the cities of Gladwin and Beaverton are best positioned for this type of growth within the County.



*The City of Gladwin' economy has evolved from a manufacturing-based one to a natural resources-based one.*

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# 2

Source: Pure Gladwin County



## DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographic analysis is an essential element of creating a compelling Master Plan. Understanding the general make-up of the residential population helps to understand where challenges and opportunities lie when planning for a broader community vision. It is also a good reminder that the Master Plan revolves around its citizens, their needs, and that “quality of life” may differ by demographic group. In this section, an examination of Gladwin’s demographic characteristics is compared to other local and regional jurisdictions to determine existing and emerging trends.

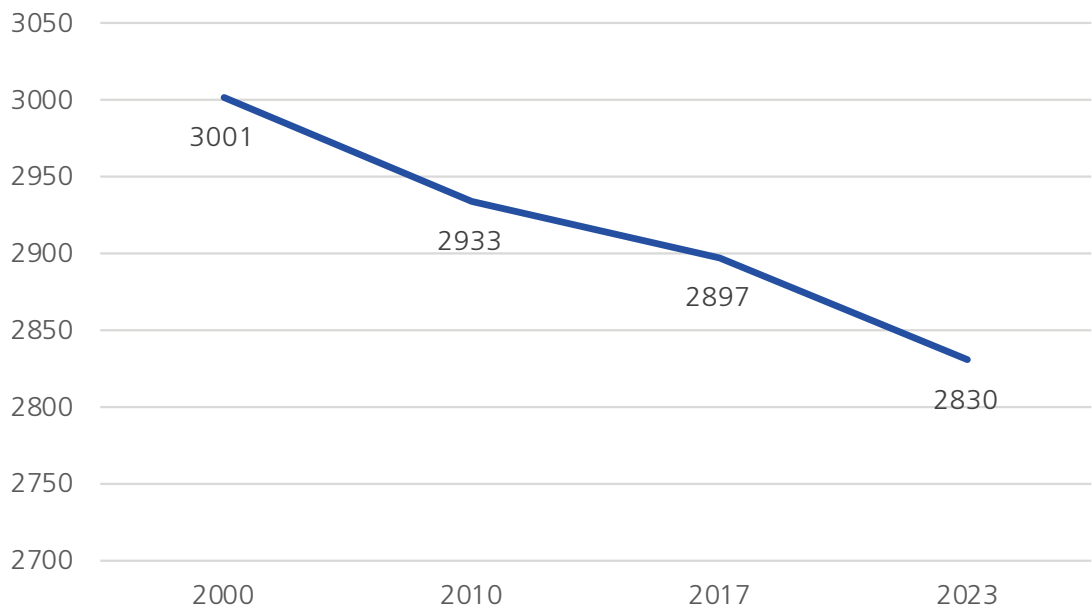
### POPULATION

The City of Gladwin had a population of 2,897 people in 2017 according to the American Community Survey (ACS)

estimates. Since 2000, the City has experienced a loss of an estimated 104 residents resulting in a 3.5% decline in population. In that same time period, a similar population decline occurred in Gladwin County (-2.8%) and the State of Michigan (-0.4%). However, the City of Beaverton, the only other city in the County, has seen an increase in the population of (7.8%) since 2000.

Demographic forecasts from ESRI, a proprietary demographic software program, forecast a continued decline in population through the year 2023, with an annual rate of -0.35%, or the loss of another 67 residents. Vital statistics for Gladwin County, published annually by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, indicates that in 2017 deaths in the County (360) were higher than births (245) resulting in net

**FIGURE 1: POPULATION PROJECTION**



Sources: Decennial census, ACS 2017 5 Year Estimates, ESRI

population loss, without in-migration, of 115 residents. This trend is present in most Michigan counties and local public schools have subsequently experienced lower student enrollment.

### Households

As of 2017, there were 1,267 total households in the City of Gladwin and they fell into two major categories: family and non-family households. Family households constituted the majority (60.5%) and non-family household comprised an estimated 39.5% of households. The percentage of family households in Gladwin was relatively low compared to the U.S. (65%), the State of Michigan (64.5%), and Gladwin County (65%). Despite a declining population in Gladwin, the average household size increased between 2010 to 2017. The average household size increased from 2.05 persons in 2010 to 2.20 persons in 2017, which is comparable to the County (2.28 persons) but lower than Michigan (2.49 persons) and the entire nation (2.63 persons). Population loss and a larger average household size can be partially explained by the decreasing percentage of non-family household residents which include households living alone, unmarried or same-sex couples,

and unrelated roommates living together. This household type has declined from (46.1%) in 2010 to (39.5%) in 2017.

### Age

The median age of Gladwin's population, as estimated by 2017 ACS data, was 37.8 years, a positive economic indicator because middle-aged persons are characterized as highly productive workers and within their family formation years. The neighboring City of Beaverton had a slightly higher median age of 39.2 years, and Gladwin County had a remarkably higher median age of 49.5 years. Gladwin and Beaverton's lower median age could be tied to more convenient access to shopping, schools, and employment opportunities that attract young families and professionals in the region. The median age in the City is getting younger, from 2010 to 2017 the median age decreased from 40.4 years to 37.8 years, a possible indication that the City is attracting a younger population due to area employment opportunities, or that households are having more children.

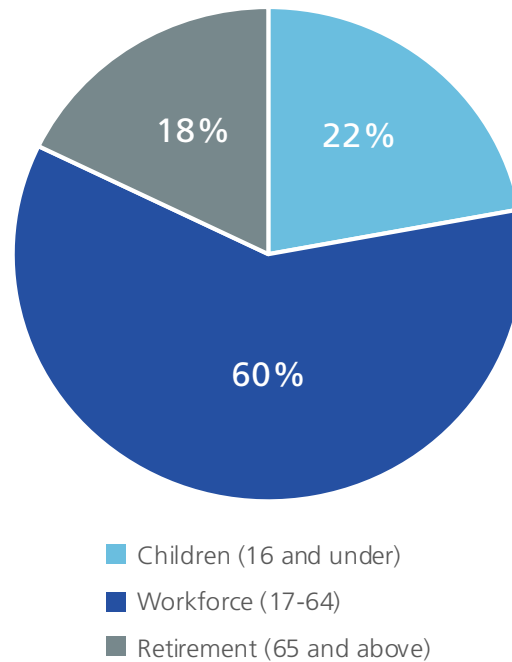
Children under 16 years and senior citizens over 65 years counts for 22.1% and 17.8% of the population, respectively. This means that more

than half (60.1%) of the population are adults, a slight increase of 1% over the timeframe of 2010 to 2017. While the group of retirement-aged persons decreased from 20.3% in 2010 to 17.8% in 2017, the children under the age of 16 increased from 20.6% in 2010 to 22.1% in 2017. Gladwin has a higher percentage of children under 16 years old when compared to the nation (20.3%), the State of Michigan (19.5%), Gladwin County (16.6%), and Beaverton City (17.6%). The declining rate of senior citizens above 65 years reinforces statewide trends that mortality rates in older age groups outpace births and in-migration rates, leading to a younger median age.

### Race & Ethnicity

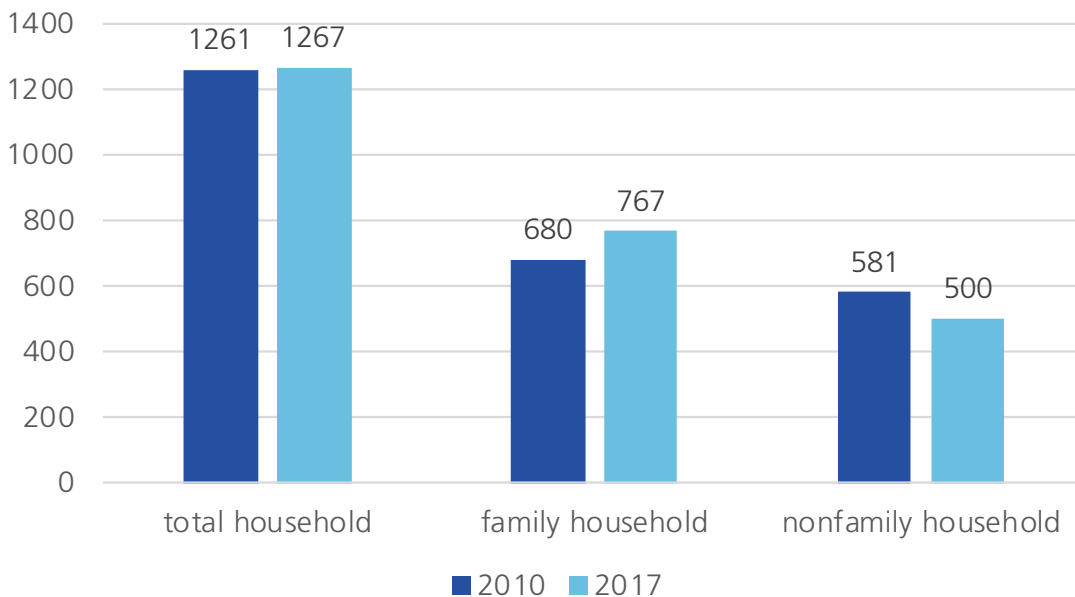
The City of Gladwin is racially homogeneous; 98% of the population identifies as “white alone,” which closely aligns with County and the City of Beaverton. Many trace their ancestry to German, English, and Irish roots. The other 2% mainly consists of African-American, native American, and Asian residents.

**FIGURE 3: AGE COHORTS IN GLADWIN CITY, 2017**



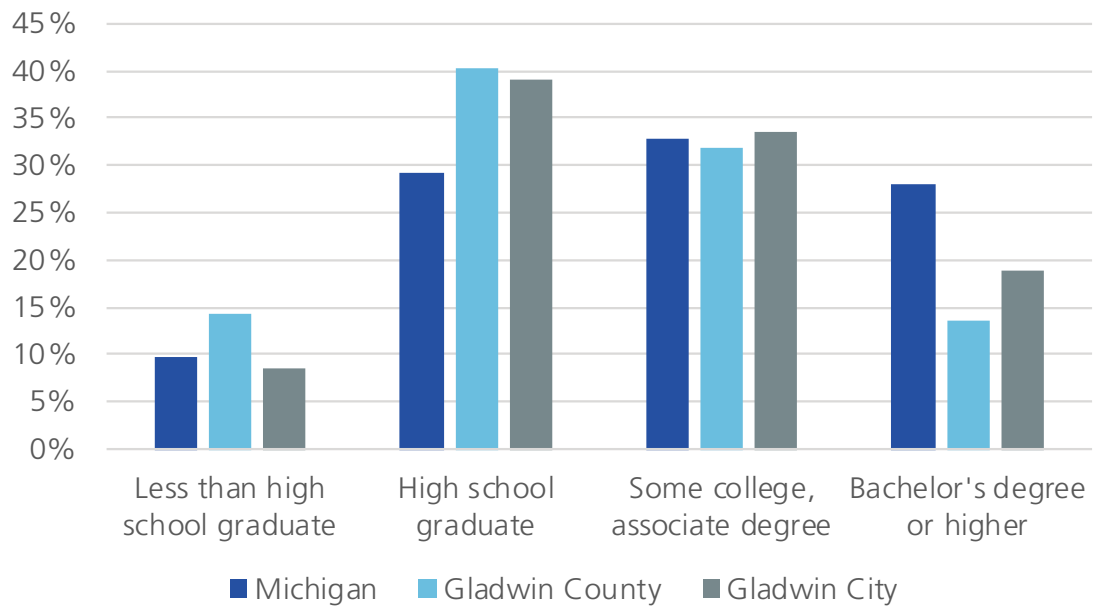
Sources: ACS 2017 5 Year Estimates

**FIGURE 2: HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS**



Sources: Decennial Census and ACS 2017 5 Year Estimates

**FIGURE 4: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT**



Sources: Acs 2017 5 Year Estimates

## SOCIOECONOMIC INDICATORS

Gladwin City had the lowest percentage of people without a high school diploma (8.6%) when compared to the nation (12.6%), Michigan (9.7%), Gladwin County (14.2%), and Beaverton City (14.0%). However, the highest proportion of residents had only a high school diploma (39%), followed by some college or associate degree (33.5%). The high number of people with some training beyond high school can be explained by the hands-on training offered by community colleges in the region which provide a curriculum that matches local employment trends and needs. Mid-Michigan College Technical Education Center (M-TEC) in Harrison, Delta College in Auburn, and Kirtland Community College in Roscommon are some examples of the colleges in the region that provide such training programs, a two-year degree, and other certifications. Based on the Division of Talent and Business Solutions Annual Report of 2015-2016, 11% of the Mid Michigan College -Technical Education Center participants were from Gladwin County.

Finally, those with a “bachelor’s degree or higher” accounted for 18.9% of the population, which is notably higher than Gladwin County and Beaverton, indicating that Gladwin has a stronger pull for the highly educated than elsewhere in the County.

### Household Income

The median household income in the City of Gladwin was \$31,926 in 2017, which was considerably lower than the nation (\$57,652), Michigan (\$52,668), and Gladwin County (\$40,971). The percentage of the population 16 years and over who were in the labor force is a barometer of economic health. In the City of Gladwin 55.8% of this age group was employed compared to a national rate of 63.4% and the State of Michigan rate of 61.2%. Although the City’s percentage was higher than Beaverton (50.1%) and the County (45.5%) it suggests that the overall workforce is aging. As the workforce ages and transitions into retirement the pool of disposable income can stabilize and/or decrease which impairs local business growth. In addition, local businesses may experience a shortage of available employees which could further cause the local economy to languish.

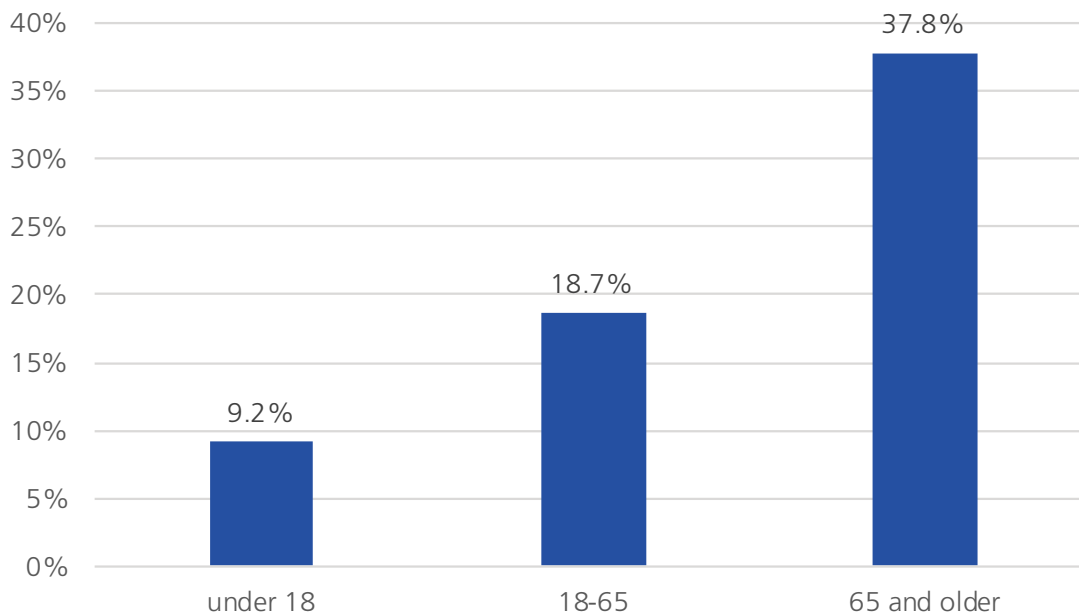
The low median income is further demonstrated by a high poverty rate. The poverty rate in the City of Gladwin was (27.8%) which is almost doubled the nation's rate (14.6%), and noticeably higher than the State (15.6%), and Gladwin County (20.2%). Another factor that could be correlated to high poverty rates is disability. In 2017, the City had an estimated 538 people, or 19.3% of the population, who were considered disabled, and many were likely on a limited, fixed income. The highest rate of disability is among those aged 65 years and older (37.8%), increasing their need for specialized services and their ability to earn additional wages.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Program (SAIPE) for 2018, 28.7% of school age children (5 to 17 years) in the Gladwin Community School district lived in poverty compared to 23.3% for the Beaverton School system. As a result, 57.6% of school children in the Gladwin Community School district were on free or a reduced-price lunch program.<sup>1</sup> County seat municipalities tend to have a proportionately higher percentage of households in poverty due to access to social and health-care related services provided by county and state agencies, and greater access to public transit.

Another indicator of local prosperity is a review of data compiled through the ALICE project coordinated by Michigan United Way. ALICE is an acronym for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed – households that earn more than the federal poverty level, but less than the County's basic cost of living (the ALICE Threshold, or "AT"). Combined, the number of poverty and ALICE households equals the total population struggling to afford basic needs. In Gladwin County, a one-person household needs to earn \$8.78 or more an hour (\$18,300 per year) to exceed the ALICE threshold. A family of two-adults with one infant and one pre-schooler needs to earn \$25.74 an hour to exceed the threshold. For the entire County, 29% of all households earn higher than the federal poverty level but less than the ALICE threshold.<sup>2</sup> Coupled with the 18% of households considered impoverished, the total percentage of households at or below the ALICE threshold is 47%, which means approximately one out of two households are struggling to make ends meet. For the City of Gladwin this percentage is 64%, which is higher than Gladwin Township (47%), Sage Township (42%), and Grout Township (35%).

The key to reducing the percentage of ALICE households is to retain and/

**FIGURE 5: DISABILITY BY AGE GROUP**



Sources: Acs 2017 5 Year Estimates

or create family-wage sustainable jobs with wages that are above the ALICE threshold, \$55,000 per year. Another strategy is to provide affordable, quality housing and community amenities, like a vibrant downtown, where people desire to live and work within the employment shed.

## Employment

Gladwin residents rely on employment offered by various business sectors in the region. A higher percentage of Gladwin residents work in the educational services, health care, and social assistance sectors, which employed 17.9% of workers in 2017. This is not surprising since Gladwin is the health care hub for the County.

The second largest employment sector for Gladwin residents is manufacturing, which employed 16% of the workforce. This may be partially explained by the high percentage of the workforce with a high school diploma who can quickly find a job in this field after graduation. However, new manufacturing processes typically necessitate a specialized certificate, associate's degree or bachelor's degree to manage the development

and oversight of production processes. Other sectors with high percentages of Gladwin workers are retail trade (12.3%) arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food service which account for 11.5%. The private sector provides 78.1% of the employment, while the government sector provides 11.5%. As a county seat, Gladwin has a higher proportion of government jobs than surrounding municipalities.

## Commuting

Most workers in the City of Gladwin use private cars to commute to work. An estimated 82.5% of people drive alone, and 7.1% of people carpool. The largest percentage of workers who do not rely on a personal vehicle walk to work (9.1%). This is a relatively high percentage and speaks well to the compactness and overall walkability of the City.

The County offers an appointment-based door-to-door service that runs by grouping requests for rides together with one vehicle. It is commonly used for medical appointments or to make a connection to another County's transit system. Another way to improve

**TABLE 1: EMPLOYMENT SECTORS**

EMPLOYMENT SECTOR	GLADWIN CITY	GLADWIN COUNTY
Agriculture and forestry	6.3%	3.6%
Construction	5.9%	9.7%
Manufacturing	16.0%	20.2%
Wholesale trade	1.0%	1.9%
Retail trade	12.3%	12.3%
Transportation and warehousing	3.1%	4.6%
Information	0.8%	0.7%
Finance, insurance, and real estate	9.2%	5.5%
Professional, scientific, and management	5.6%	5.0%
Educational services and health care	17.9%	20.0%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	11.5%	7.8%
Public administration	2.5%	5.3%
Other services	7.8%	3.4%

Source: 2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates

access to work is to remove the commute altogether. There is room for improvement here since no one reported “working from home” in 2017, a rarity in today’s economy.

## HOUSING

In the beginning of 2019, a housing needs assessment was conducted by Community Research Services, LLC. Unless otherwise cited, all of the data used below comes from this assessment. According to the report, a strong housing market would be described as having the widest range of options for the widest range of household types. While shelter is something that everyone needs to survive, its production is still dependent on market forces which include the area’s demographics, financial circumstances, and economic conditions. The analysis draws on a primary market area that is larger than the City of Gladwin because like most markets, it crosses multiple jurisdictions. The primary market area includes the City and the eight townships in central Gladwin County:

- » Gladwin Township
- » Sage Township

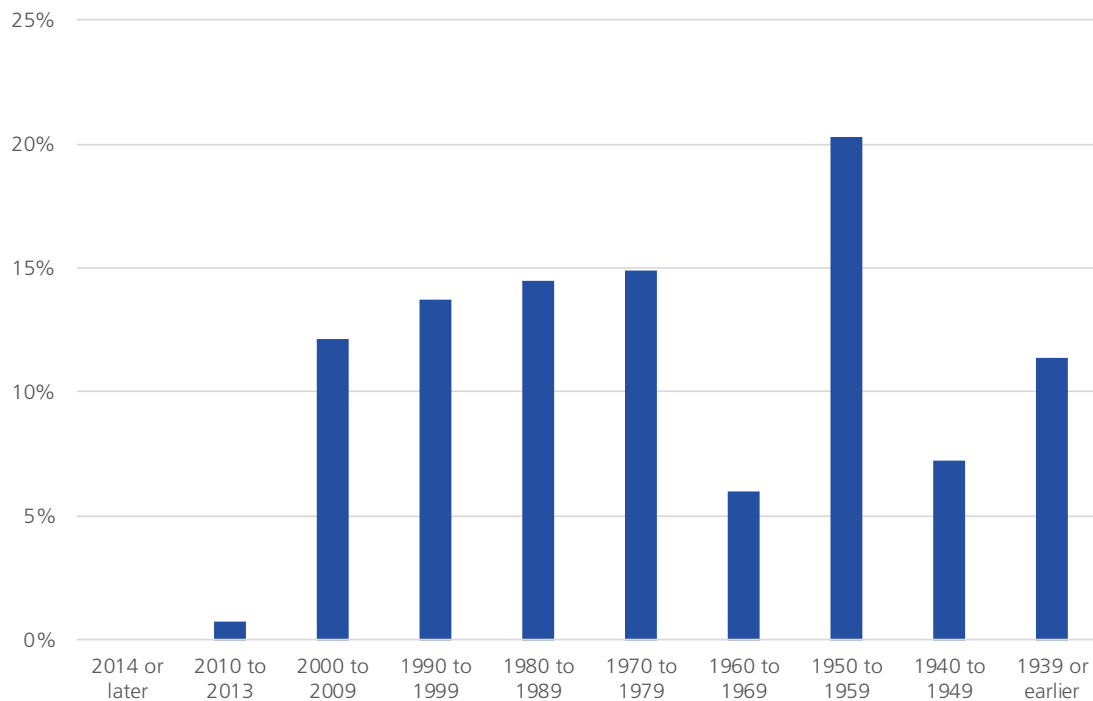
- » Grout Township
- » Buckeye Township
- » Hay Township
- » Secord Township
- » Sherman Township
- » Butman Township

Within this geography, two primary markets were examined: senior rental housing and workforce housing.

### Age of Housing Stock

Housing stock in Gladwin in aging. The graph “Age of Housing Stock” shows that the highest proportion of housing units were built between 1950 and 1959. Cumulatively, 60% of the housing stock is between 40 to 50 years old (built in 1979 or earlier). In the last decade, very few units have been built as a result of two major events: the Great Recession which started in the mortgage industry, and the Lost Decade in Michigan (2000-2010), both of which created an inhospitable environment for home building. As a result, the average age of homes has increased, and newer homes with modern amenities are lacking. The

**FIGURE 6: AGE OF HOUSING STOCK**



Source: 2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates

market is now rebounding and trying to catch up but has not necessarily generated a housing construction boom in small rural cities.

### Demographics that Influence Housing Construction

The Housing Needs Assessment reviewed the migration patterns to see if the market area can expect to see population gains or losses. Gladwin County's migration trends show that communities adjacent to the City of Gladwin have a competitive advantage in terms of housing and employment opportunities and the outcome has been population loss to the surrounding townships—Grout, Sage, and Sherman. The City has received local newcomers from Beaverton Township and some from the Detroit metro area for different reasons; the former for more housing variety and the latter likely for second homes or retirement, not to join the labor force. City and countywide projections for 2023 anticipate a shrinking population. Those leaving are likely Millennials, moving to other parts of the State.

Wages are another factor that influence the number and types of homes that are feasible to build. In Gladwin County, between 2010 and 2017, wages grew nominally but not enough to keep pace with inflation. Despite an increase in jobs and reduced unemployment rates, wage growth has been insufficient to expand household's purchasing power. Pricing and housing features have to reflect what households can afford to have a positive impact for residents.

