

M-22 Benzie-Manistee Pure Michigan Byway

Corridor Management Plan

2017 – 2021

Prepared October 23, 2017



M-22 BENZIE-MANISTEE BYWAY

Committee Members

- Little River Band of Ottawa Indians
- Michigan Department of Transportation
- Sleeping Bear Dunes National Park
- Manistee County Visitors Bureau
- Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy
- Michigan Department of Transportation
- Frankfort Elberta Chamber of Commerce
- Manistee Township
- Onekama Township
- Arcadia Township
- Village of Onekama
- Blaine Township
- Gilmore Township
- Village of Elberta
- City of Frankfort
- Crystal Lake Township
- Lake Township
- Platte Township

Plan Preparation

Networks Northwest in coordination with Parallel Solutions LLC and Alliance for Economic Success.

Networks Northwest. PO Box 506, Traverse City, Michigan 49685-0506. www.nwm.org

The Northwest Michigan Council of Governments provides regional planning, economic development, and workforce development services to its ten member counties of Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, and Wexford.

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The plan was prepared in October 2017.

Byway Sponsor for Application Process

The Alliance for Economic Success, 395 Third Street, Manistee MI 49660.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the Pure Michigan Byway: M-22 Benzie Manistee Corridor Management Plan is to provide an understanding of the designated route and the goals for the corridor. Because of the scenic attributes of inherent beauty and the rural characteristics displayed along this particular stretch of M-22, a committed group of residents and local officials began investigating the possibility of officially acknowledging the distinctiveness of this segment of roadway by designating it as a Pure Michigan Byway. This distinction would ensure the roadway would remain true to this character, and would be managed in a manner that showcases the inherent qualities of the community and transportation corridor.

Mission Statement: Promote and communicate access to, and the attributes of, the M-22 corridor in Benzie and Manistee Counties.

Vision Statement: Increased appreciation of the characteristics of the M-22 corridor.

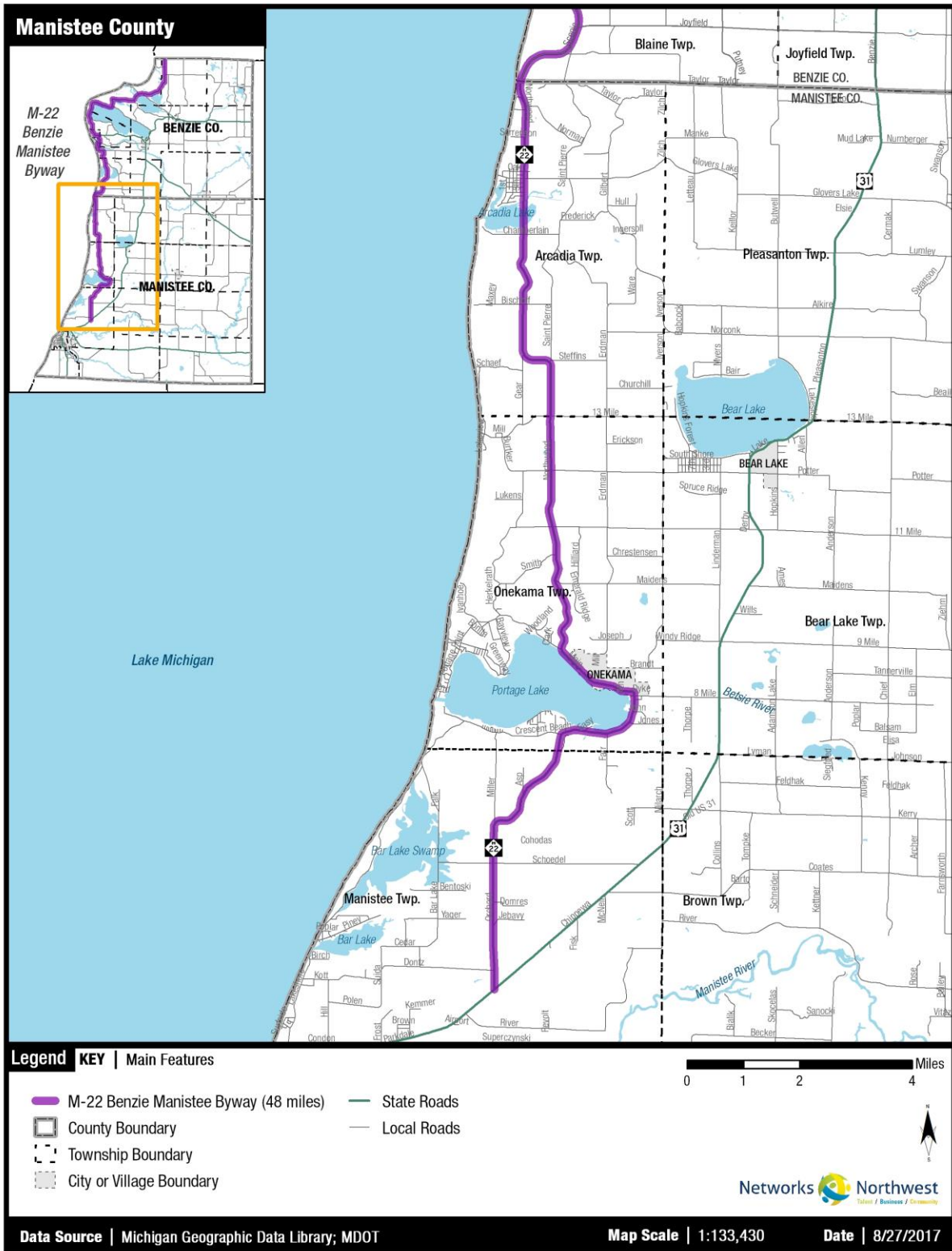
The plan includes the following:

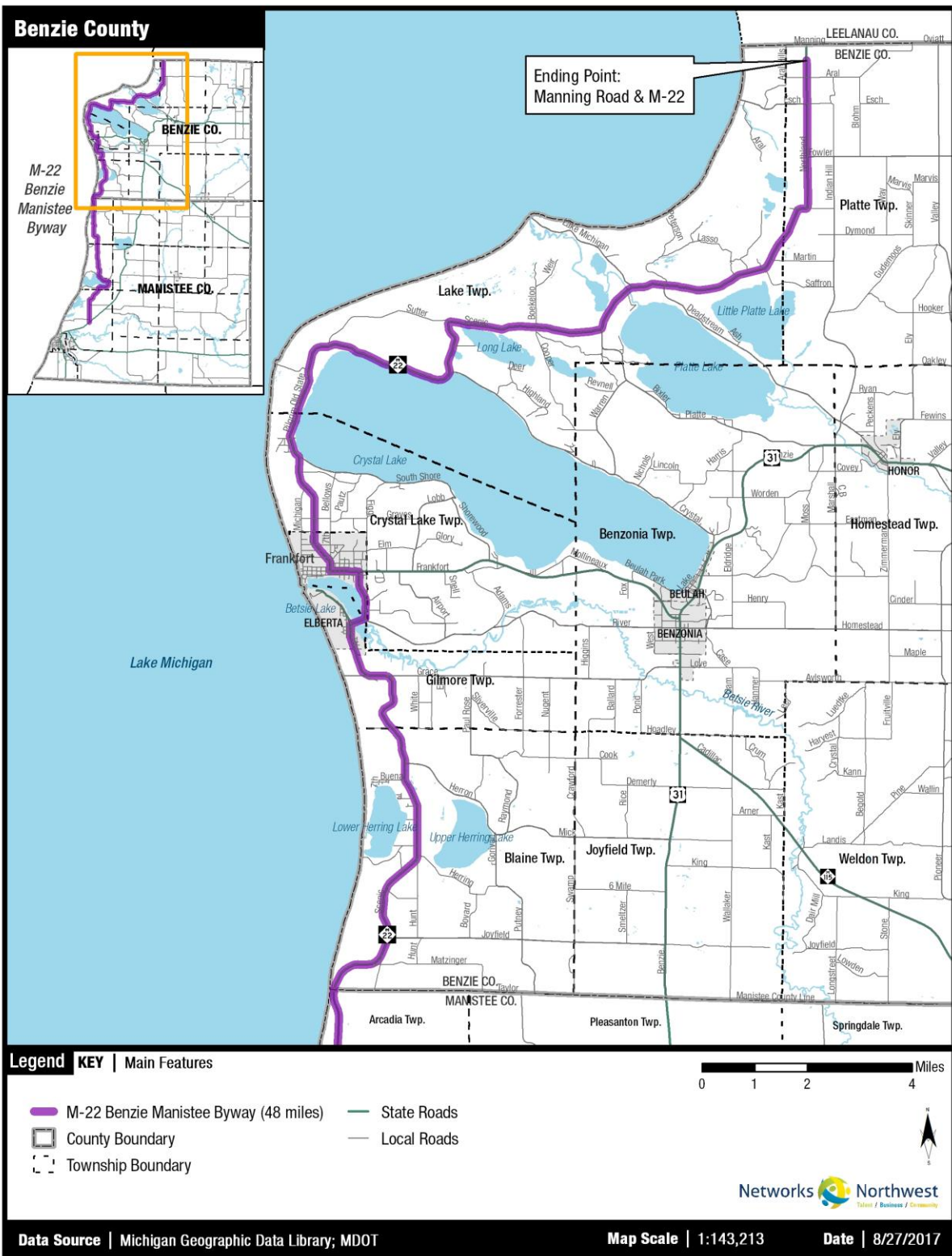
- Maps identifying the corridor boundaries
- Information about population and land use along the corridor, including traffic counts
- An inventory of corridor qualities including natural, historical, cultural, and recreational assets
- Goals for the corridor
- A list of projects and action steps
- A financial plan

This plan can be used as a guide to achieve community visions. The Pure Michigan Byway: *M-22 Benzie Manistee Corridor Management Plan* does not address every issue and problem along the corridor and does not carry the force of regulatory authority. A Corridor Management Plan cannot change a local zoning ordinance. It does not regulate or take away property rights from a landowner. The plan is a resource and reference for future corridor improvements undertaken by local landowners and units of government.

The M-22 Benzie Manistee Nominating Team and Committee was made up of representatives from local governing bodies and civic and non-profit groups, in cooperation with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), and with assistance from other agencies and organizations. Networks Northwest supported the process of the plan's development and contracted with Parallel Solutions LLC to assist with writing the plan.

Map 1. Location Maps





INTRODUCTION

The M-22 Benzie Manistee Pure Michigan Byway begins at the intersection of US 31 in Manistee County where M-22 heads north into Benzie County and ends at the Leelanau County southern boundary at Manning/Stormer Road. The route length is 49.45 miles. There are no gaps in the route, although there are two turns within the City of Frankfort. The road follows the shoreline of Lake Michigan and has some sweeping vistas of the lake, shoreline bluffs, orchards, inland lakes, forested areas, and farm fields.

M-22 is one of the main routes for the over 42,000 residents of Benzie and Manistee Counties as well as the thousands of seasonal residents and tourists who visit the area.

From M-22, corridor users can access Lake Michigan, rivers, and inland lakes; recreational opportunities such as hiking and cross country skiing trails, fishing, boating, golfing, bicycling, and bird watching; historical sites; farm businesses, and other businesses. The corridor is a popular “spring blossom” and “fall color” tour destination for visitors from areas such as Chicago and Detroit. The road corridor is also the main route from Manistee and southern Benzie County to the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore.

Pure Michigan Byways are specially designated and signed state trunkline routes with exceptional significance. The Michigan Heritage Route Program—the original name for the Pure Michigan Byway – was created by the Public Act 69 of 1993 and designed to identify, inventory, protect, enhance, and in some cases, promote state trunklines and adjacent land with distinctive or unique scenic, cultural, or historic qualities. The normal process for route nomination within the Pure Michigan Byways Program follows a standard eight-step procedure: formation of a nominating team, identification of potential routes, evaluation of the highway using a roadside inventory, selection of route to be nominated, preparation of a management plan, evidence of local support, preparation of nomination/application, and submission of application.

On December 17, 2014, the Michigan State Senate passed House Bill 5072 to change the name from Heritage Route to Pure Michigan Byway. The House Bill amended Public Act 69 of 1993 and removes references to Michigan Heritage Routes and replaces them with references to "Pure Michigan Byways". The Governor signed the bill into law on December 30, 2014 as Public Act 445.

The M-22 Benzie Manistee Byway nomination process was launched as an outcome of Lakes and Land Initiative, a coordinated multi-jurisdictional planning initiative that included townships, cities, and villages in Benzie and Manistee Counties. A Committee is comprised of representatives from local, state, federal and tribal governments, the local business community and non-profit organizations nominated the route as a Byway and agreed on the following mission, vision, and desired outcomes for the management of the M-22 corridor in Benzie and Manistee Counties. The committee adopted the mission, vision statements, vision elements, and desired outcomes below to guide future activities and investments.

