

Sodus Township

History

Forming the Western boundary of Sodus Township, the St. Joseph River became the main artery of transportation for its early settlers. The river became a source of trade and employment, with the first permanent settlers dependent upon its abundance of fish for their existence – at least until the first crops were harvested. Probably the first entrepreneur in Sodus Township was James LaRue, a new Jersey native, who purchased riverfront land for the construction of a sawmill in 1835. The first permanent settler, however, was David Rector who, in 1837, took possession of 40 acres of land. In 1840 he was followed by Captain Ebenezer Farly, who purchased 150 acres of Township land along the river and started a commercial river boat venture.

Sodus was officially incorporated as a township on October 11, 1859 at the request of John Gano and 243 other local citizens. Twenty-one years went by before the township emerged. The completion of The Big Four Railroads, which ran through the township, resulted in the construction of a woodenware factory that very soon was shipping thousands of wooden bowls and sap buckets.

Today, the St. Joseph River no longer functions as the main means of survival for the Sodus Township community, although it adds to the beauty of the landscape. Over the past 130 years, Sodus has been able to retain its quiet, rural character and remain a pleasant place to live.

Observations

Sodus Township is largely a farming community, located amidst green pastures and separated from Royaltown Township on the west by the St. Joseph River. It is located halfway between Detroit and Chicago. The Township does not have any major industries. Fruit farmers with only a few residential areas dominate the Sodus community. Its residents enjoy a fairly low crime rate and the Township provides a good quality of life for those who enjoy smaller communities.

There is no municipal water or sewer service within the Township, which may discourage some industrial entrepreneurs. In addition, the ground conditions in parts of Sodus Township do not allow for building projects, such as residential subdivisions. The clay type soil cannot accommodate water wells and septic tanks.

Community Vision

- Encourage commercial and recreational development where possible.
- Maintain the status quo of a small, rural community.
- Allow for residential development, such as multiple family dwellings, along the St. Joseph River.



Historical Photo of Rock S. Edwards Farmstead located in Sodus Township

All Demographic Information is based upon the 2009 Census Estimate

Population

1980 Census	2,260	
1990 Census	2,065	8.63 % decline
2000 Census	2,139	6.20 % increase
2009 Census Estimate	2,156	0.79 % increase

Personal Income

Median Family	\$45,260.00
Average per Capita	\$20,556.00
Median Household	\$40,052.00

Labor Force

Total Work Force	1,102
Unemployment Rate	9.0 %

Principal Economic Base Employers

Ancast	47 Employees
Flamm Pickle & Packing Co.	20 Employees
Shoreline Mold & Engineering.....	10 Employees
Sodus Hard Chrome	15 Employees

Housing

Number of Dwellings	1,007
Owner Occupied	693
Renter Occupied	206
Median Rent	\$597
Median Home Value	\$124,600

Building Permits – 2010

	Number Issued	Dollar Amount
Residential	6	\$983,000.00
Commercial	1	\$10,000.00
Other	32	\$436,539.00
Total	39	\$1,429,539.00

Education

Sodus Township is served by the following school districts:

Benton Harbor Area Schools
823 Riverview Drive
Benton Harbor MI 49022
Phone: (269) 927-0600
Enrollment: 3,688



Eau Claire Public Schools
6190 W. Main Street
Eau Claire MI 49111
Phone: (269) 461-6947
Enrollment: 812



River School – Sodus Township #5
4439 River Road
Sodus, MI 49126
Phone: (269) 925-6757
Enrollment: 72



Government

Municipal Hall

Sodus Township Hall
4056 King Drive
P.O. Box 176
Sodus, MI 49126
Phone: (269) 926-6285
Fax: (269) 926-1825

Council Meetings

Second & Fourth Tuesday of Each Month
Start: 8:00 p.m.

County Commissioner

Jon Hinkelman
(District 2)
2201 M-140
Watervliet, MI 49098
Phone: (269) 463-3385
jdinkelman@qtm.net

State Governor

Rick Snyder (R)
P.O. Box 30013
Lansing, Michigan 48909
Phone: (517) 373-3400
Fax: (517) 335-6863
Rick.Snyder@michigan.gov

State Senator

John Proos (R), District 21
P. O. Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909-7536
Phone: (517) 373-6960
Fax: (517) 373-0897
SenJProos@senate.michigan.gov

State Representative

Sharon Tyler (R), District 78
Michigan House of Representatives
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909-7514
Phone: (517) 373-1796
Fax: (517) 373-5918
sharontyler@house.mi.gov

U.S. Representative

Fred Upton, 6th Congressional District
2183 Rayburn H.O.B.
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-3761
Fax: (202) 225-4986
tellupton@mail.house.gov

U.S. Senators

Debbie Stabenow (D)
133 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
Phone: (202) 224-4822
stabenow.senate.gov/email.htm

Carl Levin (D)
269 Russell Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510
Phone: (202) 224-6221
levin.senate.gov/contact/index.cfm
Access via website Contact Center

Economic Development

Berrien County Community Development
701 Main Street
St. Joseph, Michigan 49085
Contact: Daniel Fette, Director
Phone: (269) 983-7111, Ext. 8617

Public Services

Police

Berrien County Sheriff's Department
Phone: (269) 983-7141

Fire

Fire Chief: William Long
Phone: (269) 944-4841
Number of Stations: 1
Professional Firemen: 22
Part-Time Paid: 0
Volunteers: 0
Insurance Rate Class: 7

Trash Collection

By independent contracts with trash haulers.
Please contact companies for further information.

Best Way Disposal	(800) 246-5992
Michiana Recycling & Disposal	(800) 722-9710
Reliable Disposal	(800) 677-1083
Waste Management	(800) 443-5646

Recycling

Berrien County Community Development
Jill Adams, Environmental Specialist
(269) 983-7111 Ext. 8234
Program information available online at
www.berriencounty.org/recycle.