The aging population is also of note because seniors typically require specific housing products. Ideally, communities have the highest concentration of children and young adults who are in family formation years. The Gladwin area is expected to see the senior age cohort grow to 30% of the population by 2023, which would be one of the largest senior populations in central Michigan compared to similarly sized communities. Another consideration is that the average household size for seniors is

rising in Gladwin County, suggesting longer lifespans and senior couples living as independent households. If trends continue, the market area runs the risk of a significant senior population by 2040 that could severely alter the community's character.

### Tenure & Vacancy

For a rural market, the percent of renter-occupied units is relatively low (18% of households) where many of the 1,131 rental units are clustered in the City of Gladwin. An estimated 60% were subsidized or rent restricted, and 13% of the area's rentals are mobile homes, typically occupied by low-income households. Consequently, a gap in rentals for the workforce who earn 60%-120% of the area median income, \$50,000, has formed. The high vacancy rate of 39% from 2010, primarily from seasonal or recreation units, limits the supply of rentals for moderate income families and hinders their ability to move into the area.

Homeownership has fallen since the Great Recession and is expected to continue to drop over the next decade. Many Millennials' financial circumstances prevent them from purchasing homes at the same life stage as previous generations and regardless of income some are choosing to rent for preferred mobility and flexibility. Possibly as a result, some single-family homes and duplexes have converted into rentals. According to the American Community Survey, an estimated 293 owner-occupied homes are considered substandard and are likely contenders for demolition or conversion to rentals. Unlike the popularity for three-bedroom homes for sale, demand for rentals is shifting towards one- and two-bedroom units.

Little is known about rentals downtown. Converting second story units downtown is a well-known way to increase housing variety, build foot traffic downtown, and improve cash flow for building owners. An inventory of downtown units is recommended to determine if any can be used for housing.

**TABLE 2: RENTALS**

SUBSIDIZED UNITS	SENIOR SUBSIDIZED UNITS	MARKET RATE SENIOR	MARKET RATE	MOBILE/ MANUFACTURED HOME COMMUNITIES
North Cedar Crest (20)	Maple Manor (50)	The Brook (42)	Village North (32)	Lakeshore Village (29)
Village East (48)	Antler Arms (60)			Greenbriar (69)
Chatterton (24)	Cedar Village I & II (36)			Riverview Mobile Park (48)
Foster (24)				Gladwin Village (12)
				Key Mobile Home Court (32)

Source: Community Research Services, LLC Housing Needs Assessment 2019

**TABLE 3: HOMES FOR SALE**

	# FOR SALE	AVG. PRICE	MEDIAN PRICE	AVG. SIZE	AVG. PRICE / SQ. FT.
1-bedroom	3	\$31,107	\$34,500	520	\$59.82
2-bedroom	37	\$109,691	\$93,921	1,067	\$102.80
3-bedroom	73	\$177,035	\$159,800	1,772	\$99.91
4-bedroom	27	\$254,076	\$217,850	2,846	\$89.27
Total	140	\$171,089	\$145,450	1,766	\$96.89

Source: Community Research Services, LLC Housing Needs Assessment 2019

**TABLE 4: HOMES SOLD**

	SOLD	AVG. PRICE	MEDIAN PRICE	AVG. DISCOUNT FROM LIST	AVG. DAYS ON MARKET
Total	48	\$140,841	\$133,450	-10.6%	174

Source: Community Research Services, LLC Housing Needs Assessment 2019

**What’s on the Market?**

Between October and March, 2019, 140 homes were up for sale on Realtor.com. The numbers from the table “For Sale” demonstrate a preference for 3-bedroom homes with a median sales price of close to \$160,000. Within the market area, 30% of homes sold for less than \$100,000, and the majority sold between \$100,000-\$200,000. This means that people who want to buy close to the City and have a moderate income have a narrow selection.

The number of homes sold is low compared to the number of homes up for sale. Potential causes for this imbalance is low demand, constrained economic growth and stagnating wages, a shrinking community, and a limited supply of homes with modern features. The homes that have sold skew geographically towards waterfront properties and near recreational areas but these were higher priced units.

The price of rentals on the market have not changed dramatically over time.

**TABLE 5: RENTAL DEMAND MARKET**

TARGET MARKET	TARGET INCOMES	PRICING	PROJECT SIZE	UNIT TYPE
Workforce housing	\$15,00-\$40,000 - affordable \$30,000 - \$75,000 market rate	\$600-\$900 - 1 BD \$725-\$1,050 - 2 BD	40-60 units	1-2 bedroom, modern rental similar to Midland
Senior rentals	\$10,000 - \$28,000 - affordable \$25,000 - \$75,000 - market rate	\$500-\$850 – 1 BD \$650-\$975 – 2 BD	20-30 units	1-2 bedroom, modern rental similar to Midland

Source: Community Research Services, LLC Housing Needs Assessment 2019

**TABLE 6: SECOND FLOOR RESIDENTIAL DWELLING UNITS**

ADDRESS	DWELLING UNITS
124 East Maple St	1 occupied
111 East Cedar Ave	3 occupied
136 West Cedar Ave	1 occupied
132 West Cedar Ave	1-2 apartments
234 West Cedar Ave	1 occupied
222 West Cedar Ave	1 occupied
218 West Cedar Ave	1-2 occupied
212 West Cedar Ave	1 occupied, 2 vacant
312 West Cedar Ave	1 occupied
127 East Maple St	2 occupied
101 West Cedar Ave	1-2 occupied
105 West Cedar Ave	3 occupied
121 West Cedar Ave	1-2 occupied
139 West Cedar Ave	1 vacant
201 West Cedar Ave	1-2 vacant
215 West Cedar Ave	1 vacant
239 West Cedar Ave	1 occupied
247 West Cedar Ave	1 occupied, 2 vacant
309 West Cedar Ave	1 unit vacant
327 West Cedar Ave	1 occupied
343 West Cedar Ave	3 vacant
500 West Cedar Ave	1 occupied
411 East Cedar Ave	1 vacant

Between 2010 and 2017, the median gross rent for the primary market area increased by \$36. A stable rental market is important as it is generally a precursor to homeownership.

The analysis reveals that the largest missing component from the housing market is a variety of rentals. There is demand for affordable, market rate, and senior rental housing. Affordable units would be aimed at households earning 50% to 60% of the area median income. Market rate rentals should remain moderately priced to accommodate households earning 60%-120% of the area median income. These could come in the form of garden apartments or townhomes. Senior rentals are also lacking both affordable and market rate units. Demand potential exists for independent living for seniors ages 65 and older in one- to two-bedroom single-story structures with community space.

**Second Floor Residential**

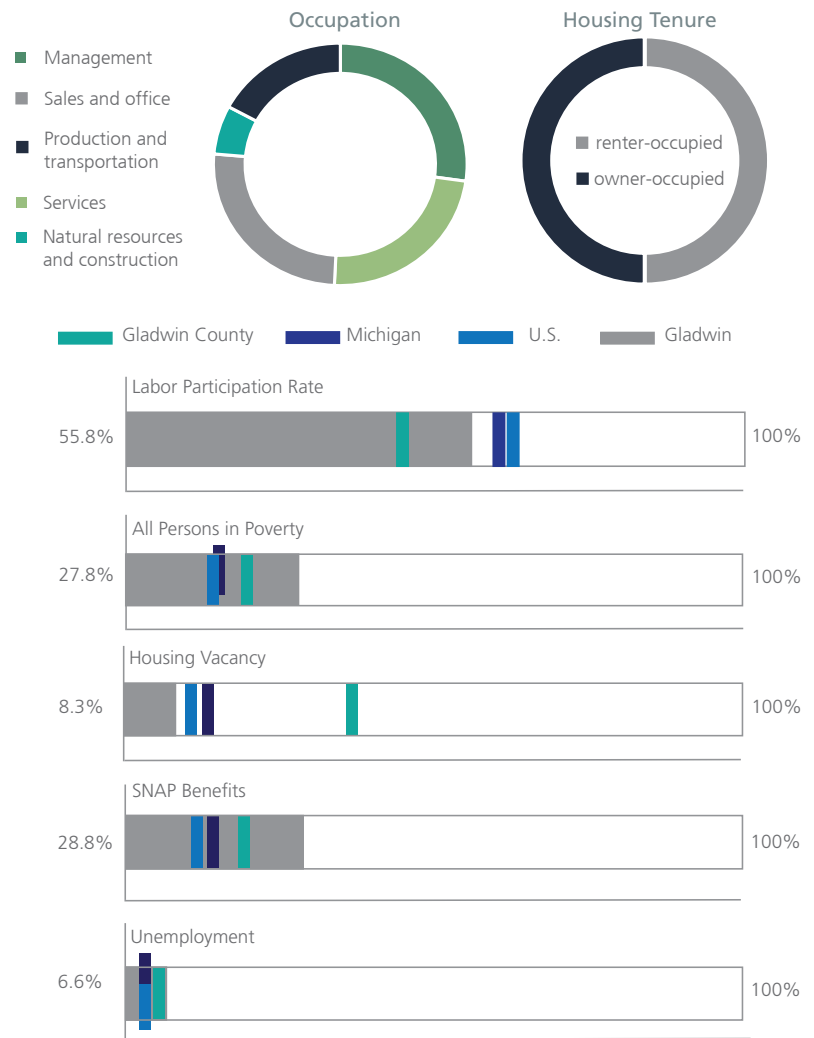
The City of Gladwin’s zoning code allows for the second floor of buildings within the “Central Business District” designation to be used for residential purposes. Several second floors in the community’s commercial core are used in this way as of 2019. Most of these units are clustered in buildings along Cedar Avenue between Silverleaf Street and Bowery Avenue in the community’s downtown blocks. According to a 2019 survey, there are about 39 second floor dwelling units in the City, roughly 27 of

which were occupied and 12 of which were vacant. Second floor residential uses in otherwise commercial buildings are often seen as beneficial because they provide compact and flexible living space and accommodate a variety of lifestyles, put residents, employment, and businesses in proximity, and augment housing variety in communities with otherwise uniform single-family neighborhoods. The City should continue to work with downtown property owners to promote more second story housing and revitalize vacant units.

## SUMMARY

Gladwin has experienced and will likely continue to experience population decline over the next five years. On a positive note, the median age is dropping despite population loss which suggests an expanding proportion of youth. As a Rising Tide community, median household incomes are low and poverty rates are high. This has an impact on the housing market. The Housing Needs Assessment showed that ownership rates have fallen, partially because there is a gap between what residents can afford and what new construction costs. As such, a more varied housing stock is recommended to help bring the cost of homeownership down. On the flip side, rentership is growing in popularity, but the City lacks market rate options for its residents; most rentals are subsidized. Moreover, as the senior population grows, the City should start considering how to house them so that they can age in place.

FIGURE 7: DEMOGRAPHIC DASHBOARD



## SOURCES

- 1 MI School Data. Free And Reduced Lunch Counts. <https://www.mischooldata.org/Other2/DataFiles/StudentCounts/HistoricalFreeAndReducedLunchCounts.aspx>
- 2 ALICE® Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed, Michigan, United Ways of Michigan, Winter 2017

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## EXISTING LAND USE



### THE PURPOSE OF EXISTING LAND USE ANALYSIS

Land use is a central component in a Master Plan as it reflects how a community developed and shapes how a community will develop or redevelop in the future. The building footprints, their density, and distribution is what defines the city's physical shape and development patterns. Much of what defines quality of life is based on how to manage land so that it promotes the health, safety, and general welfare of its residents. Reviewing land uses helps determine broadly where land is constrained and where opportunities exist, where and how the built environment interacts with nature, and where and how people live, move, work, shop, and socialize.

The Existing Land Use map analyzes the distribution of various land use categories: agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial, and exempt. In a Master Plan the land use element is composed of two parts: Existing Land Use Map (ELUM) with a close examination on current land use categories, and the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) that provides a framework for implementing the land use vision and a tool for guiding development decisions (the FLUM is included in the Implementation chapter).

### EXISTING LAND USE DISTRIBUTION

The City of Gladwin has natural and physical features that explain how land use is distributed. The Cedar River runs through the south-west part of the City,

and two state highways M-61 (east-west) and M-18 (north-south) crisscross to form an opportune spot for a traditional downtown. Starting at that intersection, development is denser in the center and disperses as it approaches the city limits. Furthermore, the highways divided the City into sections which have distinctive features; the northwest section between M-61 and M-18 is mainly residential, the northeast section between M-61 and M-18 is mainly commercial and industrial, and the south section which is bounded by M-61 and Cedar River is mostly natural open areas with some residential. A large portion of the City's exterior perimeter is undeveloped and characterized by forested area, wetlands, marshes, open areas, and rangelands which give the City a special countryside charm.

## EXISTING LAND USE CATEGORIES

In Gladwin City, the land use categories used by the assessor are the following:

- » Residential
- » Commercial
- » Industrial
- » Exempt

## Residential

Residential areas are the largest land use in the City, covering 659 acres, around 41.5% of the total land. Most of the residential developments are laid out on a grid system, which is the most efficient and walkable pattern for a municipality to use. Residential uses consist of several housing types: single-family residential, multiple-family residential, and mobile homes. Single-family residential is the most common residential type in the City and primarily located close to the downtown core and north quadrant of the City. The multi-family residential are mid-rise buildings or two-to-three story apartments; the two mid-rise buildings are senior apartments located close to the downtown and the mobile home park is located on the north side of the City. According to the assessor's data, 10.4% of the residential lands are vacant. Some of these parcels are smaller in size and scattered around the City creating an opportunity for infill developments. Using residential vacant land is one way to accommodate the variety of housing types demanded in the Housing Needs Assessment.

## Commercial

The commercial uses in the City follow a linear pattern, mainly clustered along

**TABLE 7: EXISTING LAND USE CATEGORIES**

LAND USE CATEGORY	NUMBER OF PARCELS	TOTAL ACREAGE	PERCENTAGE OF LAND
Residential	1030	658.8	41.5%
Residential Improved	907	493.6	31.1%
Residential Vacant	123	165.2	10.4%
Commercial	250	276.4	17.4%
Commercial Improved	190	212.1	13.4%
Commercial Vacant	60	64.3	4.1%
Industrial	16	56.2	3.5%
Industrial Improved	11	49.2	3.1%
Industrial Vacant	5	7.0	0.4%
Exempt	192	596.6	37.6%
State	9	8.8	0.6%
City/Township/Village	144	425.9	26.8%
Schools	6	65.7	4.1%
Religious	23	42.0	2.6%
Other	10	54.2	3.4%



major roads: M-61 and M-18. The commercial district provides services and goods to residents and the region due to the convenient access of state highways. Commercial developments cover 276 acres, around 17.4% of the total land, while commercial vacant lands account for 4.1% which equates to 60 parcels distributed in various locations.

### Industrial

Industrial uses cover the least amount of land, 56.2 acres or about 3.5% of the total land. The industrial park is located on the east side of the City along Industrial Drive, just north of the City's airport. There are five vacant industrial parcels that account for 0.4% of the land.

### Exempt

Exempt land use is the second largest land use in the City after residential. It covers 597 acres roughly 37.6% total of the land. Exempt lands consist of public and semi-public properties such as religious institutions, schools, parks, and governmental organizations, and therefore do not produce property tax revenue to the City's general fund like other uses.

The largest sector of the exempt land is owned by the State of Michigan or the City of Gladwin. As the county seat, it is unsurprising to have a disproportionate percentage of governmental uses, considering the County Sheriff's Department, State Police, Gladwin Rural-Urban Fire Protection District, Department of Public Work, City Housing Commission, Gladwin City and County Transit Corporation, Gladwin County Library, and the Gladwin Zettel Memorial Airport are located in the City. The Gladwin Zettel Memorial Airport is a small size airport located in the south east quadrant of the City. It covers 300 acres of land with two runways.<sup>1,2</sup>

## SUMMARY

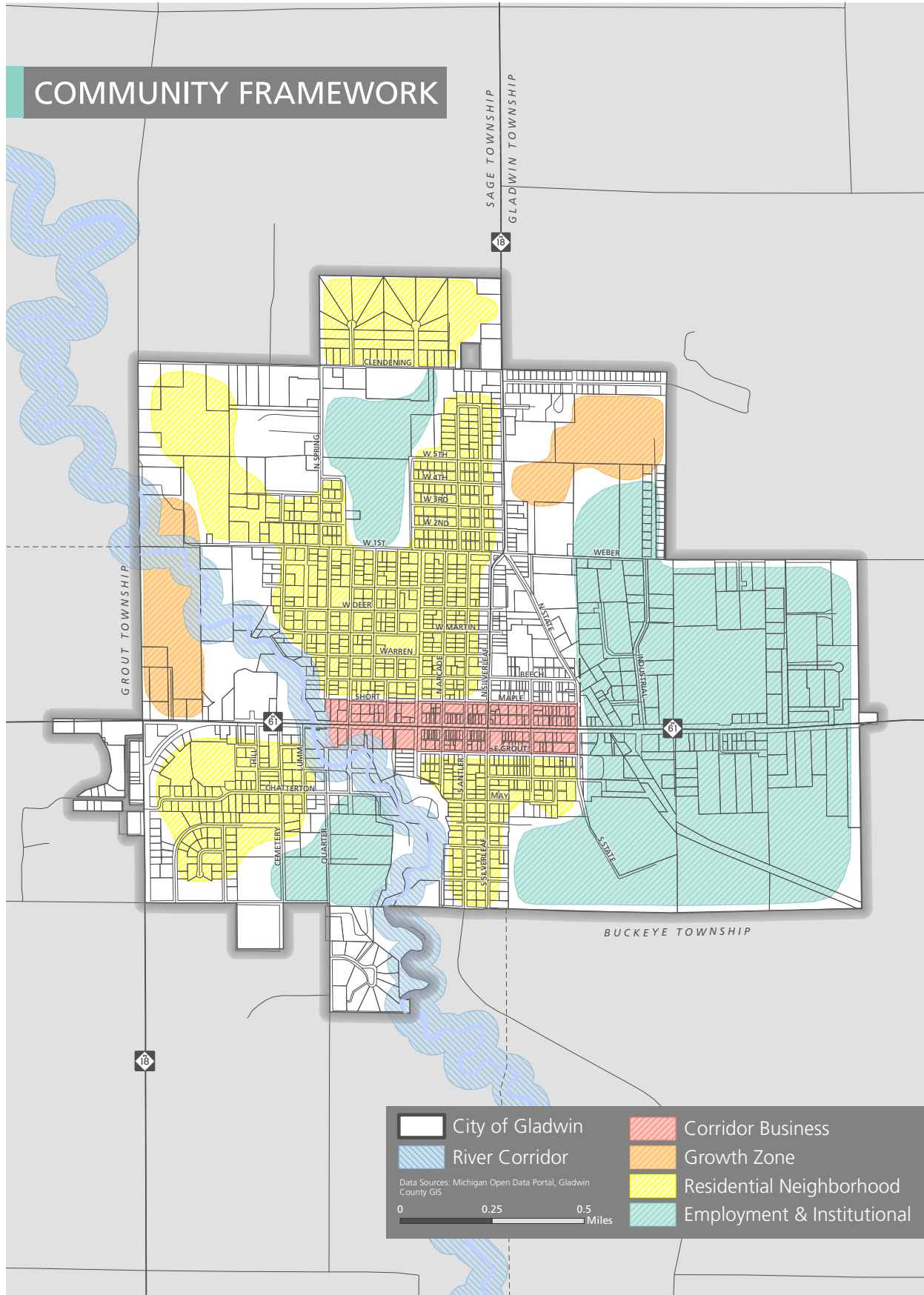
When reviewed in its totality, the City can be segmented into five community districts: Corridor Business, Employment and Institutional, Residential Neighborhoods, Growth Zones, and River Corridor. The Community Framework map illustrates the location of these generalized land use groups. The central core accommodates the business district and traditional downtown along Cedar Street (M-61). Adjacent to the business core are three residential neighborhoods: two south of M-61 and a large neighborhood in the northwest quadrant of the City. Adjacent to the residential neighborhoods are the Employment and Institutional Zones which accommodate local employers, the Gladwin Zettel Memorial Airport, public school facilities, and Mid-Michigan Health Care. On the extreme west and northeast of the City are the remaining areas classified as residential vacant that are positioned for new development. Lastly, along the Cedar River are a concentration of public properties that create a defined riverscape that transects the community from the northwest to southeast.

The Community Framework map visually indicates that the City is fairly well built out. Although there are several large parcels that can accommodate future residential development, preservation of existing residential neighborhoods needs to be carefully considered. Since Gladwin is the county seat, employment center efforts to maximize available properties on the eastern edge of the community for future employment opportunities seems reasonable. Lastly, the Business Core is linear, not terribly deep, but compact which requires a balance between pedestrian amenities, parking, and traffic.

## SOURCES

- 1 Federal Aviation Administration. Aeronautical Information Services. <https://nfdc.faa.gov/nfdcApps/services/ajv5/airportDisplay.jsp?airportId=GDW>
- 2 Airport IQ 5010. Airport Master Records and Reports. <https://www.gcr1.com/5010web/airport.cfm?Site=GDW>

# MAP 3: COMMUNITY FRAMEWORK MAP



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4



# NATURAL FEATURES

Historically, natural resources have been neglected in the face of development. Only recently have natural resources become recognized as a system to be integrated into the built environment, and that their incorporation and preservation can actually improve quality of life and the economic environment for local business. The global recognition of climate change is a warning that preserving and restoring natural resources and cultivating an understanding of their mutual benefits cannot wait. In Gladwin, natural features are a prominent part of the local identity and economy. Its rich natural resources have been at the base of its economy, and a source of recreation. In this section, an inventory of natural resources helps to understand where and how to preserve them while

maintaining the City's character and plans for responsible future growth.

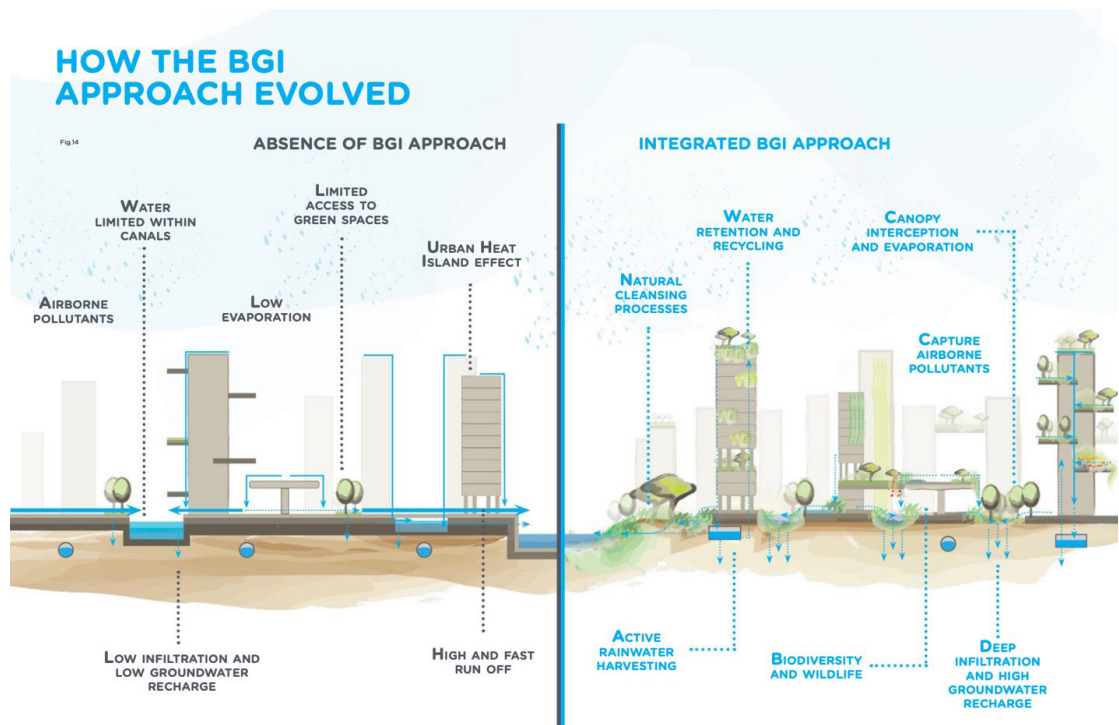
## ONE INTEGRATED SYSTEM

Modern best planning practices view manmade and natural infrastructures as two parts of one system. The conventional "grey" infrastructure refers to the essential manufactured structures that collect and convey stormwater and sewage. Examples include impervious surfaces like streets and sidewalks, storm drains, and the machinery that treats and discharges water. "Green" infrastructure such as grassland, woodlands, and rain gardens absorb stormwater through a natural hydrologic and purification process. "Blue" infrastructure such as rivers, wetlands, and ponds harvest and

**FIGURE 8: TRANSITION FROM CONVENTIONAL GREY INFRASTRUCTURE TO BLUE-GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE**



**FIGURE 9: HOW THE BLUE-GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE APPROACH EVOLVED**



Source: Livable Cities Lab

retain stormwater and channel water to a common endpoint within the watershed.

