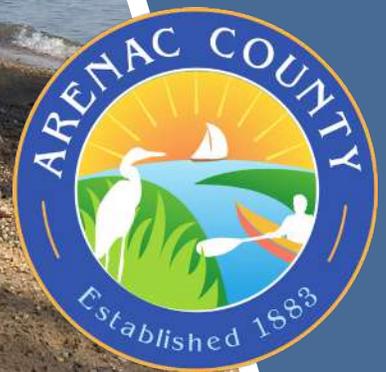




# COUNTY OF ARENAC --- MASTER PLAN



2021-2025  
COUNTY OF ARENAC MASTER PLAN

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A public hearing on the County of Arenac Master Plan was held on December 21, 2020. The County of Arenac Master Plan was adopted on January 12, 2020 by authority of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008.

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**County of Arenac**

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Assisted by  
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# Introduction

Arenac County is a special place where outstanding natural resources, scenic beauty, outdoor recreation, a four-season climate, and unique landscapes combine to create a high quality of life for residents. The purpose of the Arenac County Master Plan is to provide a guide for Arenac County and its cities, townships and villages, to use in decision-making and coordination related to future land use, so that the qualities that make Arenac County special are not lost or compromised for future generations.

## WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN?

The Master Plan is a document created by the Planning Commission and adopted by the County Board of Commissioners to guide the future growth, development, and redevelopment in the County. A Master Plan that is thorough, well thought out, and consistent is a document which helps ensure that Arenac County continues to be a desirable region in which to live and work. A County Master Plan differs from a local Master Plan in that, is that it tends to focus on policy, not individual properties or developments.

The Master Plan investigates and examines a variety of issues, both tangible and intangible. Within the document, the way the County has grown and changed will be examined. This will include detailed discussion on items ranging from who lives on in the County, to where in the County they live, and what they do for a living. Items that have remained constant or have not experienced significant changes will also be discussed. This includes the location of natural features, like such as water bodies and soils types, along with items like such as the transportation network.

In addition to these tangible items, opinions and desires are also considered. Residents and other stakeholders were asked for the thoughts on the Arenac County community, and their vision for the what the County can be in five, ten, or twenty years.

A County's Master Plan is unique in that it must function as an umbrella document, addressing plans and studies from other communities, and presenting a vision of growth, preservation, and development that dovetails with the planning documents of other jurisdictions in the County. The Plan provides overall guidance for growth and development for the communities of Arenac County.

The Master Plan is intended to act as a guide for future decisions by the County Planning Commission, the Board of Commissioners, staff, residents, and developers. It is designed as a map to direct and encourage development, redevelopment, and other improvements. The legal basis and rationale for the Master Plan are outlined in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act PA 33 of 2008, as amended (MPEA). Arenac County has developed this plan by requesting participation and cooperation from neighboring communities, jurisdictions, and utilities that have an interest within the County.

**TO ENSURE THE MASTER PLAN IS CURRENT, AND ADHERES TO THE CURRENT SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC TRENDS, THE PLAN MUST BE PERIODICALLY REVIEWED. THE MPEA REQUIRES THAT A MASTER PLAN BE REVIEWED EVERY FIVE YEARS.**

## PLANNING PROCESS

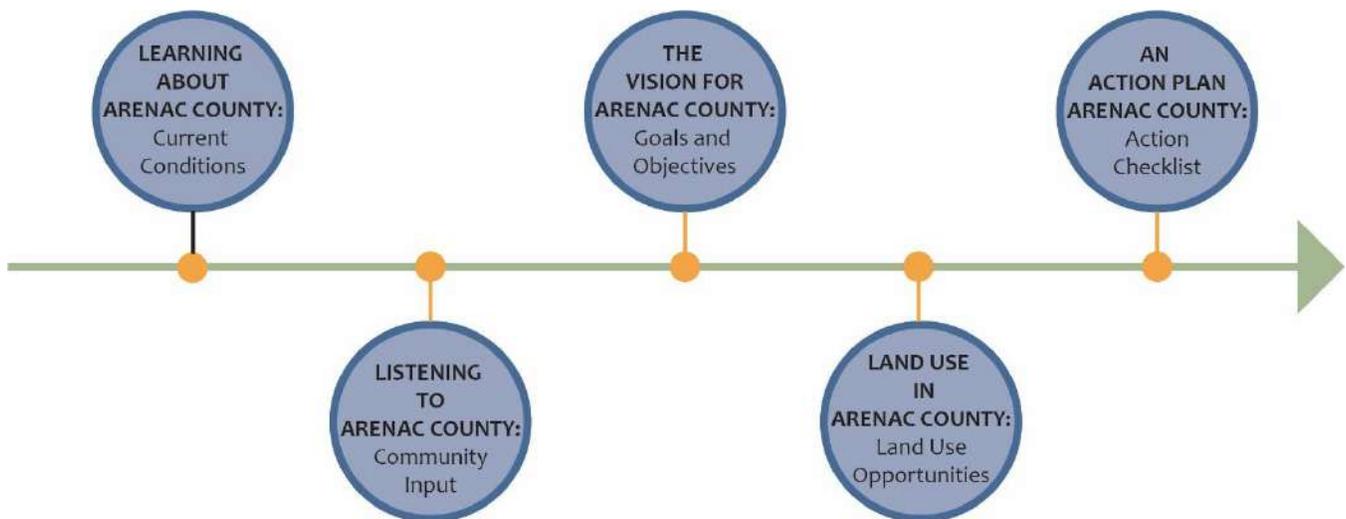
The Master Plan is constructed from a number of various components, including a community and regional profile, natural resources inventory, existing land use, community input, goals and objectives, and land use development policies. The initial inventories, regional profile, natural resources, and existing land use serve as analytical tools to review the current conditions in the County. One of the most important sections of the plan is the public input, which is an important tool to guide future decision-making and developing goals. Finally, the goals and maps pertaining to land use opportunities, strive to improve and strengthen areas of the region that the residents enjoy, and to improve areas and to address issues that have been identified as a concern.

Due to the fact that each municipality in Arenac County has adopted their own zoning regulations, the County Planning Commission acts as an advisory group to the Townships, Villages, and Cities, but has no regulatory authority. As such, the County views their role in the land use planning process as one of resource, facilitator, and supporter. The main purpose of the County Master Plan is to

- Guide the use of limited resources in an efficient manner
- Promote public health, safety, and welfare
- Preserve the quality of the environment and protect cultural assets
- Support economic development
- Promote and support goals and strategies that align with the goals and values of the citizens

The process to update the Arenac County Master Plan began in the winter of 2019. The County contracted with Spicer Group of Saginaw to assist the Planning Commission in the preparation of this Master Plan. The Planning Commission met with the Spicer Group Planning Consultants between 2019 and 2020 to work on the plan. As required by the MPEA, the County required the procedures for notifying neighboring communities and registered entities so that each interested party was made aware of the ongoing planning effort and was provided an opportunity to comment on the Master Plan.

The following steps were followed in the creation of the Arenac County Master Plan:



Community input was sought through an online survey and stakeholder interviews. Feedback from the community, as well as inventory data collected at the beginning of the process, was the basis for the goals, objectives, and action items outlined in this plan. A draft of this document was prepared in November of 2020 and delivered to the Planning Commission for review. Then, the County submitted the draft plan to neighboring jurisdictions as required by the Planning Enabling Act. On December 21, 2020, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on the Master Plan, required by the Planning Enabling Act. This provided an additional opportunity for public input on the Master Plan. The final Master Plan was adopted on January 12, 2020.



# Learning About Arenac County

## Demographics and County Profile

### ARENAC COUNTY HISTORY

Arenac County was one of several counties in Michigan named by Henry R. Schoolcraft. He noted the sandy soils and called it “a sandy place for a good footing”. The sand reminded him of the sand the ancient Romans placed in their Coliseum to provide a better footing for the gladiators during their combats. The name “Arenac” is a combination of the Latin word for sandy, “arena”, and a Native American word for earth, “ac”. Thus, Arenac means “a sandy place”.

Located at the bottom of the Saginaw Bay on Lake Huron, Native Americans have occupied the area for at least 5,000 years. Members of the Ottawa and Saginaw Chippewa Tribes used the three rivers that transverse the County; the Rifle, Au Gres and Pine Rivers. These rivers provided not only excellent fishing, but made good trade routes as well.

The first white settlers came from Canada in 1819. Most were of English and Scottish decent. The Saginaw Chippewa Tribe retained reservations at the mouths of the Rifle and Au Gres Rivers until 1937, when these lands were officially ceded to the U.S. government.

The land now called Arenac County was originally part of Bay County. In 1870, Deep River became the first township in what is now Arenac County. It has previously been part of Beaver Township in Bay County. It comprised of both the current Deep River and Adams Townships.

From 1881 through 1884 several families migrated to the Arenac area from West Prussia, including the Marks and Hertberg (1881), Netzlaff and Berg (1882) and Kaschub (1884).

In 1883, Arenac County was created from lands previously part of Bay County. The first permanent church, First Presbyterian Church of Maple Ridge, was organized in Clayton Township in the same year.

The Colombe farm in Standish Township was also established in 1883. This is now one of three Centennial Farms in Arenac County. The original buildings on the farm consisted of a saloon, a blacksmith shop and hotel with livery stables that also operated as a half-way house and stage coach stop.

The other two Centennial farms are both in Deep River Township. The Goodroe Farm is located on the edge of the Village of Sterling. The Hertzberg farm, also near the Village of Sterling, was acquired by the Hertzbergs sometime prior to 1886.

Newly designated Centennial farms include: The Dittenber farm located on Tonkey Road near AuGres and was purchased in 1910. Also, the Hagley farm founded in 1900 is the newest farm to be designated centennial, located on Conrad Road in Standish.

In 1886, the western portion of Deep River Township separated to become Adams Township, named for one of its first settlers, who later became its first supervisor.

1887 saw the establishment of St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church (WELS) in the Village of Sterling. Only a few years later, St. Mark Catholic Church was established in 1895 in Au Gres.

## ARENAC COUNTY OVERVIEW

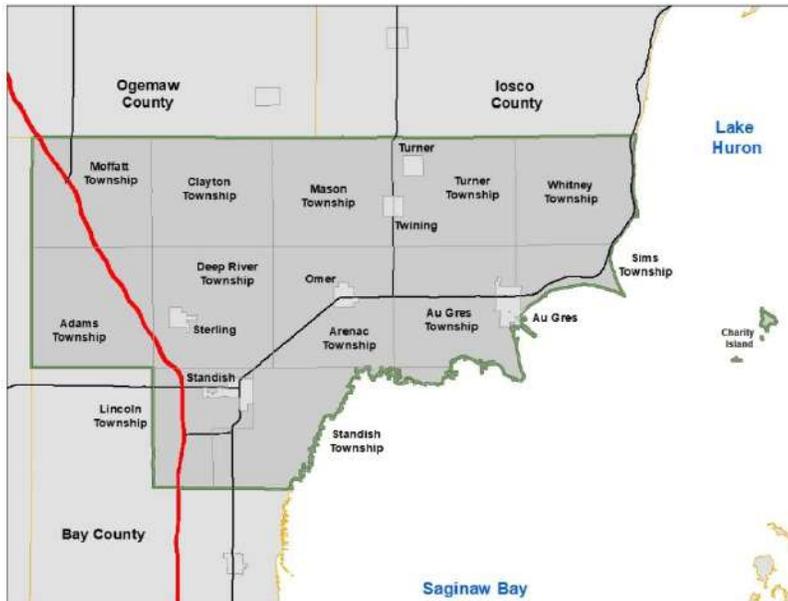
Map 1 – Arenac County Location

Arenac County is located in mid-Michigan along the Lake Huron shoreline, see Map 1. The County is bordered by Lake Huron to the east, Ogemaw and Iosco Counties to the north, Gladwin County to the west, and Bay County to the south. It covers approximately 681 square miles with 50 miles of shoreline. The interior of the County is largely forested with pockets of agriculture dispersed throughout the County.