VISION AND DESIRED OUTCOMES

The community's values and priorities as articulated in existing master plans, recreation plans, economic development plans and other community development guidance documents helped to focus the desired outcomes for this Corridor Management Plan.

Mission Statement

Promote and communicate access to, and the attributes of, the M-22 corridor in Benzie and Manistee Counties.

Vision Statement

Increased appreciation of all the M-22 corridor characteristics.

The desired outcomes stated below represent a future "ideal state" for the Byway.

1. Historical and Cultural Resources and Experiences

The byway and the community emphasize local historical sites, local histories, cultural heritages, and even local legends and folklore along the corridor. These stories and experiences add a rich layer of intrigue and interest that enriches the byway user's experience.

2. M-22 Marketing & Promotion

A comprehensive marketing and social media plan guides overall promotional efforts for the byway. Local businesses use the byway as an opportunity to expand the tourist season. Byway champions and promoters maintain a presence at local festivals, craft fairs, concerts and other events.

3. Rural Scenic Preservation

The rural character of the corridor is preserved. M-22 parallels the shoreline of Lake Michigan, with views of, shoreline bluffs, inland lakes, grasslands, orchards and forested areas.

4. Agricultural Preservation

Agricultural development and production along the route thrives and significant farmland is voluntarily protected. Large, small, and family farms, farm stands, and farm-related businesses exist along M-22. The value of agriculture to the community is emphasized.

5. Recreational Opportunities

The byway provides many recreational amenities along the corridor such as access to Lake Michigan, rivers, and inland lakes; hiking, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, "four season"

fishing, motorized and non-motorized boating, bicycling, motorcycling, hunting, golfing, and bird watching. The area emerges as a destination for growing sports such as mountain biking, kiteboarding, surfing, and windsurfing.

6. Multi-modal Transportation Facilities

The M-22 byway provides multi-modal opportunities for all corridor users including automobiles, agricultural equipment, trucks, bicycles, pedestrians, and transit. Complete Streets policies and activities will be adopted in communities along the corridor. The Byway will support and provide non-motorized facilities and trails on a regional level, including new connections and the development of new facilities and trails.

The priorities of the proposed M-22 Benzie Manistee Pure Michigan Byway are articulated within the goals and priorities found within the Master Plans of the communities along the corridor: the Townships of Manistee, Onekama, Arcadia, Blaine, Gilmore, Crystal Lake, and Lake; the villages of Onekama and Elberta; and the city of Frankfort. These plans articulate the desire to implement strategies to achieve two primary goals related to the M-22 highway:

- Ensure access to the area by taking advantage of the Pure Michigan Byway branding and promotion.
- Ensure access and provide education for visitors to take advantage of the abundance of natural, historical, and cultural resources and recreational opportunities.

LOCAL BYWAY COMMITTEE

The Pure Michigan Byway designation of M-22 in Benzie and Manistee Counties, along with the adoption of the Corridor Management Plan, will empower the Committee to work with the County boards, Township boards, planning commissions, and residents to achieve desired outcomes. The plan and designation do not regulate or take away property rights from adjacent landowners. The plan is a guide for future corridor improvements and enables local communities to maintain more control of the corridor without having ownership of the roadway. Many of the goals and activities listed in this plan mirror goals and activities highlighted by the community in already adopted local master plan and recreational plans.

The Committee's ongoing roles will include facilitation, communication and education.

- The Committee will consist of representatives from the Township government, Township residents, local groups, and representatives from the Michigan Department of Transportation.
- The Committee will prioritize the list of enhancement and improvement projects.
- The Committee meetings will be open to all interested individuals.
- Local media will be utilized to inform the greater community.
- Newsletters and other methods of outreach may be utilized to educate and inform.

Under Pure Michigan Byway status, the Townships of Manistee, Onkama, Arcadia, Blaine, Gilmore, Crystal Lake, and Lake; the villages of Onkama and Elberta; the city of Frankfort; and the Benzie and Manistee Counties can be involved in all management decisions for this segment of M-22. Designation brings with it benefits that help MDOT with prioritizing and taking special care with projects along Heritage Routes and works with the local community to fulfill their management visions. The Corridor Management Plan will help the counties and townships continue their quest for responsible, carefully planned development along the corridor while retaining the rural feel and scenic beauty of the area.

CORRIDOR CHARACTERISTICS

M-22 Benzie Manistee proposed Pure Michigan Byway begins at the intersection of US 31 in Manistee County where M-22 heads north into Benzie County and ends at the Leelanau County southern boundary at Manning/Stormer Road. The route length is 49.45 miles. There are no gaps in the route with just two turns within the City of Frankfort.

The southern terminus is 3 miles northeast of Manistee. The road takes numerous turns along the lakeshore and its majestic hills amplify the scenic views. The road runs north to the village of Onekama and Portage Lake and then to Arcadia. M-22 turns northeasterly to curve around the north shore of Crystal Lake after passing through Elberta and Frankfort. South of the Platte River, the highway crosses into the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore and connects with the M-22 Leelanau Scenic Heritage Route/Pure Michigan Byway.

M-22 is one of the main routes for the over 42,000 residents of Benzie and Manistee Counties and the thousands of seasonal residents and tourists who visit the area. The road follows the shoreline of Lake Michigan and has sweeping vistas of the lake, shoreline bluffs, orchards, inland lakes, forested areas, and farm fields.

The purpose of designating M-22 a Pure Michigan Byway is to recognize this unique highway for its natural scenic beauty, its cultural and historical resources, and abundance of recreational opportunities while working to preserve and celebrate the rural character and also attracting visitors and residents to play, work and shop. The corridor has a rich history tied to its geographic location, natural resources, and the spirit of the people in the community.

For the purposes of this plan, the corridor area includes the land located within one mile from the roadway. Some of the assets, themes and actions steps identified in this plan transcend these boundaries due to the nature of the regional systems they are a part of, such as private farmland protection , scenic protection, and marketing.

Current Conditions of the Roadway

M-22 in Benzie and Manistee Counties is a designated state trunkline highway. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has classified the roadway as a principal arterial. M-22 has a few different names along the Byway going north from the US-31 intersection.

In Manistee County:

- Manistee Township – Orchard Highway
- Onekama Township – Orchard Way/Crescent Beach
- Village of Onekama – 1st Street, Main Street
- Onekama Township – Northwood Highway
- Arcadia Township – Northwood Highway, 6th Street, Northwood Highway

In Benzie County:

- Blaine and Gilmore Townships – South Scenic Highway
- Elberta – Frankfort Avenue
- Frankfort – Lake Street, Forest Avenue, Crystal Avenue
- Crystal Lake Township – Pilgrim Highway
- Lake Township – Pilgrim Highway, Crystal Drive, North Scenic Highway

Road Condition

M-22 is mostly a two lane, paved State highway with a speed limit predominately set at 55 miles per hour. There are some left turn lanes and the speed limit is lower through the city, villages, and town centers where the road often functions as a downtown main street. There are four scenic pullouts and one major scenic overlook.

The road condition listed in the 2015 PASER rating report shows that sections of M-22 in Manistee County include ratings of 4 and 5 – Fair; 6 – Good; and 8 – Very Good. The sections in Benzie County include ratings of 4 and 5 – Fair; 6 and 7 – Good; 8 – Very Good; and 9 – excellent. Map 2 illustrates ratings at different locations along the roadway. The road shoulders are mostly three foot paved asphalt ribbons with gravel. There are relatively few marked pedestrian and bicycle use and crossing areas along the corridor.

There are no significant restrictions or factors impacting traffic safety for passenger vehicles, buses, goods movement, motorcycles, bicycles, or pedestrians. There are some curves in the road where safety signage is posted. There is little to no commuter congestion on M-22 and most of the heavier traffic generated is during the tourist season. Most festivals and events take place in the summer and early autumn, although events in “shoulder” seasons of spring and late fall have increased in recent years. Travelers can easily access the route at all times of the year.

Traveler’s Experience On The Byway

Travelers along M-22 will experience a two-lane, rural road with scenic vistas of working farms, relatively long stretches of forested land, rolling hills, Lake Michigan views, inland lakes, rivers. The corridor features access to the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, nature preserves, agricultural areas and agri-tourism experiences, and the communities of Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, Onekama, Arcadia, Elberta, and Frankfort. These assets provide many opportunities to experience M-22’s intrinsic scenic, recreational, historical, cultural, and natural qualities.

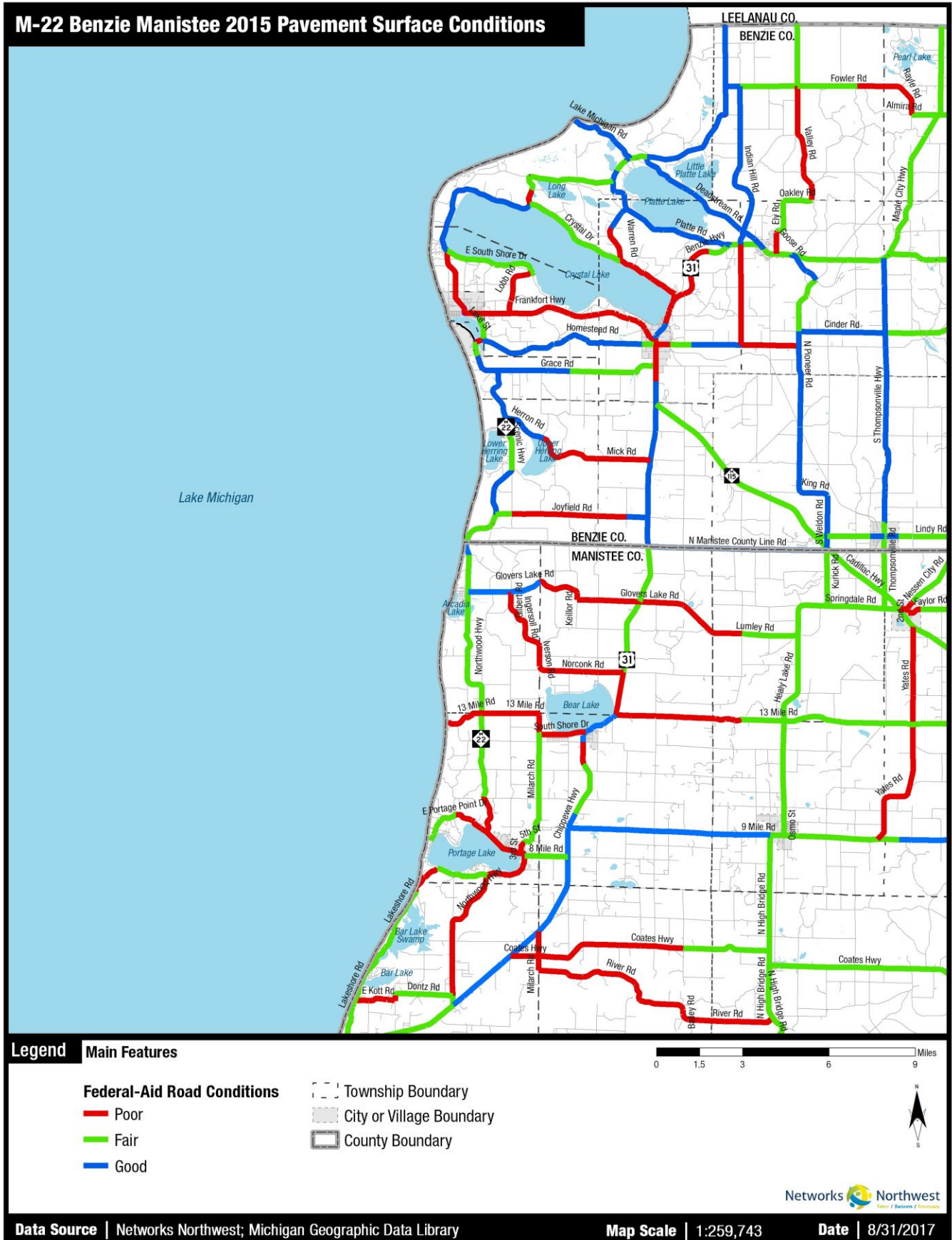
A traveler by automobile can access M-22 from the City of Manistee by heading north on US 31. From Traverse City head south on US 31 to M-115 west to Frankfort or by heading west on M-72 to Empire and head south. From Cadillac head west on M-55 to US 31 north. The proposed Byway can be accessed by the air traveler from the Manistee County Blacker Airport located south of the M-22 intersection on US 31, Cherry Capital Airport in Traverse City, or the Frankfort Dow Memorial Field Airport.

Traffic Counts

As Map 3 illustrates, traffic counts vary throughout the corridor. “Medium” levels of traffic (2,500 – 10,000 vehicles per day) are found at the south end of the corridor near the City of Manistee and through the Village of Onekama, and on the north end near the Village of Elberta and the City of Frankfort.