A purely “grey” approach is incomplete solution for handling stormwater. One of its major drawbacks is that when water hits pavement, it carries contaminants, pesticides, and fertilizers to local water bodies so that hard impervious surfaces tend to reduce water quality. Built infrastructure can be improved when “greening the grey” strategies are implemented, particularly in high density urban developments.<sup>1</sup> Blue-green infrastructure effectively reduces the instances of stormwater runoff by absorbing and removing pollutants as it infiltrates the soil. Employing

improvements to the conventional gray infrastructure, and integrating it with the blue-green infrastructure system can help improve Gladwin’s capacity to handle excessive rainfall, snowmelt, and mitigate the negative effects of flooding.

### IMPERVIOUS SURFACE

Impervious surface cover is a helpful indicator for land use and watershed planning.<sup>2</sup> Impervious surfaces are impermeable constructed hard surfaces such as asphalt and concrete that do not allow rainfall or snowmelt to infiltrate the soil or recharge groundwater.<sup>3</sup> The “Impervious Surfaces” map indicates where the highest percentage of the



impervious surface exists on a scale of 1% to 100% coverage. As expected, the downtown area, commercial, and industrial areas have the highest proportions of impervious surfaces due to parking lots, roads, and large rooftops. The lowest percentage of impervious surfaces are mostly around single-family residential areas and open spaces, which allow for rainwater to seep into the ground and eventually recharge the ground water. Where impervious surface coverage is high, it is worth investigating other strategies to collect rain water on site and to reduce the amount of water that reaches the storm drains.

## WATERSHEDS

Gladwin is a part of the Saginaw Bay Watershed, one of the largest watersheds in the State of Michigan covering nearly 8,700 square miles. The Saginaw Bay Watershed supports 1.4 million people in 22 counties, as well as diverse wildlife.<sup>4</sup> The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines a watershed as the land area that drains to one stream, lake, or river and eventually to a common waterbody, explaining further that all land and people are a part of a watershed.<sup>5</sup>

The Saginaw Bay Watershed is home to more than 138 endangered or threatened species but the U.S. Fish and

**TABLE 8: ENDANGERED OR THREATENED SPECIES IN GLADWIN COUNTY**

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	STATE STATUS	OCCURRENCES IN COUNTY	LAST OBSERVED IN COUNTY
<i>Bombus terricola</i>	Yellow banded bumble bee	Special Concern	1	1926
<i>Lasmigona compressa</i>	Creek heelsplitter	Special Concern	1	1926
<i>Villosa iris</i>	Rainbow Mussel	Special Concern	1	1926
<i>Notropis anogenus</i>	Pugnose shiner	Endangered	1	1953
<i>Bombus affinis</i>	Rusty-patched bumble bee	Special Concern*	1	1959
<i>Penstemon pallidus</i>	Pale beard tongue	Special Concern	1	1959
<i>Cambarus robustus</i>	Big water crayfish	Special Concern	2	1968
<i>Alasmidonta marginata</i>	Elktoe	Special Concern	3	1981
<i>Alasmidonta viridis</i>	Slippershell	Threatened	7	1981
<i>Venustaconcha ellipsiformis</i>	Ellipse	Special Concern	12	1981
<i>Stylurus laurae</i>	Laura's snaketail	Special Concern	1	1997
<i>Clemmys guttata</i>	Spotted turtle	Threatened	1	1998
<i>Buteo lineatus</i>	Red-shouldered hawk	Threatened	2	2003
<i>Ammodramus henslowii</i>	Henslow's sparrow	Endangered	1	2007
<i>Gavia immer</i>	Common loon	Threatened	5	2013
<i>Glyptemys insculpta</i>	Wood turtle	Special Concern	4	2013
<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Bald eagle	Special Concern	16	2017
<i>Emydoidea blandingii</i>	Blanding's turtle	Special Concern	4	2018

\*Its federal status is endangered. Sources: MSU. Michigan Natural Features Inventory. County Element Data



*Natural beauty surrounds the City of Gladwin.*

*Source: Pure Gladwin County*

Wildlife Services lists only one species as threatened in Gladwin County: the Northern Long-Eared Bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*).<sup>6</sup> The Michigan Natural Features Inventory includes threatened and endangered species that were recorded historically in the County and should be considered when developing land use plans that could destroy more of their habitat.<sup>7</sup>

A healthy watershed ultimately means a safe habitat for wildlife, productive fisheries, and clean drinking water. The health of the watershed is heavily affected by the surrounding types of land use. The ecological health of the Saginaw Bay Watershed and its tributaries is critically important because it connects to Lake Huron and the entire Great Lakes ecosystem. The City of Gladwin is only considered a small fraction of the Saginaw Bay Watershed, nonetheless, it is essential that the City understands how its zoning ordinances, local policies, and land uses contribute to the loss of or degradation of its watershed.<sup>8</sup>

## WETLANDS

Wetlands are defined by the surface area that is saturated with water seasonally or all year, also known as marshes, swamps, bogs, and fens and can be thought of as “a crucial part of a community’s natural plumbing system.”<sup>9</sup> According to the 1991 United States Fish and Wildlife Service Status and Trends Report, over 50% of Michigan’s original wetlands have been drained or filled.<sup>10</sup> Wetlands that are connected to a Great Lake or are within a certain distance from inland bodies of water, and are greater than 5 acres are protected by the State and federal government.<sup>11</sup> Wetlands that are less than 5 acres in size can be protected through local regulations.

Wetlands provide a range of ecosystem services. When it comes to water management, they significantly help to reduce flood heights, control soil erosion, recharge ground water, and remove pollutants and sediments from water. They are also a safe habitat for threatened and



endangered wildlife and fish. In the United States more than one-third of all threatened or endangered animal species depend on wetlands or live in them.<sup>12</sup> Wetlands also directly impact the health of the watersheds so restoring degraded wetlands to their natural state is essential to preserve and sustain the ecosystem.<sup>13</sup> If planned correctly, wetlands can also serve as a beautiful centerpiece to recreational open space.

The “Wetlands” map identifies three types of wetlands: freshwater emergent, freshwater forested/shrub, and the potential restoration areas. The largest portion of wetland is the potential restoration areas that cover about 715 acres of the land covering the northern, eastern, and southern parts of the City. These wetlands have been impacted by development and in some instances have already been degraded to an extent where they are not fully functioning. However, other areas may be positioned for restoration and restorative strategies should be evaluated. The next largest type of wetland is called “freshwater/forest shrub” and covers 120 acres and are scattered around the City. Freshwater emergent wetlands cover the least land at 5.7 acres.

## FLOODPLAIN

The floodplain area traces the Cedar River that runs through the southwest part of the City and then joins the Tobacco River which flows into the Tittabawassee River and eventually into Saginaw River to Lake Huron. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) defines the floodplain area, also known as special flood hazard area (SFHA) or base floodplain, as the area that has a 1 in 100 chance (1% probability) of being equaled or exceeded in any year.<sup>14</sup> Despite this definition, any parcel is subject to flooding, but parcels that intersect with the SFHA are considered to signal a heightened risk. FEMA established minimum floodplain management regulations for communities to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) for the SFHA. Fortunately, the Cedar River area is mostly surrounded by open spaces with few developments built

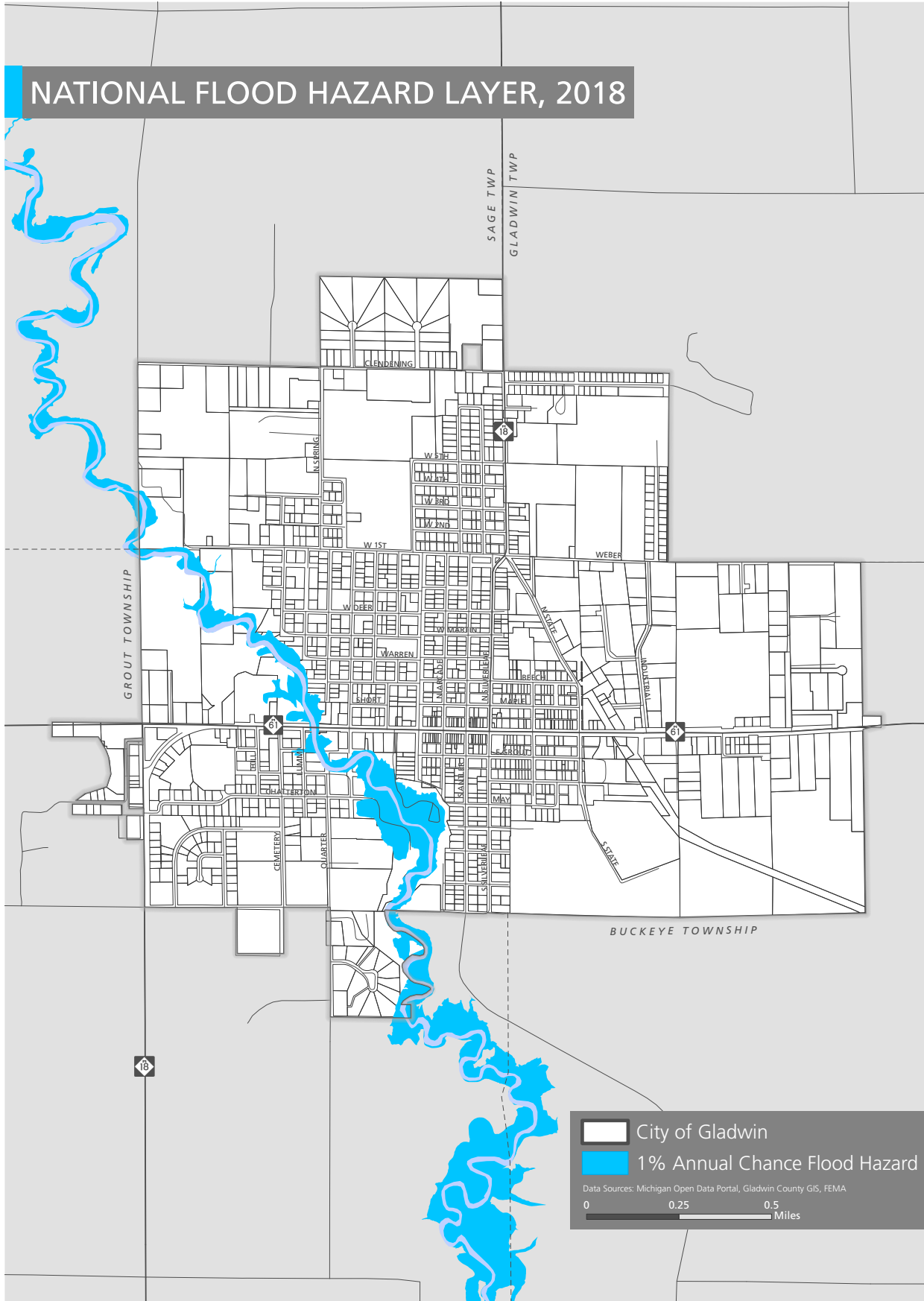
within the SFHA. It is essential to continue to preserve the SFHA for open spaces and recreational uses to prevent flooding from harming people and properties. It is also important to remember that floodplains have generally expanded over time, so parcels adjacent to the SFHA are likely at higher risk of flooding than previously noted.

## GROUNDWATER

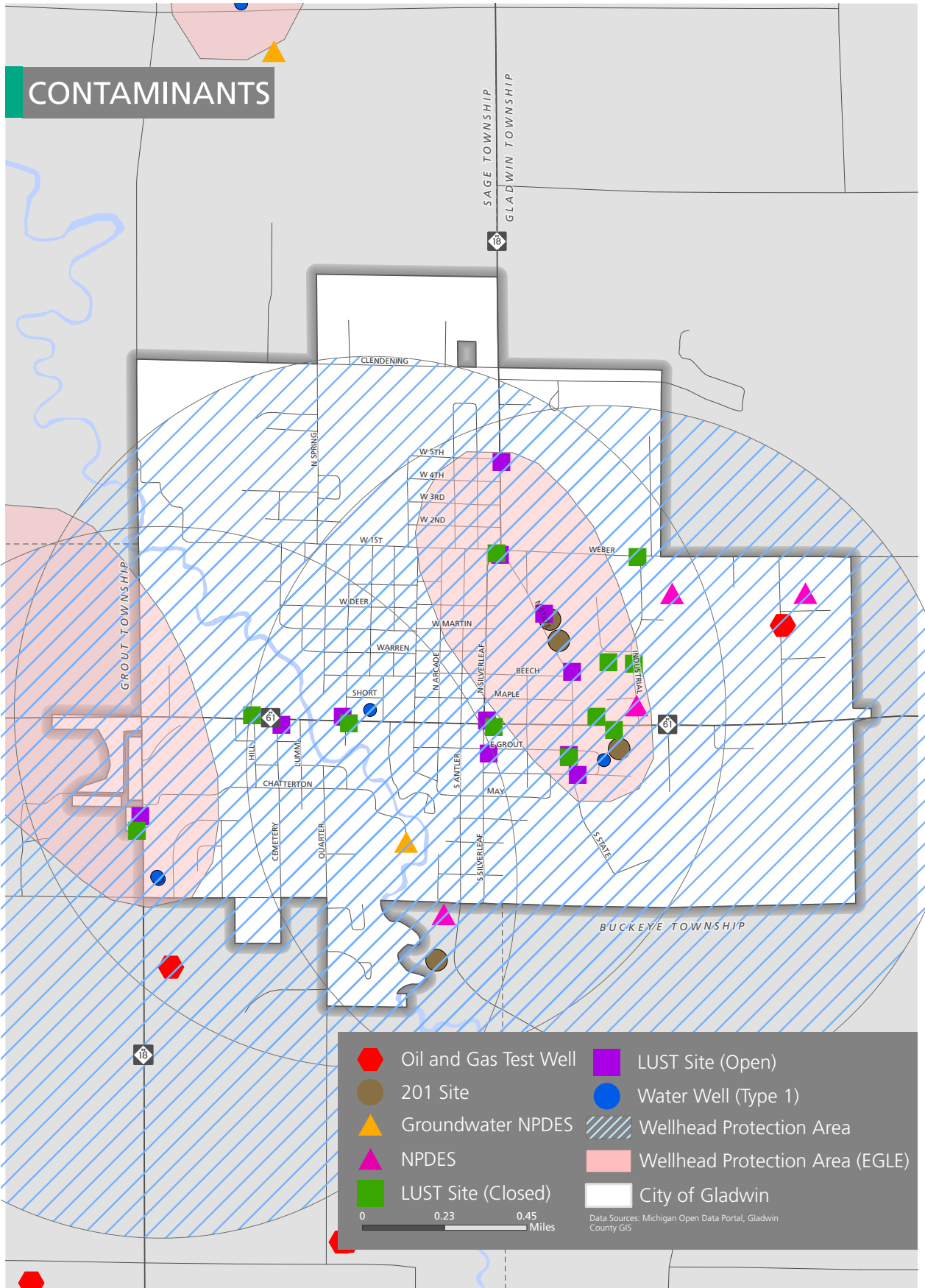
Like 45% of Michigan citizens, Gladwin residents rely on ground water for drinking water.<sup>15</sup> The City has a designated wellhead protection area (WHPA) surrounding its four active wells, a geographic boundary around public wells that helps prevent contaminants from reaching the public water supply within a 10-year time travel zone. This time period, determined by Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE), refers to a scientific process that estimates how long it takes water to travel through the WHPA to the well.<sup>16</sup> The WHPA is also approved by EGLE and is environmentally monitored at the state level for activities within this area that have the potential to impact water quality and quantity. The EGLE WHPA demonstrates what surface land contributes to the well water recharge. It is recommended that the WHPA boundaries are drawn onto the zoning map so that information is publicly available on the City’s website. The map “Contaminants” shows that almost the entire City falls within the WHPA, meaning that all development should be managed through the site plan review process to ensure that it is not a threat to drinking water. The blue boundaries are self-imposed local WHPAs written in the Zoning Ordinance and are technically different than the pink delineations of a wellhead protection area created by EGLE.

In addition, the City instituted a Wellhead Protection Program (WHPP), a voluntary program developed so that a local team can stay consistent with the State’s guidelines. One of the team’s responsibilities is to develop strategies in the Master Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and land use policies to codify its efforts, as well as educating

MAP 6: NATIONAL FLOOD HAZARD LAYER, 2018



# MAP 7: CONTAMINANTS



**TABLE 9: CONTAMINATION SITES**

CONTAMINATION SITE TYPE	QUANTITY
Closed Leaking Underground Storage Tank	12
Open Leaking Underground Storage Tanks	10
201 sites	3

Source: EGLE Environmental Mapper

residents about appropriate disposal of household chemicals. The goal of the WHPP is to preemptively mitigate ground water contamination by identifying and protecting the area that contributes water to municipal water supply wells and avoids costly groundwater clean-ups.<sup>17</sup> The City should consider holding pre-development meetings to inform applicants their responsibility to follow practices that reduce negative effects on well water.

## WATER POLLUTION

There are two ways to view how contaminants enter water sources: point source pollution and nonpoint sources pollution. According to the Clean Water Act, section 502(14), point source pollution can be summarized as an identifiable source that discharges pollutants from an individual single point source such as pipe, sewage treatment plants, and factories. Non-point source pollution is not easily attributed to a single point source because pollutants originate from a wide area, not a single point, and are mostly related to impervious surfaces or agriculture runoff.<sup>18</sup> If impervious surfaces were properly broken up with trees, grass, landscaping, riparian buffers, then a portion of that water that would otherwise enter the watershed, could be diverted and cleaned by green infrastructure.

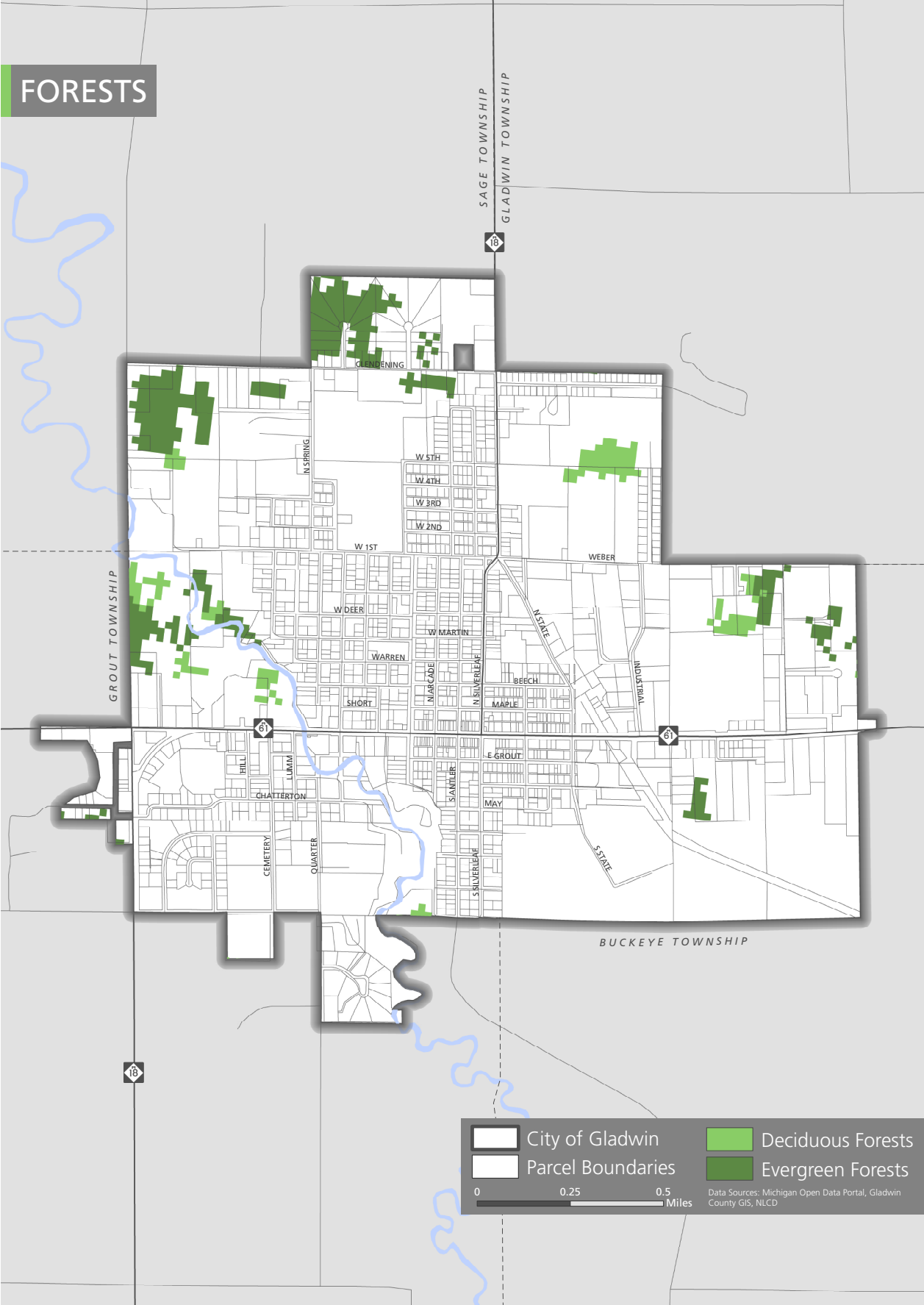
Identifying the contamination of sites is a critical step in managing the quality of the watershed, wellhead, and other water sources. Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) is an example of point source pollution that releases petroleum from leaking tanks underground that can spread to and contaminate surrounding

soil, groundwater, surface water, or affect indoor air spaces.<sup>19</sup> The map “Contaminants” also notes 201 sites and NPDES facilities: 201 sites are locations where a release of hazardous substances was reported to the state agency, Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) and NPDES locations are facilities that hold permits, under the National Pollutant Discharge Emission System (NPDES) to discharge effluent that meet federal environmental standards to either surface water or groundwater.<sup>20,21</sup> EGLE provides an interactive environmental mapper that locates contaminated sites by community. The table “Types of Contamination” indicates the number of contaminated sites in the City. Further site details can be seen from EGLE’s interactive map.<sup>22</sup> As a follow up to wellhead protection, these site clean ups should be prioritized based on their likelihood to contaminate a well.

## FOREST COVER

Green infrastructure is defined in two broad categories, the first is a natural undisturbed environment such as tree canopy, forests, and grassland and the second is a constructed green infrastructure that mimics the natural process such as green roofs, rain gardens, and bioswales.<sup>23</sup> The City of Gladwin has small patches of forests scattered throughout the City. The largest concentrations are evergreen forest in the northwest corners of the City’s boundary clustered around single-family residential developments. Small patches of evergreen and deciduous forests line the northern section of Cedar River. Urban forestry refers to all trees, publicly or privately owned, within an urban area. The U.S. Forest Service includes areas such as urban parks, street trees, landscaped

MAP 8: FORESTS



boulevards, gardens, river, river corridors, greenways, etc.<sup>24</sup>

The positive benefits of tree canopy cover are vast. The United States Department of Agriculture lists the main urban forest services as reducing energy use, improving air quality, reducing the effects of climate change, improving water flow and quality, increasing wildlife and biodiversity, improving soil quality, increasing real estate and business value, providing individual and community well-being and public health, and abating noise.<sup>25</sup>

Increasing the urban forest in urban communities has also demonstrated improvements to the economy and social and entertainment services that improve resident's health and wellbeing. For example, an urban forestry study conducted in Virginia Beach, VA found that the city had a 36% tree canopy coverage which provided \$256.9 million in savings each year; broken down by an energy cost saving of \$33.0M, air quality improvement benefit of \$21.0M, stormwater runoff reduction benefit

of \$83.9M, property value increase of \$109.5M, and carbon dioxide reduction worth \$8.7M.<sup>26</sup>

## SUMMARY

The City is fortunate to have the Cedar River run through its southwest corner, but with this natural feature comes with the responsibility to protect it. As a part of the Saginaw Bay Watershed, Gladwin's land use policies affect water quality that touches several other communities. This section discusses protecting the floodplain and wetlands from development to preserve water quality. Expanding tree canopy coverage and other forms of green infrastructure are mentioned as ways to beautify the City and also to alleviate water capacity and water quality concerns. In terms of ground water protection, policies are in place through the wellhead protection program to limit potentially harmful development that could contaminate well water. However, leaking underground storage tanks do exist and contaminants can migrate towards ground water and are priorities for clean up.