The County has 12 townships, three cities, and three villages. There are three state routes and two US highways that provide access throughout the County, these include M-13, M-61, M-65, M-33, I-75, and US-23.

Map 2 – Arenac County Communities



The County is unique in that it is the gateway to northern Michigan, any traveler headed north along the east coast of the State has to pass through the County on either I-75 or US 23. The County is in a prime location to capitalize on that traffic. This is especially true because of the beautiful natural resources that are in abundance throughout the entire County. The opportunities include a Great Lake shoreline, several rivers, and state forest land.

In addition to the tourism opportunities due to the bountiful natural resources, the County is also home to the Saginaw-Chippewa Tribe of Mt. Pleasant who opened the Saganing Eagle’s Landing Casino and Hotel just south of Standish.

## ARENAC COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS

Background information from the U.S. Census is used to analyze a community's current demographic conditions. In the following sections, Census-based data on overall population trends, housing characteristics, and economic information in Arenac County is analyzed. This chapter is a summary of this data, presenting an overview of the demographic conditions within the County.

The information presented in this chapter uses the most recent Census Data, from the 2010 Census and 2017 American Community Survey (ACS). In the following sections, the text is a comparison of all the jurisdictions in Arenac County, including the County as a whole, all cities, villages, and townships.

### Population

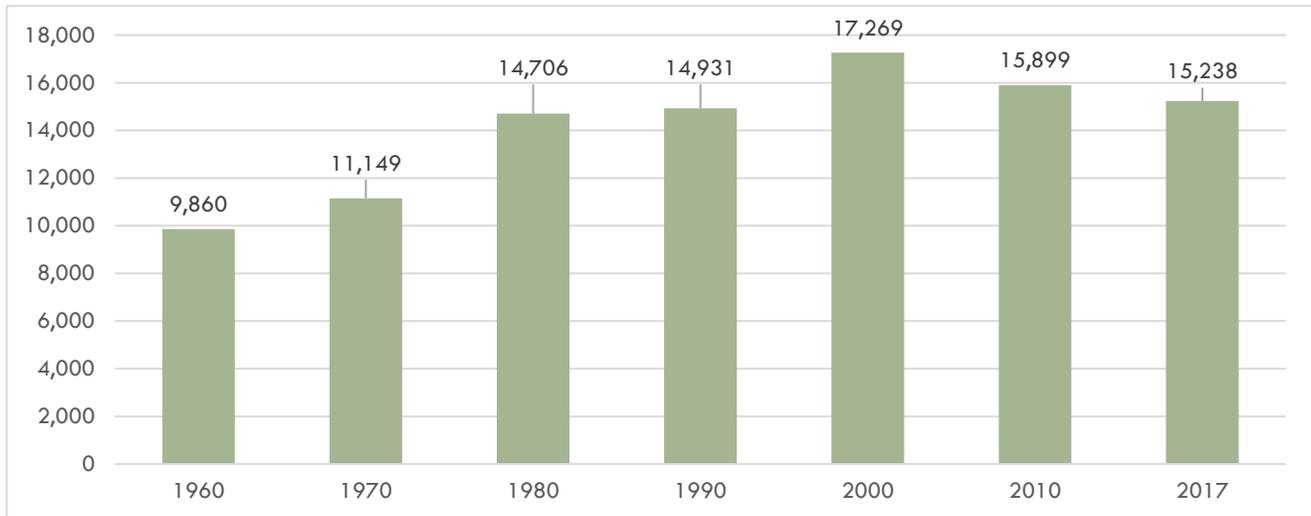
A community is defined by numerous factors, and one of the most important is population growth, stagnation, or decline. The basic foundation of a County, including utilities, housing, and transportation, are all directly impacted by population change. There are several different techniques for predicting or estimating population change over time. Using past trends and current data as a guide, this section of the Master Plan outlines population trends and existing conditions. Understanding these conditions will help Arenac County prepare for the future.

#### Population Trends

In general, Arenac County has a very small population as compared to the land area of the County. Of the 83 counties in Michigan, Arenac is ranked 68th in total population. The majority of the counties with a population smaller than Arenac are located in the Upper Peninsula. Standish is the only City in the County with a population greater than 1,000 people, at 1,509, Au Gres has a population of 889, and Omer only has 313 people. None of the three Villages in the County have more than 600 people. Sterling has the largest population, at 530, which is larger than Omer. Turner and Twining are both very small with 114 and 181 residents, respectively. The Townships are also small, of the 12 Townships in Arenac County, only half of the have a population greater than 1,000. The Township with the largest population is Deep River with 2,149 residents and the smallest is Turner with 550 residents. Populations of these sizes indicate the County is very rural.

For the past five decades, the County has experienced a steady growth in population. Figure 1 illustrates the population changes every 10 years beginning in 1960. From 1960 to 2000, the population in the County grew from 9,860 to 17,269. The population peaked in 2000 and since that time the County has been in a trend of population decline. Between 1970 and 1980, the County had the largest increase of any decade with an addition of about 3,500 people. In 2000, the County had a peak population of 17,269 residents, in 2010 the population decreased to 15,899. This was a decrease of approximately 1,370 people, or 7.9%. According to the 2017 ACS, the population in Arenac County is 15,238. This is a decrease from the 2010 Census. However, it is important to remember ACS data is estimate data and the Decennial Census is a full population count. The County will not have another full population count until the 2020 Census. Until that time, the County should consider the trends indicated by the ACS data, but should not rely on them. Arenac County and the State both lost population, at -7.9% and -0.6%, between 2000 and 2010, while the United States gained almost 10%.

**Figure 1 – County Population Trends**



An in-depth analysis of the population trends in each jurisdiction of Arenac County between 2000 and 2010 shows that each City and Village in the County had a population decline, and all the Townships aside from Moffatt and Sims and Adams also had population declines. Of the three Cities in the County, Au Gres had the steepest decline at 13.5%, Standish lost 4.6%, and Omer lost 7.1%. Of the Villages, Turner had the largest population decline at 18%, while Twining declined by 5.7% and Sterling declined by 0.6%, the smallest percentage of all the Cities and Villages in the County. The Townships had similar rates of decline, with most ranging between 1% to 6%. The outliers were Clayton Township with a decrease of 0.4%, the smallest of all the jurisdictions in the County, and Lincoln Township with a decrease of 38.1%. Mason and Tuner Townships both had decreases of approximately 14%. In comparison, Moffatt Township increased in population from 1,121 to 1,184, or 5.6%, and Sims Township increased from 1,091 to 1,095 or 0.4%.

Population change happens for many reasons. The most common reasons for population decrease include an aging population, little family growth, a decrease in migration, lack of jobs, or schools. The following charts indicate that Arenac County’s population decline can be attributed to an aging population and a decline in average household size.

**Table 2a - Population Trends, Overall**

	2000	2010	% of Population Change from 2000 - 2010
<b>Arenac County</b>	17,269	15,899	-7.9%
<b>Michigan</b>	9,938,444	9,883,640	-0.6%
<b>United States</b>	281,421,906	308,745,538	9.7%

**Table 2b - Population Trends, City**

	2000	2010	% of Population Change from 2000 - 2010
<b>Au Gres</b>	1,028	889	-13.5%
<b>Standish</b>	1,581	1,509	-4.6%
<b>Omer</b>	337	313	-7.1%

**Table 2c** - Population Trends, Village

	2000	2010	% of Population Change from 2000 - 2010
<b>Twining</b>	192	181	-5.7%
<b>Turner</b>	139	114	-18.0%
<b>Sterling</b>	533	530	-0.6%

**Table 2d** - Population Trends, Township

	2000	2010	% of Population Change from 2000 - 2010
<b>Adams</b>	550	563	2.4%
<b>Arenac</b>	992	903	-9.0%
<b>Au Gres</b>	1,007	953	-5.4%
<b>Clayton</b>	1,101	1,097	-0.4%
<b>Deep River</b>	2,244	2,149	-4.2%
<b>Lincoln</b>	1,522	942	-38.1%
<b>Mason</b>	994	851	-14.4%
<b>Moffatt</b>	1,121	1,184	5.6%
<b>Sims</b>	1,091	1,095	0.4%
<b>Standish</b>	2,026	1,900	-6.2%
<b>Turner</b>	642	550	-14.3%
<b>Whitney</b>	1,033	1,001	-3.1%

**Age Distribution**

Analyzing the age of the population is another useful way to understand the needs of a community. The following discussion will focus on the age distribution within Arenac County and the median age of the residents. Both are key indicators in determining how a population changes over time.

The population groups in the following tables are categorized into the following age groups:

- Under 5 – Young children
- Ages 5 – 19 – School age children
- Ages 20 – 24 – Young adult
- Ages 25 – 44 – Family starting/family stage
- Ages 44 – 64 – Family/Empty nesters stage
- Ages 65- 84 – Retired age
- Ages 85 and older – Elderly

Overall the County has more males than females. Table 3, on the following page, is a breakdown of the age distribution in the County by sex for 2000 and 2010. In 2010, 49.3% of the population in the County was female, and 50.7% was male. This compares to 48.6% of the population that was female and 51.4% was male in 2000. Between 2000 and 2010, the percentage of the female population in the County increased, but both groups decreased in population.

Over the past decade, the age distribution of the population in Arenac County has changed significantly. The overall population in the County is aging, this is illustrated in the age ranges 45-64 and 65-84, and 85+, because these three were the only groups to have an increase in population between 2000 to 2010, even though the County lost population. The younger age groups have similar trends to one another, in that each group lost population. The loss is most reflected in the 25-44 age group, which has experienced losses over 6%. When comparing the age ranges throughout the County, the largest population of residents, (32.1%) is in the 45-64 age group, which experienced a 6.5% increase in population from the 2000 figures. These figures can be found in Table 3.

**Table 3** - Age Distribution, Overall

	2000				2010				% Change from 2000 - 2010
	Male	Female	Total	% of Total	Male	Female	Total	% of Total	
<b>Under 5</b>	490	418	908	5.3%	386	368	754	4.7%	-17.0%
<b>Ages 5 - 19</b>	1,829	1,701	3,530	20.4%	1,484	1,347	2,831	17.8%	-19.8%
<b>Ages 20 - 24</b>	541	422	963	5.6%	350	372	722	4.5%	-25.0%
<b>Ages 25 - 44</b>	2,457	2,141	4,598	26.6%	1,655	1,613	3,268	20.6%	-28.9%
<b>Ages 45 - 64</b>	2,252	2,168	4,420	25.6%	2,603	2,494	5,097	32.1%	15.3%
<b>Ages 65 - 84</b>	1,224	1,389	2,613	15.1%	1,434	1,437	2,871	18.1%	9.9%
<b>Ages 85+</b>	78	159	237	1.4%	144	212	356	2.2%	50.2%
<b>Total</b>	8,871	8,398	17,269	100%	8,056	7,843	15,899	100%	-7.9%

To see a further breakdown of age groups by community for 2010, please reference Tables 4a through 4d, on the following pages. The only age groups in the County that have a larger percentage of the population as compared to the State and Country are the 45-64, 65-84, and 85+. The County has a smaller percentage of the population in all the other age groups. Generally, the communities in Arenac County have a similar age distribution. A few communities that stand out are Au Gres Township which has the smallest percentage of residents under 5 years of age at 4.7%. Whitney Township has the smallest percentage of population between 20-24 at 2.3%. Arenac Township has the largest percentage of population in the 45-64 age group. Standish has the largest percentage of the population older than 85, while Mason Township has the smallest percentage at 0.7%.