Data indicate that the middle of the route has “Low” traffic levels (under 2,500 vehicles per day). Communities in the middle of the route have an opportunity to increase destination traffic by providing experiences that attract and retain travelers from the north and south.

Map 2. PASER Road Condition Ratings



Map 3. Traffic Counts



Population Characteristics

The population growth rate of all 16 communities studied in the *Lakes to Lands Regional Initiative Context Report*, which includes the communities in the corridor area, was 2.13% from 2000 to 2010. The growth rate among individual communities ranged from a 36% loss of population from the Village of Onekama to an almost 20% gain in Lake Township. As a whole, the growth rate within communities in the corridor did not keep pace with the national growth rate of 9.71% or the combined Benzie/Manistee county rate of 4.2%.

Between 2000 and 2010, the number of households in the corridor area grew 5.7% while the population grew 2.13%, yielding a 3% decrease in household size from 2.55 persons per housing unit to 2.47 persons per housing unit. This percentage was consistent throughout the Benzie/Manistee county area and in Michigan overall.

The *Northwest Michigan Seasonal Population Analysis* prepared by the MSU Land Policy Institute for Networks Northwest in October 2014 estimated that Manistee County's population increases by 37% in the summer months to roughly 39,000 people. The same report estimated that Benzie County's population increases by 72% in the summer months to nearly 30,000 people. The report clarifies that these are seasonal residents, overnight visitors, and transient residents staying in second homes, campgrounds, RV parks, hotels, motels, bed and breakfast establishments, cottages and marinas.

Socio-economic Considerations

Rates of relative wealth and poverty differ along the corridor. Higher rates of lower incomes can be found in village communities and inland areas. Higher median incomes are found along shoreline areas. The uneven distribution of incomes impacts resource allocation because typically the lower income areas are also the areas where higher cost infrastructure projects are located, such as village streetscaping projects. The burgeoning summer population also places burdens on infrastructure that are not supported by dedicated revenues. Identifying collaborating financing approaches and sources of funding to complete projects in areas of need will be an important aspect of implementing the Byway program along the M-22 corridor.

Historical and Cultural Resources

M-22 possesses a rich history. There are a number of sites of historic and cultural significance along and in close proximity to the road corridor. Several local organizations support preservation and provide education regarding local historic sites and culture. These groups include:

Little River Band of Ottawa Indians (<https://lrboi-nsn.gov/>)

The Little River Ottawa descend from members of certain Grand River Ottawa Bands who lived in villages located on the Manistee River, Pere Marquette River, and at several villages on the Grand River system in Michigan. As a result of historic circumstances, only that portion of the Grand River Ottawa people now known as the Little River Band of Ottawa,

had its status as a federally recognized Indian tribe reaffirmed and restored by the United States in 1994. This Native Sovereign Nation's historic preservation programs efforts include the following goals:

- Management, research, interpretation, protection and development of sites of historic significance on Tribal lands.
- Consult with Federal, State, Local and Tribal agencies to ensure compliance with historic preservation responsibilities.
- Ensure Anishinaabe Bimaadiziwin Kinoomaagewin (life teachings) and Anishinaabemowin (language) are continued for the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians and other entities.

Interested parties may contact the Historic Preservation Program for coordination of and assistance for cultural events, including outreach and presentation for schools and other organizations; to share information about sites of historic, cultural or religious significance; to share information about a known site being endangered; or to possible record events for archival or other purposes.

Manistee County Historical Museum (<https://www.manisteeuseum.org/>)

Located in Historic Downtown Manistee, the Manistee County Historical Museum is housed inside the Lyman Building at 425 River Street. Bridging the gap between Manistee County's past and present, the Museum serves to preserve, interpret, and educate the public about the history of Manistee County.

Benzie Area Historical Society and Museum (<http://www.benziemuseum.org>)

The Benzie Area Historical Society seeks to educate the public about the Benzie area, its people, and its history through exhibits at the museum and programs throughout the area. The Benzie Area Historical Museum, owned and operated by the Society, collects and preserves artifacts, photos, and stories about our past. The Museum is housed in an 1887 Congregational Church building and is on the Michigan State Register of Historic Sites.

Manistee County Visitors Bureau (<http://www.visitmanisteecounty.com/>)

The Visitors Bureau just completed a three-year project documenting all of the county's historic sites and developed a video featuring many of the historic sites along M-22. The Visitors Bureau actively markets and promotes stories and events related to culture, history, natural resources and recreation through its materials and website in coordination with Pure Michigan and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, publishes an annual travel guide, and manages a digital and social media marketing campaign.

National Register of Historic Places

Some historical and cultural assets located along the corridor, or in close proximity within the counties, are included on the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register is the official list of the Nation's historic places worthy of preservation. Authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private

efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archeological resources. Map 4 features many of these assets. They include:

- Portage Point In Complex (Onekama)
- Udell Lookout Tower (Wellston)
- Walther League Camp – Camp Arcadia (Arcadia Township)
- Frankfort North Breakwater Light (Frankfort)
- Navigation Structures at Frankfort Harbor (Frankfort)
- Point Betsie Lighthouse Station (Frankfort)
- Platte River Campground Archeological Site (Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore)
- Watervale Historic District (Blaine Township)

Sites that have been determined eligible for national designation, but are not yet listed:

- Ken-Tuck-U-Inn (On M-22, ½ mile north of Crystal Lake)
- Boekeloo Lodge (Located at the end of Boekeloo County Road)

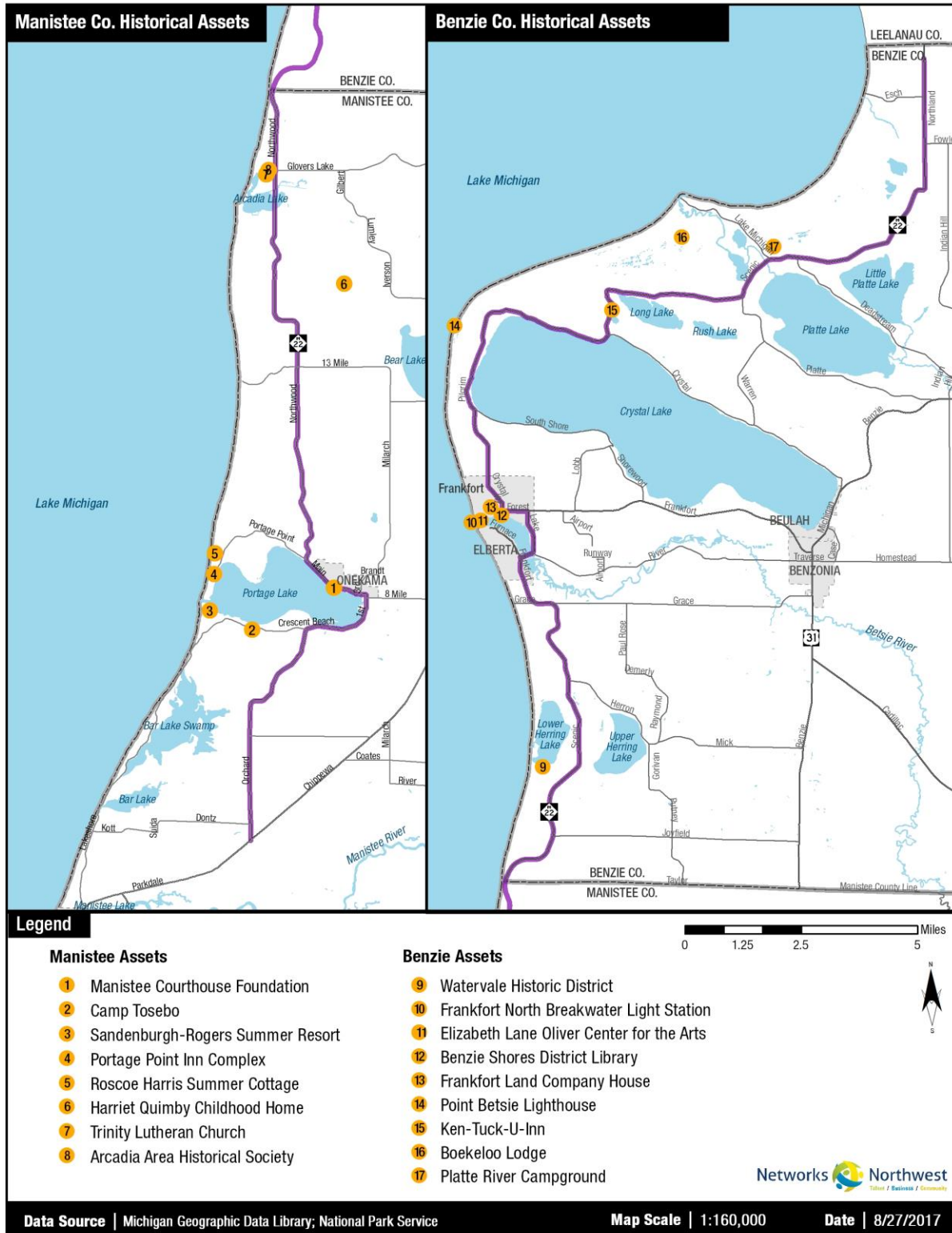
Other Historic and Cultural Sites of Interest

There are other historic sites along the corridor that have not received national or state historic designation status. Some of these include several sites of local interest near Crystal Lake, the Arcadia Museum, Arcadia area shipwrecks, and others. In the future, maps and wayfinding guides for the corridor may include information about these sites of local interest, however local criteria will need to be established to help evaluate the suitability of sites for recognition and promotion as part of the Byway.

Architecture

The architecture along the M-22 corridor reflects the history and culture of the people. Structures include barns, farmhouses, out buildings, cottages, summer homes, summer retreats, and small resorts. Many of the homes in the city and villages were built in the late 1800s and some feature Victorian architecture.

Map 4. Historic and Cultural Assets



Natural Features and Resources

Geological and Topographic Features

Glacial history shaped the corridor's current physiology, topography and soils. Dominant landscape features such as the lakes, moraines, gently rolling and steep dunes, level till and outwash plains, and drainways are the result of glacial action. The ongoing impacts of water and wind also shape the coast and the dunes, which are some of the corridor's most dramatic and cherished features, both for their scenic value and for the recreational opportunities they afford. Soil types reflect the glacial history as well with course-grained deposits over underlying bedrock. Many soils are acidic, sandy, and low in fertility. Wetland soils are found in lowland areas.

Lakes, Streams, Wetlands

Water is a prominent feature of the corridor. Lake Michigan runs the entire length of the corridor and views are visible from peak points. In addition to Lake Michigan, the corridor areas includes significant rivers and lakes such as the Betsie River and Betsie Bay, the Platte River and Big and Little Platte Lakes, Otter Creek, Bear Creek, Arcadia Lake, Portage Lake, and Upper and Lower Herring Lakes. Areas waterways are valued for the beauty, for fishing opportunities, and for access to other recreational activities such as boating and paddling.

Arcadia Marsh is one of the largest intact coastal marches along Lake Michigan. Marshes and other wetland areas within the corridor provide vital ecological services including soil retention, flood mitigation, and wildlife habitat, as well as support recreational activities such as birdwatching, fishing, and hunting.

Vegetation

The corridor's forests are second-growth, with the most common types consisting of beech-maple, red pine, elm-ash-soft maple, and aspen. Forest coverage has grown since the lumbering era in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These forested areas provide wildlife habitat, protect air quality, stabilize soils, help to manage stormwater, and have tremendous scenic value. Forest fragmentation and invasive species and diseases present the greatest threats to health and productivity.

Wildlife

The M-22 corridor is rich in wildlife. Black Bears, White-tailed Deer, Wild Turkey, bobcat, muskrat, beaver, rabbit, otters, coyote, fox, raccoons, and a variety of birds such as eagles, other raptors, waterfowl, and songbirds live in or migrate to the corridor.

