

Empire Community Survey Results – As of 10/17/2019

Total Responses: 449

Question A.1 – The issue of controlling growth and development can be controversial. Please check the statement that most closely matches your views about growth. (After the question, it states: Please identify the three statements that are most important to you, noting 1, 2, or 3 on the line in front of the statement)

I would like to see structured growth encouraged:

Selection 1 – 111

Selection 2 – 92

Selection 3 - 52

Where:

M-72 – 143

M-22 – 120

Other – This allowed respondents to indicate other locations where they would like to see structured growth. 47 respondents chose to enter a response. Choices with multiple responses included Village (30), Front Street/Downtown (9), and Everywhere/Entire Township (3).

I would prefer to let growth take its own course in the township.

Selection 1 – 51

Selection 2 – 31

Selection 3 - 63

I would prefer planned and limited growth in the township.

Selection 1 – 242

Selection 2 – 75

Selection 3 - 21

I would like to see a goal of no growth in the township.

Selection 1 – 39

Selection 2 – 40

Selection 3 - 31

Question B.1 – Should short term rentals be allowed in the township?

Agree - 243

Neutral - 107

Disagree – 81

This question included a follow-up question of “**If so, where?**” which allowed respondents to indicate a location where they would like to see short term rentals. 157 surveys included a response. By far the most popular response was Anywhere/Everywhere/No restriction, with 86 responses. Other responses mentioned specific areas (resort areas, village/downtown, rural areas, commercial districts, etc.), or expounded on whether short term rentals should be permitted but managed or required to have approval.

Question B.2 – Is there adequate affordable housing available in Empire Township?

Agree - 58

Neutral - 170

Disagree - 197

Question B.3 – Should the township explore other housing options?

Yes – 72

No – 73

Another 139 surveys included responses that went beyond a basic “yes” or “no”. 42 included answers that were “yes” and included additional information or caveats. 19 included answers that were “no” and included additional information or caveats. The remainder specified certain types of housing they would like or dislike (mentions included senior housing, affordable housing, condos, workforce housing, and others), or methods by which the township could undertake projects of these sorts or pass projects off to local for-profit or non-profit entities.

Question C.1 – In rural (non-waterfront) areas of Empire Township, do you support the clustering of several homes close together on small lots, in order to protect the majority of the site as open space?

Agree - 230

Neutral - 84

Disagree - 108

Question C.2 – The Township should work to provide environmental protection for setbacks along developed shoreline.

Agree - 352

Neutral - 34

Disagree - 35

Question C.3 – Which of the following best describes what “Open Space” means to you. Rank in order 1-6, with 1 being the best.

Forests

Selection 1 - 150

Selection 2 - 105

Selection 3 - 54

Selection 4 - 58

Selection 5 - 25

Selection 6 - 18

Wetlands

Selection 1 - 62

Selection 2 - 92

Selection 3 - 81

Selection 4 - 66

Selection 5 - 57

Selection 6 - 41

Scenic Views

Selection 1 - 143

Selection 2 - 36

Selection 3 - 71

Selection 4 - 52

Selection 5 - 74

Selection 6 - 29

Parks, sports fields

Selection 1 - 43

Selection 2 - 16

Selection 3 - 34

Selection 4 - 27

Selection 5 - 64

Selection 6 - 213

Pastures/meadows

Selection 1 - 82

Selection 2 - 91

Selection 3 - 91

Selection 4 - 91

Selection 5 - 33

Selection 6 - 19

Farmland

Selection 1 - 57

Selection 2 - 51

Selection 3 - 51

Selection 4 - 74

Selection 5 - 112

Selection 6 - 54

Question C.4 – It is important to do something now to slow the conversion of Empire Township farmland to residential or other developed uses.

Agree - 271

Neutral - 100

Disagree – 58

Question C.5 – Which are the two most important reasons to preserve farmland in Empire Township?

- a. To preserve the scenic beauty and rural character of the township – Selected 251
- b. To make it easier to transfer farms to family members or other farmers – Selected 90
- c. To preserve family farms and the township's farm economy – Selected 203
- d. To maintain the ability to grow food in the future – Selected 106
- e. To protect the natural environment and wildlife habitat – Selected 174
- f. Other – Selected 14
- g. Having a farmland preservation program is not important – Selected 18

Question C.6 – To preserve farmland, would you be willing or able to personally contribute financially?

Yes – 190

No - 207

Question D.1 – Employment opportunities in Empire Township are too dependent on seasonal/tourism business.

Agree – 296

Neutral/Uncertain – 93

Disagree – 37

Question D.2 – Is the current mix and quantity of businesses in Empire Township adequate?

Yes – 104

No – 308

Question D.3 - If not, what types of businesses are needed in Empire Township?

This question allowed respondents to enter their own answers. There are 12 pages of text answers to this question, with most respondents choosing to enter an answer. A large proportion of these entered “Grocery store(s)”. Other answers included restaurants, coffee shop, bakery, gym, brewery/winery, recreation, hardware store, retail, laundromat, small manufacturing, tech, and car wash/repair. One answer that was given several times was “pharmacy”, despite the pharmacy located in the village.