## SOURCES

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# COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES

5

Community services, including healthcare, education, public safety, and recreation, play an important role in making communities desirable locations to live. Keeping this in mind, different services hold different value depending on your life stage; families looking to purchase a home may be more interested in quality schools while young residents might prefer access to outdoor amenities, and seniors may want to locate closer to healthcare services. No matter a household's preference, the type and quality of services help boost the quality of life for residents. The City of Gladwin, in coordination with the County and State, offers a broad array of services. Summarized below are some of the major facilities and services available.

## GLADWIN COUNTY

### Educational and Cultural Services

Library services within the City of Gladwin are provided by the Gladwin County District Library System, which is co-located within the Community Arena facility in the eastern extent of the City. In addition to standard library services, the facility includes specialized after-school programming for children as well as a book club for adults. The County also partners with Michigan State University to administer the MSU-Extension office in the City of Gladwin that provides continuing education programs to adults such as financial planning. Through this office, youth development programs such as 4-H are offered to City and County

residents. Programs sponsored by 4-H include science and technology, clothing and textiles, recreational and sports opportunities, and animal husbandry.<sup>1</sup>

The Gladwin County Community Foundation is a philanthropic organization with the mission of supporting collaboration between the County's communities. It provides grants to nonprofits and scholarships to students. The organization's endowment fund spans several areas, including the Youth Action Council and Gladwin County Health Initiatives.<sup>2</sup>

## CITY OF GLADWIN

### Education

The Gladwin Community School District provides public education through its four major facilities: Gladwin High School, Gladwin Junior High School, Gladwin Elementary School, and Gladwin Intermediate School. The school district encompasses the City of Gladwin and 221 square miles of land surrounding the City, and served a total of 1,672 students in 2018. The high school includes grades 9 through 12 and served 520 students in the school district in 2018.<sup>3</sup> In that year, the percentage of Gladwin High School students with proficient scores in all state test areas exceeded the statewide average as well as the average for Michigan school districts with similar characteristics.<sup>4</sup>

The Regional Educational Service District (RES D) is an additional resource that

provides learning services to students with special needs throughout the district through Gladwin Intermediate School.<sup>5</sup>

### City Community Arena

Gladwin Community Arena provides a variety of recreational services. The facility is located on James Robertson Drive in the eastern part of the City and includes approximately 41,280 square feet of space. The facility was founded in 2000 by a nonprofit organization to provide a greater variety of year-round recreation. The facility provides an indoor space for ice skating, hockey (ice rink is open October through March), rock climbing, outdoor volleyball courts (located adjacent to the building), and a gymnasium with exercise equipment.<sup>6</sup> The arena also houses the Gladwin County District Library. Monthly membership is available at a small cost.

### Solid Waste

Most of the solid waste produced in Gladwin County and the City is collected by private waste companies. Waste Management Company, located in Harrison, is the primary provider of waste pickup services to residential and commercial customers in the City.<sup>7</sup> Most waste is exported to surrounding counties for disposal in landfills. The City of Gladwin also provides single-stream municipal recycling along with refuse pick up. Recycling collection bins are provided by the City and the collection service is provided on a bi-weekly basis throughout the year.<sup>8</sup>

**TABLE 10: EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES IN GLADWIN CITY**

SCHOOL	STUDENT ENROLLMENT (2018)
Gladwin High School	520
Gladwin Junior High School	406
Gladwin Elementary School	368
Gladwin Intermediate School	363
Total	1,657

source: Michigan School Data



*Gladwin Elementary School*  
Source: Gladwin Community Schools

Also provided to residents through the City's Department of Public Works are composting services. The department provides a leaf and grass pickup service from April through November. After collecting these materials, they are composted near the airport.<sup>9</sup> Alternatively, residents can also deliver large quantities of leaves and grass to these sites on their own. Tree and brush limbs are also collected from individual properties by the Department of Public Works, and this material is then chipped and piled south of the cemetery and airport. Both services are available to residents for a small charge, which is figured into monthly trash pickup fees.<sup>10</sup> If residents choose, they can also arrange to obtain composted materials from the City for use on their private property.<sup>11</sup>

### Public Safety

The City of Gladwin's Police Department is located in downtown on City Park Street. The department currently employs four full-time and eight part-time officers. All officers are certified by the Commission on Law Enforcement Standards, as specified by Michigan statute. The police department intends to provide continuing and updated training to all officers on staff in July 2019 by joining the Delta University Consortium.<sup>12</sup> The City's police facility was renovated in 2012.<sup>13</sup>

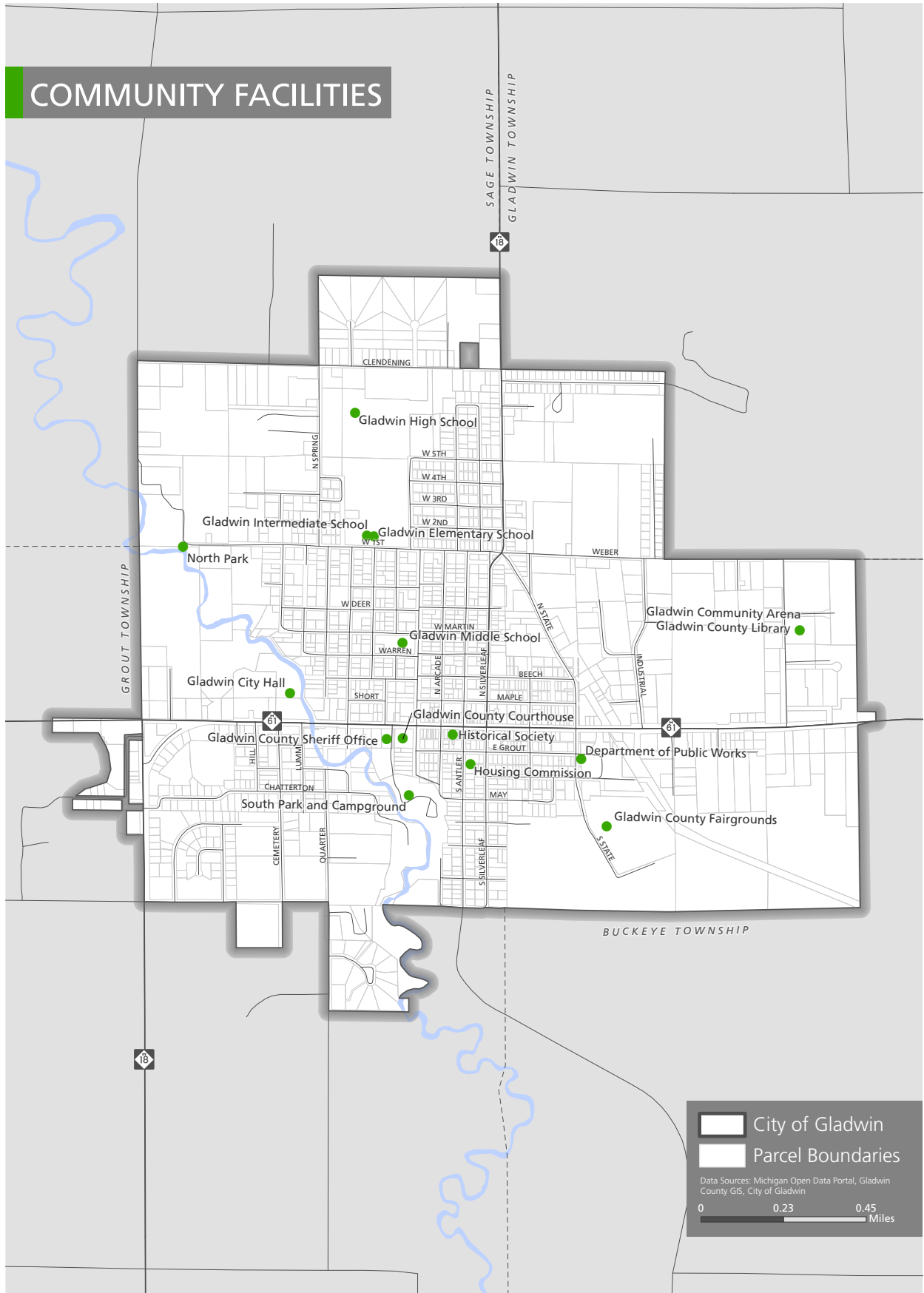
The City of Gladwin's Fire Department is located on Cedar Avenue east of the City's downtown, and the department's facility was renovated in 2018 including a new roof, siding, windows and lighting.<sup>14</sup>

### Water and Sewer

The City of Gladwin's water supply comes from groundwater and is pumped from three wells located throughout the City.<sup>15</sup> The water is then distributed to homes and businesses by the municipal distribution network, which includes 25 miles of water lines.<sup>16</sup> Municipal water is also stored for future use in the City's elevated storage tank, which can hold up to 500,000 gallons of water and is located in the southwest section of the City.<sup>17</sup> This water tower was constructed in 2010 to provide safer water storage to residents and also to improve water pressure. It is scheduled for a major cleaning in 2023. The City of Gladwin maintains and operates the system and provides water to locations within the City but does not extend outside of the City boundary.

The City also provides a municipal sanitary system to residents and businesses within the City. The City's sewer system consists of 21 miles of sewer lines and three pump stations, which connect homes and businesses to the City's wastewater

# MAP 9: COMMUNITY FACILITIES



treatment plant.<sup>18</sup> This plant is located in the southwest corner of the City on the banks of the Cedar River, where wastewater is discharged after it is treated. The wastewater treatment plant has a capacity of 0.65 million gallons per day, while the plant's maximum flow is 1.5 million gallons per day. As of 2018, Gladwin's sewer system was scheduled to undergo major upgrades including manhole repairs, a rubber roof repair to the wastewater treatment building, and other repairs to the wastewater facility.<sup>19</sup> Given a shrinking population, it is unlikely that the City will need to expand its capacity in the next five years.

Gladwin also provides a stormwater management system separate from the municipal sanitary system. The City's infrastructure takes the form of storm sewers located throughout the City. There are a series of retention basins located on private property that temporarily hold stormwater and prevent it from accumulating on City streets or flooding waterbodies. The City can require these types of retention basins for development that takes place on properties as part of its site plan review process to help control excess stormwater. The City does not, however, filter stormwater that is handled through the storm sewer or in retention basins and all runoff is eventually discharged into the Cedar River.<sup>20</sup>

### Broadband and Cellular Service

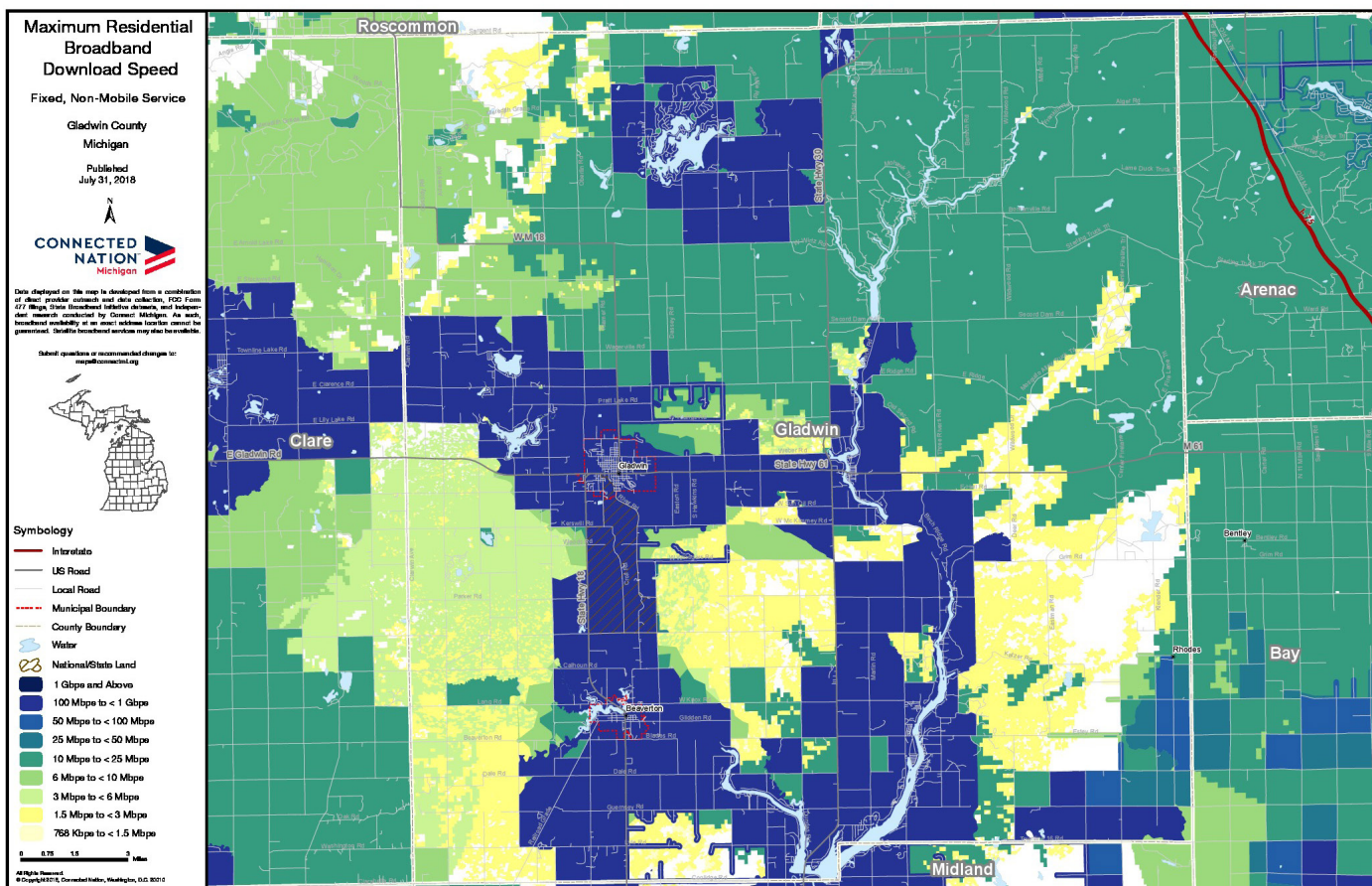
In 2015, Gladwin County created a Technology Action Plan, understanding that access to technology is a key economic feature in the 21st century. The plan evaluated current levels of access to broadband and measured levels of digital literacy among residents. The plan used an indexing system to score access to and the adoption of broadband internet service throughout the County; Gladwin County scored a 108 out of 120 possible points.

Major strengths included residential broadband availability. According to the plan, 95% to 97.9% of households had access to broadband service with download speeds of at least 3 megabytes per second or greater, while 84.4% of the County's households had access to service

of at least 25 megabytes per second.<sup>21</sup> The County scored relatively lower on levels of digital literacy. Moreover, it also had lower computer access among low-income households with only two public computer access sites: the Beaverton Activity Center and the Gladwin County District Library.<sup>22</sup> Major action items in the plan included the development of a technology mentorship program and the distribution of digital literacy content and training.<sup>23</sup>



*City of Gladwin water tower*  
Source: City of Gladwin



*Broadband download speeds in Gladwin County*  
Source: Connected Nation

The map displayed shows broadband download speeds in Gladwin County as of 2018. The entire City of Gladwin as well as the residential areas near highways M-18 and M-61 have maximum download speeds of between 100 megabits per second and 1 gigabyte per second for non-mobile service. This level of service is enough to support most fixed commercial activities, a crucial element of supportive infrastructure for the community and local economy.<sup>24</sup> Because private internet speeds support most residential and commercial activities, the City will not need to invest in infrastructure improvements to boost internet speeds as of now.

### Healthcare Facilities

MidMichigan Medical Center provides a variety of general healthcare services to the community. MidMichigan Medical Center is a 42-bed facility and provides general medical and surgical care to

patients, and 24-hour emergency care.<sup>25</sup> The facility also provides more specialized services including cardiopulmonary care, physical therapy, and occupational therapy. In 2019, it was rated by the Chartis Center for Rural Health as one of the top 100 critical access hospitals in the United States. The facility is part of the nonprofit organization MidMichigan Health System, which is in turn part of the University of Michigan Health System.

### SUMMARY

Gladwin offers many cultural, educational, and healthcare related services to its residents. Its municipal services, such as water and sewer, do not appear at this time to need major capacity improvements, however, stormwater ordinances that require retention on site could help mitigate contaminants draw into the system that eventually flows into the Cedar River.

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# 6



## TRANSPORTATION

Roads are the connective tissue that allow people and goods to move—they connect residents to other neighborhoods, to destinations for socializing, and to places of employment. Their design, conditions, and connectivity impact the convenience of getting through our daily routines.

Gladwin County does not have any major expressways and is 20 miles north of US-10, 16 miles east of US-27, and 23 miles west of I-75. M-61 and M-18 play a pivotal role in the City as they bring the highest traffic volumes and connect the City to interstates. This section reviews the road network and ways to expand a road's use to safely include more users.

### ROADS

#### Condition

The East Michigan Council of Government (EMCOG) issued a report in 2014 to strategically address the region's challenges. One of the major challenges identified was infrastructure maintenance – that not enough capital is invested in roads. Michigan spends the least per capita on roads than any other Great Lakes state; the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) estimated an annual funding gap of \$1.5 billion for the next decade for state highways alone. Over half of state-maintained roads are expected to be in worse condition over the next 10 years.<sup>1</sup> Local roads tend to be in even worse condition because the City's responsibility to maintain them with



*Existing street amenities in the City of Gladwin.*

a stagnant or shrinking tax base proves to be very difficult.

The Transportation Asset Management Council, an organization affiliated with MDOT, used a widely accepted analysis known as PASER to rate the conditions of road pavement for state-owned roads. M-61 and M-18, owned and operated by MDOT, crisscross through Gladwin to form its downtown. That means that the City does not have any direct control over when and how those roads are maintained. Further, to make any modifications to the roadway requires working with MDOT, a precedent that has been set by several communities but adds a layer to the process.

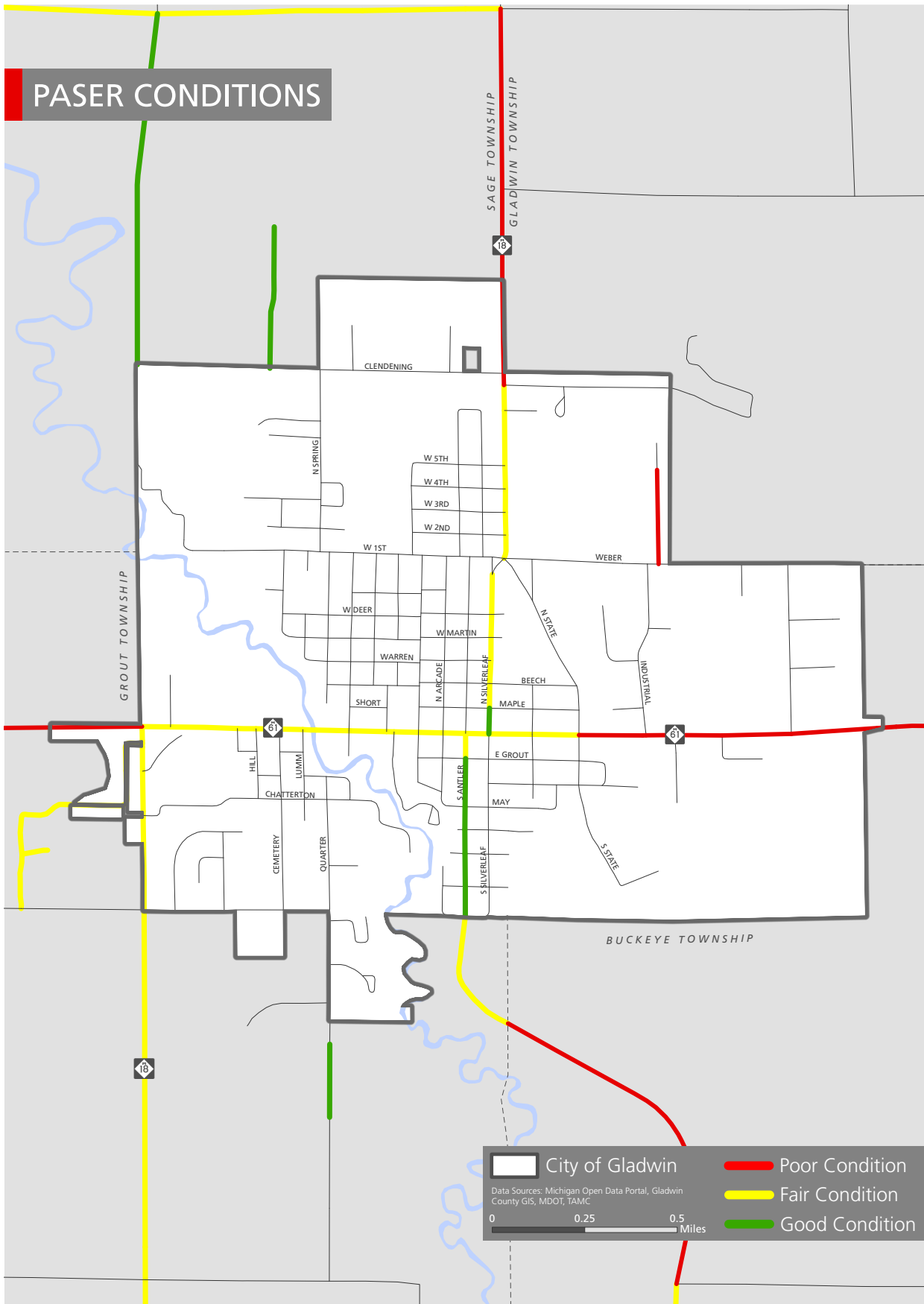
As a part of the PASER system, different segments along those thoroughfares have received a rating of “good,” “fair,” and “poor.” The longest segment to be rated poor was on M-61, east of State Street. The local roads were not assessed by MDOT because they are ineligible for federal funding. Most local roads are owned and maintained by the City

and are paid for via millage, the general fund, Act 51 proceeds, or a combination thereof. If possible, local governments should use the PASER system to record and monitor the condition of its roads with the goal of preventing them from falling into the “poor” category. Poor quality roads cost more to repair. It is an inefficient use of taxpayer money to defer maintenance only to pay more in the future. Over one mile of M-61 within the City was resurfaced in 2019, as was a ½ mile of M-18, which resulted in marked improvements to their conditions.

### **Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT)**

MDOT also calculates the average annual daily traffic on its roads. M-61 carries the largest volume of vehicles especially on the western half of the City where over 12,800 vehicles travel on average. The number drops off as it moves east to as low as 9,918 near the eastern border of the City. South M-18 is the least traveled thoroughfare with a count of about 4,800 vehicles per day on average. The traffic

# MAP 10: PASER CONDITIONS



counts are encouraging to businesses along these roads who experience high volume exposure to potential clientele. The next step is to capture passers-by as customers through properly scaled signage and appealing frontage that entices traffic to stop and spend time in the City.

M-61 functions like many small town/rural state highways where the road widens within the incorporated limits of the City. In Gladwin, M-61 enters the eastern approach to the City as a two-lane highway and then flares out to five lanes at the E. Cedar and Buckeye intersection. This cross-section is maintained throughout the City, except in the downtown district between State Street and Bowery where the road accommodates five lanes of traffic plus on-street parallel parking. Once M-61 passes the M-18 intersection on the west end of the City it narrows again to two lanes. Although intended to accommodate traffic flow through the City by providing dedicated right-turn and center left-turn lanes, this configuration also induces higher speeds as the additional lane becomes a passing lane. The AADT is in the lower range for a five-lane street cross-section and when the road is resurfaced/reconstructed by MDOT, removal of a lane in each direction and the addition of dedicated bike lane should be evaluated. Adoption of a Complete Street policy by the City would aid in this evaluation.

### Public Transportation & Economic Development

In sparsely populated areas, frequency and extensiveness of a public transit system are difficult to maintain. The Gladwin City-County Transit is a bus system that provides door-to-door service that groups ride requests together to utilize one vehicle. This service is largely used for medical appointments and to accommodate reoccurring trips. The service does not cross county lines but will help coordinate a connection with adjoining counties: Midland, Clare, Roscommon, Ogemaw, and Arenac.<sup>2</sup>

EMCOG's strategic plan also recorded as a part of community engagement

1/3

of respondents recorded that if their vehicle were to break down, they could not easily find another way to get to work.