The dunes and other areas along the corridor are home to some federally and state Threatened and Endangered plants and bird species. The Federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 provides these definitions:

- *Endangered* - Any species that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range;

- *Threatened* - Any species that is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

In simple terms: Endangered species are at the brink of extinction now. Threatened species are likely to be at the brink in the near future. The preservation of Threatened and Endangered species is a vital aspect of maintaining the biological diversity of any region. The current listing of Threatened and Endangered wildlife species in Benzie County include:

Indiana bat (<i>Myotis sodalis</i>)	Endangered	Summer habitat includes small to medium river and stream corridors with well developed riparian woods; woodlots within 1 to 3 miles of small to medium rivers and streams; and upland forests. Caves and mines as hibernacula.
Northern long-eared bat <i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>	Threatened	Hibernates in caves and mines - swarming in surrounding wooded areas in autumn. Roosts and forages in upland forests during spring and summer.
Piping plover (<i>Charadrius melodus</i>)	Endangered	Beaches along shorelines of the Great Lakes
Piping plover (<i>Charadrius melodus</i>)	Critical Habitat	
Rufa Red knot (<i>Calidris canutus rufa</i>)	Threatened	Only actions that occur along coastal areas during the Red Knot migratory window of MAY 1 - SEPTEMBER 30
Michigan monkey-flower (<i>Mimulus michiganensis</i>)	Endangered	Soils saturated with cold flowing spring water; found along seepages, streams and lakeshores
Pitcher's thistle (<i>Cirsium pitcheri</i>)	Threatened	Stabilized dunes and blowout areas

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Eastern massasauga (<i>Sistrurus catenatus</i>)	Threatened	
Pitcher's thistle (<i>Cirsium pitcheri</i>)	Threatened	Stabilized dunes and blowout areas

Fisheries

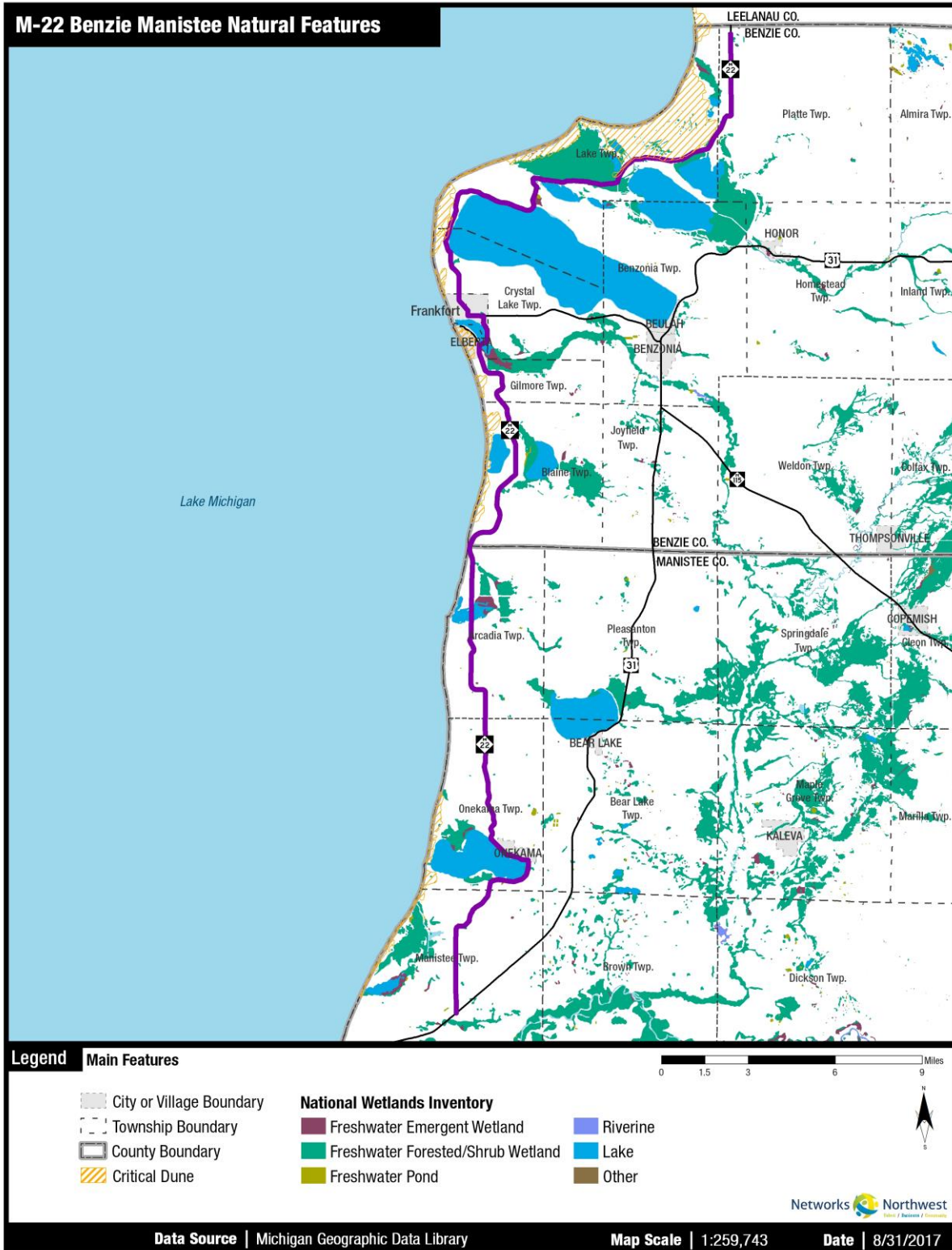
In Lake Michigan and in the Betsie, Platte, and Manistee Rivers and within inland lakes along the corridor, you can find salmon and steelhead, brown trout, walleye, northern pike, panfish, smallmouth and largemouth bass, lake trout, rainbow trout and yellow perch. This area of Michigan is a destination for four-season fishing.

Air Quality

An important aspect of the designation of a Pure Michigan Byway is that it does not adversely affect the environment through which it runs. Increased traffic volume along M-22 could potentially increase the amount of emissions in the region, impacting air quality.


The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) has designated both Manistee and Benzie Counties as Air Attainment Areas. This designation means that the air quality in these counties meets the requirements set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Air Act and should any future impacts be observed, measures would be taken to correct the problem through the cooperation of the State and county agencies.

Map 4. Natural Features



Scenic Views

The M-22 corridor offers some of the most scenic vistas in the State of Michigan. Scenic locations were inventoried as part of the byways nominating process. This section of M-22 provides access to scenic views of Lake Michigan as well as long and winding views of the shoreline and or farms and forested land. Photographs and descriptions for scenic areas are listed below. Map 5 shows their locations.

Map Photo #	Image	Photo Location and Description
1		View of the north side of Portage Lake from M-22 North before intersection of Farr Road.

2



View of protected wetlands on south side of Portage Lake near M-22 and 8 Mile Road.

3



The southeast shore of Portage Lake as seen from M-22 at the Farr Center in Village of Onekama.

4



The Onekama Village Park and Portage Lake as seen from M-22.

5



Early summer sunset on Portage Lake from M-22 just before Portage Point Drive.

6



Sunflowers along M-22 at the Bradford Farm on M-22 just north of 11 Mile Road in Onkama Township.

7



Arcadia Bluffs Golf Course as seen from M-22 just south of Arcadia.

8



Sunrise over
Arcadia
Marsh from
M-22 bridge
in Arcadia.

9



Arcadia
Lookout
(MDOT
turnout) on
M-22 just
north of
Arcadia
looking south.

10



Scenic area on M-22 just north of Joyfield Road.

11



Autumn colors along Herron Road as seen from M-22.

12



Scenery looking east on M-22 and Grace Road.

13



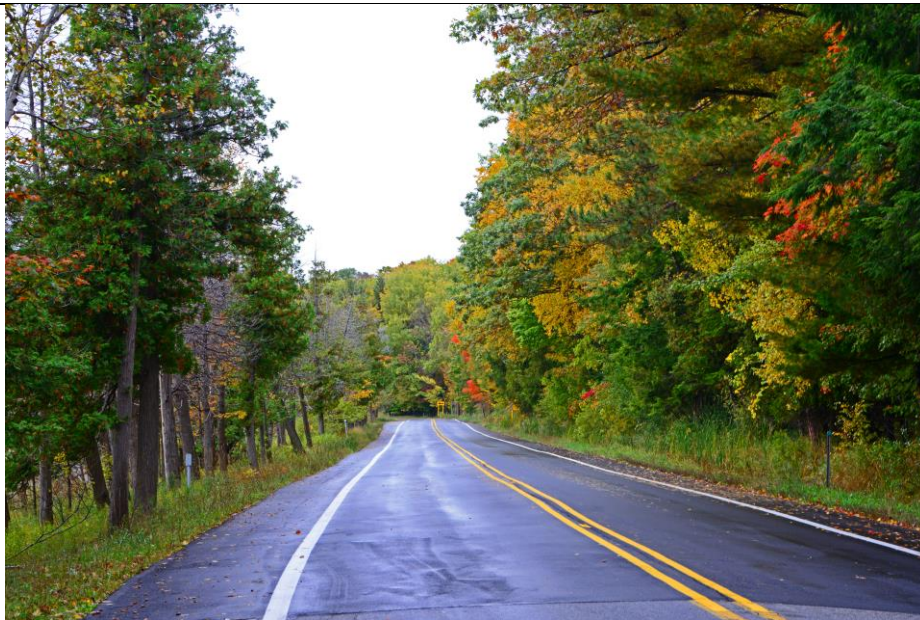
Elberta View of Betsie Lake from M-22.

14



Crystal Lake
as seen from
Crystal Drive
(M-22).

15



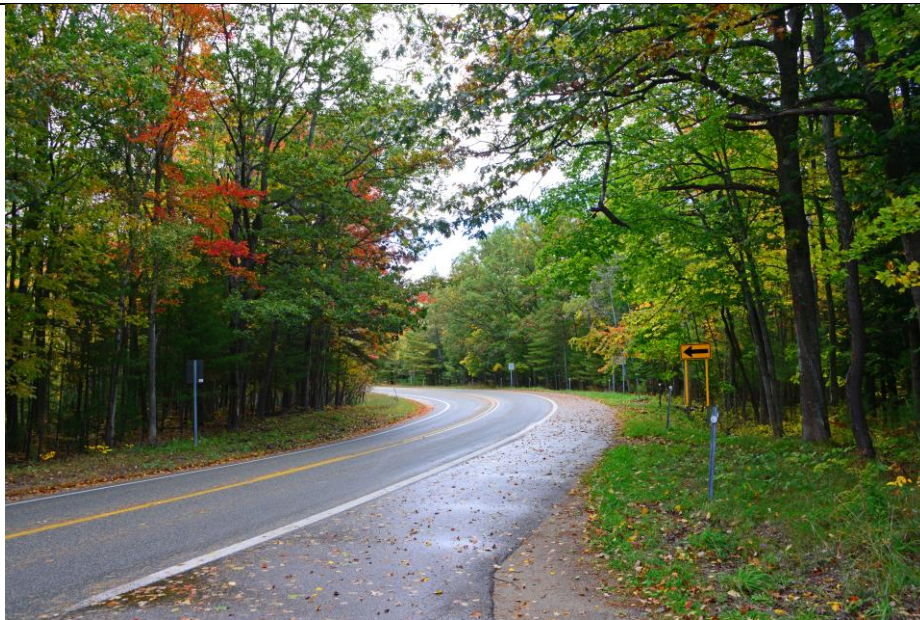
M-22 looking
south along
Long Lake.

16



M-22 North
just before
Little Platte
Lake.

17



M-22 heading
north from
Little Platte
Lake.

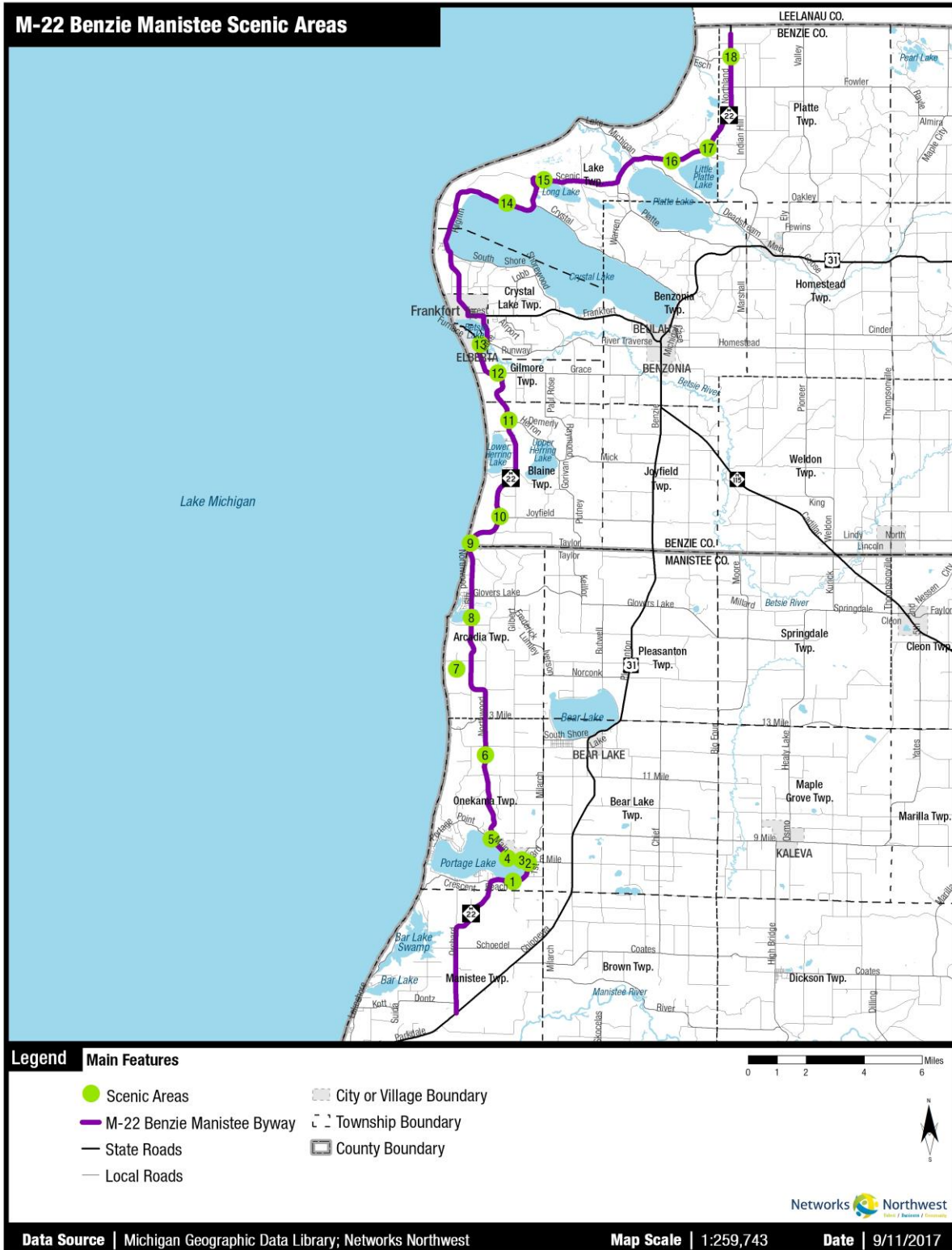
18



View from M-22 near Esch Road.

