



March 10, 2025

## Attention: East Bay Charter Township Realtors

On December 9, 2024, a new zoning ordinance went into effect in East Bay Charter Township. As a real estate professional working within the Township, the Planning and Zoning Department would like to make you aware of special zoning protections for properties within East Bay Township's Environmentally Sensitive Areas. These areas include Riparian Setbacks from Water Bodies and Watercourses, Wetland Buffer Areas, Flood Hazard Zones, Steep Slope Protection, and Bridge Crossings. Enclosed, you will find a copy of the Environmentally Sensitive Areas Supplemental Standards, Section 3.8 of the Zoning Ordinance. This ordinance aims to regulate property near or within the following environmentally sensitive areas:

**1. Vegetative Buffer Strip - Water Bodies and Watercourses:**

Except for a permitted structure as outlined in subsection B(1), the remainder of the riparian setback area must consist of a vegetative buffer strip. This (50 -100') strip is designed to stabilize the riparian area, prevent erosion, absorb nutrients from water runoff, provide shading to maintain cool water temperatures, and screen adjacent man-made structures. Refer to Section 3.8, 2. a.-e., 3., and 4. for regulations.

**2. Wetland Buffer Area:**

A 25-foot undisturbed vegetative buffer strip must be preserved around state-regulated wetlands. No structures are permitted within this buffer. Wetlands can be incorporated into a stormwater management strategy if wetland values are preserved or enhanced. Refer to Section 3.8 D for regulation.

**3. Flood Hazard Zones:**

Flood hazard boundaries align with the 100-year flood boundary, termed "Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs)," as designated in the *Flood Insurance Study East Bay Charter Township, Grand Traverse County, Michigan* and accompanying FIRM maps. Disputes over SFHA designations must follow the procedures outlined in subsection E(3). Refer to Section 3.8 E. 1–5 for regulation.

**4. Steep Slope Protection:**

Land areas with slopes of 15% or greater are defined as steep slope areas. Site disturbance on steep slopes is restricted, with exceptions as outlined in Section F. 1–3.

**5. Bridge Crossings:**

Bridge crossings of streams must meet all standards and regulations specified in Section 3.8 G. 1. – 10.

**6. Grading, Removal, and Filling of Land:**

Changes in site elevation exceeding three (3) feet or the excavation, removal, or depositing of earth materials are prohibited without a grading permit. Refer to Section 3.8 H. 1.–2 for regulations.

**Land Use Permit or Site Plan Review Requirements:**

Any proposed structures or site alterations, regardless of their location, shall adhere to Section 6.4 (Land Use Permits) or Section 6.1 (Site Plan Review). A complete copy of the East Bay Township Zoning Ordinance can be reviewed online at: [www.eastbaytwp.org](http://www.eastbaytwp.org)

As you plan and execute your projects, please ensure that your designs comply with these zoning requirements. Failure to adhere to these standards could result in delays, penalties, or additional requirements to bring projects into compliance.

**Enforcement and Penalties:**

Any development, construction, or land use in violation of this Ordinance is hereby declared a nuisance per se. Any person, partnership, corporation, association, or other legal entity who creates or maintains a nuisance per se as defined in the zoning ordinance or who violates or fails to comply with the ordinance shall be responsible for a civil infraction as defined in Public Act 12 of 1994, as amended, and shall be subject to a fine of not more than five hundred (\$500) dollars. Every day that such a violation continues shall constitute a separate and distinct offense under the provisions of this Ordinance; refer to Section 7.9 for regulations.

Your compliance with these ordinances helps preserve the unique characteristics of the community and supports the Township's long-term planning goals. For more detailed information about the zoning regulations or to confirm whether a property falls within an Environmentally Sensitive Area, please contact the Planning and Zoning Department directly at (231) 947-8681, extension 3, or email [zoning@eastbaytwp.org](mailto:zoning@eastbaytwp.org).

We greatly appreciate your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Bill Vandercook  
Zoning Administrator  
East Bay Township Planning and Zoning Department

Enclosures: (1) Zoning Ordinance Section 3.8: Environmentally Sensitive Areas Supplemental Standard