- Community Survey

that "public transportation does not adequately serve the region's workforce and adult education needs." Due to the limited service provided by the bus system, individuals without a reliable vehicle cannot easily work night shifts, weekends, or attend evening classes. Poor links between residents and employment reduce physical and social mobility which can have serious consequences for residents who have an alternative work schedule. Investment in service with greater frequency and efficiency could leverage greater economic returns in job stability and wage growth. The Center for Neighborhood Technology, a reputable community-based nonprofit, hosts an interactive mapping tool that estimates that households spend 31% of their income on transportation and 25% on housing.<sup>3</sup> The comparison between the two expenditures shows that a vehicle, for all the convenience it provides, is a financial burden for some households.

### Complete Streets

The proportion of Gladwin's population that commutes by foot and bicycle is impressive. Nearly 10% of residents forgo driving to work and arrive either on foot or bicycle. That is, the City has a strong connection between land use and nonmotorized systems to build upon. Designed on a grid system with a sidewalk network, the streets are on their way to becoming Complete Streets. Complete Streets is movement that advocates for streets designed for everyone, not just vehicles. Organizations such as Smart Growth America have pushed back on the traditional vehicle-oriented design of streets and called for streets designed for pedestrians, bicyclists,

MAP 11: MDOT TRAFFIC VOLUME COUNTS

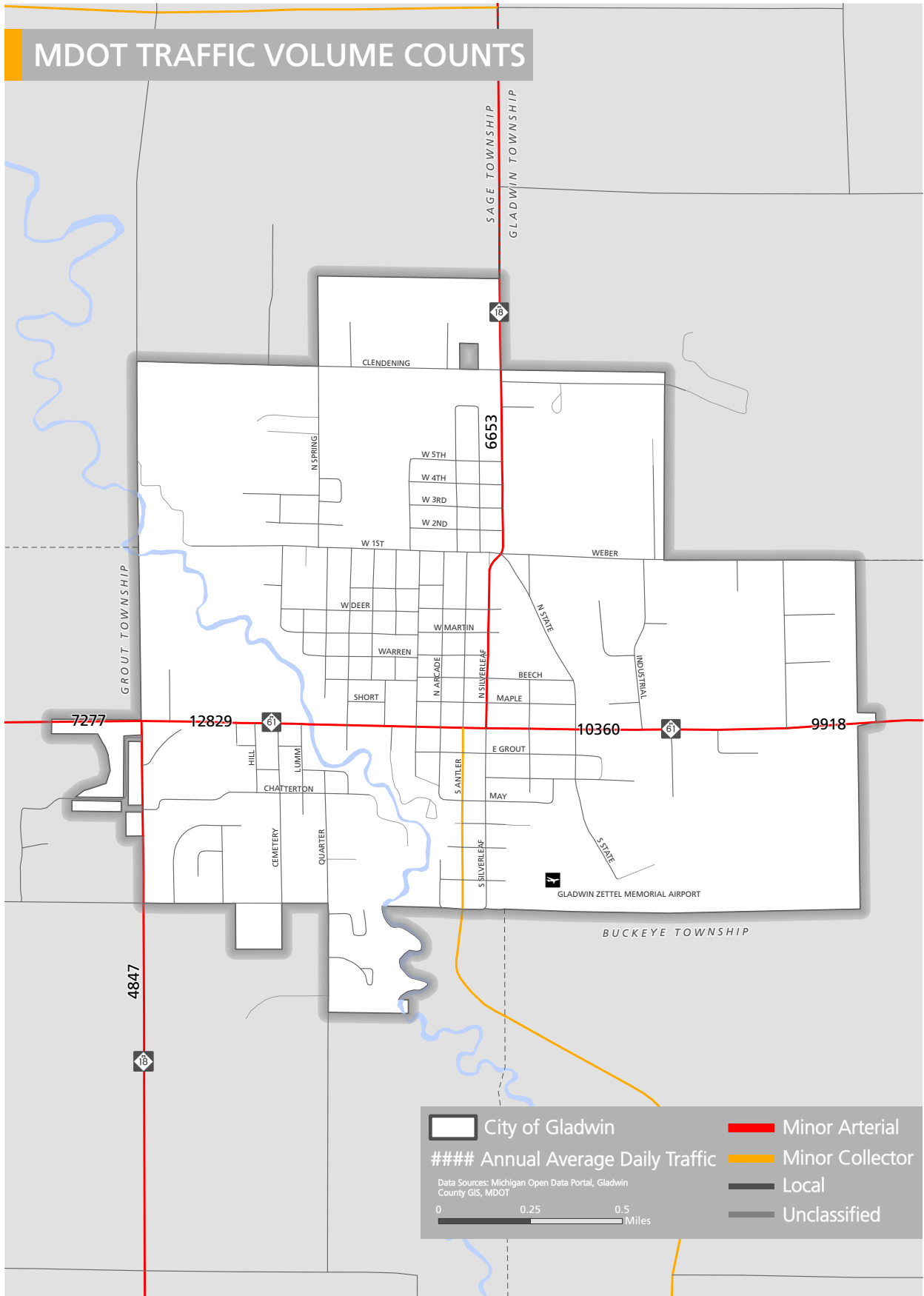
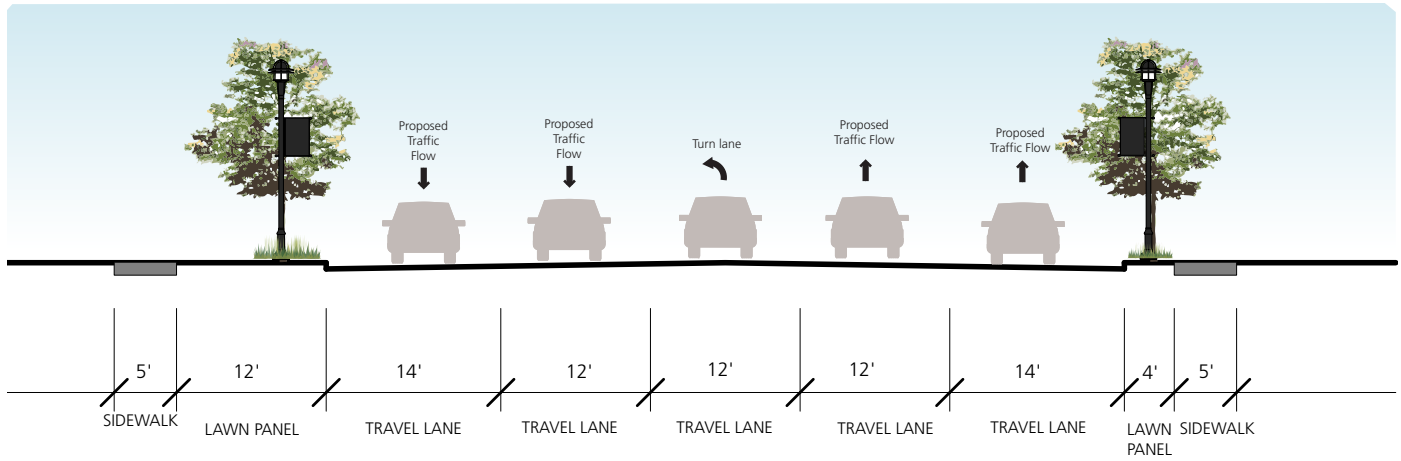
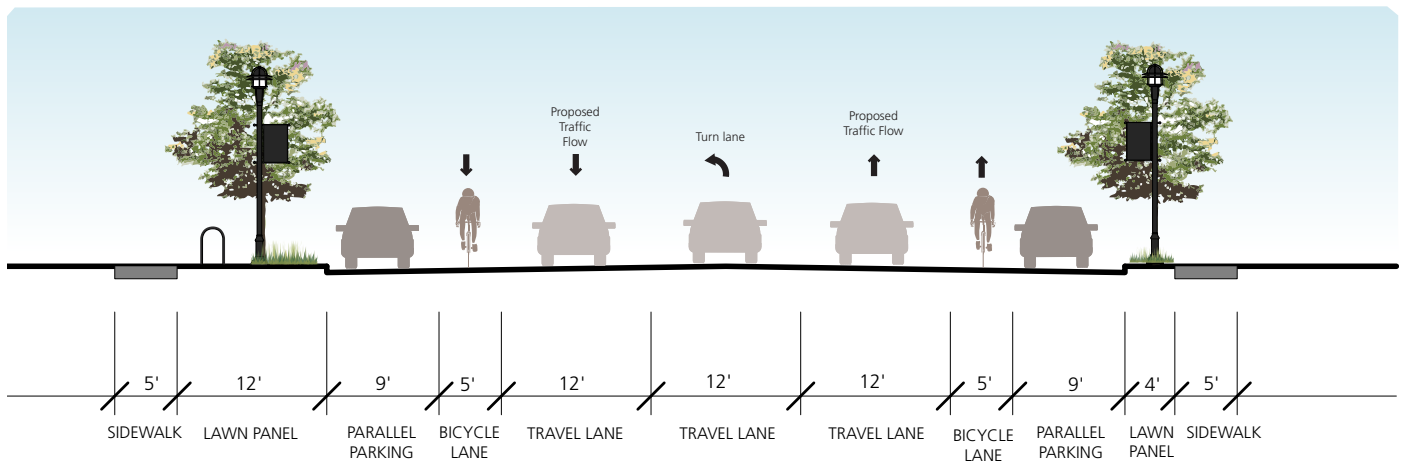


FIGURE 10: HOW A COMPLETE STREET CAN LOOK IN GLADWIN



*EXISTING: Outside Downtown*



*PROPOSED: Outside Downtown*



## ELEMENTS OF COMPLETE STREETS

Wide sidewalks

Bike lanes and racks

Safe crossings

Medians

Curb extensions

Benches

Bus shelters

# 18%

of survey respondents do not feel safe from traffic when walking or bicycling in the City.

- Community Survey

motorists, and public transit users of all ages and abilities. In this case, like some other Michigan communities, some streets would accommodate the Amish horse and buggy to avoid conflicts with other users. Instead of only measuring the success of a road by vehicular mobility, Complete Streets include design elements, safety, and accessibility for all users. The figure “How a Complete Street Can Look in Gladwin” shows examples of how narrowing the number of lanes, extending sidewalks, and in some cases adding bicycle lanes can make the streetscape more user-friendly.

The City can phase these elements into the system over time, starting with small investments such as adding bike racks to popular destinations, benches that are set back from the street to give residents a respite, or installing bicycle lanes on streets with low traffic counts. The intent is to connect community assets such as

the high school, retirement communities, and the hospital, to downtown. A key component to Complete Streets is a well-connected sidewalk network. One way to elevate the sidewalk's importance is to use a similar PASER-like rating scale to record and monitor the condition of sidewalks and note where there are gaps in the network that make pedestrian access difficult. To achieve this, the Gladwin Planning Commission conducts an annual inventory of sidewalk conditions and incorporates vital improvements into the City's capital improvements plan.

In 2010, Complete Streets legislation passed in Michigan that requires MDOT to consider multi-modal features with new road construction. The City of Gladwin has not yet adopted a Complete Street policy which would be a good first step in educating the public on the importance of investing in multi-modal streets. Having transportation options provide healthier ways to get around, reduces our carbon footprint, and can help families struggling with vehicle-related costs to reduce their expenses.

### Zettel Memorial Airport

This public airport serves businesses that transport goods and other resources and recreational pilots and visitors. Because there are no Class 1 railroads in the region, the airport's contribution to the local economy makes it an economic asset. The airport is easily accessible to both M-61 and M-18 and is located less than one-half mile south of downtown.

### SUMMARY

Gladwin, like most American cities, is car-dependent. There are limited public transit options to make commuting by other means feasible. And, when residents do turn to walking or bicycling to get somewhere in town, a considerable amount do not feel safe. A focus of this section is to re-imagine what streets could like if they incorporated elements of Complete Streets. Cedar Avenue is envisioned as a narrower road for cars with extended space and features for nonmotorized users.



*Existing roadway width in downtown Gladwin.*

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# 7



## OPEN SPACE & RECREATION

The recreation industry has emerged as an economic driver in many communities throughout Michigan. The Eastern Michigan Council of Governments (EMCOG) issued a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy in 2016 that described the provision of parks and recreation as a key strategy for communities to attract and retain residents within the 14-county region. According to the report, this would include the provision of long-distance trails for hiking and biking as well as more traditional outdoor opportunities such as ball courts and campgrounds.<sup>1</sup> In 2019, Gladwin went through a community process to re-brand itself and found that the participants believe its proximity to nature is an asset that should be promoted to visitors and potential residents alike. Its logo depicts the medley

of greens and blues found in the area and its tagline reads “Connected, by Nature” – a phrase that expresses the community’s embrace of outdoor recreation and the quality of life it provides.

The presence of recreational infrastructure is also tied to healthy and active lifestyles. Together with county and state levels of government, the City of Gladwin provides a diverse array of recreational resources. This chapter inventories the existing recreational infrastructure in the community and documents planned improvements.

### INVENTORY

The recreational facilities in Gladwin support a wide variety of opportunities for residents and seasonal visitors. The following inventory of the park facilities

36%

of adults in Gladwin County are sedentary, and the same percent are obese.

62%

have access to exercise opportunities compared to 84% of Michiganders.

Mid Michigan Health has a goal to encourage healthy weights and prevent diseases associated with obesity by promoting physical activity services.

Source: 2016 Community Health Needs Assessment

in the City classifies them by the type of park using the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) descriptions.

### Mini Parks and Neighborhood Parks

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources classifies “neighborhood parks” as recreational areas that typically encompass one acre of land or less and serve surrounding residences. These smaller facilities are important because they provide recreation that is easily accessible from residents’ homes. Currently, the City is lacking a purely neighborhood park, as the main City Park is clustered near the river and not easily accessible to the neighborhoods.

### Community Parks

Gladwin City Park is a recreational facility that attracts visitors from the community and beyond by providing a wide collection of recreational amenities. Classified as a “community park,” these areas are typically 30 to 50 acres in size and serve multiple surrounding residential areas.<sup>2</sup> The wooded park is situated along the Cedar River and is divided into two distinct areas, South Park and North

TABLE 11: MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES PARKS CLASSIFICATION

PARK TYPE	PURPOSE	SIZE AND LOCATION
Mini-Park	To provide limited, isolated, or unique recreational needs.	Less than one acre in size, located within ¼ mile of residential setting
Neighborhood Park	Serves as the recreational and social focus of the surrounding residential neighborhood.	5 to 10 acres, ¼ to ½ mile distance of surrounding residential
Community Park	Meets residential needs throughout the community and beyond.	30 to 50 acres and serves neighborhoods within ½ and 3 miles
Natural Resource Areas	Lands set aside for the preservation of natural resources or unique natural landscapes.	Variable
Special Use	Serves a specific recreational activity or recreational purpose.	Variable
Greenways	Connects park system components together to create a continuous environment	Variable



*Camping facilities in Gladwin.*

*Source: Pure Gladwin County*

Park, and is a popular destination for summer campers and local recreators.

South Park includes 61 wooded campsites with water and electricity, two rustic cabins, pavilions, showers and restrooms, tennis courts, horseshoe pits, an ADA-compliant fishing platform, a picnic area, and a beach along the river. North Park features an enclosed pavilion and amenities for active recreation including horseshoe pits, basketball courts, a skateboard park, fields for soccer, and a launch site for tubing and canoing.<sup>3</sup> The City has made consistent updates to the park including the addition of new playground equipment, and the installation of universal access features to restrooms and camping lots to capitalize on the facility's growing popularity among visitors.<sup>4,5</sup>

Gladwin plans incremental upgrades including improved sewer and electrical service to the campsites in South Park, repairs to the pavilion, and an improved trail in North Park to further increase the facility's popularity among visitors and residents.<sup>6</sup> The park's location downtown and along nonmotorized paths makes many of the City's shopping and dining locations easily accessible by foot or bicycle from the campsites.<sup>7</sup>

## Special Use Facilities

The City of Gladwin also includes a variety of facilities for programmed events, or specific types of use, which the Michigan Department of Natural Resources refers to as "special use areas."<sup>8</sup> The most prominent are the Gladwin Community Amphitheater and the adjacent Community Center Building, which are situated conveniently within the Gladwin City Park.<sup>9</sup> The theater is used for a mix of events such as the community's Tuesday in the Park series, which includes a variety of musical offerings, sponsored by the Gladwin Business and Professional Association. The Community Amphitheater also hosts shows produced by Gladwin Friends of the Theater as well as the Summer Council of the Arts Festival. Another facility is Gladwin County Fairgrounds, maintained by the Gladwin County Fair Association, and encompasses 15 acres of land in the southeastern portion of the community. The park includes a racetrack with a grandstand, three merchant buildings, rustic camping, and animal barns, and is used for events throughout the year. Additions made to the fairground in 2014 included a new pavilion, which was funded through donations and increased the park's usable space.<sup>10</sup> In



*Gladwin Farmer's Market*  
 Source: Record & Clarion

2018, Gladwin also added a farmers' market to the community, which runs on Saturdays from May through October and is located in a pavilion adjacent to residential neighborhoods in the City's eastern portion.<sup>11</sup>

Several of the community's special use facilities support athletic endeavors. The Gladwin County Sports Complex is situated on 55 acres of land and has activities for children and adults alike with fields for baseball, softball, soccer, and youth football.<sup>12</sup> Major safety improvements were made to the park in 2017, including the replacement of fencing and dugout floors.<sup>13</sup> Another major facility is the Gladwin Community Arena, which is located in the City's northeast quadrant and provides a place for the community to enjoy other sports including volleyball, hockey, and figure skating. In addition to sports facilities, there is a 6,000 square foot gymnasium, a fitness center, and a rock climbing wall. The community arena was awarded a variety of grants between 2017 and 2019 to purchase new youth skates and commercial treadmills, thereby expanding recreation for youth and seniors.<sup>14,15</sup>

### School District Facilities

In many communities in Michigan, the local school district is a key provider of recreational amenities, particularly for youth, and Gladwin Community School District is no exception. Most of the district's recreational facilities are situated adjacent to the elementary, intermediate, and high schools. Recreational facilities include baseball and softball fields, a football field, track, soccer field, tennis courts, and a playground adjacent to the elementary and intermediate school campuses. These sports facilities are programmed for the school district's youth athletics and are critical pieces of infrastructure contributing to the community's physical and social health,<sup>16</sup> all of which are designed with universal access features.<sup>17</sup> The Junior High School is situated south of this main campus and the property features outdoor basketball boards and a playfield.<sup>18</sup>

The school district has also expressed support of the nonmotorized trail to connect the periphery of the City and the school's recreational facilities.<sup>19</sup> Outside the City boundary, Gladwin Schools also maintains a 200-acre nature area east of the City in Buckeye Township.<sup>20</sup>

## Private and Nonprofit Facilities

Other recreational facilities in and around the Gladwin community are maintained by nonprofit and private-sector organizations. Six buildings identified as the “Gladwin County Historical Village” are located at the intersection of Cedar and State Streets near the City’s Farmers Market.<sup>21</sup> The property, operated by the Gladwin County Historical Society, preserves Gladwin’s historic log cabins and uses the space for craft demonstrations and other publicly-programmed events.<sup>22,23</sup> In terms of privately-owned facilities, Gladwin Heights is a family-owned and operated 18-hole golf course located west of Gladwin along M-61.<sup>24</sup> Two additional golf courses are located in the Sugar Springs development, 15 miles north of Gladwin. The Sugar Springs development also offers an indoor swimming pool, tennis courts, and hiking trails. Residents also enjoy two privately-run bowling alleys, one in Gladwin and one in Beaverton.<sup>25</sup>

## Regional Recreation

While the City of Gladwin provides smaller-scale recreational facilities within its boundary, larger expanses of land dedicated to recreation are available

outside of the City and are owned by the County or State. These types of parks are classified as “Natural Resource Areas,” which are typically dedicated to the preservation of important natural landscapes that can still be enjoyed by visitors.<sup>26</sup> Four parks located in the townships throughout Gladwin County are maintained by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and provide important access to water on Pratt Lake, Wiggins Lake, Lake Four, Wixom Lake, and the Tittabawassee River for fishing and boating.<sup>27</sup> The MDNR also maintains a State Roadside Park in Clement Township, which is located where M-30 crosses the west branch of the Tittabawassee River and features picnic tables and scenic overlooks.<sup>28</sup> Because of its unique river access, the park is used heavily for fishing. Gladwin County maintains 160 acres of land known as the Gladwin Recreational Area in nearby Sage Township which includes paved hiking and walking trails as well as a lodge.<sup>29</sup>

## PARKS AND RECREATION ACTION

Through the planning processes at the City and County level, the need for some



*Gladwin County Historical Museum*  
Source: Gladwin Historical Village

key additions and renovations to the community's facilities emerged regarding accessibility and nonmotorized trails. The following section describes major themes from these processes and highlights actions the community seeks to pursue in planning park development.

**Universal Access**

One major issue facing parks and recreation is the lack of facilities that accommodate users with special needs. The City of Gladwin, with its aging park infrastructure, follows this pattern. Since the passage of the Americans With Disabilities Act in 1991, the federal act specifies guidelines that local governments must follow when improving public facilities to promote access for all potential users. In this context, disabilities are defined more broadly than physical difficulties and could include potential users with reading difficulties or cognitive impairment.

Therefore, the act's requirements also affect the placement and design of signage and symbols.<sup>30</sup> The first step to ensure universal access improvements is to understand how well a community's existing park infrastructure follows the act's guidelines.

The City of Gladwin evaluated accessibility of the park system as part of its 2015 recreation planning process. Each of the community's facilities was rated on a numerical scale of one to five:

- » 1- none of the park's amenities met universal access guidelines
- » 2- some of the park's amenities meet accessibility guidelines
- » 3- most of the park's features met guidelines
- » 4- the entire park meets accessibility guidelines
- » 5- the park was developed using universal access as a core principle.<sup>31</sup>

**TABLE 12: UNIVERSAL ACCESS RATINGS FOR FACILITIES IN THE CITY OF GLADWIN**

GLADWIN FACILITY	UNIVERSAL ACCESS RATING (1-5)	MAINTAINING ORGANIZATION	PARK TYPE
South City Park	3	City of Gladwin	Community park
North City Park	2	City of Gladwin	Community park
Gladwin Community Arena	2	Gladwin Community Arena	Special use
Gladwin County Fairgrounds	2	Gladwin County Fair Association	Special use
Gladwin County Sports Complex	3	Gladwin County and Gladwin Little League	Special use
Gladwin Community Amphitheater	3	City of Gladwin	Special use
City of Gladwin Tennis Courts	3	City of Gladwin	Special use
Gladwin Community School Facilities	3	Gladwin School District	Special use
Historic Settlement	2	Gladwin County Historical Society	Special use
Gladwin Skate Park	2	City of Gladwin	Community park

All City and school district facilities scored either a two or a three with a fairly even split between the two scores.<sup>32</sup> For instance, facilities such as Gladwin North City Park and the Community Arena both scored only two out five on universal access.<sup>33</sup> The presence of “two” ratings among some park facilities indicate that improvements are still needed to some older sites in order to ensure universal access. To achieve this, the City is updating its parks and recreation plan in 2019 and intends to continue its policy of park upgrades that improve access for all users.<sup>34</sup>

### Nonmotorized Connections

Bicycle and pedestrian trails are an important and emerging component of recreation-based tourism in Michigan. According to the “Trail Towns Manual” for northern Michigan, communities in the region benefit by attracting long-distance nonmotorized trail users. Communities can achieve this by establishing links between trails, by providing accommodations for trail users on multiple-day excursions, and providing other amenities including entertainment and dining.<sup>35</sup> In turn, these links often bring economic benefits to the communities that implement them by growing the clientele for local businesses.<sup>36</sup>

In recognizing these benefits in conjunction with its existing assets, the City of Gladwin proposed several extensions to the community’s nonmotorized paths in its 2015 recreation plan. In keeping with the Trail Town concept, the Gladwin County Trail Authority, comprised of Gladwin and

Beaverton committees, has worked to extend a nonmotorized trail between the City of Gladwin and its southern neighbor, Beaverton and eventually farther south to Coleman, known as the Trail of Two Cities.<sup>37</sup> In 2018, the project began.<sup>38</sup> These connections within the community and to neighboring ones will play an important role in facilitating active transportation for residents, expanding recreation for visitors, and promoting travel options for seniors and those with physical disabilities.<sup>39</sup> As of 2019, Gladwin has a multi-use pathway for pedestrians and cyclists that extends along the Cedar River and connects North Park to South Park.

Municipalities can take other actions to promote long-distance nonmotorized links to realize the associate benefits. Promoting and encouraging Complete Streets, is a key element to building recreation into the fabric of the City (more about Complete Streets in the transportation chapter).<sup>40</sup>

### SUMMARY

Parks and recreation is a key strategy to attract and retain residents within the 14-county region. This includes long-distance trails for hiking and biking and traditional outdoor opportunities such as ball courts and campgrounds. Gladwin is already invested in the Trail of Two Cities to expand its nonmotorized network. Gladwin has a good network of specialized recreation but accessibility will be another area for investment in the coming years to make all facilities user-friendly.