The word “viewshed” is often used to describe views encompassing multiple directions and varied distances. A comprehensive scenic viewshed map endorsed by all units of government is included as a potential activity to support the goals of the Byway. Gilmore Township created a scenic viewshed inventory and map as a component of its master planning efforts. This locally-endorsed plan could serve as a model for scenic viewshed identification and could support the exploration of priorities for protection throughout the corridor.

Map 5. Areas with Scenic Views



Recreational Resources

In addition to an agricultural economy, the community has historically drawn upon the natural beauty of the area to attract residents and tourists. Resorts, cabins, and campgrounds have flourished since the late 1800s. With the increase in winter activities, tourism throughout northern Michigan has grown into a year-round industry.

Spring and summer activities such as beach-combing, wildflower viewing, hiking, fishing, bird watching, paddling, golfing, surfing, sunfish sailing, large boat sailing, motorized boating, hang gliding, kite boarding, mountain and road biking, boating, can be enjoyed within the corridor community. In the fall and winter residents and visitors enjoy hunting, downhill skiing, cross-country skiing, snowboarding, snowmobiling, and fat tire biking.

Recreational Assets

The following recreational assets are located along or within one mile of the M-22 corridor in Benzie and Manistee Counties. The list below is presented in the geographic order the assets appear traveling from the south to the north along the corridor.

- Portage Lake
- Portage Lake Beach
- Langland Park (Onekama)
- Village of Onekama parks
- Arcadia Bluffs Golf Course
- Arcadia Beach
- Arcadia Lake
- Arcadia Marsh Nature Preserve
- MDOT's Scenic Lookout
- Fruithaven Nature Preserve
- Upper Herring Lake Preserve
- Arcadia Dunes: A C.S. Mott Nature Preserve
- Green Point Dunes Nature Preserve
- Elberta Beach
- Village of Elberta parks
- Elberta Dunes South Nature Preserve
- Betsie Bay
- Betsie River
- Betsie Valley Trail
- City of Frankfort
- Frankfort Beach
- Crystal Lake
- Platte River, Platte Lake and Little Platte Lake
- Point Betsie Lighthouse
- Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore Old Indian Trail
- Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore Platte River Campground

- Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore Platte Plains Hiking and Ski Trail

Map 6 illustrates the location of these assets.

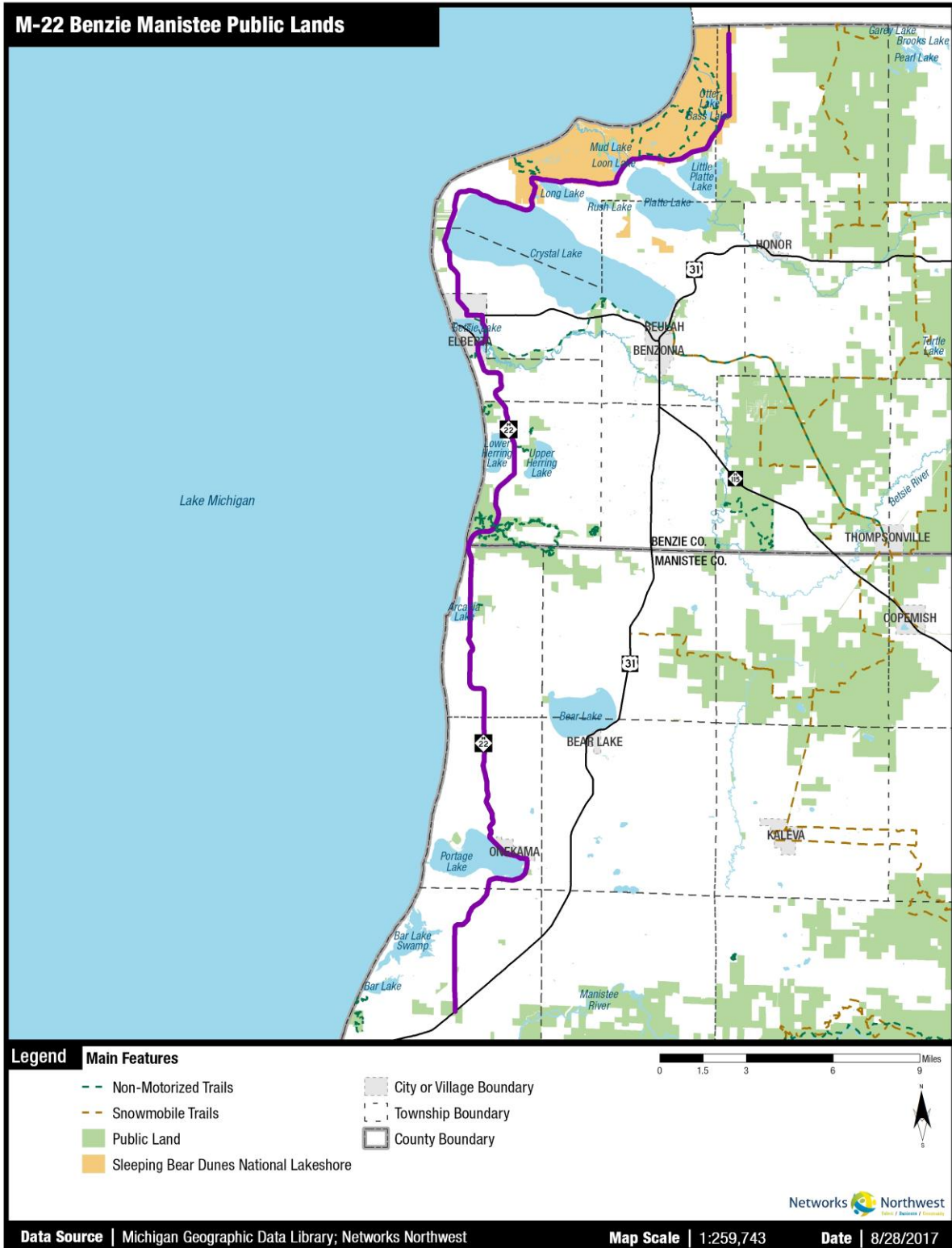
The shoreline of Lake Michigan, the Lake Michigan Circle Tour, and the Sleeping Bear Birding Trail are accessible from multiple access sites along the corridor.

Marinas and Boat Launches

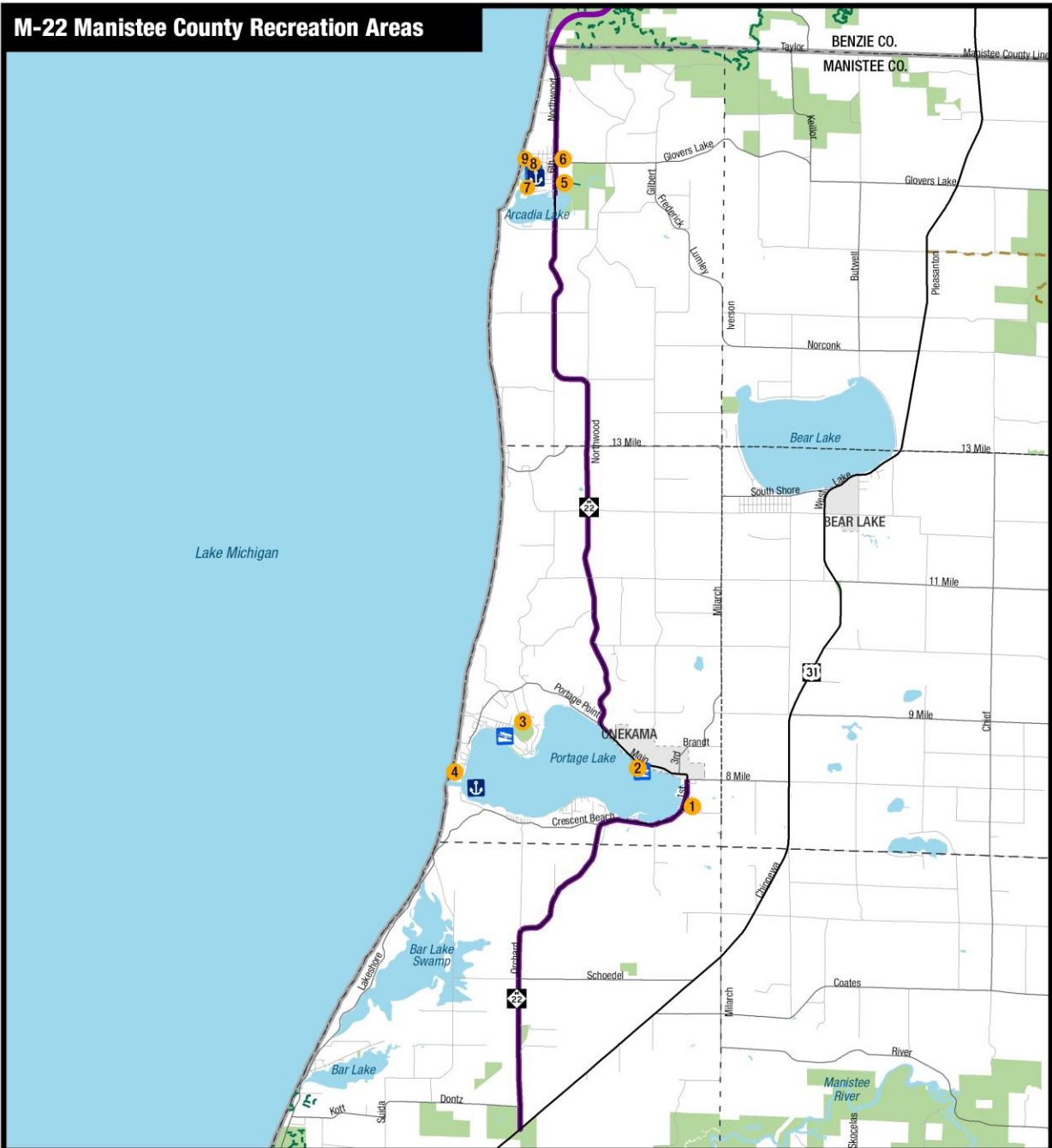
The corridor community is home to numerous public boat launches and three public marinas. These boating access sites are important recreational and economic development assets. Frankfort is a deep draft commercial Harbor of Refuge that supports 200 recreational boat slips. The recreational harbor at Portage Lake in Onkama supports 230 recreational boat slips. Arcadia's harbor supports 60 recreational boat slips and charter fishing businesses. Securing funding for harbor dredging has been a challenge in the past. The need to dredge fluctuates by year and by site.

Boat launch ramps also provide recreational access to waterways in the corridor. There are eight state-designated boat launch ramps in the corridor area providing access to Lake Michigan, rivers, and inland lakes for watercraft including kayaks, canoes, fishing boats, sailboats, and yachts. There are numerous other small launch areas maintained at road-ends by the Manistee and Benzie County Road Commissions.