**Table 4a** - Population Trends, Overall

	Under 5	Ages 5 - 19	Ages 20 - 24	Ages 25 - 44	Ages 45 - 64	Ages 65 - 84	Ages 85+
<b>Arenac County</b>	4.7%	17.8%	4.5%	20.6%	32.1%	18.1%	2.2%
<b>Michigan</b>	6.0%	20.8%	6.8%	24.7%	27.9%	11.8%	1.9%
<b>United States</b>	6.5%	20.4%	7.0%	26.6%	26.4%	11.9%	1.8%

**Table 4b** - Population Trends, City

	Under 5	Ages 5 - 19	Ages 20 - 24	Ages 25 - 44	Ages 45 - 64	Ages 65 - 84	Ages 85+
<b>Au Gres</b>	4.7%	15.6%	4.4%	19.4%	30.3%	21.9%	3.6%
<b>Standish</b>	6.4%	20.4%	5.5%	24.2%	25.7%	14.1%	3.7%
<b>Omer</b>	7.7%	17.9%	5.4%	25.0%	26.2%	16.3%	1.6%

**Table 4c** - Population Trends, Village

	Under 5	Ages 5 - 19	Ages 20 - 24	Ages 25 - 44	Ages 45 - 64	Ages 65 - 84	Ages 85+
<b>Twining</b>	7.2%	22.1%	5.0%	26.6%	27.6%	10.0%	1.7%
<b>Turner</b>	5.3%	23.7%	4.4%	23.7%	27.9%	12.3%	2.6%
<b>Sterling</b>	5.1%	18.9%	4.2%	24.2%	22.8%	22.3%	2.6%

**Table 4d** - Population Trends, Township

	Under 5	Ages 5 - 19	Ages 20 - 24	Ages 25 - 44	Ages 45 - 64	Ages 65 - 84	Ages 85+
<b>Adams</b>	5.7%	23.5%	5.5%	25.6%	27.5%	11.2%	1.1%
<b>Arenac</b>	5.2%	17.7%	3.3%	21.5%	34.8%	15.0%	2.4%
<b>Au Gres</b>	3.1%	16.0%	3.9%	19.0%	32.9%	23.4%	1.5%
<b>Clayton</b>	4.4%	19.5%	5.4%	22.2%	33.5%	14.1%	1.0%
<b>Deep River</b>	4.6%	19.1%	5.0%	22.1%	30.4%	15.3%	3.5%
<b>Lincoln</b>	5.7%	21.2%	5.3%	24.1%	26.5%	15.3%	1.8%
<b>Mason</b>	4.2%	20.7%	5.4%	19.7%	35.4%	13.8%	0.7%
<b>Moffatt</b>	4.8%	13.6%	4.6%	17.0%	36.2%	21.6%	2.0%
<b>Sims</b>	3.8%	10.7%	4.5%	12.9%	36.3%	29.5%	2.1%
<b>Standish</b>	4.6%	20.1%	3.9%	22.1%	32.9%	14.9%	1.5%
<b>Turner</b>	3.8%	17.0%	4.0%	19.3%	35.4%	18.6%	1.8%
<b>Whitney</b>	3.8%	13.0%	2.3%	14.8%	35.8%	28.3%	2.1%

Each age group has very specific needs. It is important for a community to understand how many people are in each stage of life in their community so they can plan for the necessary resources. A community with a growing young population and family population, needs good schools, activities for families, single-family homes, and active recreation uses. As compared to a population with a larger concentration of empty nesters or retirees, who may need condos, apartments, public transportation, healthcare facilities, and passive recreation.

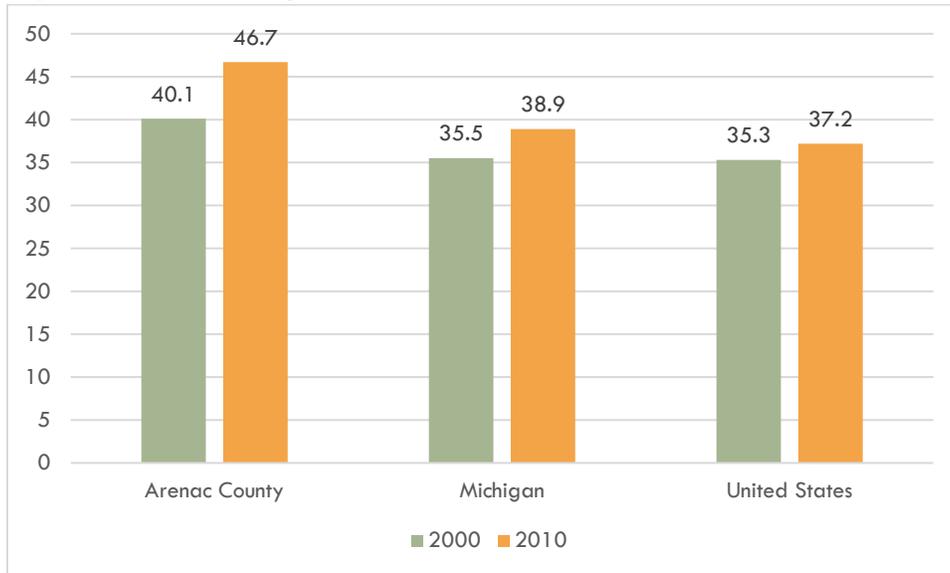
**Median Age**

The median age of a community is another tool which can be used to analyze the overall age of a population. Even more insightful, is the change of the median age over a period of time. It is a good indicator of how fast or slow a population is aging. Referencing Table 5a, Arenac County is aging much faster than the State or Country. The median age in Arenac County grew from 40.1 years in 2000 to 46.7 years in 2010. In addition to aging at higher rate, the County’s median age is significantly higher than the state or county as well. The median age for the County is 7.8 years older than that of the State, and 9.5 years older than that of the Country. Arenac County is aging at a rate doubly as fast and the rest of the State.

Generally, the communities of Arenac County are following the same trend of the County as a whole. The two exceptions to this trend are the Village of Twining and the Village of Turner. Both Villages had a decrease in the median age, meaning their population was younger in 2010 than it was in 2000. The community with the oldest median age in Arenac County is Sims Township which has a median age of 57.2, Whitney Township is the second oldest community with a median age of 55.1. The communities with the youngest median age in the County are The Village of Twining at 34.5 years and Lincoln Township at 39.5 years. The communities with the

largest change in median age between 2000 and 2010 were Turner Township which had an increase in median age by 10 years, and Mason Township with an increase of 9.4 years.

**Figure 2 - Median Age Trends**



**Table 5a - Median Age, Overall**

	2000	2010	Change from 2000 - 2010
<b>Arenac County</b>	40.1	46.7	6.6
<b>Michigan</b>	35.5	38.9	3.4
<b>United States</b>	35.3	37.2	1.9

**Table 5b - Median Age, City**

	2000	2010	Change from 2000 - 2010
<b>Au Gres</b>	42.9	49.8	6.9
<b>Standish</b>	36.6	40	3.4
<b>Omer</b>	39.5	40.8	1.3

**Table 5c - Median Age, Village**

	2000	2010	Change from 2000 - 2010
<b>Twining</b>	37.8	34.5	-3.3
<b>Turner</b>	42.7	42.0	-0.7
<b>Sterling</b>	41.1	42.7	1.6

**Table 5d** - Median Age, Township

	2000	2010	Change from 2000 - 2010
<b>Adams</b>	35.2	38	2.8
<b>Arenac</b>	40.1	46.5	6.4
<b>Au Gres</b>	46.1	50.7	4.6
<b>Clayton</b>	38.1	44.2	6.1
<b>Deep River</b>	39.2	44.5	5.3
<b>Lincoln</b>	34.6	39.5	4.9
<b>Mason</b>	35.6	45	9.4
<b>Moffatt</b>	44.5	51.4	6.9
<b>Sims</b>	50.6	57.2	6.6
<b>Standish</b>	39.1	44.4	5.3
<b>Turner</b>	39.3	49.3	10.0
<b>Whitney</b>	49.6	55.1	5.5

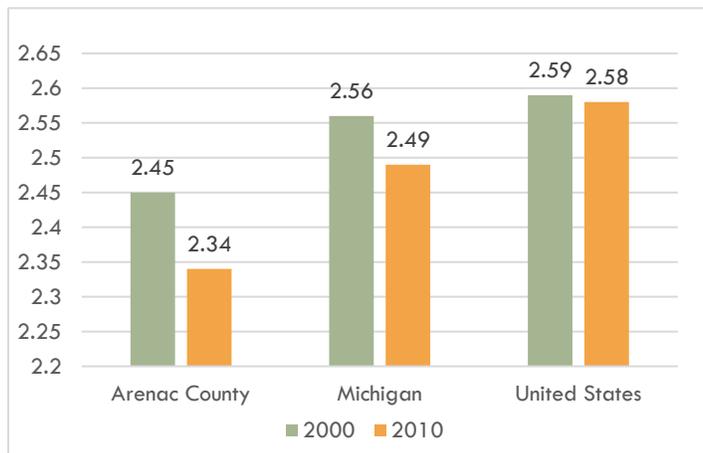
### Household Characteristics

In addition to population demographics, the Census also measures various household and housing characteristics. The household characteristics analyze the human element of each household. These characteristics give a community a broader understanding of who lives within their jurisdiction, how they live there, and what family structures are present.

#### Average Household Size

Average household size is a measure that shows the average number of people living in a household in a community. This figure is an indicator of several things, including the number of families with children, the change in family structures over time, and the number of residents living alone. The average household size in the County in 2010 is 2.34 this is a decrease from 2.45 in 2000. As compared to the State and the Country, the average household size of the County is much smaller and decreased at a much higher rate over the 10-year period.

**Figure 3** – Average Household Size Trends



All the communities in Arenac County aside from the City of Omer, the Village of Twining, the Village of Sterling, and Moffatt Township also had decreases in their average household size. This trend could be happening for many reasons, but with a larger retiree/elderly population there are often smaller household sizes because there is an increase in single-persons living alone, smaller family sizes, or other non-family structures. These trends require specific types of housing that the County and local jurisdictions will need to consider. For example, if more people are living alone and there are fewer families, the demand for single-family housing structures could be less than the demand for apartments or condos.

Generally, the decreases in average household size were similar throughout the County, however, the communities with the largest decreases were the Village of Turner and Mason Township. These two stand out in the County because they had a decrease that was more than double the other communities. The communities in the County with the largest average household size are Adams Township and the Village of Twining, both with an average household size of 2.66, then the Village of Turner with an average household size of 2.65. The communities with the smallest average household size are the City of Au Gres (2.00) and Sims Township (2.08).