Question D.4 – How much new business would you like to see in Empire Township and where?

This question allowed respondents to enter their own answers. There are 10 pages of text answers to this question, with many respondents choosing to enter an answer. Answers ranged from specific types of businesses (grocery store, restaurants, etc), to locations of new business (along certain streets or highways, in the Village, etc.), to quantities (either hard numbers of new businesses or jobs, or percentages of increase over existing quantities), to types of growth (planned growth, very limited, etc.) to “none” or “0” from several respondents.

Question D.5 – Are there adequate employment opportunities in the area for Empire Township residents?

Full-Time

Yes – 47

No – 290

Part-Time

Yes – 170

No – 119

Question D.6 – Do you work in:

Empire Township – 47

Northern Michigan – 38

Outside Northern Michigan – 87

Retired – 217

Not Working – 21

Question E.1 – Architectural controls for new development

Agree – 263

Neutral/Uncertain – 82

Disagree – 59

This question also included a sub-question of “**What control?**”. There are 6 pages of text replies to this question, most of which focused on specific types of controls (height, size, design, setbacks, parcel size, etc.)

Question E.2 – Stricter sign regulation

Agree – 192

Neutral/Uncertain – 146

Disagree – 57

This question also included a sub-question of “**What regulations?**”. There are 4 pages of text replies to this question, most of which focus on regulating size and height and dis-allowing billboards and neon-lit signs.

Question E.3 – Preservation of scenic rural roads

Agree – 338

Neutral/Uncertain – 52

Disagree – 25

This question also included a sub-question of “**What roads?**”. There are 5 pages of text replies to this question. Most of the responses name specific roads. M-22 and M-72 are the most frequently mentioned. Other roads mentioned multiple times include Wilco, Burnham, Echo Valley, Voice, Stormer, M-109, CR-616, Norconk, Fredrickson, and Benzonia Trail. A number of respondents also listed “All” or “All seasonal”.

Question E.4 – Preservation of historic buildings

Agree – 283

Neutral/Uncertain – 95

Disagree – 27

This question also included a sub-question of “**Which buildings?**”. There are 6 pages of text replies to this question. Most of the responses named specific buildings. The most popular answer was the old schoolhouse in Empire Village. Other buildings mentioned multiple times included old farms/farmhouses, the old hardware store/livery in Empire Village, and the museum building in Empire Village. A number of respondents also listed “All” or “Any”.

Question E.5 – Adopting a Point of Sale septic ordinance to assure water quality for lake and stream properties

Agree – 320

Neutral/Uncertain – 61

Disagree – 36

Question E.6 – How do you feel about special events for nonprofits?

Agree – 285

Neutral/Uncertain – 97

Disagree – 23

Question E.7 – How do you feel about special events for profit?

Agree – 143

Neutral/Uncertain – 185

Disagree – 84

Question E.8 – Lighting standards are needed to protect the night sky

Agree – 331

Neutral/Uncertain – 59

Disagree – 39

Question E.9 – Internet speed is adequate in the township

Agree – 106

Neutral/Uncertain – 168

Disagree – 150

Question F.1 – How long have you lived in Empire Township, either part-time or full-time?

N/A – 22

0-4 Years – 63

5-10 Years – 55

11-20 Years – 106

21-30 Years – 81

Longer than 30 years - 108

Question F.2 – During which months do you typically reside in Empire Township?

All – 212

Jan – 11

Feb – 8

Mar – 7

Apr – 55

May – 123

Jun – 170

Jul – 184

Aug – 183

Sep – 136

Oct – 101

Nov – 37

Dec – 21

Question F.3 – How long have you owned property in Empire Township?

Don't Own – 3

0-4 Years – 56

5-10 Years – 59

11-20 Years – 128

21-30 Years – 81

Longer than 30 years - 116

Question F.4 – Are you a registered voter in Empire Township?

Yes – 209

No – 212

Question F.5 – Do you own more than one home or lease an Empire Township home to others?

Yes – 68

No – 366

This question included a follow-up question:

If so, what is the typical rental period:

Do not lease/rent – 82

Weekly or by the day – 40

Monthly – 5

Annually – 8

Question F.6 – If you rent your Empire Township house, which months is it typically rented?

All – 14

Jan – 2

Feb – 3

Mar – 2

Apr – 5

May – 21

Jun – 36

Jul – 45

Aug – 45

Sep – 24

Oct – 17

Nov – 5

Dec – 4

Question F.7 – Indicate which best describes where your Empire Township property is located. (May choose multiple answers).

Shoreline – 65

Rural Setting – 154

Farm – 20

Empire Village – 140

Glen Lake – 104

Question F.8 – Please indicate which of the following best describes your affiliations.

Farmer – 29

Real Estate/Developer – 11

Tradesperson/laborer – 14

Family w/ school age children – 25

Business Owner – 78

Elected Official – 6

Employee – 42

None of the Above – 22

Owner of over 20 acres – 61

Retiree – 257

Professional – 155

Note that there are also 16 pages of text responses to “General Comments” as well as additional comments that were given to questions that did not indicate to give text answers. All of the text answers have been transcribed and are available for review.