Map 6. Recreational Assets



M-22 Manistee County Recreation Areas



Legend Main Features

- Parks & Rec Assets
- Public Boating Access Site
- Harbor
- Non-Motorized Trails
- Snowmobile Trails
- Public Land

Parks & Recreation Assets

- Manistee County Fairgrounds
- Onkama Village Park
- North Point Park
- Captain John Langland Park
- Arcadia Marsh Nature Preserve
- Pleasant Valley Community Center
- Grebe Park
- Pickert Park
- Arcadia Beach Natural Area



Networks Northwest
Water • Energy • Environment

Data Source | Michigan Geographic Data Library; Networks Northwest

Map Scale | 1:123,138

Date | 8/28/2017

M-22 Benzie County Recreation Areas



Legend Main Features

- # Parks & Rec Assets
- ▣ Public Boating Access Site
- ⚓ Harbor
- Non-Motorized Trails
- Snowmobile Trails
- Public Land

Parks & Recreation Assets

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Arcadia Dune Nature Preserve 2 Upper Herring Lake Preserve 3 Fruithaven Nature Preserve 4 Green Point Dunes 5 Stratton Hill Scenic Turnout 6 Elberta Dunes South | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 Elberta Park & Trailhead 8 Elberta Waterfront Park 9 Elberta Lake MI Beach 10 Frankfort Lake MI Beach 11 Mineral Springs Park 12 Crystal Lake Beach 13 Point Betsie Lighthouse | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14 Old Indian Trail 15 Lake Twp Park 16 Platte River Campground 17 White Pine Campground 18 Platte Plains Campground 19 Esch Road Beach 20 Empire Bluff Trail |
|---|--|---|

0 1 2 4 Miles



Networks Northwest

Data Source | Michigan Geographic Data Library; Networks Northwest

Map Scale | 1:139,000

Date | 8/28/2017

Land Use and Land Cover

Current land use and land cover information provides a base from which to understand the character of the landscape along the corridor.

Land Use

The *Lakes to Lands Regional Initiative Context Report* prepared in 2014 by the Alliance for Economic Success and Beckett & Raeder evaluated land use by applying a transect planning model in the corridor area. In this model, each “transect” reflects a type of land use in an area based on its natural and developmental elements, ranging from sparsely populated rural areas to denser areas of development and population near an urban core. Understanding these zones helps communities evaluate their current land use patterns and plan for future infrastructure investments, land use regulations, or incentives over time. In the M-22 Benzie Manistee Pure Michigan Byway corridor area, four of the six transect model zones exist: Natural, Rural/Farm, Cottage and Country, and Settlement.

- **Natural:** This transect zone characterized by unique natural resource and ecological assets. These areas are commonly classified as “Recreation” or “Open Space” in local plans and ordinances.
- **Rural/Farm:** In this transect zone, farming is the dominant land use activity with some large lot residential homes. These areas are commonly classified as “Agriculture,” “Agriculture / Rural Residential” or “Rural Forest” in local plans and ordinances.
- **Cottage and Country:** This transect zone consists of low-density collections of year-round homes or seasonal cottages. Some cluster around inland lakes or along the Lake Michigan shoreline. Home occupations and outbuildings are permitted. Planting is naturalistic and setbacks from roadways are relatively deep. Development areas may be dispersed and the roads irregular to accommodate natural conditions and topography. These areas are commonly classified as “Residential – Resort” in local plans and ordinances.
- **Settlement:** This transect zone includes traditional residential neighborhoods characterized by a grid street pattern and smaller lots with higher densities of development than found in other locations. These areas are commonly classified as “Residential – Settlement,” “Commercial Corridor,” “Commercial Node,” or “Village Center” in local plans and ordinances.

The M-22 Benzie Manistee Pure Michigan Byway corridor area is primarily Rural/Farm and Cottage and Country. There are Settlements in the unincorporated village of Arcadia, the villages of Bear Lake, Elberta, and Onekama, and the City of Frankfort where densities range from 4 to 6 dwellings per acre.

Land Cover

Land cover refers to the physical material at the earth’s surface including soil, vegetation,

water and wetlands, and pavement or other built surfaces. Urban land cover refers to places where streets, sidewalks, buildings and parking lots have been built. In the corridor area, Urban land cover is located in areas in and around incorporated villages and the City, as well as along major roads. Some areas of Urban land cover accompany nearly every lake in the region.

The most recent version of the Benzie County Master Plan, adopted in 2017, indicates that just over half of the county's land cover is forestland, following by rangeland and open lands, agricultural land, wetlands, and water.

According to data from the 2008 Manistee County Master Plan, it was estimated that there are 276 miles of rivers and streams in Manistee County, with an estimated 45 miles of state or federally designated Wild, Scenic, and Natural rivers. Manistee County also has 25 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline. There are 9,600 acres of surface water in Manistee County, consisting in part of nine inland lakes each with a surface area greater than fifty acres. Approximately 73% of land area in the county is forested. A total of approximately 90% of the land area of the county is open space. There were 46,440 acres are in active farmland, 18% of the county total land area. There are approximately 73,000 acres of wetlands in the county, some 21% of the total land area. These wetlands are primarily located along the Manistee River and within the Pere Marquette State Forest and the Manistee National Forest.

The corridor area hosts one of the largest areas of freshwater sand dunes in the world. There are approximately 7,025 acres of critical dunes along the shores of Benzie and Manistee Counties. Arcadia Township is the only shoreline community in the corridor area in which the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality has not inventoried dunes. Onekama, Blaine, Gilmore, and Crystal Lake Townships all have State-designated "critical dune areas". These areas are regulated due to the unique, irreplaceable, and fragile nature of dune features that are easily disrupted by development and construction.

These same communities, as well as the Village of Elberta and the City of Frankfort, also have State-designated high-risk erosion sites along their shorelines. These areas require specific development setbacks for construction activities in order to support shoreline health.

Protected Lands

Federal, state, or local governments and non-profit organizations have protected and continue to steward lands of significance within the corridor area.

- **Manistee National Forest:** The National Forest was created in 1938 and comprises 148,000 acres of land within Manistee County. The Forest provides recreational opportunities, fish and wildlife habitat, and resources for local forestry-related industries.
- **Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore:** The National Park Service authorized and created the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore in 1970. It extends across nearly 35 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline from Benzie to Leelanau Counties, with 12,000 acres of parkland in Benzie County. In 2011, the Lakeshore was named by ABC's "Good Morning America" as the Most Beautiful Place in America. It is an international

destination for outdoor recreation and wildlife enthusiasts.

- **Conservancy-Protected Lands:** The Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, a regional non-profit organization, has worked with willing landowners, local and state government partners, volunteers, and private donors to protect significant lands in Benzie and Manistee Counties. Founded in 1991, the organization has protected and continues to steward nature preserves within the corridor which are open to the public including the Arcadia Dunes: The C.S. Mott Nature Preserve, Green Point Dunes Nature Preserve, Arcadia Marsh Nature Preserve, Upper Herring Lake Nature Preserve, Fruithaven Forest Preserve, and the Elberta Dunes South Natural Area.

Land Use Regulations

The way land is used is often governed by community standards that include historically accepted practices or cultural norms as well as regulations on land use such as zoning or purchase of development rights. The list below provides information about the zoned communities within the corridor.

- Arcadia Township
- Blaine Township
- City of Frankfort
- Crystal Lake Township
- Gilmore Township
- Manistee Township
- Onekama Township
- Village of Elberta
- Village of Onekama

The language describing the general, permitted, and special and conditional uses of all respective governmental units' zoning districts can be found in each community's zoning ordinance. A copy of the Zoning Ordinance can be obtained from each respective community's website, or by visiting the respective village, city, or township hall.

SITE EVALUATION AND RANKING

Committee members created an inventory of cultural, historic, natural, and recreational resources and evaluated these intrinsic characteristics based on the “tourism readiness” of each asset, site or facility. Using an evaluation system provided by the Michigan Department of Transportation, committee members ranked each asset, site, or activity on a scale of one to five, where one represents a site with the lowest level of readiness and five represents the highest level of readiness related to the carrying capacity of facilities including parking, restrooms, and other visitor support services.

It is not the goal of the committee to strive for or achieve “tourism readiness” according to this ranking system for all corridor assets. Rather, the criteria and ranking can be used to help understand current capacities, guide marketing and messaging, and characterize or set expectations for user experiences. Additionally, the criteria used to assess “readiness” did not take into account the availability of lodging or restaurant facilities within close proximity to cultural, historic, natural, and recreational resources. These are important considerations for communities to assess when they consider their own readiness, as well as future business development and marketing opportunities.

Ranking of 5

Sites and resources with this ranking have the highest level of tourism readiness and can handle one or more motor coach at a time (60 or more visitors), have adequate parking and adequate visitor services like restrooms, have regular posted hours of operation (year round or seasonal), have a high degree of “authenticity” for the program or service provided, have clear highway orientation signage to the site, and may already be listed in state or national travel guides.

- Arcadia Bluffs Golf Course
- Heathlands Golf Course
- Elberta Beach and Lakeshore Recreation Area
- Elberta Farmer’s Market
- Frankfort Farmer’s Market
- Frankfort Boat Launch and Marina
- Little River Band of Ottawa Indians Casino and Resort
- Little River Band of Ottawa Indians Tribal Government Center
- Onekama Boat Launch and Marina
- Platte River (Access under M-22 with the Riverside Canoe Livery on the southwest corner from the bridge)
- Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore Platte Rover Campground
- Village of Onekama Parks

Ranking of 4

Sites and resources with this ranking meet the same criteria as a “5”, but may be smaller in size. They may be able to handle 60 or fewer visitors at a time, and/or have available parking

relative to the size of the facility or location.

- Arcadia Boat Launch
- Betsie Bay
- Crystal Lake
- MDOT Arcadia Scenic Lookout
- Portage Lake (Onekama Township)

Ranking of 3

Sites and resources with this ranking have a lower level of tourism readiness. Small museums, historic homes, and small preserves and lower capacity trailheads are typical in this category. These sites typically have a limited carrying capacity of 30 or fewer visitors at a time, and/or limited dedicated parking with the addition of “on street” parking available.

- Arcadia Dunes: The C.S. Mott Nature Preserve
- Arcadia Museum
- Betsie Valley Trailhead to Thompsonville
- Chimney Corners
- Onekama Farmer’s Market
- Point Betsie Lighthouse
- Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore Old Indian Trail
- Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore Platte Plains hiking and ski trail

Ranking of 2

This type of site or facility has the lowest level of acceptable tourism readiness. Due to capacity considerations, it may not be wise to advertise this attraction or site in a travel guide or website. These sites can handle small numbers of visitors at a time, have limited or no dedicated parking and may have limited street parking, have no public restrooms, have no orientation or directional signage to the site, and/or have limited or no hours posted.

- Arcadia Lake
- Arcadia Marsh Nature Preserve
- Congregational Summer Assembly
- Elberta Dunes South Natural Area
- Fruithaven Nature Preserve
- Green Point Dunes Nature Preserve
- Ken-Tuck-U-Inn
- Platte Lake and Little Platte Lake
- Upper Herring Lake Nature Preserve
- Upper and Lower Herring Lakes

Ranking of 1

This type of site or facility is not “tourism ready” for marketing the byway. Some of factors considered include no public services, no posted hours of operation, no signage to find site, site may be weak in authenticity, and/or limited parking.

- Covenant Bible Camp
- Little Eden

Ranking of 0

This type of site or resources is not physically accessible to visitors, but can be easily seen by visitors on a drive by, or can be viewed, and has a unique or significant scenic or historic value or helps to tell the story of the byway.

- Grace Road – A scenic drive
- Joyfield Road – A scenic drive
- Watervale – A privately-owned historic inn located near Arcadia Dunes

ACTION PLAN

Implementation Process

It is essential to note that this Corridor Management Plan is not a regulatory document and designation of M-22 as a Pure Michigan Byway will not bring any immediate changes along the Route. The local community with the involvement of MDOT for support and action will decide all changes that occur. Some of the recommendations for action listed in this plan may be process-oriented or involve the development or revision of existing land use or environmental regulations.

This plan is a working document. The concepts outlined in this document will guide the implementation of projects and programs that will fulfill the goals outlined in the beginning document. The plan may serve as a resource for elected and appointed officials and community residents involved in making future decisions the M-22 corridor.

The M-22 Benzie Manistee Pure Michigan Byway Committee is comprised of members of the community, township government, the local conservancy, developers, the historical society, and local residents who all have a hand in the successful implementation of the plan. Their voluntary participation in the Byway program will allow the community to focus, without mandates, on projects that will positively impact the community. With designation, M-22 will receive priority funding for normal maintenance projects and will receive greater attention to detail on maintenance and improvement projects.

This management plan should be used as a guidebook to implement projects, network with other agencies and organizations, and support other agencies and projects in the community that have similar goals and interests for the corridor.

Shared Community Priorities

The following issues and shared community priorities were identified during community master planning discussions and public input sessions that took place from 2014 – 2016 through the Lakes to Land Regional Initiative.

Encourage Economic Development Tied to Community Assets

Several communities along the corridor prioritized an opportunity to encourage job creation and talent attraction and revitalize downtowns and main streets while protecting and promoting scenic, recreational, and historic and cultural assets. Growing light industry and small businesses; recruiting more talent, businesses and retail; developing a design guidebook; improving streetscapes, and protecting significant scenic, recreational, and historic and cultural assets were identified as objectives and opportunities for action.