**Table 6a** - Average Household Size, Overall

	2000	2010	Change from 2000 - 2010
<b>Arenac County</b>	2.45	2.34	-0.11
<b>Michigan</b>	2.56	2.49	-0.07
<b>United States</b>	2.59	2.58	-0.01

**Table 6b** - Average Household Size, City

	2000	2010	Change from 2000 - 2010
<b>Au Gres</b>	2.15	2.00	-0.15
<b>Standish</b>	2.36	2.27	-0.09
<b>Omer</b>	2.36	2.39	0.03

**Table 6c** - Average Household Size, Village

	2000	2010	Change from 2000 - 2010
<b>Twining</b>	2.53	2.66	0.13
<b>Turner</b>	3.09	2.65	-0.44
<b>Sterling</b>	2.44	2.47	0.03

**Table 6d** - Average Household Size, Township

	2000	2010	Change from 2000 - 2010
<b>Adams</b>	2.89	2.66	-0.23
<b>Arenac</b>	2.55	2.38	-0.17
<b>Au Gres</b>	2.32	2.27	-0.05
<b>Clayton</b>	2.65	2.62	-0.03
<b>Deep River</b>	2.54	2.45	-0.09
<b>Lincoln</b>	2.62	2.43	-0.19
<b>Mason</b>	2.77	2.45	-0.32
<b>Moffatt</b>	2.27	2.28	0.01
<b>Sims</b>	2.17	2.08	-0.09
<b>Standish</b>	2.53	2.48	-0.05
<b>Turner</b>	2.64	2.34	-0.3
<b>Whitney</b>	2.34	2.16	-0.18

### Household Structure

The following information categorizes the type of family unit that lives in each household. The U.S. Census breaks families into 2 categories, which have several sub-categories. The first category is family households, which includes the sub-categories: married couple families, male householder, and female householder. The second category is nonfamily households, which includes the sub-categories: living alone and not living alone.

In Arenac County, 67.8% of households are considered to be family households. Of the 67.8%, 53.1% are married couple families, 9.6% are female householders, and 5.1% are male householders. Between 2000 and 2010 the number of family households decreased from 70.3% to 67.8%. Between 2000 and 2010, nonfamily households increased from 29.7% to 32.2%. Nonfamily households are defined as people living together who are not related by blood or marriage. In Arenac County, 27.5% of people are householders living alone and 4.7% are householders not living alone. Table 7 illustrates these changes.

**Table 7** - Household Structure, County

	2000	2010
<b>Family Households</b>	<b>70.3%</b>	<b>67.8%</b>
<i>Married Couple Families</i>	<i>57.0%</i>	<i>53.1%</i>
<i>Female Householder (no husband)</i>	<i>9.0%</i>	<i>9.6%</i>
<i>Male Householder (no wife)</i>	<i>4.3%</i>	<i>5.1%</i>
<b>Non-family Households</b>	<b>29.7%</b>	<b>32.2%</b>
<i>Householder Living Alone</i>	<i>25.5%</i>	<i>27.5%</i>
<i>Householder Not Living Alone</i>	<i>4.2%</i>	<i>4.7%</i>

### Housing Characteristics

In addition to household characteristics, the U.S. Census also measures housing characteristics, or the occupancy, number, type, ownership, and value of the housing units within a jurisdiction. Once a community understands the way their population is changing, and the needs of the shifting population, then it is important to understand what housing options are available to Arenac County residents. Analyzing this information allows the community to see where there is a lack or gap of a certain type of housing, the conditions of the housing stock, and the cost of living. Understanding these changes will help Arenac County plan for changes in the future.

### Housing Types

The Census measures several different housing types, which are included in Table 8, on the following page. A 1-unit, detached structure is a typical single-family housing unit, while a 1-unit, attached structure is a single-family housing unit that is attached to several other single-family housing units (such as townhomes or row houses), but is a completely separate unit from the adjoining neighbors. There is a total of 9,803 housing units in the County. Of those, 82.5% are 1-Unit, Detached structures. In Arenac County, the second most prevalent form of housing is Mobile Homes, at 11.5%. All the multi-family housing units are relatively equal across the different types, each around 1% of the total housing stock. According to the Census, there are no County residents living in boats, RV, or vans. These kinds of housing characteristics are a way for the County to evaluate the existing structures to determine if the housing needs of the residents are being met.

**Table 8** - Household Structure, County

	2000	2010
<b>1-Unit, Detached</b>	77.2%	82.5%
<b>1 Unit, Attached</b>	1.1%	0.4%
<b>2 Units</b>	1.0%	0.6%
<b>3 or 4 Units</b>	0.9%	1.3%
<b>5 to 9 Units</b>	1.9%	2.5%
<b>10 to 19 Units</b>	0.8%	0.5%
<b>20 or More Units</b>	0.3%	0.8%
<b>Mobile Home</b>	16.2%	11.5%
<b>Boat, RV, Van, etc</b>	0.4%	0.0%

**Housing Occupancy**

The Census measures the number and tenure of housing units in a jurisdiction. Then, the data is cataloged as either occupied or vacant units. Then, occupied units are categorized as owner or renter occupied. Vacant units are categorized as their vacancy type (i.e. for rent, for sale, under construction, seasonally vacant etc.).

In Arenac County in 2010, there were a total of 9,803 housing units, of which 6,701, or 68.4%, are occupied and 3,102, or 31.6% were vacant. These percentages are very different than that of the State and Country, which both have similar occupancy rates in the mid to high 80% range and vacancy rates in the mid to low teens. Arenac County’s high vacancy rate can be attributed to the many seasonal homes located throughout the County. The communities in the County with the highest occupancy rates, and therefore the lowest vacancy rates, are The City of Standish (90.8%), Lincoln Township (90.4%), Sterling (89.8%), Adams Township (85.5%), The Village of Twining (84%), and Omer (80.9%). These are all Cities or Villages in Arenac County, aside from Adams and Lincoln Townships which are along the western border of the Township. The communities with the highest vacancy rates are Sims Township (55.1%), Whitney Township (53%), Moffatt Township (46.1%), Au Gres Township (39%), The City of Au Gres (27.3%), and Arenac Township (25.3%). Sims, Whitney, and Moffatt have a significantly higher vacancy rate than the other on the list, both Sims and Whitney are located along the lakeshore, as is Au Gres Township and the City of Au Gres.

**Table 9a** - Housing Occupancy, Overall

	Total Housing Units	Occupied	Vacant	% Occupied	% Vacant
<b>Arenac County</b>	9,803	6,701	3,102	68.4%	31.6%
<b>Michigan</b>	4,532,233	3,872,508	659,725	85.4%	14.6%
<b>United States</b>	131,704,730	116,716,292	14,988,438	88.6%	11.4%

**Table 9b** - Housing Occupancy, City

	Total Housing Units	Occupied	Vacant	% Occupied	% Vacant
<b>Au Gres</b>	598	435	163	72.7%	27.3%
<b>Standish</b>	682	619	63	90.8%	9.2%
<b>Omer</b>	162	131	32	80.9%	19.1%

**Table 9c** - Housing Occupancy, Village

	Total Housing Units	Occupied	Vacant	% Occupied	% Vacant
<b>Twining</b>	81	68	13	84.0%	16.0%
<b>Turner</b>	55	43	12	78.2%	21.8%
<b>Sterling</b>	206	185	21	89.8%	10.2%

**Table 9d** - Housing Occupancy, Township

	Total Housing Units	Occupied	Vacant	% Occupied	% Vacant
<b>Adams</b>	248	212	36	85.5%	14.5%
<b>Arenac</b>	509	380	129	74.7%	25.3%
<b>Au Gres</b>	689	420	269	61.0%	39.0%
<b>Clayton</b>	534	419	115	78.5%	21.5%
<b>Deep River</b>	1,071	848	223	79.2%	20.8%
<b>Lincoln</b>	428	387	41	90.4%	9.6%
<b>Mason</b>	455	347	108	76.3%	23.7%
<b>Moffatt</b>	953	514	439	53.9%	46.1%
<b>Sims</b>	1,172	526	646	44.9%	55.1%
<b>Standish</b>	1,001	765	236	76.4%	23.6%
<b>Turner</b>	316	235	81	74.4%	25.6%
<b>Whitney</b>	985	463	522	47.0%	53.0%

### Housing Tenure

In addition to understanding the housing units in the County, another analysis is the housing tenure, or ownership, of the occupied units. The following set of charts and tables depict housing tenure and the percentage of home ownership rates in the County over the past 10 years. Of the 9,803 housing units in the County, 6,701 units are occupied. Of the 6,701 occupied units, 83.6% are owner-occupied and 16.4% are renter occupied. In Arenac County, the rate of owner-occupied housing units is significantly higher than that of the State (72.1%) and the Country (65.1%). This means there are significantly less renters in Arenac County. The housing tenure breakdown per jurisdiction can be found in Tables 10a through 10d. Overall the Townships have a very high owner-occupancy rate between 80% - 95%, with most of them being higher than the County rate at 83.6%. The highest rates in the County are in the following Townships: Sims, Au Gres, Turner, and Whitney. These all have owner-occupied housing rates over 90%. The communities with the highest renter-occupied units are in the Cities and Villages. These communities are Standish, Au Gres, Twining, and Sterling. Omer and Turner have owner-occupancy rates similar to that of the County, both in the mid-80% range.

**Table 10a** - Housing Tenure, Overall

	Occupied	Owner-Occupied	Renter Occupied	% Owner Occupied	% Renter Occupied
<b>Arenac County</b>	6,701	5,605	1,096	83.6%	16.4%
<b>Michigan</b>	3,872,508	2,793,342	1,079,166	72.1%	27.9%
<b>United States</b>	116,716,292	75,986,074	40,730,218	65.1%	34.9%

**Table 10b** - Housing Tenure, City

	Occupied	Owner-Occupied	Renter Occupied	% Owner Occupied	% Renter Occupied
<b>Au Gres</b>	435	274	161	63.0%	37.0%
<b>Standish</b>	619	353	266	57.0%	43.0%
<b>Omer</b>	131	110	21	84.0%	16.0%

**Table 10c** - Housing Tenure, Village

	Occupied	Owner-Occupied	Renter Occupied	% Owner Occupied	% Renter Occupied
<b>Twining</b>	68	53	15	77.9%	22.1%
<b>Turner</b>	43	37	6	86.0%	14.0%
<b>Sterling</b>	185	146	39	78.9%	21.1%

**Table 10d** - Housing Tenure, Township

	Occupied	Owner-Occupied	Renter Occupied	% Owner Occupied	% Renter Occupied
<b>Adams</b>	212	180	32	84.9%	15.1%
<b>Arenac</b>	380	336	44	88.4%	11.6%
<b>Au Gres</b>	420	395	25	94.0%	6.0%
<b>Clayton</b>	419	354	65	84.5%	15.5%
<b>Deep River</b>	848	739	109	87.1%	12.9%
<b>Lincoln</b>	387	313	74	80.9%	19.1%
<b>Mason</b>	347	300	47	86.5%	13.5%
<b>Moffatt</b>	514	454	60	88.3%	11.7%
<b>Sims</b>	526	495	31	94.1%	5.9%
<b>Standish</b>	765	665	100	86.9%	13.1%
<b>Turner</b>	235	215	20	91.5%	8.5%
<b>Whitney</b>	463	422	41	91.1%	8.9%

A deeper review of homeownership patterns in the County reveals a trend that the majority of the communities in the County have a smaller percentage of homeowners in 2010 as compared to 2000. The homeownership rate in 2010 was 83.6%, which is down from 84.6% in 2000. Both Michigan and the County also had a decrease in homeownership over the same 10-year period, however, the County decreased at a slower rate than the State or Country. Of all the communities in Arenac County, the only communities to have an increase in homeownership were the following Townships: Arenac, Clayton, Sims, Turner and Whitney. Most increased right around 1%, but Turner Township increased at a much more drastic rate at 6.9%. In comparison, most communities had a decrease in homeownership rates between 0% - 3%, two outliers that had a much higher decrease were Lincoln Township at 5.6% and Adams Township at 8.3%.

