

FUTURE METROPOLITAN PLANNING AREA

During the development of this LRTP, NATS reviewed population, housing, employment, and travel patterns to see where potential connections to the urban area may exist in the future, specifically at the 2020 U.S. Census count. While the MPO will be monitoring other factors as indicated, the dominant factor monitored will be population. The U.S. Census urban areas are defined only by the population numbers. Federal statute governs the planning boundaries for Metropolitan Planning Organizations. Specifically, Title 23 Part 450.38 states that:

(a) The metropolitan planning area boundary shall, as a minimum, cover the UZA(s) and the contiguous geographic area(s) likely to become urbanized within the twenty year forecast period covered by the transportation plan described in §450.322 of this part. The boundary may encompass the entire metropolitan statistical area or consolidated metropolitan statistical area, as defined by the Bureau of the Census.

Therefore, it is prudent for the MPO to monitor areas closely as the economy continues to recover in southwest Michigan and northern Indiana.

MONITORING FACTORS

As this LRTP was being developed, population, housing, employment, and travel patterns were reviewed for the base year of 2010 and were projected out to the plan end year of 2040. This information allows the MPO to monitor where development is being shifted to or where it is to be newly created. The specific factors that the MPO will use to monitor this information before the next Census count will be:

- Population
- Housing
- Employment

The MPO staff will use the American Community Survey (ACS) information which releases 1-year, 3-year and 5-year data products every year to monitor the above listed information. As the new Census information will not be released before the next long range plan update, the MPO will rely on the information changes that are supplied.

GEOGRAPHIES TO MONITOR

Map 22 highlights the areas that will be monitored over the functional life of this long range transportation plan. There are eight specific areas that the SWMPC will be monitoring until the next U.S. Census.

1. Berrien Springs-Eau Claire Urban Cluster (Buchanan Township and Oronoko Township).

Prior to the 2010 Census information being released, SWMPC staff anticipated the connection of the NATS planning boundary with the Berrien Springs-Eau Claire urban cluster, given that the two areas were close to connecting in the 2000 Census. However, the Berrien Springs-Eau Claire cluster shrank. Berrien Springs population lost about 3 percent of their population and Eau Claire also lost about 4 percent of their population causing a potential contraction of the urban area. *(As of the writing of this section, the adjusted census urban area boundaries were being reviewed for this urban cluster and the final size of the urban cluster is not yet known.)* While this did show a contraction this is still an area that is regularly analyzed at the MPO level and by committee members and will thus continue to be monitored.

2. North of City of Buchanan Limits-Red Bud Trail east to US-31 (Buchanan Township and Niles Charter Township)

This area experienced significant growth since the 2000 Census mainly due to development north of the St. Joseph River and continued development occurring along the US-31 corridor.

3. Bertrand Road and US-31 East to Niles Charter Township (Bertrand Township and Niles Charter Township)

The pattern of development continues to come from South Bend, Indiana. There continues to be consistent interaction between the two regions in the form of households and travel patterns. Many people from southern Berrien County that live close to the Indiana state line work in the South Bend urban area.

4. Redfield Street from Gumwood Road East to Ironwood Road (Milton Township and Ontwa Township)

The pattern of development continues to come from South Bend, Indiana. There is consistent interaction between the two regions in the form of households and travel patterns. Many people from southern Cass County that live close to the Indiana state line work in the South Bend urban area. And as the map indicates, the South Bend and Elkhart, Indiana urbanized areas continue to push north into Michigan.

5. Village of Edwardsburg North into Jefferson Township (Village of Edwardsburg, Ontwa Township, and Jefferson Township)

The change from the 2000 and 2010 adjusted census urban areas has shown the trend of population, households, and businesses moving in a northerly pattern into the Village of Edwardsburg, continuing into Ontwa Township. This may continue to move northerly into Jefferson Township.

6. Davis Lake Street South to North Shore Drive (Ontwa Township and Jefferson Township)

There is significant and consistent demand to live near or along one of many inland lakes throughout the study area. This pattern in Cass County has not slowed, as many people from Indiana and Illinois own second homes along many of the inland lakes in this region. According to township officials, many of these second homes are becoming primary residences for people as they retire to our region.