Reduce Blight and Nuisances

Several communities along the corridor are struggling with blight and junk regulation and

enforcement. Adopting ordinances, enforcing ordinances, and providing households opportunities to safely remove refuse were identified as potential action steps.

Advance Agricultural Vitality

Many of the scenic views along the M-22 corridor include a farm, a rustic or historic barn, or rolling fields of working lands. For generations, agriculture has provided the backbone of the community's culture. Farmers growing apples, cherries, peaches, pears, blueberries and strawberries, and producing honey and maple syrup live and work in the corridor. Challenges to the long-term viability of agriculture in the corridor include rising land costs, the increasing median age of farmers, and unpredictable marketplaces and fluctuating prices. Both farmers and non-farm residents in the corridor prefer that existing farmlands be preserved.

Improving Communication

Enhancing cooperation and coordination across units of government and improving communication with citizens were identified as opportunities. Meeting semi-annually with neighboring jurisdictions was an identified action step.

Lack of High Speed Internet

The community has identified the lack of access to broadband services and high speed internet as a significant challenge and barrier to economic growth and development.

The following five-year action plan outlines priority projects to be completed over the next five years, prospective partners, and target completion dates related to vision elements and desired outcomes.

1. Vision Element: Historical and Cultural Resources and Experiences

Desired Outcomes: The byway and the community emphasize local historical sites, local histories, cultural heritages, and even local legends and folklore along the corridor. These stories and experiences add a rich layer of intrigue and interest that enriches the byway user’s experience.

Projects and Activities	Target Completion Date	Prospective Partners
A. Promote Protection. Link with groups working to protect the historic and cultural aspects of the corridor.	Ongoing through September 2021	Units of local government and tribal government, non-profit groups involved in historic and cultural resource protection and promotion.
B. Collaborative Marketing. Connect and link with other groups working to market the corridor and encourage cross-promotion and collaborative multi-channel event and experience marketing.	Ongoing through September 2021	Chambers of commerce, Benzie and Manistee Visitors Bureaus, non-profit groups involved in historic and cultural resource protection and promotion.

2. Vision Element: M-22 Marketing & Promotion

Desired Outcomes: A comprehensive marketing plan guides overall promotional efforts for the byway. Local businesses use the byway as an opportunity to expand the tourist season. Byway champions and promoters maintain a presence at local festivals, craft fairs, concerts and other events.

Projects and Activities	Target Completion Date	Prospective Partners
A. Marketing Strategy. Develop a plan to guide marketing activities and integrate efforts with Explore the Shores (Manistee), the Sleeping Bear Birding Trail, the M-22 Leelanau Scenic Heritage Route, and other stakeholders.	September 2018	Benzie and Manistee County Visitors Bureaus, Chambers of Commerce, Leelanau Scenic Heritage Route Committee, Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, Sleeping Bear Dunes/National Park Service, local volunteers, LIAA, Networks Northwest, Alliance for Economic Success
B. Website. Create a website, or collaborate to use an existing website, to educate and promote and market corridor assets.	September 2019	
C. Brochure. Develop and distribute a general brochure regarding the Byway including links to the website.	September 2019	
D. Wayfinding Guide. Develop and distribute a Wayfinding Guide.	September 2019	
E. Social Media. Develop and invest in a social media presence to market the Byway and cross-promote activities hosted by others in the corridor community that fulfill the Byway's mission, vision, and desired outcomes.	September 2019	
F. Kiosks. Explore the need and feasibility of creating information kiosks or hubs for visitor information along the corridor.	Ongoing through September 2021	
G. Wayfinding Signage. Design and install wayfinding signage to enhance travelers' awareness and access to significant scenic, historic, cultural, and recreation assets.	September 2021	County parks and recreation and planning commissions, Alliance for Economic Success, Networks Northwest, Chambers of Commerce, Visitors Bureaus
H. Presence at Events. Maintain a presence at booths at popular events that are hosted by others.	Ongoing, September 2021	Volunteers, event hosts

3. Vision Element: Rural Scenic Preservation

Desired Outcomes: The rural character of the corridor is preserved. M-22 parallels the shoreline of Lake Michigan, with views of, shoreline bluffs, inland lakes, grasslands, orchards and forested areas.

Projects and Activities	Target Completion Date	Prospective Partners
A. Scenic View Inventory. Inventory and map scenic viewsheds, identify priorities for protection, and share recommended action steps with landowners and units of government.	September 2019	Networks Northwest, Alliance for Economic Success, planning commissions, Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy
B. Landowner’s Guide. Prepare and distribute a Landowner’s Scenic Protection Guidebook with tools for the voluntary protection of scenic qualities.	September 2019	Networks Northwest, business and non-profit sponsors
C. Land Use Tools. Share sample blight, signage, and lighting ordinances with local units of government. Create “character zones” in order to guide future land use decision-making.	September 2021	Planning commissions, Alliance for Economic Success, Networks Northwest
D. Conservation Easements. Protect additional lands with high scenic values close to the corridor using conservation easements.	Ongoing through September 2021	Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, private landowners

4. Vision Element: Agricultural Preservation

Desired Outcomes: Agricultural development and production along the route thrives and significant farmland is voluntarily protected. Large, small, and family farms, farm stands, and farm-related businesses exist along M-22. The value of agriculture to the community is emphasized.

Projects and Activities	Target Completion Date	Prospective Partners
<p>A. Advocacy. Advocate for policies at the state and federal level that enable farms to remain productive and for farmland to stay in active use.</p>	<p>Ongoing through September 2021</p>	<p>Northwest Michigan Food and Farming Network, land conservancies, Conservation Districts</p>
<p>B. Support Farmland Conservation Easements and Purchase of Development Rights. Support the use of voluntary land conservation tools and efforts such as Purchase of Development Rights and conservation easements that result in the permanent protection of privately owned farmland.</p>	<p>Ongoing through September 2021</p>	<p>Local units of government, landowners, Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy</p>
<p>C. Support Business Environment for Agriculture. Advocate for and support the efforts of organizations that are working to support the viability of agriculture in the corridor and community.</p>	<p>Ongoing through September 2021</p>	<p>Alliance for Economic Success, Networks Northwest, Michigan Farm Bureau, Northwest Michigan Food and Farming Network, Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, Grow Benzie, Taste the Local Difference and Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities</p>

5. Vision Element: Recreational Opportunities

Desired Outcomes: The byway provides many recreational amenities along the corridor such as access to Lake Michigan, rivers, and inland lakes; hiking, cross country skiing, fishing, motorized and non-motorized boating, bicycling, hunting, golfing, and bird watching. The area emerges as a destination for growing sports such as mountain biking, kiteboarding, and windsurfing.

Projects and Activities	Target Completion Date	Prospective Partners
<p>A. Advocate for Infrastructure Improvements. Support community efforts to improve infrastructure and access at existing recreational sites, and for projects listed in approved parks and recreation plans.</p>	<p>Ongoing through September 2021</p>	<p>Federal, state, and local government site and asset owners, Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy</p>
<p>B. Advocate for Investments in Maintenance and Stewardship. Support community-based projects and initiatives that promote the stewardship and management of existing recreational sites.</p>	<p>Ongoing through September 2021</p>	<p>Federal, state, and local government site and asset owners, Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy</p>
<p>C. Support Recreation Planning. Support the creation of, and updates to, local five-year master recreation plans.</p>	<p>Ongoing through September 2021</p>	<p>Local units of government, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Networks Northwest, Alliance for Economic Success</p>
<p>D. Advocate for Harbor Dredging. Support efforts led by the communities of Onekama, Arcadia, and Frankfort to ensure continued recreational boating access to Lake Michigan.</p>	<p>Ongoing through September 2021</p>	<p>Local units of government, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Networks Northwest, Alliance for Economic Success</p>
<p>E. Promote “little known” assets. Include activities like surfing, shipwrecks, paragliding, and off-road non-motorized biking in promotion materials.</p>	<p>Ongoing through September 2021</p>	<p>County parks and recreation and/or planning commissions, marketing activity partners listed in Vision Element 2.</p>

6. Vision Element: Multi-modal Transportation Facilities

Desired Outcomes: The M-22 byway provides multi-modal opportunities for all corridor users including automobiles, agricultural equipment, trucks, bicycles, pedestrians, and transit. Complete Streets policies and activities will be adopted in communities along the corridor. The byway will provide non-motorized facilities on a regional level such as the development of new facilities and connections to existing facilities.

Projects and Activities	Target Completion Date	Prospective Partners
<p>A. Explore Betsie Valley Trail Connections. Explore the feasibility of connections and improvements to the Betsie Valley Trail.</p>	September 2019	Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Networks Northwest, Betsie Valley Trail Authority, local units of government, and landowners
<p>B. Explore Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail Extensions. Explore the feasibility of extending the Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail south the Platte River Campground.</p>	September 2019	TART Trails Inc., Networks Northwest, Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail Steering Committee, National Park Service, Michigan Department of Transportation, and landowners
<p>C. Explore Future Trail connections. Develop a comprehensive non-motorized, motorized, and water trail action plan for the corridor area.</p>	September 2021	Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Networks Northwest, planning and parks and recreation commissions
<p>F. Advocate for Streetscaping. Act as a vocal champion for streetscaping project initiated by cities and villages. Explore and document challenges, needs, opportunities, priorities, and costs to improve pedestrian and non-motorized bike crossings and access at specific locations along the corridor. Educate communities about Complete Streets practices and encourage their adoption by local governments along the corridor, focusing on city and village areas.</p>	<p>Begin planning Onkama Streetscaping by September 2018</p> <p>Ongoing through September 2021</p>	Local units of government, MDOT

FINANCIAL PLAN

The designation of M-22 in Benzie and Manistee Counties as a Pure Michigan Byway will enable the residents and the appointed and elected leaders of the community to work together while using this Corridor Management Plan as a guide for future action. The designation of M-22 in Benzie and Manistee Counties as a Pure Michigan Byway will enhance the opportunities to qualify for and obtain state and federal funds for work to enhance existing and future projects along the route. With Pure Michigan Byway designation, the M-22 Benzie Manistee Pure Michigan Byway may qualify for the following:

- Michigan Department of Transportation grant programs
- Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grants
- Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Coastal Management Program grants
- Other identified governmental agencies' programs

In addition to applying for competitive grants from the sources above, Byway projects may also be funded, at a community's discretion, using the following tools and approaches:

- State/Local revenue sharing
- Special Assessment Districts
- Downtown Development Authority, Tax Increment Financing Districts
- Corridor Improvement Act Districts
- Allocations from the General Funds of local units of government
- Millages (such as for the purchase of development rights or to support trail development or maintenance)

In addition to these potential sources of public funding, projects benefitting communities along the Byway may be able to access or leverage private funding. Sources of private funding may include:

- Local Community Foundations
- Corporate foundations (including utilities)
- Family foundations
- Private businesses
- Individual donors

The M-22 Benzie Manistee Pure Michigan Byway Committee will organize and prioritize proposed projects each year to take advantage of public and private funding opportunities. Because there is no dedicated source for annual projects, pro-active planning will be necessary in order to apply for and secure funding for projects that will benefit the corridor community. This Management Plan has a five-year shelf life.

Additional Considerations

There are several additional considerations regarding action and implementation that are important for Pure Michigan Byway planning and management. Any projects listed in this plan are subject to safety and maintenance guidelines set forth by the Michigan Department of Transportation such as tree trimming or removal to protect utility operations or to correct drainage problems. Projects are also subject to local government action or review. Funding will need to be secured prior to implementing the projects listed.

RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

Benzie County Master Plan. 2017. Prepared by Networks Northwest.
<http://www.networksnorthwest.org/planning/current-projects/benzie-county/>

Benzie County Economic Development Strategic Plan. 2014. Developed by the Traverse Bay Economic Development Corporation in cooperation with the Benzie County Board of Commissioners.

Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy nature preserves maps and information.
www.gtrlc.org

Lakes to Land Regional Initiative. <http://www.lakestoland.bria2.net/>

Little River Band of Ottawa Indians website. <https://lrboi-nsn.gov/>

M-22 Economic Development Strategy. August 2010. Developed by Beckett & Raeder and the Alliance for Economic Success, with funding from USDA Rural Development.

Manistee County Master Plan. 2008.
http://www.manisteecountymi.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=75&Itemid=126

Michigan Historic Preservation Network. <http://www.mhpn.org/>

National Register of Historic Places. <http://www.nationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com/>

Networks Northwest Website and GIS Data. www.networksnorthwest.org

Northwest Michigan Seasonal Population Analysis. A report prepared by the MSU Land Policy Institute for Networks Northwest, Traverse City, Michigan. October 2014.