**Table 11a** - 2000-2010 Percent Change in owner-Occupied Housing, Overall

	% Owner Occupied 2000	% Owner Occupied 2010	% Change
<b>Arenac County</b>	84.6%	83.6%	-1.0%
<b>Michigan</b>	73.8%	72.1%	-2.3%
<b>United States</b>	66.2%	65.1%	-1.7%

**Table 11b**- 2000-2010 Percent Change in owner-Occupied Housing, City

	% Owner Occupied 2000	% Owner Occupied 2010	% Change
<b>Au Gres</b>	63.9%	63.0%	-1.4%
<b>Standish</b>	58.3%	57.0%	-2.2%
<b>Omer</b>	87.4%	84.0%	-3.9%

**Table 11c** - 2000-2010 Percent Change in owner-Occupied Housing, Village

	% Owner Occupied 2000	% Owner Occupied 2010	% Change
<b>Twining</b>	80.3%	77.9%	-3.0%
<b>Turner</b>	88.9%	86.0%	-3.3%
<b>Sterling</b>	83.2%	78.9%	-5.2%

**Table 11d** 2000-2010 Percent Change in owner-Occupied Housing, Township

	% Owner Occupied 2000	% Owner Occupied 2010	% Change
<b>Adams</b>	92.6%	84.9%	-8.3%
<b>Arenac</b>	87.9%	88.4%	0.6%
<b>Au Gres</b>	94.5%	94.0%	-0.5%
<b>Clayton</b>	83.9%	84.5%	0.7%
<b>Deep River</b>	89.6%	87.1%	-2.8%
<b>Lincoln</b>	85.7%	80.9%	-5.6%
<b>Mason</b>	88.0%	86.5%	-1.7%
<b>Moffatt</b>	91.3%	88.3%	-3.3%
<b>Sims</b>	92.6%	94.1%	1.6%
<b>Standish</b>	88.0%	86.9%	-1.3%
<b>Turner</b>	85.6%	91.5%	6.9%
<b>Whitney</b>	90.4%	91.1%	0.8%

**Structures by Vacancy Type**

The U.S Census breaks down vacant units into the following categories: seasonal, for rent, rented, but unoccupied, for sale only, sold but unoccupied, or other vacant. Tables 12a through 12d breakdown the vacancies by jurisdiction. If a housing unit is only seasonally occupied, the Census considers it vacant, therefore the high vacancy rates in the County can be explained by the large amount of seasonal housing units. There is a high percentage of seasonal housing throughout the County, particularly along the shoreline and in the wooded areas of the County.

High seasonal vacancy rates are not a reality for all Arenac County communities, and this trend is most apparent when the vacancy rates in each township, city, and village are compared individually against the State and Country rates. The communities that do not have a large number of seasonal housing units compare more closely to the percentages of the State and Country. The majority of the Cities and Villages in Arenac County have rates that are comparable to the State. Similarly, a couple Townships in the County also have rates that compare with the State. Adams and Lincoln Townships have the smallest percentage of seasonal homes as compared to the other Townships in the County. The Townships with the largest percentage of seasonal homes are Sims (50.5%), Whitney (47%), Moffatt (40.6%), and Au Gres (32.8%). Sims, Whitney, and Au Gres Townships are all located along the Lake Huron shoreline, and Moffatt Township is located in an area that is very wooded with a lot of natural resources such as waterways and public land. The difference between the types of seasonal vacancies would be lakefront homes in Sims, Whitney, and Au Gres township versus wooded cabins in Moffatt Township. The other Townships in the County all have seasonal rates that are almost double that of the State.

**Table 12a** - Structures by Vacancy Type, Overall

	Total Housing Units	Total Vacant Units	% of Units Vacant	Seasonal, Recreational, or Occasional Use	For Rent	Renter, Unoccupied	For Sale Only	Sold, Unoccupied	Other Vacant
<b>Arenac County</b>	9,803	3,102	31.6%	77.3%	2.8%	0.5%	6.3%	1.5%	10.3%
<b>Michigan</b>	4,532,233	659,725	14.6%	5.8%	3.1%	0.1%	1.7%	0.4%	3.4%
<b>United States</b>	131,704,730	17,988,438	11.4%	3.5%	3.1%	0.2%	1.4%	0.3%	2.8%

**Table 12b** - Structures by Vacancy Type, City

	Total Housing Units	Total Vacant Units	% of Units Vacant	Seasonal, Recreational, or Occasional Use	For Rent	Renter, Unoccupied	For Sale Only	Sold, Unoccupied	Other Vacant
<b>Au Gres</b>	598	163	27.3%	19.4%	0.2%	0.0%	3.7%	0.3%	1.8%
<b>Standish</b>	682	63	9.2%	1.2%	1.8%	0.6%	1.9%	0.6%	3.2%
<b>Omer</b>	162	31	19.1%	7.4%	3.7%	0.6%	1.2%	1.9%	4.3%

**Table 12c** - Structures by Vacancy Type, Village

	Total Housing Units	Total Vacant Units	% of Units Vacant	Seasonal, Recreational, or Occasional Use	For Rent	Renter, Unoccupied	For Sale Only	Sold, Unoccupied	Other Vacant
<b>Twining</b>	81	13	16.0%	2.5%	3.7%	0.0%	1.2%	0.0%	8.6%
<b>Turner</b>	55	12	21.8%	7.3%	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	9.1%
<b>Sterling</b>	206	21	10.2%	2.9%	1.5%	0.0%	1.0%	1.0%	3.9%

**Table 12d** - Structures by Vacancy Type, Township

	Total Housing Units	Total Vacant Units	% of Units Vacant	Seasonal, Recreational, or Occasional Use	For Rent	Renter, Unoccupied	For Sale Only	Sold, Unoccupied	Other Vacant
<b>Adams</b>	248	36	14.5%	7.3%	0.0%	0.0%	2.8%	0.0%	4.4%
<b>Arenac</b>	509	129	25.3%	14.9%	1.0%	0.2%	1.8%	0.6%	6.9%
<b>Au Gres</b>	689	269	39.0%	32.8%	0.1%	0.1%	3.0%	0.1%	2.8%
<b>Clayton</b>	534	115	21.5%	14.4%	0.4%	0.4%	1.5%	1.1%	3.7%
<b>Deep River</b>	1,071	223	20.8%	12.0%	0.8%	0.1%	1.9%	1.1%	4.9%
<b>Lincoln</b>	428	41	9.6%	3.3%	0.7%	0.2%	1.2%	0.9%	3.3%
<b>Mason</b>	455	108	23.7%	14.1%	0.4%	0.0%	1.8%	0.4%	7.0%
<b>Moffatt</b>	953	439	46.1%	40.6%	0.6%	0.2%	1.9%	0.1%	2.6%
<b>Sims</b>	1,172	646	55.1%	50.5%	0.3%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	2.3%
<b>Standish</b>	1,001	236	23.6%	16.9%	1.5%	0.1%	1.3%	0.4%	3.4%
<b>Turner</b>	316	81	25.6%	14.9%	1.6%	0.0%	1.3%	0.6%	7.3%
<b>Whitney</b>	985	522	53.0%	47.0%	0.5%	0.0%	2.0%	0.4%	3.0%

**Housing Value**

The median housing value in Arenac County is \$88,900, which is less than both the State (\$119,200) and the Country (\$174,600). There are various reasons for this, and one major contributing factor is that almost a third of the housing stock in the County is seasonal homes. Table 12 illustrates the values of owner-occupied housing units in Arenac County.

**Table 13**- Housing Values, County

	Number	Percent
<b>Less than \$50,000</b>	1,066	19.4%
<b>\$50,000 to \$99,999</b>	2,062	37.4%
<b>\$100,000 to \$149,999</b>	969	17.6%
<b>\$150,000 to \$199,999</b>	706	12.8%
<b>\$200,000 to \$299,999</b>	472	8.6%
<b>\$300,000 to \$499,999</b>	58	2.9%
<b>\$500,000 to \$999,999</b>	54	1.0%
<b>\$1,000,000 or More</b>	20	0.4%

**Housing Costs as a Percent of Income**

A conventional indication of housing quality is the percent of income spent on housing. Housing expenditures that exceed 30% of household income are viewed by planners as an indicator of a housing affordability problem for residents. Sixty-five percent of homeowners in Arenac County spend less than 30% of their income on monthly housing costs. This means 35% of homeowners spend more the 30% of their income on monthly housing costs. In comparison, 75% homeowners pay less than 30% of their income in the State and the same is true for 70% of homeowners across the Country.

**Table 14** - Selected Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income, Overall

	Arenac County	Michigan	United States
<b>Total Units</b>	2,635	1,676,203	47,932,589
<b>Less than 30%</b>	64.7%	74.9%	70.6%
<b>Greater than 30%</b>	35.2%	25.1%	29.5%

The same consideration is true for renters as homeowners. Housing expenditures that exceed 30% of a household income are viewed as an indicator of housing affordability issues. In Arenac County 52% of renters spend less than 30% of their income on rent, which is a higher percentage than both the State (49%), and the Country (49%). This means more renters in Arenac County spend less money on rent as compared to the other jurisdictions.

**Table 15** - Selected Monthly Rental Costs as a Percentage of Household Income, Overall

	Arenac County	Michigan	United States
<b>Total Units</b>	979	1,039,930	39,799,272
<b>Less than 30%</b>	52.6%	49.6%	49.4%
<b>Greater than 30%</b>	47.3%	50.4%	50.6%

The Census also measures median gross rent, which is the median costs that renters spend on their housing and estimated costs for utilities for all the rental units in the County. By comparing the median household income to median gross rent, it can be determined if renters have affordable housing options in the County. The median household income in Arenac County is \$39,947. Thirty percent of that equates to \$11,984 per year. This is approximately \$998 per month. The median gross rent in the County is \$610, which suggests there are affordable rental housing options in the County.

**Table 16** - Median Gross Rent, Overall

	2017
<b>Arenac County</b>	\$610
<b>Michigan</b>	\$824
<b>United States</b>	\$982

When comparing homeowner costs to renter costs in Arenac County, 35% of homeowners pay greater than 30% of their income on housing, and 47% of renters pay more than 30% of their income on housing, which is an indication of higher rental costs compared to homeownership. This trend is also true in the State and Country, where 50% of renters in Michigan pay more than 30% of their income on rent and 25% of homeowners pay the same.

## Economic Characteristics

Economic characteristics comprise a major part of U.S. Census data. It is important to examine the economic status of a community to determine the ability to support future commercial, residential, and industrial development. The data indicates the strengths and weaknesses in the County, while alluding to trends that may aid or hurt the economic future of the community. This economic analysis utilizes 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census data and 2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

**Education**

Educational attainment measures the education level of a community. It allows for analysis of the skills and capabilities of the labor force and the economic vitality of the community. The level of educational attainment achieved within a community illustrates the types of jobs that are suitable or necessary for citizens. The U.S. Census Bureau reports on all levels of education attainment including those who did not complete high school, those who earned a high school diploma or an equivalent, those that attended some college, earned an associate’s degree, and those who earned a bachelor’s degree or higher. The following analysis includes the educational attainment for all residents in Arenac County 25 years of age or older.

As illustrated in Figure 17a, Arenac County has the largest percentage of individuals with high school diplomas and Associate’s Degrees, as compared to the State and Country, and has the smallest number of residents who earned a Bachelor’s Degree or Graduate or Professional Degree when compared to both geographies. Tables 17a through 17d, illustrate the educational attainment for each community in Arenac County. The communities with the most people who have earned a bachelor’s degree are Sims and Whitney Townships.