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Source: Pure Gladwin County



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

8

The composition of a community's economy is driven to a large extent by the region in which it is situated, and more broadly by national and international trends. This chapter begins by examining the economic trends influencing the eastern Michigan region. It then examines the profile of industries and employment in Gladwin County and the City of Gladwin and concludes by summarizing the community's existing institutions and initiatives to assist in economic growth.

### ECONOMIC TRENDS IN EASTERN MICHIGAN

In 2016, the Eastern Michigan Council of Governments, (EMCOG), published a report titled "2016 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy," which defined the economic challenges and

#### EMCOG 2016 AT A GLANCE

Utilities, Trade, and Transportation is the largest sector at 27% of businesses in 2016.

2013 Per Capita Personal Income was 76% of the national average.

2011-2013 saw a slight increase in college and high school education.

Employment in manufacturing, retail, and wholesale is forecasted to decrease through 2040.

"Services" are forecasted as the largest employment sector by 2040.

opportunities of the region’s 14 counties. The economic indicators compiled by EMCOG show that the region’s recovery since the Great Recession lags behind the nation’s; the 24-month unemployment rate was well above the national rate of 6.8% as of 2014, and similarly, one business moved out of the region for every business that moved in.<sup>1</sup> As of May 2019, the unemployment rate has declined to 5.1%, which is still higher than the national rate of 3.8%. According to the plan, major challenges through 2040 include lack of lodging options to support the tourism industry, weak workforce availability and training, sufficient and readily-available incentives for businesses, and quality buildings for new businesses.<sup>2</sup> Despite these significant challenges, the region has many strengths to build on including strong anchor institutions such as Central Michigan University (CMU), Saginaw Valley State University (SVSU), and Dow Chemical, access to highways and transportation infrastructure, and a low cost of living.<sup>3</sup>

change because new residents are often in their working years and therefore bring increased spending power and economic activity to a community. The American Community Survey indicates however that out-migration has begun to outpace in-migration in Gladwin County; the County had a net gain of 117 new residents per year in 2010, which flipped to a net loss of –395 residents by 2015. This trend, coupled with the County’s aging population, contributed to a decline in the share of residents in the workforce (those that are working or are available to work) by roughly 4% within the same timeframe to only 45% of the total population. This is far below the statewide labor participation rate of 61.3% in that year. Taken with the unemployment rate of 5.1% among the County’s workforce in 2015, this meant that only 41.2% of its residents were engaged in employment, which equates to low incomes and large segments of the population in need of social support and services. Following this, the countywide median annual household income was \$40,871, which was more than one-fifth (22.4%) below than the statewide median in that year.

## GLADWIN COUNTY ECONOMY

### Economic Indicators

The dynamics of household employment, income, and expenses in the area have changed distinctly since the Great Recession. Net migration into and out of the County are components of population

Poverty status for households was determined by comparing their annual income with the number of household residents; American Community Survey estimates show that 17% of Gladwin County households lived in poverty

**TABLE 13: ECONOMIC INDICATORS**

PERCENTAGE	GLADWIN COUNTY 2010	GLADWIN COUNTY 2015
Population in labor force	49.2%	45.5%
Unemployment rate (within labor force)	13.7%	6.5%
Households in poverty	18.0%	18.0%
ALICE Households	19.0%	29.0%
Households with SNAP/food stamps	15.2%	20.7%
Households with social security income	43.3%	48.0%
Disconnected youth population	12.5%	21.9%

*Source: American Fact Finder – American Community Survey 2010 and 2015, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, United Ways of Michigan 2017 ALICE report*

and therefore had insufficient income to meet their basic needs with respect to these standards. Further, the United Way organizations throughout Michigan studied households termed ALICE (Asset Limited; Income Constrained; Employed). These are households that earn more than federally-defined poverty levels but struggle to cover basic expenses such as housing, food, healthcare, and childcare in the community in which they live, and often have no savings or long-term assets.<sup>4</sup> In Gladwin County, ALICE households comprise nearly one third (29%) of the total, a figure which has risen since the Great Recession, as it has throughout the State.<sup>5</sup> Together, the County's ALICE households coupled with those in poverty amount to nearly half (47%) the total and indicate large segments of the community are vulnerable to emergencies and economic downturn. Meanwhile, a key determinant of a community's future workforce is the status of its youth population. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates the number of residents in a community between 16 and 19 years of age who are not enrolled in high school or college and not employed, a group titled "disconnected youth." A growing and concerning large (21.9%) share of Gladwin County youth fall into this category.<sup>6</sup>

Access to internet and sufficient broadband speeds are key elements of success in facilitating a thriving local economy. Although an average of 3-4 providers deliver broadband service to households within the City of Gladwin and therefore offer a degree of competition, large portions of the County are without access to broadband service.<sup>7</sup> Estimates from 2019 indicate that approximately 6,000 people in the County remain without service while even more have slow service. For a complete discussion on broadband service, refer to the community facilities and services chapter.

### Industries and Jobs in Gladwin County

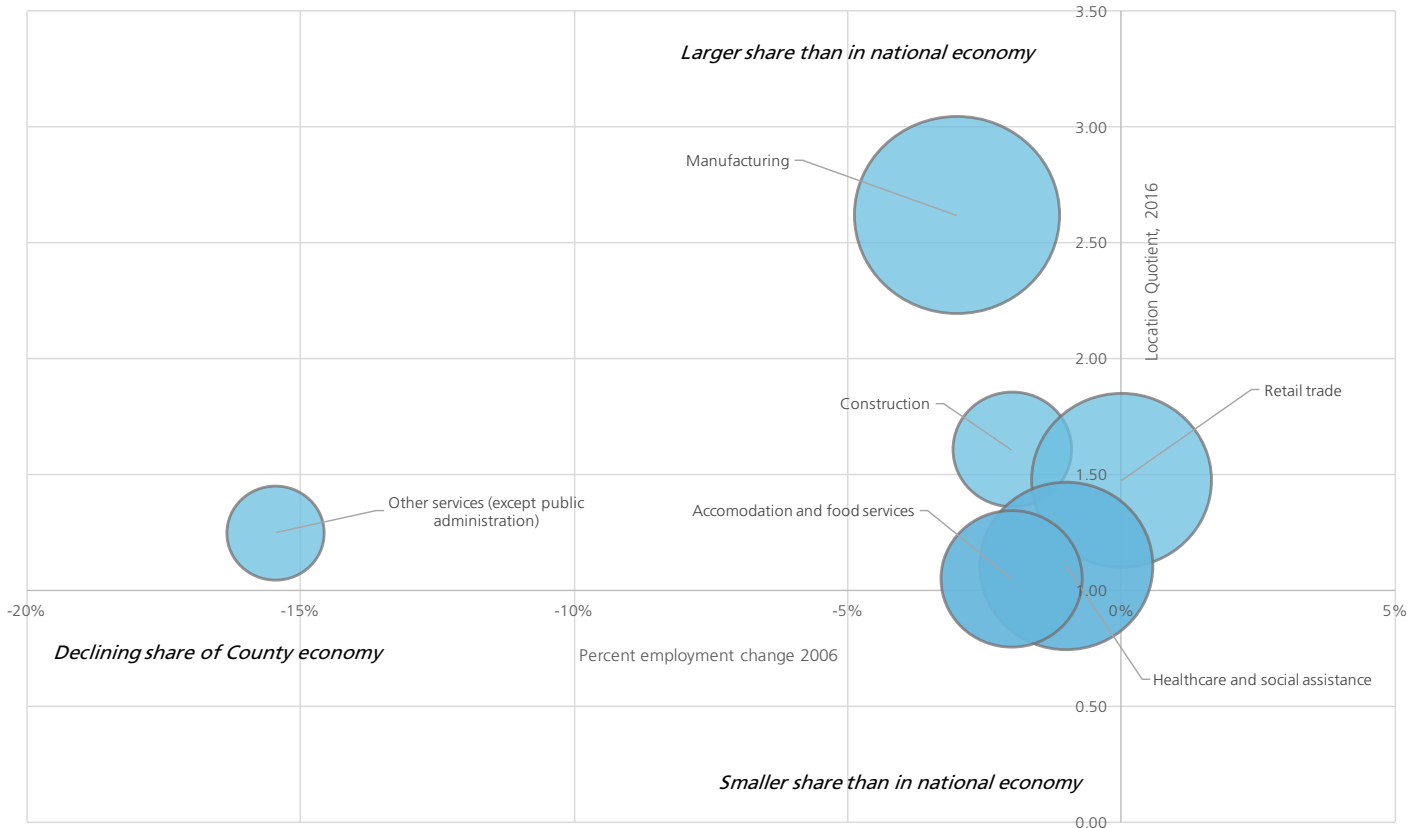
The "Industries in Gladwin County 2010-2016" graph conveys three pieces of information for each employment sector in the County; its change as a share of employment since 2006, the

share of employment in 2016, and the concentration of employment in each sector relative to the national economy in 2016. The horizontal axis shows the change in the number of persons employed between 2006 and 2010. The chart indicates that employment in industries including manufacturing, accommodation and food service, and healthcare and social assistance contracted slightly between these years by -3%, -2%, and -1%, respectively. Meanwhile, employment in "other services," which includes government and nonprofit employment, experienced the largest reduction in employment in the same timeframe (-15%). This is significant for the City of Gladwin, considering its position as a county seat and the associated public sector jobs. Retail jobs were the only major industry to remain unchanged during these years (0%) growth. The size of each industry bubble represents the number of jobs within the County.

The graph's vertical access conveys the proportion of employment for each sector in the County compared to the proportion of employment within the national economy. This measure is called a "location quotient," and any value greater than one indicates that the economic sector is "concentrated" locally and comprises a greater share of employment in the County than in the national economy. For instance, the location quotient for employment in manufacturing jobs is 2.62, meaning that the percentage of manufacturing jobs in Gladwin County was 2.62 times greater than the same percentage in the national economy as a whole in 2016, even though employment in manufacturing declined in the County between 2006 and that year. The graph indicates, therefore, that employment in manufacturing, retail, construction, healthcare and social assistance, and accommodation remain concentrated in the County relative to the U.S. economy.

Three other measures describe the composition of a community's economy. The percentage of jobs within industries and the percentage of residents employed in those industries describes the types of employment. These industry categories

**FIGURE 11: INDUSTRIES IN GLADWIN COUNTY 2006-2016**



Source: American Fact Finder - County Business Patterns 2006 and 2016

**TABLE 14: EMPLOYERS IN GLADWIN COUNTY**

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN ESTABLISHMENT	NUMBER OF ESTABLISHMENTS IN GLADWIN COUNTY
1-4 employees	223
5-9 employees	81
10-19 employees	57
20-49 employees	27
50-99 employees	6
100-249 employees	7
250-499 employees	0
500-999 employees	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>401</b>

Source: American Fact Finder - County Business Patterns 2016

correspond to the federal North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes, which classify businesses based on their primary activity (the highest revenue-generating activity). The size of businesses and the number of workers employed is also an important factor that describes economic trends.

**Local Businesses**

As of 2016, 401 establishments existed in Gladwin County, the vast majority of which (90%) were small businesses with 19 or fewer employees. Correspondingly, about one third of all establishments in the County were involved in retail trade or arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services. These two industries represent much of the small businesses in Gladwin’s downtown, and combined account for 20.1% of workers employed in the City. This illustrates that small businesses are at the core of the County’s economy and that continuing to expand the types of retail,

**TABLE 15: MAJOR EMPLOYERS IN GLADWIN COUNTY**

EMPLOYER NAME	TYPE OF BUSINESS	EMPLOYEES
Gladwin Community Schools	Education	260
Brown Machine	Manufacturing	228
Saint-Gobain	Manufacturing	228
MidMichigan Health	Healthcare	187
Beaverton Rural Schools	Education	150
Gladwin Pines Nursing and Rehabilitation Center	Healthcare	135
Loose Plastics	Manufacturing	120
East Jordan Plastics	Manufacturing	100
TOTAL		1408

Source: Gladwin County Economic Development Corporation

dining, and entertainment establishments in the community's core will have major impacts on local employment patterns. It is also critical to note however, that jobs in these two sectors offer some of the lowest median annual earnings in the community: \$16,532 in retail trade and \$11,858 in arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services. The lack of competitive wages can stymie local economies by making these jobs difficult to fill and by leading to lower discretionary spending power among households. Additionally, over half the jobs in both sectors in Gladwin County were either part-time or seasonal (51.9% in retail and 55.5% in arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food service) and the intermittent work associated with these industries presents further challenges including lack of benefits and seasonal declines in economic activity.

**Manufacturing and Education, Healthcare, and Social Services**

Meanwhile, the manufacturing, and education and healthcare services sectors contribute large shares to the County's employment and are provided by some of its larger employers. As of 2017, about one fifth (20.2%) of the County's employed population worked in manufacturing while about the

same percentage (20.0%) worked in educational services, healthcare, and social assistance, making these two sectors the largest segments of the economy. Many of the jobs in these sectors are provided through larger employers such as Gladwin and Beaverton School Districts, healthcare institutions, and manufacturing firms located in Gladwin's industrial park. Large shares of employment in these sectors offer advantages through higher earnings. The median annual income among Gladwin County residents employed in manufacturing was nearly one third (30.9%) higher than the County's annual median income of \$28,458, while annual earnings among County residents working in education, healthcare and social assistance were roughly on par with (93% of) the County's median income. Year-round and full-time work comprised most of the County's jobs in these two key industries; 84.5% of the County's manufacturing jobs were full-time throughout the year as were 54.9% of jobs in healthcare, education, and social assistance. Despite these notable strengths, reliance on single large employers can be a weakness when national economic trends curtail employment in a certain industry or other larger factors cause a business to reduce production.

## Information, Finance and Skilled Professions

The number of establishments in knowledge-based sectors including professional, scientific, and management services, information, and finance, insurance, and real estate comprises only 17.9% of Gladwin County's businesses, combined. Employment in these sectors comprise a similarly small share of the County's total (11.2% of jobs). Despite this, median annual incomes for residents working in these sectors was higher than the Countywide median income in 2017. For instance, County residents employed in finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing services earned \$35,893 on average compared with \$28,458 across all industries.

## Industries and Gender

Gladwin County displays distinct patterns of employment and earnings by gender across these industries. Males held over three quarters (76.4%) of the jobs in manufacturing, which is significant considering the sector's higher annual earnings. Meanwhile, over four fifths (83.7%) of the County's employment in education, healthcare, and social assistance was held by females in 2016, although their median annual earnings of \$24,860 was just over half (57.6%) of males' in that industry. This is particularly significant for the City of Gladwin where the sector comprises a greater share of the community's employment than the County. Further, nearly one quarter (24.2%) of family households in Gladwin were headed by single females in 2016 and perhaps relatedly, the community's poverty rate among residents under 18 years of age (33.1%) was roughly one third higher than that of Michigan's as a whole (21.7%).

## Generation (Gen) Z and Gladwin

As younger generations enter young adulthood and are soon to be entering the workforce and housing market, understanding their preferences is essential to plan successfully for the future. Defined as the generation born between 1995 and 2015, they are the first group in mass to be native technology-users. Never has anyone

grown up in an age of instant and international connectivity with such ease. As such, much of their emerging opinions have been formed in ways that are different than older generations. As a unique and important cohort, it is beneficial for cities to stay in touch with how to include and incorporate their values into the planning process if they have any hopes of retaining them or enticing them to return.

During the month of May 2019 Gladwin Public School 234 high school students participated in a Gen Z survey which asked a variety of questions regarding opinions on national issues and after graduation plans. Results of the survey rendered the following:

- » Over 50% of students plan to leave the community after graduation.
- » Two-thirds of those leaving for college noted they will not be returning to the community because they won't be able to pursue their career.
- » Healthcare, creative arts, and education were the top three career paths selected.
- » Less than 5% plan to pursue a vocational trade after graduating from high school.
- » Approximately 15% will seek local employment and remain in the greater Gladwin area.

## CITY OF GLADWIN ECONOMY

### Commuting

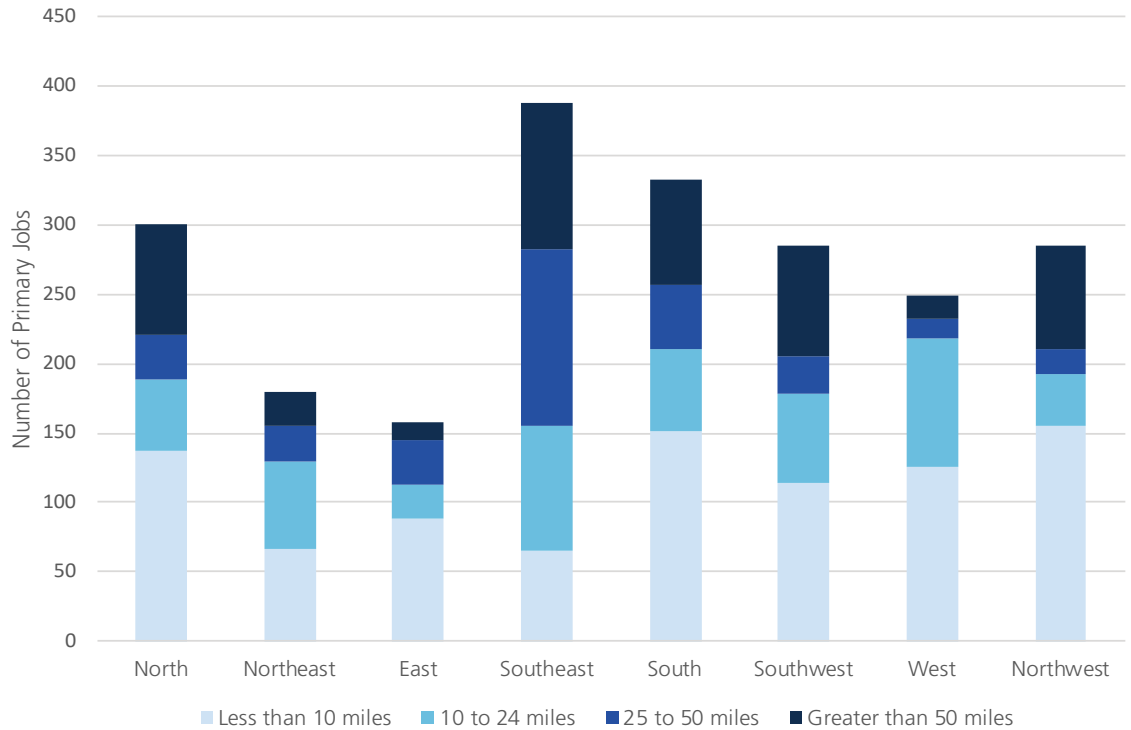
The time working households take to commute to work is a key economic indicator because it defines the portion of their income they expend on transportation. In 2017, the average commute time for employed Gladwin County residents was a lengthy 30.4 minutes. The U.S. Census Bureau has an online application that uses payroll data to estimate levels of commuting between different geographies and according to the analysis, the City of Gladwin is a major employment center for surrounding areas. The analysis indicates that 88.7% of all workers employed in the City of Gladwin, a total of 1,930 people,

**TABLE 16: MAJOR EMPLOYERS IN GLADWIN COUNTY**

INDUSTRY	ESTABLISHMENTS IN GLADWIN COUNTY		EMPLOYMENT AMONG GLADWIN COUNTY RESIDENTS		MEDIAN ANNUAL INCOME IN GLADWIN COUNTY (\$)
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	5	1.2%	324	3.6%	40,455
Construction	60	15.0%	867	9.7%	40,236
Manufacturing	25	6.2%	1,796	20.2%	37,270
Wholesale trade	9	2.2%	168	1.9%	32,500
Retail trade	90	22.4%	1,096	12.3%	16,532
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	9	2.2%	407	4.6%	37,552
Information	7	1.7%	61	0.7%	22,917
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	31	7.7%	485	5.5%	35,893
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	34	8.5%	443	5.0%	30,298
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	42	10.5%	1,781	20.0%	26,549
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, accommodation, and food services	44	11.0%	690	7.8%	11,858
Other services, except public administration	43	10.7%	474	5.3%	21,859
Public administration and industries not classified	2	0.5%	778	13.1%	40,294
All industries	401		1,178		28,458

Source: American Fact Finder - County Business Patterns 2016, and Table DP03 and Table S2414 2017 5 Year Estimates

**FIGURE 12: COMMUTE TIMES BY DISTANCE**



commute from outside the City daily. Meanwhile, only about one quarter of employed City residents also work within the community's limits, while the rest of the community's working residents (74% of community workers, 701 people) travel outside of the City boundary for work. Together, these patterns result in a net inflow of 1,229 people into the City for work daily, and accordingly, the City's daytime population grows by 42.4% from this net influx. It is key to bear in mind that the Census Bureau's application aggregates payroll data from "primary jobs" which are often permanent and higher-earning jobs and therefore likely do not capture all of the employment forms within the community. The estimates are, however, a good starting point to understand the dynamics of commuting in and out of the community, and they show that a mismatch between the community's jobs and residents' employment exists. More detailed analysis provided through the Census Bureau show the direction and distance City of Gladwin residents travel for work and indicate that Gladwin's labor force travels large distances to surrounding communities. The most common

directions that residents travel for work is south and southeasterly directions; a total of 388 of Gladwin residents with primary jobs commuted southeast of their home block, which is over twice the number of residents that traveled northeast (179 workers). Residents commuting in these directions also travel longer distances to reach their workplace; over one quarter of residents traveling southeast of their home commuted 50 miles or more in 2016. The "commuting" map indicates more specific locations of employment associated with these patterns. Outside of the City of Gladwin, clusters of employment exist to Gladwin's south in Beaverton, Midland, Coleman, Sanford, and even Midland. Meanwhile, residents commute north to the Sugar Springs resort, while still others travel significant distances west to Clare, Mount Pleasant, and Harrison. Very few workers travel to destinations as distant as Saginaw and Flint.

### The "Gig" Economy

The gig economy is made up of three main components: the independent workers paid by the gig (i.e., a task or a project) as opposed to those workers

who receive a salary or hourly wage; the consumers who need a specific service, for example, a ride to their next destination, or a particular item delivered; and the companies that connect the worker to the consumer in a direct manner, including app-based technology platforms.<sup>8</sup>

According to data compiled by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics the non-employer establishments in Gladwin County declined by 16.8% between 2005-2015. During this same period the

national share of this workforce increased 15.8%.

### Industries and Jobs in the City Gladwin

Among Gladwin City's estimated civilian population 16 years and older, only about half (52.1%) were employed in 2017. The profile of employment by industry type in the City of Gladwin generally follows that of the County in 2017, with a few key differences. Within the City, the industries retail and arts, entertainment, accommodation, and food services

**TABLE 17: MAJOR EMPLOYERS IN GLADWIN CITY**

INDUSTRY	ESTABLISHMENTS IN GLADWIN CITY		EMPLOYMENT AMONG GLADWIN CITY RESIDENTS	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	3	0.9%	74	6.3%
Construction	21	6.5%	70	5.9%
Manufacturing	12	3.7%	189	16.0%
Wholesale trade	7	2.2%	12	1.0%
Retail trade	55	17.1%	145	12.3%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	5	1.6%	36	3.1%
Information	5	1.6%	9	0.8%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	32	10.0%	108	9.2%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	17	5.2%	66	5.6%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	54	16.8%	211	17.9%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, accommodation, and food services	31	9.7%	136	11.5%
Other services, except public administration	42	13.0%	92	7.8%
Public administration and industries not classified	37	11.5%	30	2.5%
All industries	321		1,178	

Source: ESRI – Business Summary and American Fact Finder – 2017 American Community Survey

together comprised an even larger share of residents' employment (30.2%) than the County. Meanwhile, manufacturing comprised a smaller portion of the City's employment (16.0% of employed residents) comparatively. Together, these numbers suggest that employment among Gladwin residents tilts toward lower-paying service-sector industries, and that City residents occupy a relatively low share of the County's manufacturing jobs, which often offer stability and higher wages. The City of Gladwin's share of employment in manufacturing is also small compared with neighboring Beaverton, where it comprises over one third (35.1%) of the community's employment. It is key to note that these numbers on employment among Gladwin City residents are independent of location; Gladwin residents working in these industries don't necessarily also work in the City but may commute to locations such as Beaverton or Midland. Meanwhile, employment in educational services, healthcare, and social assistance was the single largest industry among City residents, which is promising relative to the sector's higher average incomes. The portion of City residents employed in finance, insurance, and real estate jobs, professional, scientific, and management pursuits or, information is still small at 15.6% of the community's population,

although this was higher than the County's proportion.