State of Michigan, Department of Environmental Quality website.
State of Michigan, Department of Transportation website and staff.
<http://www.michigan.gov/mdot>

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. <https://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/lists/michigan-city.html>

USA Today, “Michigan's M-22 Wins Best Scenic Autumn Drive!” October 2015.
<http://www.10best.com/awards/travel/best-scenic-autumn-drive/>

APPENDIX A: PUBLIC INPUT

Stakeholder, Public and Media Outreach

The public comment period for the draft plan was September 13 – October 23, 2017. All Byway committee members and advisors and Lakes and Lands planning process participants were directly informed via email of the draft plan’s availability for review. A media release was shared with local and regional news outlets. Copies of the plan were available for review at the Benzie County Library in Frankfort, Arcadia’s Pleasant Valley Community Center, and Onekama Township. The article below appeared in the Manistee News Advocate on September 21, 2017.

MANISTEE NEWS ADVOCATE • Thursday, Sept. 21, 2017

M-22 Byway Committee presents management plan

BY DYLAN SAVELA
Staff Writer

ONEKAMA — Perfect for a fall color tour or a scenic drive along the lake, M-22 embodies Northern Michigan in its purest form.

Thanks to years of work by the M-22 Benzie-Manistee Byway Committee, the 49-mile

stretch that runs through the two counties was fittingly designated a Pure Michigan Byway last year.

On Wednesday the committee hosted an open house to gather further public input on its five-year Corridor Management Plan, an extensive document designed to promote and communicate the quality

assets along the Pure Michigan Byway and the access to those assets.

“We want to learn about people’s preferences and invite their involvement to inform and guide the management process,” said Al Taylor, chair of the M-22 Benzie-Manistee Byway Committee. “The state requires that we have a

corridor management plan, so we’ve been working hard over the past year on putting it together.”

The M-22 Benzie-Manistee Byway Committee was formed out of the Lakes to Land Regional Initiative, which began as a grassroots effort of 16 participating

See COMMITTEE PAGE 8A

COMMITTEE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

communities in Manistee and Benzie counties to update their master plans in unison and develop collaborative priorities.

“It was a consolidated effort to look for common goals and projects we could work on together,” Taylor said. “One of the projects that came out of that was the M-22 scenic highway.”

On Wednesday, citizens, businesses and organizations were invited to the Onekama Township Hall to review sections of the plan and maps, as well as speak with committee members and provide input.

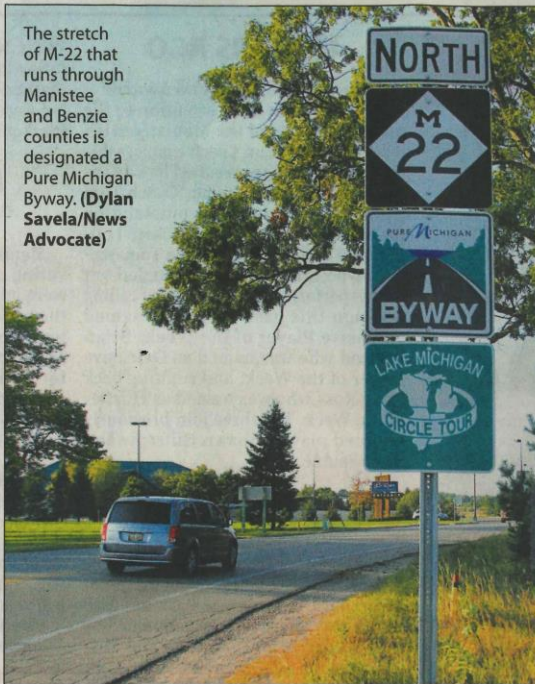
The public can also review a copy of the Corridor Management Plan and share comments at www.nwm.org/m22bywayplan. The public comment period ends on Oct. 13.

The plan includes maps identifying the corridor boundaries; information about population and land use along the corridor, including traffic counts; an inventory of intrinsic qualities including scenic, natural, historical, cultural, and recreational assets; goals and objectives for the corridor; a list of projects and action steps; and a financial plan.

The M-22 Benzie-Manistee Byway Committee is comprised of representatives from local governments, agencies and organizations, and works in cooperation with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT).

Funding assistance for this project came from Benzie and Manistee counties and the Michigan

The stretch of M-22 that runs through Manistee and Benzie counties is designated a Pure Michigan Byway. (Dylan Savelle/News Advocate)



Department of Transportation. The Alliance for Economic Success, Networks Northwest, and the Michigan Department of Transportation are active partners in the committee's activities.

The vision and desired outcomes of the management plan include:

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES AND EXPERIENCES

The byway and the community emphasize local historical sites,

local histories, cultural heritages and even local legends and folklore along the corridor. These stories and experiences add a rich layer of intrigue and interest that enriches the byway user's experience.

M-22 MARKETING & PROMOTION

A comprehensive marketing and social media plan guides overall promotional efforts for the byway. Local businesses use the byway as an opportunity to expand



The public was invited to give input to the M-22 Byway Committee's management plan on Wednesday in Onekama.

the tourist season. Byway champions and promoters maintain a presence at local festivals, craft fairs, concerts and other events.

RURAL SCENIC PRESERVATION

The rural character of the corridor is preserved. M-22 parallels the shoreline of Lake Michigan, with views of shoreline bluffs, inland lakes, grasslands, orchards and forested areas.

AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION

Agricultural development and production along the route thrives and significant farmland is voluntarily protected. Large, small, and family farms, farm stands, and farm-related businesses exist along M-22. The value of agriculture to the community is emphasized.

RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The byway provides many

recreational amenities along the corridor such as access to Lake Michigan, rivers and inland lakes; hiking, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, "four season" fishing, motorized and non-motorized boating, bicycling, motorcycling, hunting, golfing and bird watching. The area emerges as a destination for growing sports such as mountain biking, kiteboarding, surfing and windsurfing.

MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

The M-22 byway provides multi-modal opportunities for all corridor users including automobiles, agricultural equipment, trucks, bicycles, pedestrians and transit. Complete Streets policies and activities will be adopted in communities along the corridor. The Byway will support and provide non-motorized facilities and trails on a regional level, including new connections and the development of new facilities and trails.

Public Plan Review Meeting

A public meeting was held on September 20, 2017 from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. at the Onekama Township Hall. One member of the media and four members of the public attended the meeting. The meeting was conducted in an open house format. Copies of the plan and maps were available for review, and comments cards were shared with each participant.

Public Input

Below is a comprehensive report of the public input received via an online survey that was available on the Networks Northwest website at

<http://www.networksnorthwest.org/planning/transportation/heritage-routes/m-22-benzie-manistee-scenic-byway/>.

As an outcome of the public comments shared via the survey, two changes were made to the plan:

- A description and definition of the corridor area.
- An explanation regarding the distinction between national and state-designated historical and cultural sites of interest and local sites of interest and the potential development of criteria to map and inform the promotion of local sites of interest.

Aside from the survey, no other input was received in writing.

Survey Feedback

Corridor Management Plan for the M-22 Benzie-Manistee Pure Michigan Byway

Q1. Which resources or assets in the corridor are you most interested in seeing protected or preserved?

Respondents	Response Date	Responses	Categories
		Private property situated both adjacent to the ROWs, and between the ROWs under the Corridor road.	
1	Oct 10 2017 08:25 PM	Properties contiguous to the Corridor within the watershed overlay districts for Crystal and Platte Lakes.	
2	Sep 29 2017 05:02 PM	The sugar maples that used to line M22.	
3	Sep 28 2017 11:47 AM	Portage Lake, Arcadia Marsh	
4	Sep 14 2017 08:41 AM	Recreational, historical and scenic	

Q2. Which assets or resources in the corridor are you most interested in seeing promoted?

Respondents	Response Date	Responses	Categories
1	Oct 10 2017 08:25 PM	Private property situated both adjacent to the ROWs, and between the ROWs under the Corridor road.	

		Properties contiguous to the Corridor within the watershed overlay districts for Crystal and Platte Lakes.
2	Sep 29 2017 05:02 PM	Walking trails, history, and road side fruit stands
3	Sep 28 2017 11:47 AM	Portage Lake, villages of Onekama and Arcadia, agricultural products
4	Sep 14 2017 08:41 AM	Recreational, scenic, unique retail and dining

Q3. Please consider the list of action steps and proposed projects in the plan. Which projects or activities are the most important for the community to implement within the next three to five years?

Respondents	Response Date	Responses	Categories
1	Oct 10 2017 08:25 PM	In reference to the five-year Action Plan “Vision Elements” (Page 48ff): 1. Historical and Cultural Resources and Experiences. A. Promote Protection. 2. M-22 Marketing & Promotion. G. Wayfinding Signage. 3. Rural Scenic Preservation . A. Scenic View Inventory. & C. Land Use Tools. 4. Agricultural Preservation. C. Support Business Environment for Agriculture. 5. Recreational Opportunities. D. Advocate for Harbor Dredging. 6. Multi-modal Transportation Facilities. C. Explore Future Trail connections.	
2	Sep 29 2017 05:02 PM	when I was young there were hundreds of beautiful old sugar maples lining the road. They are all but gone.You need to replant them so that they get growing for future decades to enjoy.	
3	Sep 28 2017 11:47 AM	Marketing, signage, funding for local government to implement plan	
4	Sep 14 2017 08:41 AM	Web site, M-22 guide, preservation of scenic views	

Q4. What questions, concerns, or suggestions do you have about the proposed list of projects and activities?

Respondents	Response Date	Responses	Categories
1	Oct 10 2017 08:25 PM	Page 18. There seems to be a conspicuous absence in not listing specific local historical markers associated with the epochal lowering of Crystal Lake by the Benzie Co. River Improvement Co. in 1873. These markers were locally funded and not associated with any State or Federal historical markers. “Tragedy of Crystal Lake” - three separate markers dedicated 27 Aug 1978, sited, resp. (1) in the public beach park in downtown Beulah on the southeast shore of Crystal Lake; (2) at the corner of Crystal Drive and Warren Road, on the northeast shore of Crystal Lake, and (3) in Bellows Park on the southwest shore of Crystal Lake. “Comedy of Crystal Lake” – single (two-sided) marker dedicated 22 Aug	

		2015, sited along the west side of the Betsie Valley Trail near Molleneaux Road at the Crystal Lake Outlet.
2	Sep 29 2017 05:02 PM	None
3	Sep 28 2017 11:47 AM	Local events along M22 could be coordinated and cross-marketed
4	Sep 14 2017 08:41 AM	Resource and financial support

Q5. How do you want to be involved in future corridor planning or implementation efforts?

Respondents	Response Date	Responses	Categories
1	Oct 10 2017 08:25 PM	As a property owner, professional environmental engineer, & historian with local experience/ knowledge.	
2	Sep 29 2017 05:02 PM	Consultant	
3	Sep 28 2017 11:47 AM	Hope to help economic development issues in area. Involvement in Onekama events and progress	
4	Sep 14 2017 08:41 AM	Be on corridor team, continue to promote area with social media	

Q6. Additional Comments

Respondents	Response Date	Responses	Categories
		The Committee Members generally are to be commended for their enthusiasm in initiated the Plan.	
		There is some lack of familiarity with local history by the regional preparers of the Plan. The local historical societies should be consulted to review and amend specific elements.	
		The definition, interpretation, design, regulation, and enforcement of watershed overlay districts, affect multiple jurisdictions, such as the Crystal Lake Watershed Overlay District (CLWOD) and implications affecting its water quality and viewshed. With rescission of County-wide zoning (~2010), administration and enforcement of the CLWOD is relegated to the individual townships of Benzie County.	
		[Twps of Lake (Sec. XIII), Crystal Lake (Sec. XXIV), and Benzonia (Sec. XXIV).] [Three townships bordering Crystal Lake (Benzonia, Crystal Lake, & Lake), and three other townships off the lake (Homestead, Inland, & Weldon), lie mostly or partially within the CLWOD. The former three Twps. have specific zoning ordinance sections dealing with watershed overlay districts for Crystal and Platte Lakes.	
		The width of the Corridor is not specified. Presumably it is limited to road surfaces within 66-foot ROW's.	
1	Oct 10 2017 08:25 PM	Only the path of the corridor is shown. Nothing is said about the	

boundaries between the corridor or adjacent or underlying land. The interpretation of corridor “boundaries” is decidedly vague. Is it implied to be limited to just the area between the M-22 roadway ROW’s. A specific definition of “corridor is needed, i.e. a narrow tract of land forming a passageway between points of interest of destinations, for foot, cycle, car, truck, railroad, or canalboat traffic.

Not all of the land within the Corridor is owned by governmental entities!

Some surveyed Plats predate any granted easements for M-22 and also are not formalized takings.

Portions of land under the ROW easement in some instances are subject to property taxes.]

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------|---|
| 2 | Sep 29 2017
05:02 PM | I'm happy that there is a group that will help preserve the road for future generations to come.
Major plans will be difficult to implement without financing and resourcing. Commercial groups like Chambers, Visitor Bureaus will need to work/coordinate with other entities on web site(s), event calendars and social media. Starting with some easy, inexpensive items may provide support for more difficult projects |
| 3 | Sep 14 2017
08:41 AM | |