**Table 17a** - Educational Attainment, Overall

	No High School Diploma	High School Diploma (include equivalency)	Some College, no degree	Associates Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Graduate or Professional Degree
<b>Arenac County</b>	13.3%	42.9%	22.5%	9.7%	7.4%	4.2%
<b>Michigan</b>	9.7%	29.3%	23.6%	9.3%	17.1%	11.0%
<b>United States</b>	12.6%	27.3%	20.8%	8.3%	19.1%	11.8%

**Table 17b** - Educational Attainment, City

	No High School Diploma	High School Diploma (include equivalency)	Some College, no degree	Associates Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Graduate or Professional Degree
<b>Au Gres</b>	11.1%	41.7%	22.7%	8.1%	9.6%	6.9%
<b>Standish</b>	18.6%	35.0%	24.8%	12.1%	6.2%	3.3%
<b>Omer</b>	15.3%	45.9%	21.1%	12.0%	1.9%	3.8%

**Table 17c** - Educational Attainment, Village

	No High School Diploma	High School Diploma (include equivalency)	Some College, no degree	Associates Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Graduate or Professional Degree
<b>Twining</b>	24.8%	46.8%	20.2%	6.4%	1.8%	0.0%
<b>Turner</b>	23.5%	52.0%	10.8%	7.8%	3.9%	2.0%
<b>Sterling</b>	11.5%	41.9%	27.7%	10.8%	4.7%	3.4%

**Table 17d** - Educational Attainment, Township

	No High School Diploma	High School Diploma (include equivalency)	Some College, no degree	Associates Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Graduate or Professional Degree
<b>Adams</b>	12.3%	47.8%	19.7%	9.9%	6.7%	3.7%
<b>Arenac</b>	19.2%	38.9%	23.2%	10.6%	6.2%	1.9%
<b>Au Gres</b>	10.6%	36.7%	29.4%	10.9%	5.5%	6.9%
<b>Clayton</b>	16.0%	50.8%	20.9%	6.1%	5.1%	1.2%
<b>Deep River</b>	13.0%	43.9%	22.6%	8.6%	7.5%	4.3%
<b>Lincoln</b>	13.1%	47.9%	18.8%	10.1%	6.7%	3.4%
<b>Mason</b>	21.6%	46.3%	17.1%	9.5%	3.6%	1.8%
<b>Moffatt</b>	14.2%	39.6%	25.5%	9.0%	6.8%	4.9%
<b>Sims</b>	5.8%	39.8%	22.7%	13.8%	10.0%	7.8%
<b>Standish</b>	11.8%	47.4%	21.1%	9.7%	7.2%	2.8%
<b>Turner</b>	13.0%	42.6%	22.2%	13.0%	8.1%	1.2%
<b>Whitney</b>	6.8%	44.8%	21.4%	4.5%	15.3%	7.3%

In addition to educational attainment, the State of Michigan measures enrollment data for all school districts K through 12. Within Arenac County there are four different school districts. The Arenac Eastern School District recently closed. Additionally, two of the four, primarily serve Iosco County and Ogemaw County to the north, but small sections dip into Arenac County in Whitney, Mason, and Clayton Township. The two main districts that serve the majority of Arenac County are Au Gres-Sims School District, and the Standish-Sterling School District. The enrollment information in Table 18 below, focuses on these two districts and Map 3 depicts the school district boundaries in the County.

**Table 18** – Arenac County School Enrollment Trends

Arenac County School Enrollment Trends		
District	2010-2011	2017-2018
<b>Au Gres-Sims School District</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>450</b>
<i>Au Gres-Sims Elementary</i>	192	204
<i>Au Gres-Sims Middle School</i>	-	85
<i>Au Gres-Sims High School</i>	210	161
<b>Standish-Sterling Community Schools</b>	<b>1,417</b>	<b>1,577</b>
<i>Sterling Elementary School</i>	363	140
<i>Standish-Sterling Central Elementary School</i>	464	677
<i>Standish-Sterling Central Jr/Sr High School</i>	590	760

**Income**

Income and poverty levels are measuring tools that can be used to determine the relative economic health of a community. Increases in income can show economic success while increases in the percent of individuals below the poverty level can show economic downturn. Income is measured at three levels: median household income, median family income, and per capita income. Table 19 illustrates these three levels in each jurisdiction.

Measuring income is a way to measure wealth, or a relative measure of a population’s willingness and/or ability to pay for infrastructure, housing, and discretionary municipal services.

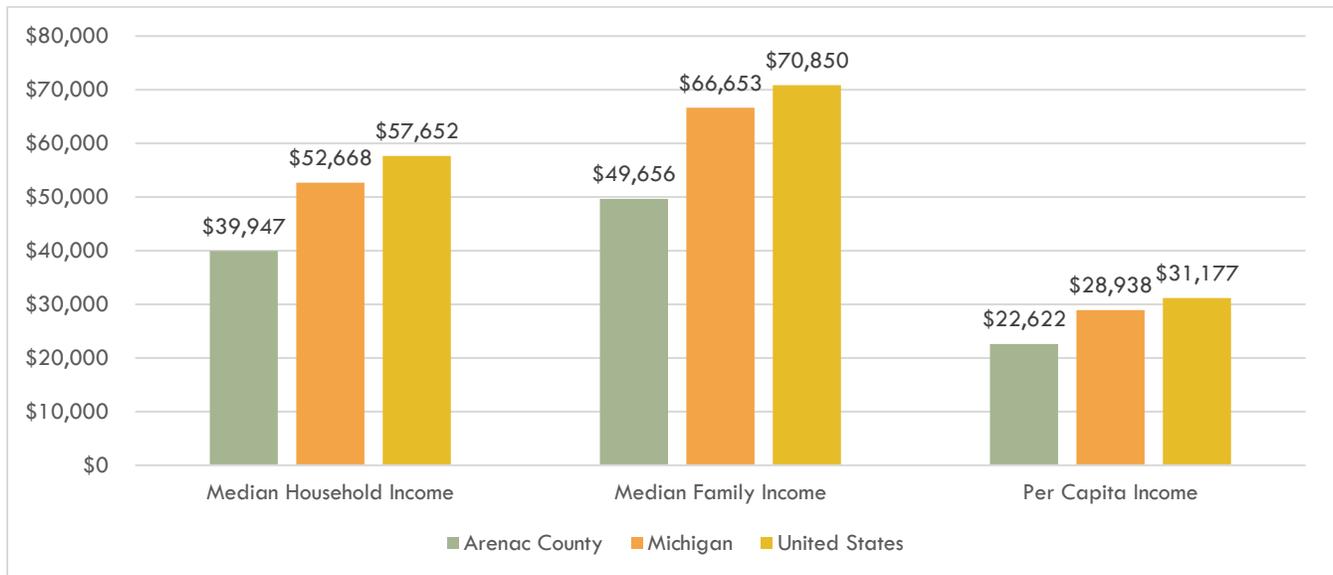
Median household income is a measure of the total income of the people living in a single household. The median household income in Arenac County is \$39,947. This is less than the State (\$52,668) and Country (\$57,652).

Median family income is a measure of the total incomes of a family living in a single household. On average, this number is higher than median household income for two reasons: families often have 2 individuals earning an income, and the category does not include single persons living alone. The median family income in Arenac County is \$49,656. This is more than \$10,000 higher than the median household income. The median family income in the County is less than the State (\$66,653) and Country (\$70,850).

Per capita income is the amount of income all individuals within the jurisdiction, regardless of age or employment, would receive if income was equally divided among all residents. This number is usually the lowest of the three measurements, and is a good indication of the overall wealth of a community. In Arenac County, the per capita income is \$22,622. The State and Country both have higher per capita incomes at \$28,938 and \$31,177, respectively

The top three communities with the highest median household income in Arenac County are Adams Township (\$52,813), Au Gres Township (\$46,964), and Arenac Township (\$44,250). The communities with the highest median family income are Adams Township (\$60,313), Au Gres Township (\$57,778), and Deep River Township (\$56,136).

**Table 4 – Income Trends**



**Table 19a** - Income, Overall

	Median Household Income	Median Family Income	Per Capita Income
<b>Arenac County</b>	\$39,947	\$49,656	\$22,622
<b>Michigan</b>	\$52,668	\$66,653	\$28,938
<b>United States</b>	\$57,652	\$70,850	\$31,177

**Table 19b** - Income, City

	Median Household Income	Median Family Income	Per Capita Income
<b>Au Gres</b>	\$28,947	\$46,528	\$22,679
<b>Standish</b>	\$28,804	\$39,688	\$17,652
<b>Omer</b>	\$32,188	\$37,500	\$16,165

**Table 19c** - Income, Village

	Median Household Income	Median Family Income	Per Capita Income
<b>Twining</b>	\$35,417	\$41,250	\$12,598
<b>Turner</b>	\$24,306	\$26,250	\$11,583
<b>Sterling</b>	\$40,568	\$47,083	\$20,036

**Table 19d** - Income, Township

	Median Household Income	Median Family Income	Per Capita Income
<b>Adams</b>	\$52,813	\$60,313	\$25,334
<b>Arenac</b>	\$44,250	\$52,019	\$22,887
<b>Au Gres</b>	\$46,964	\$57,778	\$25,676
<b>Clayton</b>	\$40,789	\$45,500	\$18,026
<b>Deep River</b>	\$41,464	\$56,136	\$22,032
<b>Lincoln</b>	\$43,750	\$50,625	\$23,293
<b>Mason</b>	\$38,344	\$38,750	\$17,802
<b>Moffatt</b>	\$41,429	\$47,083	\$24,250
<b>Sims</b>	\$44,891	\$53,672	\$28,440
<b>Standish</b>	\$41,544	\$53,636	\$25,060
<b>Turner</b>	\$44,688	\$49,750	\$21,249
<b>Whitney</b>	\$41,375	\$50,625	\$25,898

**Individuals with Income Assistance**

In addition to the previous income measurements, another measure of income is to analyze residents who are collecting social security or on government assistance programs. These numbers represent segments of the population that are older or do not have a large household income, which could highlight trends such as willingness to pay for certain services, like road millages or parks and recreation.

Overall, Arenac County has a higher percentage of residents who need income assistance as compared to the State and Country. Forty-six percent of the population has a social security income, as compared to 34% at the State level, and 30% across the Country. This number is representative of the population within a jurisdiction that falls into the following categories:

- Withdrawing from a personal retirement plan
- Withdrawing from a pension from an employer
- Based on marital history
- Based on health status
- Based on work, adult, and child disabilities

It is a good indicator for the community because people living on a fixed income have very different priorities and needs than those that are working. This number can be attributed to the larger elderly/retiree population Arenac County.

**Table 20** – Income Assistance, County

	Arenac County	Michigan	United States
<b>With Social Security Income</b>	46.9%	34.3%	34.3%
<b>With Retirement Income</b>	30.5%	22.5%	22.5%
<b>With Supplemental Social Security Income</b>	8.2%	6.3%	6.3%
<b>With Cash Public Assistance Income</b>	3.7%	2.8%	2.8%
<b>With Food Stamps/SNAP Benefits</b>	19.4%	14.9%	14.9%

**Poverty**

Poverty is the final factor used in determining the economic health of a community. The U.S. Census measures poverty by comparing the total income of a person’s family with the threshold appropriate for the family size and characteristics. There are a total of 48 thresholds which determine the level of an individual’s poverty. According to the 2017 ACS data, 18.5% of individuals in Arenac County live below the poverty line. The County and State have poverty levels which are smaller than that of the County, at 15.6% and 14.6% respectively. Income levels are generally related to a community’s educational attainment level. Recall from earlier, in Table 17a, Arenac County contained the lowest percentage of citizens who have obtained a bachelor’s degree or higher, and earns the least amount of income (Table 19a). The top three communities with the lowest poverty levels in Arenac County are Adams Township (10%), Au Gres Township (10.7%), and Sims Township (11.7%). The communities with the highest poverty levels are Village of Twining (36%), Village of Turner (32.4%), and The City of Standish (32.7%).