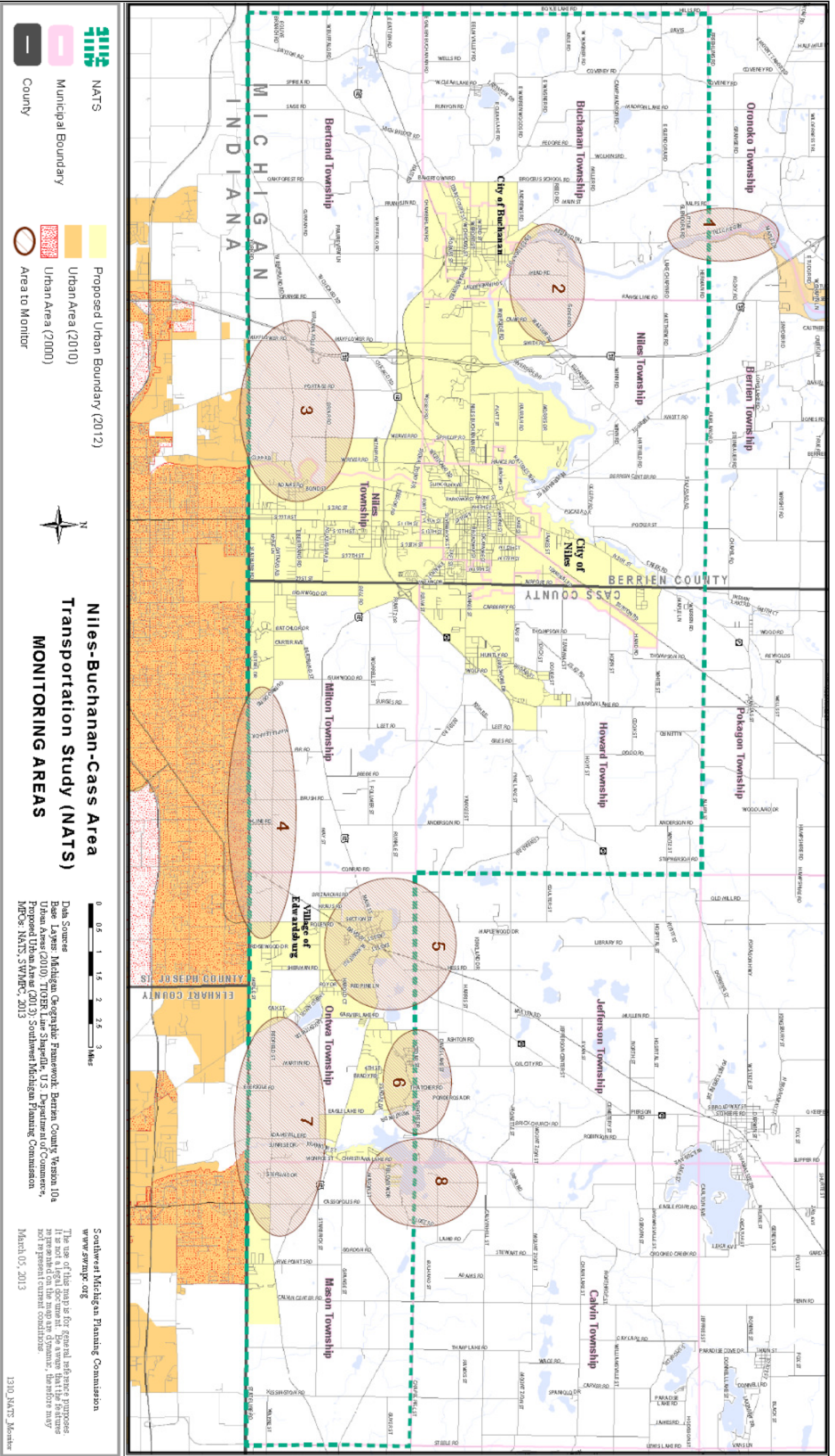
7. Redfield Street from Elkhart Road East to Cassopolis Road (Ontwa Township and Mason Township)

Mason Township is the most recent addition to the planning area and this again is due to the northerly expansion of the South Bend and Elkhart, Indiana urbanized area. There continues to be consistent interaction between the two regions in the form of households and travel patterns. Many people from southern Cass County that live close to the Indiana state line work in the South Bend urban area.

8. Christiana Road to Cassopolis Road from Mason Street to Calvin Hill Street (Calvin Township, Jefferson Township, Mason Township and Ontwa Township).

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Map 22 - Areas to Monitor in NATS Planning Area



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TRENDS IN THE OUTYEARS

This section will review some of the trends that are being projected for the study area. The following tables note where the biggest growth and reduction is projected to occur. The SWMPC will use this information to help committee members make transportation decisions that respond to trends in the population, households, and employment in the region. Table 40 highlights the population projects that the communities in the planning area may see over the life of the LRP. Table 41 highlights the Indiana population projects that will continue to impact the planning area.