Water

Sodus Township Hall
Phone: (269) 926-6285
Source: Individual Wells

Sewer

Sodus Township Hall
Phone: (269) 926-6285
System Type: Septic Tanks

Telephone

A T & T
Residential Customers (800) 244-4444
Business Customers (800) 660-3000

Gas

Michigan Gas Utilities
1-800-778-3802

Electric

American Electric Power Company
(800) 311-6424



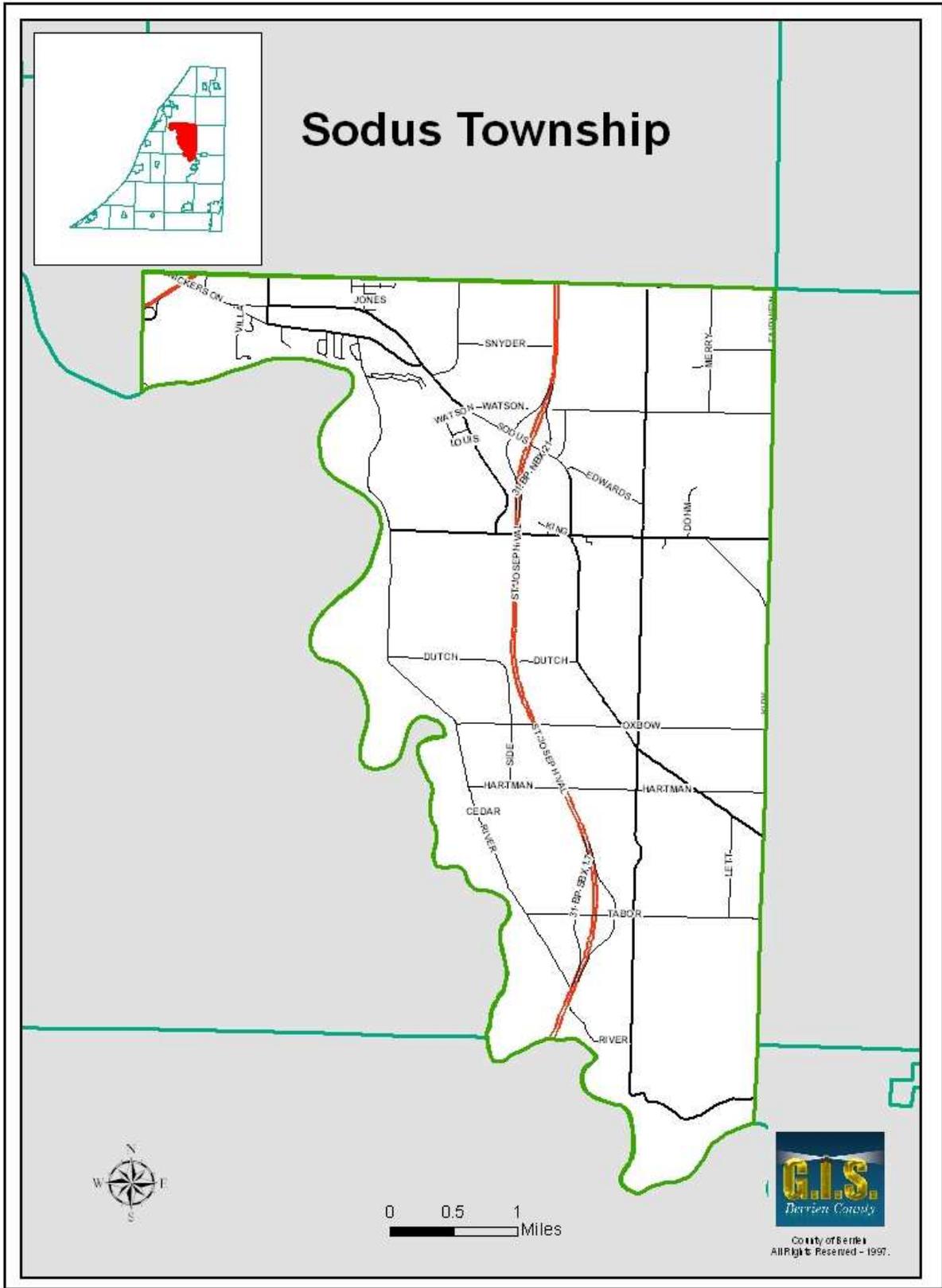
Taxes

In March 1994, Michigan voters approved a new tax structure (Proposal A). The following table provides a simplistic look at the taxes currently levied within this community. Property tax is based now upon taxable value, not state equalized value.

General Taxes

General County	4.7723
Law Enforcement/ Public Safety	0.3500
Special Voted 911	0.2500
Senior Citizens	0.3000
LMC College	1.7854
Township	0.8898
Special Voted	3.2000
Subtotal	11.5475

School Taxes (Berrien RESA)	Benton Harbor	Eau Claire	River
State Education Tax	6.0000	6.0000	6.0000
Non-Homestead (Business)	17.8308	18.0000	18.0000
Extra Voted Building & Site	2.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Debt Retirement	0.0000	3.2500	0.0000
Berrien RESA	0.1745	0.1745	0.1745
Special Education	2.1954	2.1954	2.1954
Subtotals			
Homestead	10.3699	11.6199	8.3699
Non-Homestead (Business)	28.2007	29.6199	26.3699



This Community Snapshot has been prepared by the Berrien County Community Development Department. For more detailed information on services available in Berrien County, please visit our website at www.berriencounty.org/CommunityDevelopment.

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information. However, as data is constantly changing, Berrien County will be held harmless for any omissions or errors contained herein.