**Table 21a** - Poverty, Overall

	2000	2017
<b>Arenac County</b>	13.9%	18.5%
<b>Michigan</b>	10.5%	15.6%
<b>United States</b>	12.4%	14.6%

**Table 21b** - Poverty, City

	2000	2017
<b>Au Gres</b>	17.5%	21.5%
<b>Standish</b>	19.1%	32.7%
<b>Omer</b>	15.2%	21.7%

**Table 21c** - Poverty, Village

	2000	2017
<b>Twining</b>	25.9%	36.0%
<b>Turner</b>	34.6%	32.4%
<b>Sterling</b>	9.8%	20.7%

**Table 21d** - Poverty, Township

	2000	2017
<b>Adams</b>	15.4%	10.0%
<b>Arenac</b>	12.4%	16.6%
<b>Au Gres</b>	9.4%	10.7%
<b>Clayton</b>	14.7%	16.2%
<b>Deep River</b>	12.1%	16.1%
<b>Lincoln</b>	19.7%	31.8%
<b>Mason</b>	17.0%	24.7%
<b>Moffatt</b>	9.5%	15.9%
<b>Sims</b>	9.6%	11.7%
<b>Standish</b>	11.5%	14.1%
<b>Turner</b>	21.1%	18.6%
<b>Whitney</b>	10.9%	12.8%

### Employment

Labor force characteristics depicts how people report their current work status, as well as their intended work status. Labor force characteristics also contribute to land use decisions. The greater percentage of the population working, the more need for connectivity in the road system, and alternative housing types for those who do not want traditional home ownership responsibilities. It is important to note that labor force and income do not always vary directly and the percentage of unemployed does not necessarily indicate a lower income community.

The population of the Arenac County labor force that is over 16 years of age is made up of 5,842 of the County population, the remaining individuals who are not in the labor force. This is another indication of the high proportion of senior citizen and retirees in Arenac County.

Employment by industry measures the type of industry present in a community and the people who travel to a specific destination, such as a large industrial site, or who do not travel at all, such as farmers. From a land planning standpoint, these figures show trends in housing and traffic needs over time. Table 22 indicates the employment by industry for Arenac County in 2000 and 2017. The top three employment industries in the

County are educational services, and health care and social assistance (23.4%), manufacturing (16.5%), and retail trade (12.9%). These were also the top three industries in 2000.

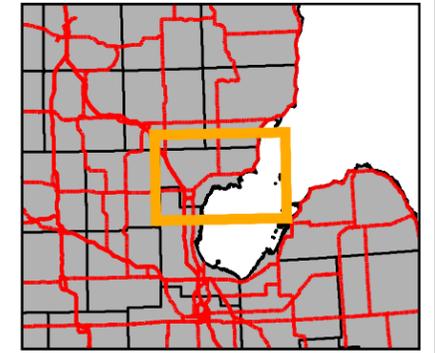
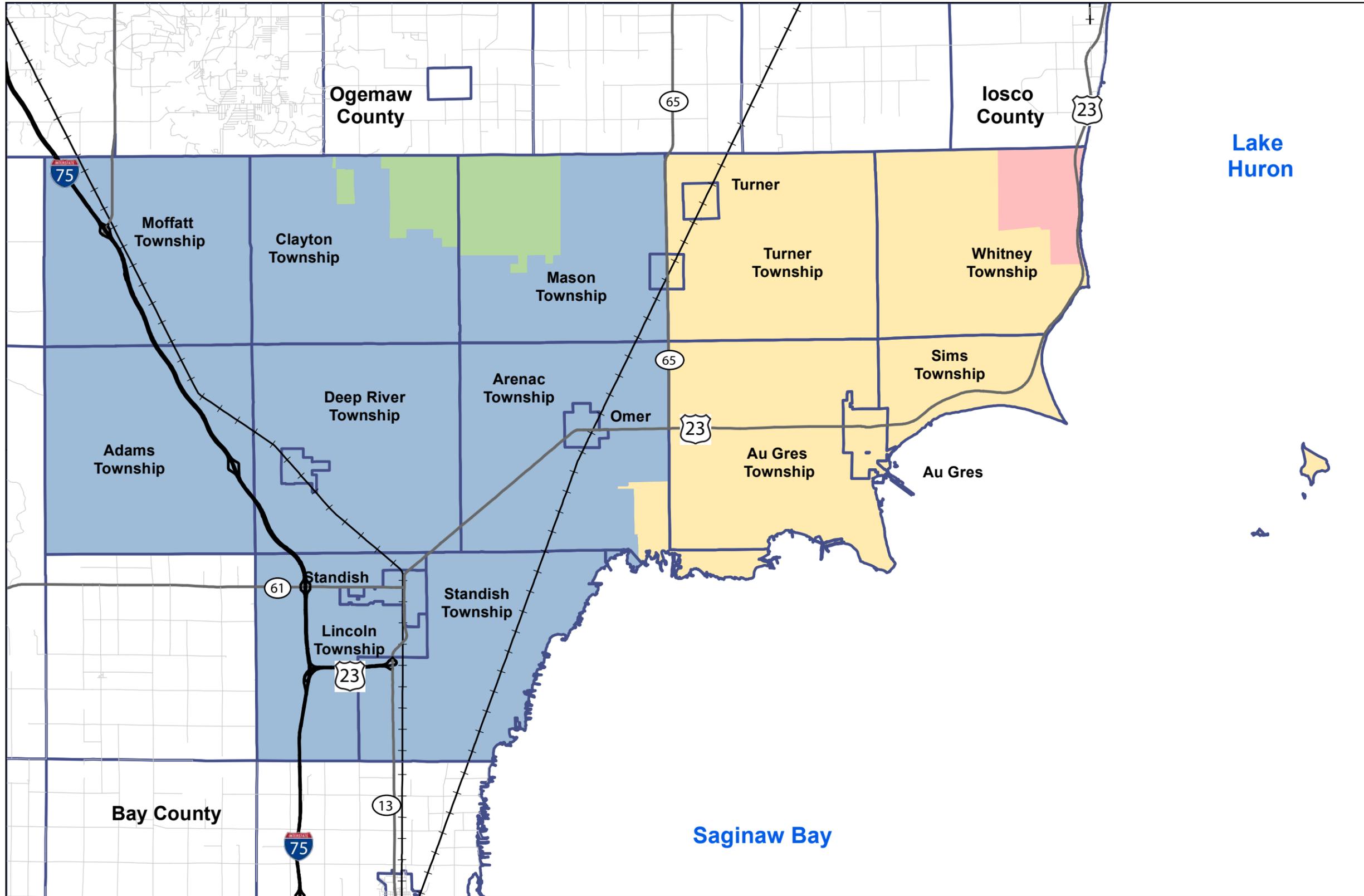
**Table 22** - Income, Overall

	2000		2017	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining</b>	245	3.7%	198	3.4%
<b>Construction</b>	520	7.9%	344	5.9%
<b>Manufacturing</b>	1,304	19.8%	966	16.5%
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>	172	2.6%	123	2.1%
<b>Retail Trade</b>	908	13.8%	753	12.9%
<b>Transportation and warehousing, and utilities</b>	304	4.6%	336	5.8%
<b>Information</b>	93	1.4%	48	0.8%
<b>Finance and insurance, and real estate</b>	258	3.9%	216	3.7%
<b>Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services</b>	258	3.9%	337	5.8%
<b>Educational services, and health care and social assistance</b>	1,288	19.5%	1,367	23.4%
<b>Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services</b>	603	9.1%	643	11.0%
<b>Other services, except public administration</b>	356	5.4%	278	4.8%
<b>Public Administration</b>	284	4.3%	233	4.0%

According to the Arenac County Economic Development Corporation, the following lists represents the major employers in Arenac County.

- ATD Engineering & Machine
- The Andersons
- Bay City Shovels
- Bessinger Pickle Co. Inc
- Bopp-Busch Manuf. Co.
- Crew Products Co.
- Globe Fire Sprinkler Corp.
- Magline
- Maple Ridge Hardwoods
- Modern Craft Winery
- Saganing Eagles Landing and Casino
- Standish Milling Company
- Vantage Plastics

# MAP 3 - SCHOOL DISTRICT ARENAC COUNTY, MICHIGAN



AREA MAP  
NOT TO SCALE



### LEGEND

- Au Gres-Sims School District
- Standish-Sterling Community Schools
- Tawas Area Schools
- Whittemore-Prescott Area Schools

Source:  
Michigan Geographic Data Library

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Date December 2020

# Learning About Arenac County

## Natural Features Inventory

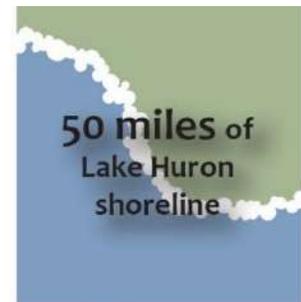
Arenac County is a rural forested area bordering Lake Huron and the Saginaw Bay. The county is part of the northern Michigan recreational area, with resort development along Lake Huron. Natural assets such as the Gladwin State Forest, the Au Gres and Rifle Rivers and the Lake Huron shoreline, make it attractive for tourism. Agriculture is an important segment of the economy and accounts for 45% of land use. Arenac County is part of the six-county, state designated Huron Shores Heritage Route, one of 14 in the state.

The county is a popular recreation area, with plenty of canoeing, kayaking, hunting and fishing opportunities. The Au Gres and Rifle Rivers continue to be favorite canoeing, kayaking and fishing spots. Favorite fish include trout, perch, walleye and smelt. Suckers are also a popular favorite, celebrated annually with the City of Omer's Sucker Festival. Local efforts are underway to restore the reputation of the Pine River as an excellent perch fishing river. The MDNR Lake Huron Boat Launch and Breakwall located at the mouth of the Au Gres is also the only designated harbor of refuge for boaters between Bay City to the south and East Tawas to the north. The City of Au Gres has a marina connected to Lake Huron with an inland channel to the city.

The County draws many nature and hunting enthusiasts. Located just to the west of Au Gres is the Gladwin State Forest which provides good small game hunting. There is also the Wigwam Bay State Wildlife Area located about halfway between the cities of Standish and Au Gres, near the Saginaw Bay. Birders and other wildlife enthusiasts flock to Charity Island located in the Bay, just off Whitney Township. Almost 80% of this 222 acre island and its three miles of shoreline are owned by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which brought the island into the national protected area called the Michigan Islands National Wildlife Refuge.

With all of the natural resources available to both residents and visitors, the natural environment plays a significant role in the development of Arenac County. The County provides unique features offering rolling terrain, access to the Lake Huron, woodlands and state land, and wide open agricultural spaces. It is this combination of options that provide the specific character that residents who choose to live here seek. It is important for a community to analyze the land before beginning development, because the natural environment can significantly impact development, or vice versa.

Arenac County contains ample natural amenities. These resources provide residents a clean water supply, and a strong base for tourism and agriculture. The County wishes to preserve natural features while utilizing them for recreation and relaxation. This section analyzes the natural features located throughout the County, and the maps referenced throughout the text can be found at the end of this chapter.