### Economic Opportunity - High-Skill Industries

As part of its 2016 economic development plan, EMCOG defined a variety of strategies for communities to pursue to foster small business growth in these knowledge-based economic sectors. Broadly, the plan recommends building on the region's key assets, including higher education institutions, medical complexes, and major corporations to encourage economic growth in highly skilled industries. The plan recommends for instance, that municipalities network with young professionals at events including university business competitions to retain and attract young residents and to foster greater entrepreneurship that is rooted in the community.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, communities could work with universities including CMU and SVSU to expand research and development budgets and to support research opportunities that leverage the region's existing firms.<sup>10</sup> In this vein, partnerships between the CMU medical school and local medical complexes could be pursued to promote life sciences research. Lack of capital was defined as a major challenge to local businesses in the region, and the plan recommends that area municipalities



*Pedestrian-scaled buildings in the Downtown core have a strong built character.*



*Historic, brick buildings in downtown Gladwin.*

work with local business development centers to assist local entrepreneurs in accessing external funding and support.<sup>11</sup> The City of Gladwin should continue to consider the strategies put forward in EMCOG’s plan to grow these economic sectors.

### **Economic Opportunity - Marketing and Tourism**

Michigan’s tourism and recreation-based industry garners billions of dollars on an annual basis, and EMCOG recommends that area municipalities partner with organizations including convention and visitor bureaus, chambers of commerce, and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to share in the economy. These organizations can collaborate to offer amenities for a “diverse, adaptable, and accessible set of outdoor recreation activities” coupled with lodging and transportation to facilitate their use.<sup>12</sup> As the plan notes, leveraging the region’s natural resources to create new recreational assets would also be instrumental in attracting new firms and residents.<sup>13</sup> The 2016 economic

development strategy also suggests that communities engage in internal marketing to promote the region’s shared identity and resources, which could include training sessions for service industry workers and engaging a cross section of organizations including visitors bureaus, chambers of commerce, and municipalities on shared marketing strategies.<sup>14</sup> External marketing could include developing relationships with industry leaders and business executives to better coordinate public and private investment and promote the region as a business environment.<sup>15</sup> The City has already taken the first by developing a branding strategy that focuses on its closeness and appreciation of nature.

### **Economic Opportunity - Downtown Gladwin**

Gladwin’s downtown extends east to west along Cedar Avenue and includes a diverse mix of local businesses and other commercial uses. In 2019, over four fifths (84.6%) of the 65 storefronts along Cedar Avenue between Bowery and State Streets were occupied with



*Vacant storefronts detract from the downtown's commercial environment.*

commercial use. Just under half of these occupied commercial storefronts (43.6%) contained entertainment, dining, and retail uses, many of which are frequented and supported by community members.<sup>16</sup> The two blocks of Cedar Avenue between Silverleaf and Arcade Streets are particularly dense with entertainment, dining, and retail use. Meanwhile about 10% of the district's occupied storefronts contained professional offices including banking and law offices associated with the nearby county government facilities.<sup>17</sup> Gladwin's downtown also includes several historic buildings with brick construction, traditional profiles, and two floors, all of which reinforce the district's pedestrian scale and strong built character.<sup>18</sup> Gladwin's downtown corridor is also well-served with parking. Four surface parking lots are located behind commercial buildings south of Cedar Avenue between Silverleaf and Arcade streets, and a visual survey revealed that many of these facilities are underused with less than

50% of parking spaces occupied in each lot during mid-day business hours.

The district has unique challenges and potential for renewal. Intermittent business hours throughout the day and throughout the week limit the strength of downtown's economy and degrade the density of commercial uses and opportunities for comparison shopping. Meanwhile, vacant storefronts and second floors detract from the district's density and contiguous commercial environment. A visual survey of the district noted that most of the second floors spaces along Cedar Avenue were vacant, while about 15% of the district's 65 storefronts were unused.<sup>19</sup> Although vacancy presents a weakness to the district, the presence of empty but usable space coupled with strong building characteristics presents an opportunity for redevelopment. Similarly, downtown features several single-floor buildings, and although many are occupied with

commercial use in 2019, the presence of these wide buildings limits the density of potential uses and detract from the area's pedestrian environment. Noting this, Gladwin has prioritized some single-floor structures for redevelopment as the second story units are more difficult to renovate and fill.

## RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS

The Retail Market Place Profile created by ESRI's business analyst software estimates how well local demand for products and services are matched with businesses' supply of those goods and services. A "surplus" industry means that visitors from outside the community come to Gladwin for the good or service; conversely, "leakage" categories indicate where residents travel outside of the City limits to access the good or service. Together, these represent the segments of the local economy where a community is "over producing" and local demand is already exceeded, and those where it is "losing money" and the community could likely support more of that good or service. The Retail Market Place Profile also quantifies the value of surplus and leakage within a community

and therefore enables comparison of supply and demand within a community's submarkets.

The retail markets where Gladwin businesses attract customers from outside the community in 2017 come from three automotive-related retail markets; "motor vehicle parts and dealers," "automobile dealers," and "gasoline stations," which together total \$78,972,428 in surplus income annually. Other "surplus" markets that attract visitors are several retail and food service sectors. Surplus income from the "food and beverage stores," "grocery stores," "general merchandise stores," and "department stores" together totals \$41,447,135 annually, while surplus revenue from "food services and drinking places," and "restaurants and other eating places" amounts to \$14,544,749 annually.

The ESRI report shows where local retailers' provision of goods and services does not meet the community's demand in those market segments. This includes three specific markets of goods: "electronics and appliance stores," "furniture stores and home furnishings stores," and "other motor vehicle

**TABLE 18: TOP 10 SURPLUS INDUSTRIES**

INDUSTRY	SURPLUS (DOLLARS)	NUMBER OF ESTABLISHMENTS IN GLADWIN
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	33,858,902	10
Automobile dealers	30,946,897	3
Gasoline stations	14,166,629	5
Food and beverage stores	11,276,123	7
Grocery stores	11,014,991	5
General merchandise stores	9,974,391	6
Department stores excluding leased departments	9,181,630	2
Food services and drinking places	7,381,760	22
Restaurants and other eating places	7,162,989	20
Building material and supplies dealers	5,767,292	5

Source: ESRI - Retail Market Profile

**TABLE 19: TOP 10 LEAKY INDUSTRIES**

INDUSTRY	LEAKAGE (DOLLARS)	NUMBER OF ESTABLISHMENTS IN GLADWIN
Electronics and appliance stores	804,180	0
Furniture stores and home furnishings stores	658,511	1
Other motor vehicle dealers	557,115	0
Nonstore retailers	513,354	0
Electronic shopping and mail-order houses	383,346	0
Beer, wine, and liquor stores	343,300	0
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	336,594	2
Sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores	287,437	3
Lawn and garden equipment and supply stores	191,072	0
Direct selling establishments	101,851	0
<b>TOTAL LOST</b>	<b>4,176,759</b>	<b>6</b>

Source: ESRI - Retail Market Profile

**GLADWIN CITY  
DEVELOPMENT  
INCENTIVES**

Specific tax incentives allowed by the state of Michigan at the local level that the City of Gladwin grants and administers:

- Industrial and Commercial Property Tax Abatement
- Obsolete Property Rehabilitation
- Tax Increment Financing through the Downtown Development Authority
- Personal Property Tax Relief in Distressed Communities

dealers.” Other market segments where Gladwin residents spend their money outside the City boundary include several more general retail segments such as “Beer, wine and liquor stores,” “lawn equipment and garden supply stores” and “sporting goods, hobby, and music stores.” In 2009, Gladwin undertook a plan for the community’s downtown which highlighted residents’ preferences for new businesses in the community’s core. Among residents surveyed, 67% saw that increasing the number of retail businesses was “very important” while 48% indicated that increasing the variety of restaurants was “very important.”<sup>20</sup> In conjunction with “leaky” retail markets, these findings suggest where local demand could likely support businesses in Gladwin.

**PROGRAMS AND ORGANIZATIONS SERVING GLADWIN’S ECONOMY**

A variety of local economic development programs exist at multiple geographic levels to spur private development.

### Gladwin County Economic Development Corporation

The Gladwin Economic Development Corporation provides a variety of measures to support local businesses throughout Gladwin County and to attract and encourage new ones. The organization maintains an online catalogue of commercial and residential properties available for rent or purchase.<sup>21</sup> The organization also provides its own small business revolving loan fund, which makes more favorable credit available to County businesses seeking to start or expand operations than is available through private lenders.<sup>22</sup> The County Economic Development Corporation is authorized by the State to administer a variety of tax incentives for redevelopment of industrial and commercial properties.<sup>23</sup> Businesses seeking to locate in Gladwin’s industrial park qualify for tax incentives administered by the County Economic Development Corporation and high levels of service provision including sewer, water, roadways and underground infrastructure.<sup>24</sup>

### Gladwin County Chamber of Commerce

The Gladwin County Chamber of Commerce is a partnership working to promote networking, information sharing, and cooperation among local businesses. Through the chamber, the County’s local businesses also promote the area as a place to live and do business. The organization holds its own events and promotes others hosted local clubs.<sup>25</sup> The chamber also catalogues and disperses information on the County’s businesses for use by visitors, residents, and business owners themselves.<sup>26</sup>

### Gladwin Downtown Development Authority

The City of Gladwin’s Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is a local board with the stated purpose to strengthen the character and economy of the community’s downtown. The board undertakes public improvements including parking, pedestrian linkages, road resurfacing, and streetscape projects and provides incentives to support business in the community’s core. The organization is also authorized to capture tax revenue for economic development for in the form of tax increment financing.<sup>27</sup> The DDA District encompasses the community’s downtown along the north and south sides of Cedar Street and extends east to include the industrial park. As of 2019, the district encompasses over one third (34%) of the City’s properties and acreage and includes most of the community’s industrial and commercial uses. Businesses seeking to locate in Gladwin’s industrial park qualify for tax incentives administered by the City and are provided high quality sewer, water, and transportation services.<sup>28</sup>

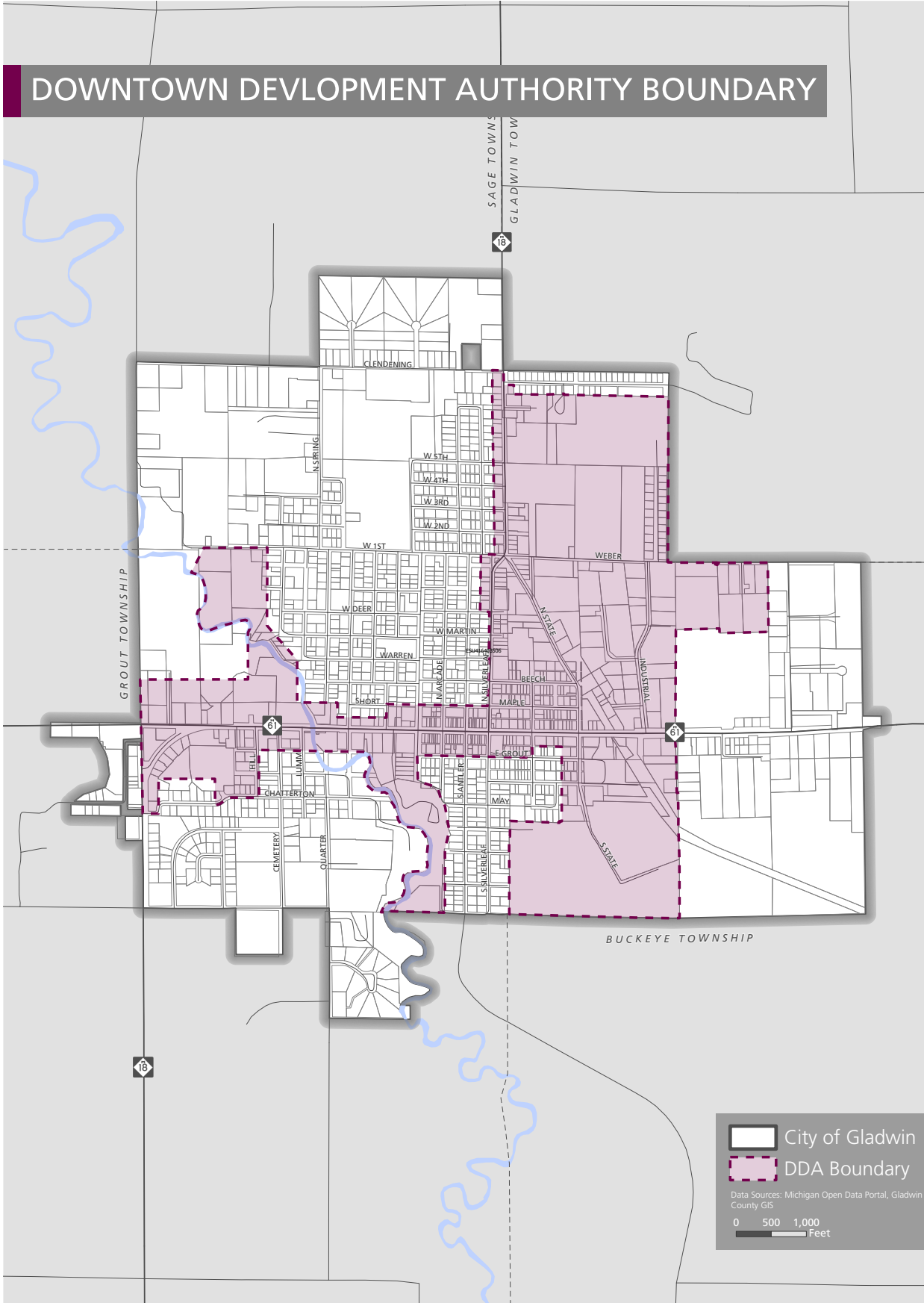
### Michigan Small Business Development Center

Access to capital and technical knowledge is often an inhibitor to potential entrepreneurs and to address this issue, the Michigan Small Business Development Center offers consulting services to potential business owners. The organization provides information on financing sources and assists entrepreneurs in accessing grants and loans for business ventures.<sup>29</sup> It also provides training to new entrepreneurs including business plan creation, social media use and marketing, and human resources management.<sup>30</sup> These services

**TABLE 20: CITY OF GLADWIN DDA PROPERTIES**

	CITY OF GLADWIN DDA	CITY OF GLADWIN	PERCENT OF CITY WITHIN DDA
Number of parcels	521	1,523	34%
Acreage	637.57	1,849.27	34%

MAP 12: DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BOUNDARY



**TABLE 21: POTENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT READY SITES**

SITE ADDRESS	SITE NAME	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	EXISTING PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS	ASSESSED VALUE (\$)
700 West Cedar Avenue	A+H Parking	Private	Vacant lot	Paved road, storm sewer, sidewalk, water, electric, gas, streetlights, curb	26,400
1003 West Cedar Avenue	Gladwin Motor Inn	Private	Vacant lot	Paved road, storm sewer, sidewalk, water, sewer, electric, gas, curb, streetlights, underground utilities	63,500
246 East Cedar Avenue	Rice	Private	Vacant Lot	Paved road, storm sewer, sidewalk, water, sewer, electric, gas, curb, streetlights	17,100
324 West Cedar Avenue	Dec. Ballard	Private	Improved	Paved road, storm sewer, sidewalk, water, sewer, electric, gas, curb, streetlights	54,600
411 East Cedar Avenue	Yarn 4 Ewe	Private	Improved	Paved road, storm sewer, sidewalk, water, sewer, electric, gas, curb, streetlights	43,900

make the office a valuable resource for those seeking to expand or establish businesses. The organization’s regional offices for serving Clare, Gratiot, Gladwin, and Isabella Counties are at the MidMichigan College’s Mount Pleasant campus.

**MidMichigan Community College**

The appropriate workforce training for manufacturing jobs is a major issue facing communities in Michigan and is a factor driving the relocation of manufacturing activities from the state. MidMichigan Community College, which is located roughly 16 miles west of Gladwin in Harrison, offers an array of industry-related and skilled-trades job training including welding, advanced integrated manufacturing, facilities, heating and air conditioning maintenance, and computer aided drafting and design.<sup>31</sup> The College offers professional certifications and credentials and is therefore a major resource in workforce development.<sup>32</sup>

**REDEVELOPMENT READY SITES**

Redevelopment Ready Communities® (RRC) is a program administered by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation as a voluntary, no-cost certification designed to help cities attract investment and residents. To participate, cities must follow a set of RRC best practices defined by the state agency to achieve certification. These best practices include improving planning, zoning, and



a streamlined development process to signal to developers and investors that the community is ready for reinvestment. One important part of the process is to identify and catalogue sites that are vacant, obsolete, or underused and located in areas that have large impact such as neighborhoods or downtowns. In the RRC process, the community takes this initiative and defines its selected sites and markets it to the private sector.

The municipality first defines its sites, collects information on them, convenes a process to define the community's preferred vision for them, identifies potential resources and incentives that could be used to implement the vision, and then markets the sites to developers. The approach is designed to accomplish desirable outcomes by establishing community support ahead of time and proactively marketing a defined vision to developers with the expertise to implement it. The sites for RRC should be selected by consensus but the State's guidelines can help in establishing promising options. The state recommends that redevelopment sites can be a range of poorly used parcels including:

- » Vacant land
- » Surface parking lots
- » Former industrial sites
- » Brownfields and contaminated sites
- » Historic rehab or adaptive reuse
- » Vacant storefronts
- » Vacant upper stories

The City of Gladwin has undertaken the initial steps of the process and catalogued information on several underused properties in the community's downtown. From this starting point, the City can begin a community-driven conversation to determine the desirable types of development in each location, the uses and businesses that the community would like, the types of development that would be feasible, and the resources available to encourage the development. The City of Gladwin should continue to engage the community on preferred redevelopment

locations and can use the information and economic trends depicted in this chapter to represent the market realities and regional economic trends.

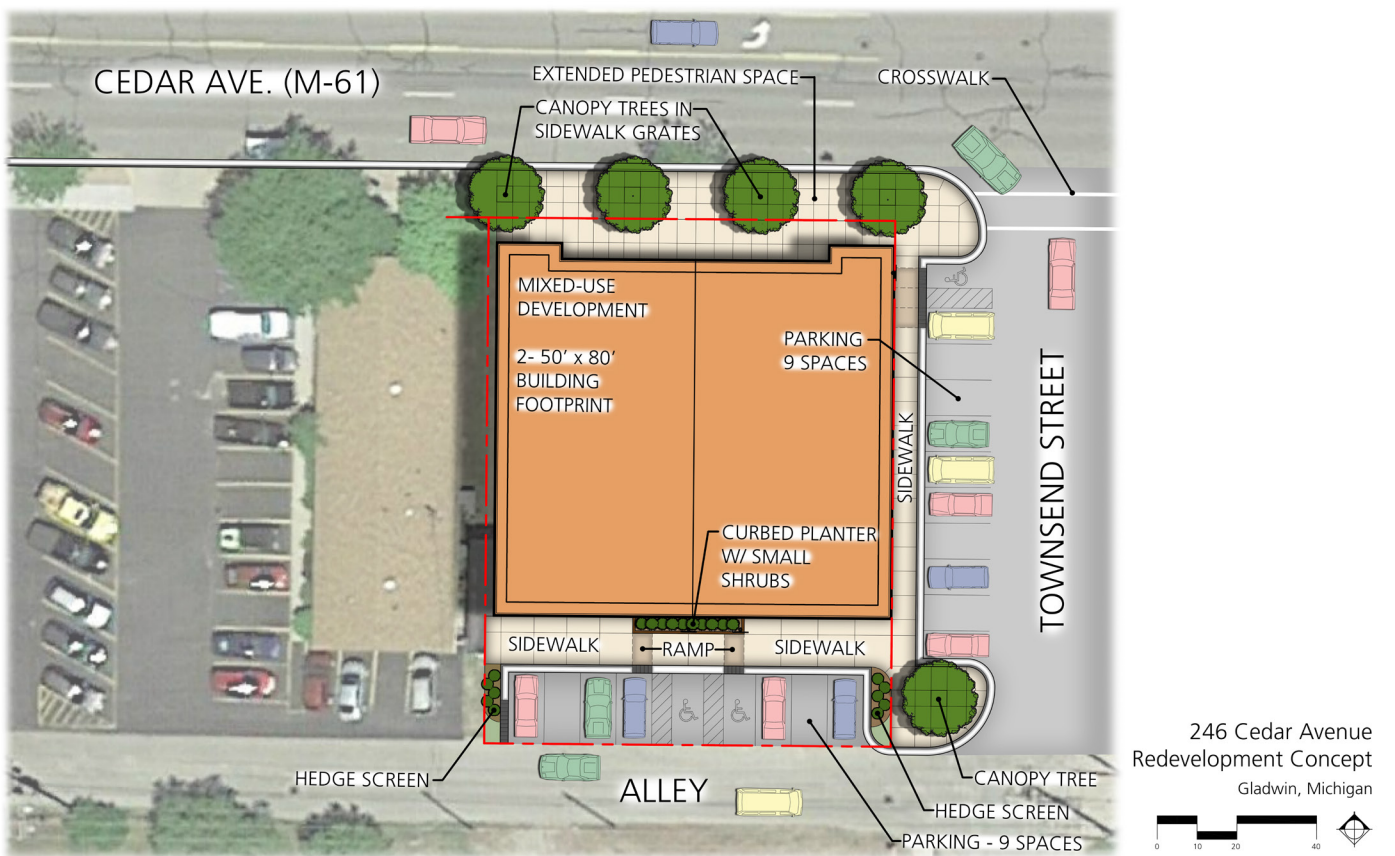
### Redevelopment Site Case Study

The City has identified five sites that are suitable for redevelopment. All the sites are privately owned, and three are vacant. 246 E. Cedar, a vacant site, is located downtown at the corner of Cedar and Townsend Streets. The property has 102 feet of frontage on E. Cedar with a depth of 123 feet consisting of 13,464 square feet. It is zoned C-1 (Central Business District), which allows for a variety of commercial and office uses. The property can comfortably accommodate a building with two 50-foot bays each 100 feet deep, which can be divisible into two leasable units or connected internally, resulting in one leasable unit. If the building is developed as a two-story structure, there is enough square footage for a combination of eight one- and two-bedroom units. There is also enough space behind the building to include off-street parking from the adjacent alley, as well as along Townsend Street. If declared blighted by the City, the property may qualify as a brownfield site thus allowing for partial project financing.

### SUMMARY

The Gladwin area has many connections and institutions to leverage, for example, links to higher education and employers from diverse sectors. Locally, however, there are several buildings that could be filled or better utilized, placemaking efforts that could help to retain its youth, and retail opportunities to keep money from escaping the City that have not been capitalized on. Gladwin must use its new branding to promote its near north appeal and use the data from this recent inventory to match buildings with investor's who can meet the residents' retail needs. Through land use policy and economic development, the City can re-invent itself to become a place where businesses and residents are choosing to settle, and tourists want to visit.

FIGURE 13: 246 EAST CEDAR CONCEPTUAL DRAWING



October 2019

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## FOCUS ON THE FUTURE

Like many other Michigan rural communities, the City of Gladwin is confronted with some systemic community and economic development issues that will influence its future development unless addressed.

The City's population is declining and growing older, over 50% of the housing stock is 40 years or older, the retiree population group is increasing, the school-age population is decreasing, local wages are not keeping pace with the cost of housing, and the variety, quality, and availability of rental housing is lacking. As a county seat, the availability of social services will continue to attract residents with lower incomes and occupational skills. Conversely, the concentration of educational and medical facilities will provide opportunities for higher wage family-sustainable jobs.

Because the City's residential and commercial areas are significantly built-out, redevelopment of existing vacant and underutilized properties will be an integral component of any economic development strategy. As a result, in order to rebalance the demographic profile of the community and increase the median income of residents, a focus on place-based economic development needs to be embraced for the future.

Place-based economic development is anchored in and leverages the locales' existing assets. In Gladwin, this would include its downtown, neighborhoods, parks, business park, and medical campus. Layered on these assets, the community would include a network of walkable and pedestrian-friendly streets.

The future Gladwin would be:

- » a community with a diverse population,
- » an active downtown with a mixture of business, entertainment, and residents,
- » a trail town, serving as an entry to recreational assets inside the City and outside in the County,
- » a community with a variety of owner-occupied and rental housing, and
- » a community where residents, especially younger residents, desire to stay, work, and raise a family.

This vision, although broadly defined, will be accomplished through a mixture of land use and zoning, marketing and promotion, utilization of available economic development tools, and collaboration with County and State partners.

The ingredients are already present in the Gladwin community to build upon; MidMichigan Medical Campus, Riverwalk Place, a quaint and walkable downtown, reasonably priced housing, and access to open space and recreation opportunities.

Some of the challenges may be addressed by the City, and others will be an outcome of the overall State and National economy.