Table 40 - Population Projections

Jurisdiction	2010	2020	2030	2040	Change from 2010-2040
Buchanan City	4,471	4,274	4,168	4,102	-8.20%
Buchanan Twp	3,508	3,437	3,411	3,419	-2.50%
Niles City	13,300	12,879	12,540	12,324	-7.33%
Niles Twp	12,306	12,137	12,074	12,131	-1.40%
Bertrand Twp	2,657	2,626	2,640	2,681	0.90%
Howard Twp	3,348	6,433	6,447	6,438	92%
Milton Twp	3,878	4,234	4,454	4,653	19.98%
Edwardsburg Village	1,259	1,243	1,185	1,125	-10.60%
Ontwa Twp	2,011	5,128	5,189	5,230	160%
Mason Twp	2,945	3,113	3,180	3,234	9.80%
Total	49,683	55,504	55,288	55,337	11.38%

The greatest population increases are being projected to occur in the following communities: Howard Township, Milton Township, Ontwa Township and Mason Township. Milton and Mason Townships show increases hovering near 10 percent while Howard projects to nearly double and Ontwa Township projects to more than double. This projection supports the SWMPC intent to monitor these areas as pointed out in the Geographies to Monitor section above. These areas are projected to see significant population increases that would impact the need to rethink where the transportation investments are being made in the region. As with the case for Ontwa Township for example, the projection over the next 30 years is for the community to grow by over 3,000 people. While this is still a comparatively small population increase within the region, this could stretch the infrastructure demands within the township. As we know from previous sections, the aging of our region will continue and as more people are moving further away from core service areas such as in cities and villages, there is a need to think about how to connect people with the vital services that they need.

Table 41 - Indiana Counties Population Projections

County Jurisdiction	2010	2020	2030	2040	Change from 2010-2040
St. Joseph	266,931	270,586	274,250	274,683	2.9 %
Elkhart	197,559	212,036	225,496	237,323	20.1%
Total	464,490	482,622	499,746	512,006	10.2%

Source: STATS Indiana www.stats.indiana.edu

As stated in the introduction of this document, NATS is part of the South Bend and Elkhart, Indiana urbanized area. Map 22 indicates where the St. Joseph and Elkhart counties are located in proximity to Berrien and Cass Counties. While there will still be some modest growth in St. Joseph County, Indiana as we have seen in Milton Township, the main growth will be happening in Elkhart County which coincides with the expansion of the urban areas into Mason and Milton Townships, which we can see in the projections in Table 41.

Table 42 - Household Projections

Jurisdiction	2010	2020	2030	2040	Change from 2010-2040
Buchanan City	1,977	1,898	1,883	1,853	-6.20%
Buchanan Twp	1,325	1,334	1,339	1,333	0.60%
Niles City	5,540	5,598	5,548	5,454	-1.50%
Niles Twp	4,906	4,989	5,013	4,999	1.80%
Bertrand Twp	1,026	1,058	1,074	1,080	5.20%
Howard Twp	2,575	2,760	2,797	2,760	7.10%
Milton Twp	1,390	1,625	1,782	1,885	35.60%
Edwardsburg Village	517	531	517	490	-5.20%
Ontwa Twp	1,982	2,126	2,189	2,193	10.60%
Mason Twp	1,104	1,225	1,282	1,302	17.90%
Total	22,342	23,144	23,424	23,349	4.51%

Not surprisingly the same trends are visible with respect to communities that anticipate more households in the future, Table 42. Milton, Ontwa, and Mason Townships are projecting to have at least double-digit percentage growth in the number of households from 2010 to 2040. One of the surprising communities is Bertrand which is anticipating households growing by 5 percent while their total population growth is only .9 percent. This may be a reflection of a national trend of less people per household. This could also mean that more people are choosing to age in their home. As noted in the description of population projections,

this shifting of where households are located should reflect the investments that will need to be made to accommodate the shifting demographics.

Table 43 - Employment Projections

Jurisdiction	2010	2020	2030	2040	Change from 2010-2040
Buchanan City	2,944	3,083	3,096	3,161	7.30%
Buchanan Twp	677	693	692	703	3.80%
Niles City	8,062	8,543	8,621	8,786	8.90%
Niles Twp	5,696	6,172	6,188	6,200	8.80%
Bertrand Twp	1,282	1,446	1,461	1,476	15.10%
Howard Twp	1,392	1,484	1,488	1,534	10.20%
Milton Twp	834	877	873	900	7.90%
Edwardsburg Village	1,214	1,338	1,370	1,437	18.30%
Ontwa Twp	1,785	1,887	1,884	1,952	9.30%
Mason Twp	439	452	445	455	3.60%
Total	24,325	25,975	26,118	26,604	9.37%

The employment projections for the region show modest gains throughout all jurisdictions, Table 43. This demonstrates that while Michigan and southwest Michigan are still recovering from the 2008 economic downturn, that the future for the region shows that gains are likely.