### A Vibrant and Accessible Downtown

For example, the desire to have a vibrant downtown with retail, arts, incubator and maker spaces was clearly articulated at the September 2019 Community Vision session. A local challenge is how to mitigate the impact on the downtown resulting from the five-lane configuration on M-61 (Cedar Street).

Based on the average daily traffic counts the width of the street and the number of lanes, this lane configuration could comfortably accommodate 18,000 to 22,000 vehicles per day. Cedar Street is accommodating half that amount. As a result, M-61 creates a physical barrier in the downtown making accessibility difficult and impacts the economic potential of the district. The road width could sufficiently handle three lanes of traffic, bike lanes, and on-street parking. Several of the critical downtown intersections could be reconfigured to include bump-outs, which would reduce



*A vision for E. Cedar Street - a Complete Street shared by pedestrians and vehicles.*



*Example of a residential loft*

the walking distance across M-61 by as much as twenty feet.

However, this outcome will take a concerted effort by the City Council, DDA, local business community, and State elected officials to convince MDOT that this is the appropriate solution. The first step in the process is to address the configuration of Cedar Street through a traffic study performed by a pre-qualified MDOT traffic and operations engineer. Since this affects the downtown, this study could be sponsored and funded by the DDA.

### Quality Housing

There are two prevailing themes that have unveiled through the Master Plan process. The first theme contends there is a lack of higher wage jobs in the community. The second theme advanced at the initial meeting of the Project Rising Tide leadership team meeting was the lack of skilled workers to fill available job opportunities. Interestingly, both themes are influenced by the lack of affordable and quality housing. People wish to

work relatively close to their place of employment and if housing is unavailable, then the potential worker looks at another locale for that opportunity. The housing study indicated both a need for senior rental housing and market rate rental housing. Both types would provide housing options to seniors and working families, but also free up some single family homes that are occupied by seniors wishing to move into a rental unit. This is a challenge that can be addressed locally.

### Announcing Gladwin

As noted throughout the plan, the City has a considerable portfolio of natural and man-made assets. These need to be announced to external markets and through different venues. For example, the recent community branding effort should be used to market the areawide recreation resources as a means to build a destination economy for the greater Gladwin area. Similarly, these materials should be used to market the downtown, assist in the recruitment of businesses and new residents.

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## IMPLEMENTATION

### FUTURE LAND USE & ZONING

This section details future land use and a plan for zoning changes to be undertaken by the City of Gladwin to move toward implementing the City's vision for the future.

### FUTURE LAND USE

The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) is another tool that helps the City visualize how it should develop over time, a visionary map that adds the spatial component to some of the action plan items related to land use. Unlike a Zoning Map that is designed to be a parcel-by-parcel map to enforce the legally binding Zoning Ordinance, the FLUM provides a direction more than a directive on

how future development can align with best planning practices. While most of the FLUM designations correspond to existing zones, there are some departures concerning housing density, permitted uses downtown, and the conservation of institutional uses and natural features.

### Future Land Use Map

The FLUM is not intended to be used to identify future land use on a parcel-by-parcel basis, but rather to identify districts that may evolve within the City. The Future Land Use Map shows the preferred locations for future development in Gladwin.

In general, commercial and residential districts are expected to retain their existing character, and parks and natural

areas will be preserved as possible. When compared with the 2014 Future Land Use Map, there are a few notable changes. First, the number of districts has been increased to make the map easier to read and understand for developers and others in the community looking to get involved in community development.

Second, a Transitional district has been added to the perimeter of the Central Business District to allow for a gradual transition between downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. While these areas will still be predominately residential, the district allows for limited commercial that will provide services for surrounding residences within walking distance.

Third, a Conservation category was added to the Future Land Use. The purpose of this category is to ensure that during the site plan review process and long-range planning activities, the planning commissioners can account for the FEMA designated floodplain within the City and that structures and activities are protected to the greatest extent possible.

Fourth, the commercial categories were changed to reflect the difference between a walkable, pedestrian-oriented commercial area (Central Business District) and a vehicular-oriented business district (Regional Business District).

Last, an Institutional category was added to reflect the presence of the MidMichigan Health Park and other quasi-public uses along Quarter and Cemetery Streets.

## LAND USE CATEGORIES

### Central Business District

The current zoning for downtown only permits a mixed-use building or development as a special land use that requires a permit. In the City of Gladwin, there is no better place to encourage mixed-uses than the downtown, many of the buildings already have the ideal footprint for this arrangement: they are situated along an established main street, are compact, and have upper units

available. As a way to encourage infill development and increase the variety of housing units, streamlining this process could expedite the transition to a denser and livelier downtown.

### Transitional

Immediately adjacent to the downtown would be the transitional zone that permits higher density housing and office spaces. Offices make compatible neighbors as they tend to keep quiet day-time hours. This area currently permits duplexes and administrative offices as a buffer to single-family neighborhoods; the only major change recommended is that this zone permit higher density housing such as triplexes, fourplexes and small apartment and condominium buildings. The proximity to downtown makes this an appropriate envelope for higher density housing with similar height restrictions as the central business district so it would not be too imposing on the adjacent single-family homes.

### Regional Business

This district, sitting along the periphery of the downtown along M-61 and along the eastern side of M-18, should not compete with the downtown. The current zone, C-2, allows all the same uses as the downtown with the addition of other businesses that are built for convenience shopping such as open air businesses, automotive services, and discount stores. Located on a highway that primarily accommodates passer-by traffic, the uses should be focused on commercial businesses with a larger building footprint and that mainly accommodates vehicle access but does not exclude pedestrians.

### Technology & Industry

The intent of this district stays largely the same except that its coverage is expanded on the FLUM and its permitted uses should be expanded to include research, modern manufacturing, and technology. If the land where potential employers could develop expands, it is important to also scale up housing to ensure that supply of housing and supply are jobs are appropriately balanced.



## Housing

### *Low Density*

The low-density single-family housing remains on the periphery of the City on larger lot sizes in the quieter corners of Gladwin. No changes are recommended to this current arrangement.

### *Neighborhood*

The majority of the housing in Gladwin falls into this category. Still primarily single-family homes, but on smaller lots on a grid street pattern, this is a foundational configuration for neighborhoods.

### *Multi-family*

While several denser residential units were added to the transitional zone and second story units in the central business district, the theme continues that multi-family units should be drawn into the center and not pushed out to the City's edges. The existing multi-family units remain and the zone was expanded near the hospital, an essential service. This zone would include any residential unit denser than a single-family home.

### *Manufactured Housing*

This category recognizes the Manufactured Housing development on N. Spring Street opposite the Gladwin High School campus.

## Institutional

The implementation of this zone is intended to protect community assets that serve the educational, healthcare, and/or social needs of Gladwin residents. When they fall into residential or commercial zones, as they often do, they could be redeveloped as such if community-based enterprise were to vacate. For example, without ample protection, a place like the Gladwin Community Arena could be converted to a private business. Considerations

for this zone would be to emphasize accessibility, public amenities, and/or an extended transition period post-closure to identify another building to relocate and preserve this use.<sup>1</sup> The City of Gladwin is reviewing the zone to determine whether its continued implementation is necessary, or if institutional uses could be integrated with other uses in different zoning categories.

## Conservation

Where land is densely covered by forests, wetlands, or adjacent to floodplains, development should follow tighter development standards to protect the surrounding natural features. Low impact development (LID) is one method of responsibly building in sensitive areas. LID is supported by the federal EPA as an integrated development practice that reduces stormwater runoff and pollutants into local waterbodies.

## ZONING PLAN

According to Section 2(d) of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008), the Master Plan shall include a Zoning Plan depicting the various zoning districts and their use, as well as standards for height, bulk, location, and use of buildings and premises. The Zoning Plan serves as the basis for the Zoning Ordinance.

## Relationship to the Master Plan

As a key component of the Master Plan, the Zoning Plan is based on the recommendations of the Master Plan and is intended to identify areas where existing zoning is inconsistent with the objectives and strategies of the Master Plan, and to guide the development of the Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Ordinance is the primary implementation tool for the future development of Gladwin. The following sections detail existing zoning regulations in the City.

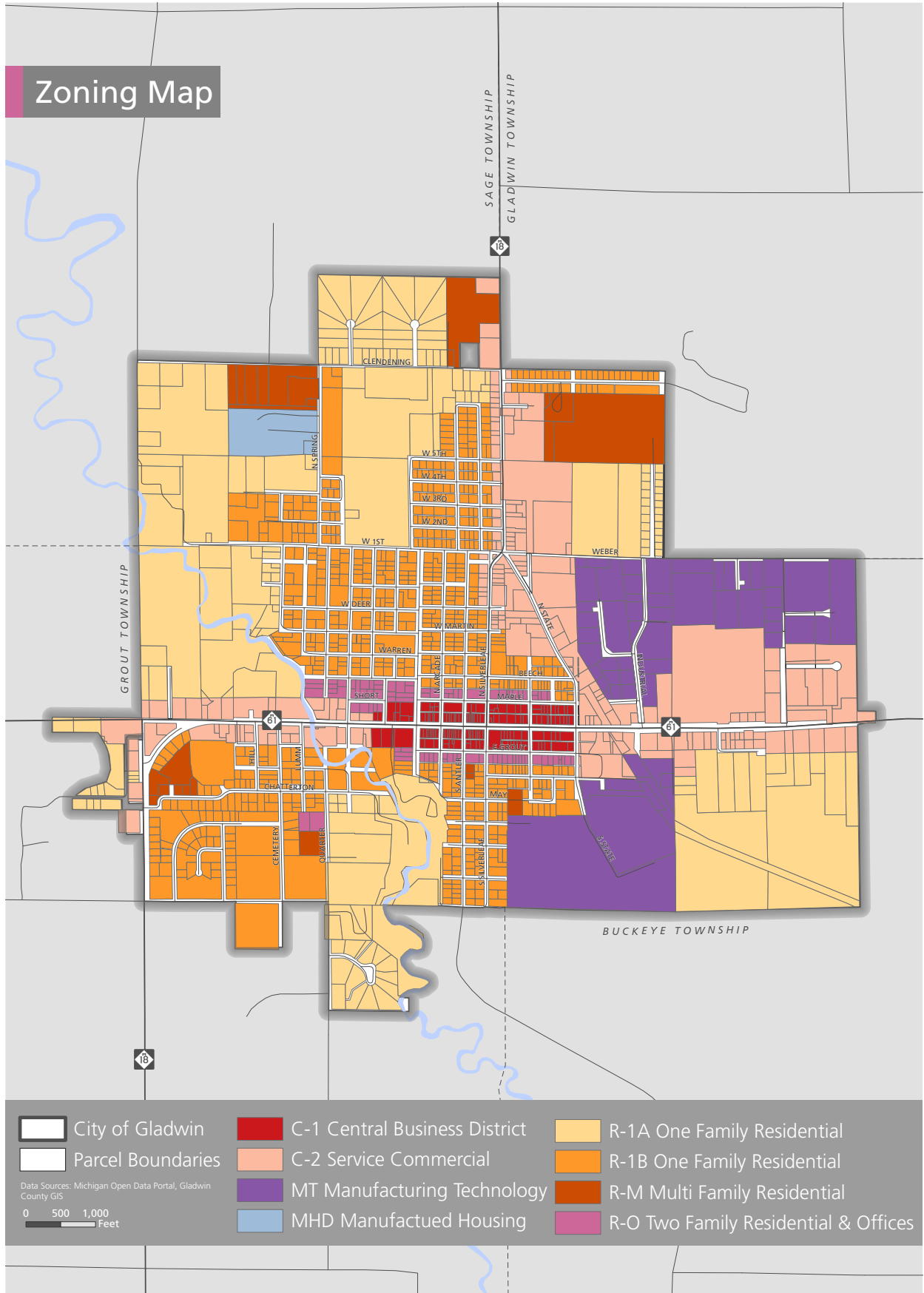
**TABLE 22: ZONING REGULATIONS & FUTURE LAND USE**

FUTURE LAND USE 2019	RELATED ZONING DISTRICT	PROPOSED ZONING REVISIONS
Central Business District	C-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Remove health care and veterinary clinics</li> <li>» Remove hospitals and medical centers as a Special Land Use</li> <li>» Prohibit all drive-thru services for any use group</li> <li>» Include outdoor dining as a Principal Land Use by Right</li> <li>» Allow theaters as a Principal Land Use by Right</li> <li>» Remove provision that allows off-street parking in front yard setback</li> </ul>
Regional Business District	C-2	
Technology and Industry	MT	
Transitional	R-O, MF	
Multiple-Family	MF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Increase lot coverage to 50%</li> <li>» Reduce parking requirements</li> </ul>
Neighborhood Housing	R1-B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Include triplex as Special Land Use</li> </ul>
Low Density Housing	R1-A	
Manufactured Housing	MHD	
Institutional	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Add a new zoning district</li> </ul>
Conservation	R1-A, MF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Conservation Overlay District</li> </ul>

**TABLE 23: OTHER ZONING-RELATED ISSUES**

ARTICLE	PROPOSED REVISIONS
Article 5 Site Plan Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Include an option for a pre-application conference with the applicant prior to a formal site plan submission to go over requirements, review process, and timelines.</li> <li>» Include a provision for Administrative Review on projects that are classified as Principal Land Use by Right.</li> <li>» Review standards for approval that contain discretionary language such as the word “may.”</li> <li>» Remove site plan checklist form from the Zoning Ordinance.</li> </ul>
Article 6 Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Revise parking schedule to include “minimum” and “maximum” parking space requirements.</li> <li>» Exempt C-1 from off-street parking requirements.</li> <li>» Include a provision for shared parking in the C-2, MT, and R-O districts.</li> </ul>

MAP 14: ZONING MAP



## IMPLEMENTATION

### Housing

In 2019, Gladwin completed a thorough housing needs assessment to determine what types of homes are necessary to accommodate their two target markets: workforce housing and senior rentals. Because wages have not kept pace with inflation, purchasing power for new construction homes is limited. One strategy for bringing down the cost is to permit higher-density housing. The gap in the market lies primarily between 60%- 120% of the area median income of \$50,000, meaning that there is little housing supply for households who earn \$30,000 to \$60,000 annually. When tracked over six months, the average price of a home sold was close to \$141,000 and 48% of survey respondents feel comfortable buying a home between \$50,000 to \$100,000. Increasing the correct supply of housing can have a positive effect on the local economy because it allows entry-level and young professionals an opportunity to live and invest in the community.

Additionally, when asked on the community-wide survey about what type of home residents wanted to live in, about 11% of the population preferred to live in an attached housing type (as opposed to a single-family detached home with a yard). Moreover, “affordability of housing” was the second most popular response for choosing to live in the area. Also important is the consistent enforcement of housing quality. Rental inspection programs help keep housing in better condition and deter owners from converting homes into rental units.

#### *Goal:*

**Permit and actively seek out housing formats that are compatible with all life stages, income levels, and disabilities, based on the Gladwin Housing Market Study.**

#### *Objectives:*

- » Increase the variety of housing types to include townhouses, and small triplex and quadplex apartment buildings.

- » Maintain a quality housing stock using a rental inspection program and enforcement of existing building maintenance code.
- » Encourage residential apartments on the upper floors of downtown commercial buildings.
- » Identify a site to construct 20-30 senior units in proximity to downtown, if possible.
- » Identify sites to accommodate up to 60 workforce rental housing units.

### Recreation

Gladwin’s branding process confirmed the residents’ enthusiasm for recreation and its surrounding natural beauty. The new logo features the colors of the rivers, lakes, and trails of the area, refers to itself as “Michigan’s backyard”, and sports the motto “connected, by nature.” True to the motto, the community has also noticed that over the last five years walking trails have improved, as reported in the community survey. Gladwin’s dedication to nonmotorized trails has been consistent; since 2010 the City has been planning to connect to Beaverton via trails, and construction began in 2018. Still, respondents to the community survey selected “outdoor recreation” (32.4%) as the third-highest priority for improvement in Gladwin.

The National Recreation and Park Association’s 2018 report on the economic impact of recreation found many benefits to having a park outside of improving quality of life: it is a part of the decision-making process for employers when deciding where to locate, where people want to vacation, and boosts property values.<sup>2</sup>

Emblazoned as a part of the City’s identity, it is essential that Gladwin continues to follow through by maintaining an up-to-date Parks and Recreation Master Plan, applying for grants for recreation projects, and becoming a Trail Town – a designation that signifies the best trails in the state based on the quality of the experience, maintenance, community support, marketing, and clear signage.<sup>3</sup>

There are no Trail Town designations in the region and only four cities in Michigan with this title, so this investment would set Gladwin apart.

*Goal:*

**Continue development as an all-season recreation destination in the “near north” region.**

*Objectives:*

- » Provide multi-use, all-season trails, programming, and related amenities.
- » Become a “Trail Town” and market this brand in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce.
- » Work with partners, such as the Chamber of Commerce, to develop a coordinated external marketing program focused on the area’s recreational assets.
- » Build on the growing demand for recreation and leverage it as an economic asset.

### Natural Features

As a part of one of the largest watersheds in Michigan, the City must ensure that it is not contributing to the degradation of water quality or the habitat that is home to 138 endangered species. Also, because almost the entire City is covered by a wellhead protection area, it is prudent to make sure that land use practices are not contributing to the contamination of Gladwin’s water supply. More details will be featured in the Zoning Plan, but there are practices that can be codified in the local ordinance and investments the City can make to reduce the amount of nonpoint source pollution that reaches its river, for example, strategic tree canopy coverage, porous pavement, rain gardens, rain barrels, or landscaping and/or water retention standards for new businesses. Protecting the river’s water quality reinforces the idea expressed by the survey takers of improved “outdoor recreation,” as a main feature of the park system and home to many recreational activities, water quality is a vital component of recreation.

*Goal:*

**Improve the watershed’s water quality.**

*Objectives:*

- » Use land use policy and strategic investments to keep the rivers and wetlands clean.
- » Ensure that the Zoning Ordinance has provisions focused on stormwater management, and the use of low impact stormwater techniques.

### Economics

The success of a local economy has as much to do with housing as it does business recruitment and retention, placemaking, and people-building. To make Gladwin a lively place to live, the housing supply and placemaking should be simultaneously addressed. One way to do that is to help fill the commercial vacancies downtown with the expressed demand of residents. The survey-takers were clear in their hopes for which retail would come to Gladwin: 73% for general merchandise, 60% for food and beverage, and 51% for clothing and accessories, all of which they reported they would visit at least monthly. In terms of services, the top of the list is “restaurants” (65%) followed by a “movie theatre” (47%), and “lodging for visitors” (40%). With this data, the City’s DDA and Chamber can focus on recruiting businesses to the downtown, especially to fill the gap in food and beverage.

In addition to making Gladwin a more attractive place to live and visit, building a pipeline from the education system to the available jobs is crucial for maintaining a workforce. As the City continues to build out the industrial park, work with educational institutions to determine if students are trained to take the jobs that are coming to Gladwin. The Generation Z survey revealed that there is greater opportunity to promote tours of local businesses to expose students to the range of employment options as about three-quarters of the students surveyed were unaware of these programs. The

Generation Z survey also revealed what fields the youth are interested in pursuing which can serve as another launching point for business recruitment.

*Goal:*

**The community is a lively, attractive, and convenient place to live and conduct business.**

*Objectives:*

- » Increase the number of people that live and work in Gladwin.
- » Invest in placemaking efforts to beautify the area and signal to developers that Gladwin is a great place to invest.

*Goal:*

**Increase local shopping options for food and beverages and general merchandising.**

*Objective:*

- » Encourage a partnership between the Downtown Development Authority and the Chamber of Commerce to recruit new businesses to the downtown. Focus attention on food and beverage establishments, food markets, and specialty foods and goods.

*Goal:*

**Build strong partnerships and programming with regional educational/training institutions.**

*Objectives:*

- » Continue build-out at the industrial/business park.
- » Actively promote available redevelopment sites and ensure that the zoning and infrastructure are available for fast-tracking the development process.

## Infrastructure

Gladwin's grid street pattern and relatively high percentage of those who walk or bicycle to work already make for a strong foundation for Complete Streets. However, 18% of survey respondents recorded that they do not feel safe from traffic as a pedestrian or bicyclist in Gladwin. An investment in Complete Street elements is an investment in public safety and economic development. Starting in the downtown and the street system that leads to downtown, Complete Street elements help to boost pedestrian foot traffic, drive tourism, and improve the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists. This is important because 42% of survey respondents prefer to live within walking or bicycling distance from local businesses. However, without the appropriate infrastructure, people will continue to drive and contribute to traffic. When viewed as a way to enhance public health and safety, and make businesses more accessible, it is worthwhile to make investments in a Complete Street network. It is also important to ensure that infrastructure improvements made below ground are timed with road construction projects.

*Goal:*

**Build a Complete Street network.**

*Objectives:*

- » Provide the opportunity for all users to feel safe on the road.
- » Build alternative and active ways for people to move throughout the City.
- » Reduce the lanes on Cedar Avenue and include dedicated bike lanes as part of a Complete Streets effort.

**TABLE 24: ACTION PLAN**

GOAL	ACTION	PRIORITY LEVEL	PARTNERS	TIME FRAME
<p><b>HOUSING</b> Permit and actively seek out housing formats that are compatible with all life stages, income levels, and disabilities, based on the Gladwin Housing Market Study.</p>	<p><b>Zoning Ordinance:</b> Revise the ordinance to include triplex, attached townhomes, and live-work units in the R1-B and MF district.</p>	High	City	1-5
	<p><b>Rental Inspection Program:</b> Institute a formal rental inspection program that requires the inspection and licensing of rental units that are located in R1-A, R1-B and R-O zoning districts.</p>	Medium	City	1-5
	<p><b>Senior Housing:</b> Identify a site to accommodate 20-30 units and solicit a developer.</p>	High	City	1-5
	<p><b>Workforce Housing:</b> Identify sites to accommodate up to 60 rental units and solicit a developer.</p>	High	City	1-5
<p><b>RECREATION</b> Continue development as an all-season recreation destination in the “near north” region.</p>	<p><b>Trail Town:</b> Undertake a comprehensive inventory of all trail types in Gladwin County. Utilize this information for marketing and designation as a Pure MI Trail Town.</p>	Medium	City; County; Chamber	1-5
	<p><b>Branding:</b> Continue collaboration with Chamber and Gladwin County EDC to promote a county-wide brand focused on outdoor recreation activities and opportunities.</p>	Medium	City; County; Chamber; Gladwin County EDC	1-5
<p><b>NATURAL FEATURES</b> Improve the watershed’s water quality.</p>	<p><b>LID Provisions:</b> Incorporate into the Zoning Ordinance requirements for low impact development storm water provisions.</p>	High	City	1-5
	<p><b>Riparian Setback:</b> Evaluate the use of riparian buffer setback along the Cedar River.</p>	Medium	City	5+

GOAL	ACTION	PRIORITY LEVEL	PARTNERS	TIME FRAME
<b>ECONOMIC</b> The community is a lively, attractive, and convenient place to live and conduct business.	<b>Maker and Co-Op Spaces:</b> Identify a building(s) that could be converted into maker and co-op spaces to encourage small business development and provide office space for “gig” economy workers that need access to broadband services.	Medium	DDA	1-5
	<b>Downtown Redevelopment:</b> Use the real estate provisions in the DDA statute where the DDA takes an active role in the redevelopment of property.	High	DDA	<1
	<b>Traffic Study M-61:</b> Perform a traffic study to evaluate the feasibility of a three-lane highway through the downtown.	High	DDA	<1
	<b>Dining Target Market:</b> Focus recruitment efforts to increase dining and entertainment opportunities in the downtown.	High	DDA; Chamber; Gladwin County EDC	1-5
	<b>Announcing Gladwin:</b> Develop an external market promotion using the new branding materials.	Medium	DDA; Chamber; and County EDC	1-5
<b>INFRASTRUCTURE</b> Build a Complete Street network	<b>Cedar Avenue:</b> Reduce the number of lanes from 5 to 3 with on-street parking downtown	High	City; DDA; MDOT	1-5
	<b>Cedar Avenue:</b> Add bicycle lanes outside of downtown	Medium	City; DDA; MDOT	5+
<b>REGULATORY</b> Revise the Zoning Ordinance	<b>Zoning Ordinance:</b> Revise and update the Zoning Ordinance incorporating recommendations in the Zoning Plan.	High	City	1-5

## SOURCES

- 1 Kelley-Markham. “Institutional Zone Vital to City Planning.” Los Angeles Times. 1987. <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1987-01-04-me-2152-story.html>
- 2 National Recreation and Park Association. “Economic Impact of Local Parks. Executive Summary.” 2018.
- 3 Department of Natural Resources. Pure Michigan Trail and Trail Town Designation Program. [https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-350-79133\\_79206\\_87346---,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-350-79133_79206_87346---,00.html)