## TOPOGRAPHY

The topography of Arenac County is generally flat to gently rolling, which is illustrated on Map 4. The lower elevations are located along the shoreline, and as the land continues west toward the interior of the state the elevation increases with the highest elevations in Clayton and Adams Townships. The only variations to this gradual elevation change are located along the rivers which traverse the County. The elevation of the riverbeds is lower than the surrounding land. In general, these gradual changes are not an impediment to development in the County, as there are no steep climbs or cliff faces. However, the riverbanks may pose certain challenges that should be considered when siting any future construction. As each area of the County presents specific conditions in regards to topography, each site will have specific challenges for property owners to work around. The County should encourage the local communities to use best practices when siting structures along sensitive natural areas.



## SOILS AND PRIME FARMLAND

Map 5 depicts certain soil types in Arenac County. The soils are defined by various characteristics in relation to their qualities best suited for farming. It is important to categorize and inventory the land that is best suited to farming because agriculture is such an important part of the Arenac County economy and way of life. If the County would like to protect high-quality land in the future, this is land that should be prioritized for agriculture uses.

According to the National Resources Conservation Service, Prime Farmland is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops, and is also available for these uses. These soils are of the highest quality and can economically produce sustained high yields of crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods. Very specific technical criteria were established by Congress to identify prime farmland soils. In general, the criteria reflects adequate natural moisture content; specific soil temperature range; pH between 4.5 and 8.4 in the rooting zone; low susceptibility to flooding; low risk to wind and water erosion; minimum permeability rates; and low rock fragment content. Therefore, the soil indicated as prime farmland, if drained, does not naturally fit under the specified criteria, but would if it were cultivated using modern agricultural practices. Map 5 illustrates that there are pockets of prime farmland located throughout the County and larger sections of prime farmland, if drained. The largest portions of prime farmland are located in Clayton and Lincoln Townships with other significant amounts also found in Mason, Adams, Moffatt and Deep River Townships. Surrounding the prime farmland is the prime farmland, if drained land. Prime farmland, if drained, can also be found in Turner, Whitney, Sims, Au Gres, and Standish Townships. Agriculture is large part of Arenac County's economy and way of life, and is important to consider in any master planning effort.

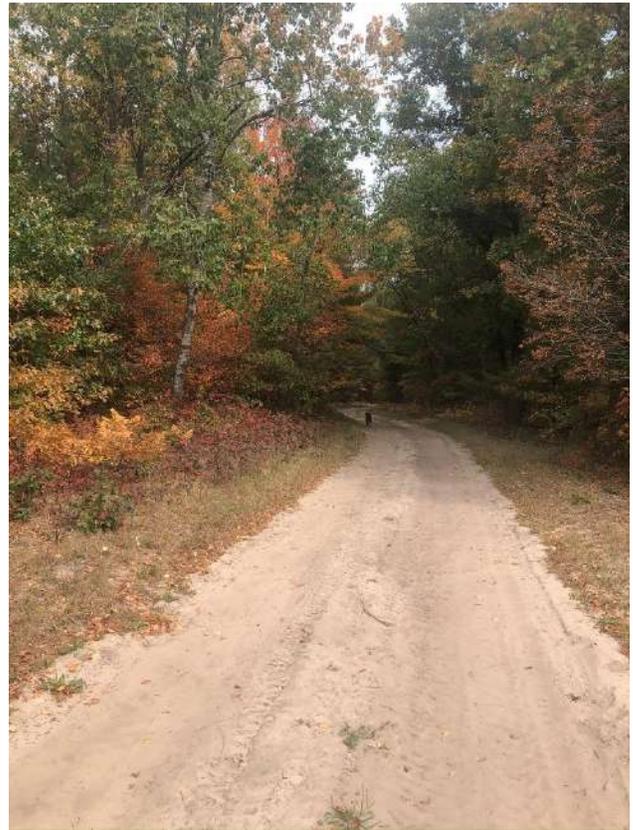
## WOODLANDS

Woodlands information for Arenac County was derived from the Michigan Geographic Data Library (MiGDL). The dataset divides forested areas in the County into three categories: deciduous forest, evergreen forest, and mixed forest. Deciduous forests are characterized by trees that shed foliage according to the season such as maples, ash, elms, oaks, and others. Evergreen forests consist of conifers or evergreen trees, and mixed forests are with both deciduous species and evergreen species. The map also shows the location of open grasslands in the County.

Arenac County is fortunate in that a large percentage of the land in the County is wooded and natural. This land is perfect for recreation opportunities, provides great habitat for wildlife, and is a good resource for the local economy. The recreation opportunities are a great draw for the tourism industry and the wildlife habitat makes the County an ideal place for hunters.

Map 6 illustrates the wooded land in Arenac County. Each Township in the County has a significant portion of wooded land. The only large areas that are not wooded are currently used for agricultural purposes. Each Township has some agricultural land but the Township with the least amount and the most wooded land are generally found on the western end of the County, away from the lakeshore. Moffatt, Adams, Clayton, Deep River, Mason, and Arenac Townships are examples of Townships with the most wooded land.

This land is primarily private, however, the State owns large tracts of public land in several Townships throughout the County. Map 7 depicts the state owned land which is located in Moffatt, Adams, Clayton, Deep River, Mason, Arenac, Whitney, Au Gres, and Standish Townships. Most of this land is just state owned property that is not managed and only accessible via off-road trails. However, there are three DNR managed access points in the County. The first is the Wigwam Bay State Wildlife Area which is a 4,300 acre property located in Arenac and Standish Townships. The DNR has designated this land for hunting and also uses it as a waterfowl breeding area. The other two sites are both boat launches located in Whitney and Au Gres Township. Overall, the DNR owns more than 8,000 acres in the County. This is all public land open for recreation. In addition to the State Land, the US Fish and Wildlife Service owns the majority of Charity Island. The island is located off the coast of Sims Township and is approximately 265 acres. It is undeveloped except for the lighthouse on the northernmost point of the island. There is also a marina on the northern shore.



## WETLANDS AND WATERWAYS

Wetlands areas are lands defined by the existence of water, either on or near the surface, during a portion of the year. In addition to standing water, other characteristics of a wetland include poorly drained soils and water-loving vegetation, which may also be physical indicators of wetlands. These ecosystems are a sensitive and vital part of the natural water cycle, and when they are negatively affected, without proper mitigation,

many problems such as standing water, water filtration, aquifer recharge, and flooding will occur in unexpected areas.

Development concerning wetlands is regulated by the State of Michigan. At the heart of Michigan's wetland regulatory program is Part 303, Wetland Protection, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (Act 451 of 1994), formerly referred to as the Goemaere-Anderson Wetlands Protection Act, P.A. 203 of 1979. The Michigan Department of Energy, Great Lakes, and Environment (DEGLE) administers the permit program. This legislation was passed to protect wetlands by restricting their use to certain activities only after permitted approval by the State of Michigan. Permits are approved only upon a review of an environmental assessment filed by the petitioner that shows the avoidance of wetland resources to the greatest extent possible and minimization of unavoidable wetland impacts.

Under the Act, the following wetlands are protected:

- Wetlands contiguous to an inland land, pond, river, stream, or similar water course. Wetlands adjacent to the lakes, rivers, creeks, and drains in Arenac County would fall in this category.
- Wetlands five acres in size, or larger, in counties that contain a population of at least 100,000 people. This category does not apply to Arenac County.

The wetland information on Map 8 was derived from MiGDL and the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI). Arenac County has large tracts of wetlands, due in part to the low elevation and proximity to Lake Huron and also to the network of rivers and streams that traverse the County. Each Township in the County has wetlands, there are significantly more wetlands along the shoreline and the western border of the County than through the interior of the County. Unfortunately, the lakeshore is primarily private property, which means there is little public access for swimming or beaches.

One of the most important natural features of Arenac County is the 50 miles of shoreline along Lake Huron. The coastline is a one of Arenac County's defining features and provides access to both Lake Huron and the Saginaw Bay. The County coastline is mostly wooded and developed with single family homes. These homes often have beach access and docks. There are a few parks along the shoreline for public access and two public boat launches. The boat launches provide access to some of the best fishing the State can offer anglers. In the past few years, the water level in the Great Lakes has been rising. In the summer of 2019, the Great Lakes broke all high water records and the high water has drastic effects for all the communities along the Great Lakes shoreline. This included Arenac County, where many lakefront property owners have lost all the beach in front of their house and many have installed sea walls to protect their homes. It also effects public beaches where there is less or no access to the water. Docks at boat launches and marinas have also become submerged. This has a negative effect on property values and tourism in the County and will be a struggle to contend with in the upcoming years.



Arenac County has three major rivers that flow through the County to Lake Huron. The Pine River, Rifle River, and Au Gres River. These rivers are beautiful natural resources home to some of the best fishing on the east side of the state. The three rivers generally run through wooded/undeveloped land until they reach Lake Huron. However, the Rifle River passes through Omer and the Au Gres River flows through the City of Au Gres. In Au Gres the riverfront is dotted with homes and businesses or other recreational uses. At the mouth of the river is a DNR boat launch. In Omer, the Rifle River flows through the City with homes and recreational businesses along the riverfront. In addition to these three rivers, there are many streams in the County and a network of County drains. In the summer months, these rivers are not just places for good fishing, they have also become popular locations for tubing, kayaking, and canoeing. There are numerous liveries located along the Rifle River that bring in thousands of people each summer weekend to enjoy the natural beauty of the river. In addition to the liveries, there are numerous campgrounds for both short and long-term visitors.

The Arenac County Drain Commission is responsible for all the County drains in the County. The Drain Commission's responsibility includes all established drains for storm water runoff, drainage and water quality according to the Michigan Drain Code, Act 40 of 1956, as amended. The Drain Commissioner is responsible for legal proceedings and hearings for open or closed channels, dams, dikes, levies, water and sewer projects, lake level control structures, pumping stations, and for the implementation of the Soil Erosion and Inland Lakes and Streams Acts. The Drain Commissioner requires that the proper size culverts are placed within the drain and that no obstructions will impede the flow of the channel. County drainage channels are an integral part of successful drainage techniques and crucial to the adequate flow of water through the County.

## FLOODPLAINS

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), defines floodplain areas based on hydrological surveys, topographical surveys, soil studies, and land cover characteristics. The result of this research is a statistical model that indicates an area vulnerable to the "100-year flood" and the "500-year-flood". The 100-year-flood area is an elevation that has a 1% chance of being equaled or exceeded each year. This area has a 1% annual chance of flooding. The 100-year flood, which is the standard used by most federal and state agencies, is also used by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) as the standard for floodplain management and determination of need for flood insurance. Structures located in the flood hazard area have a 26% chance of suffering flood damage during the term of a 30-year mortgage. This means a home in the mapped flood hazard area is five times more likely to be damaged by flood than to have a major fire.

The area that encompasses the 500-year-flood is an area with a 0.2% (or 1 in 500 chance) annual chance of flooding. The 500-year floodplain is a zone used to designate base floodplain of lesser hazards, such as areas protect by levees from the 100-year flood, or shallow flooding areas.

The flooding of land adjoining the normal course of a stream or river is a natural occurrence. Flooding events are often swift and very damaging. Floods can damage or destroy public and private property, disable utilities, make roads and bridges impassable, destroy crops and agricultural lands, cause disruption to emergency services, and result in fatalities. People may be stranded in their homes for several days without power or heat, or they may be unable to reach their homes at all.

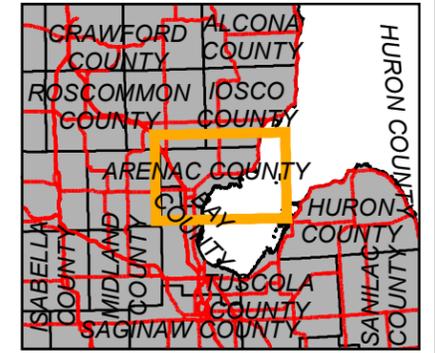
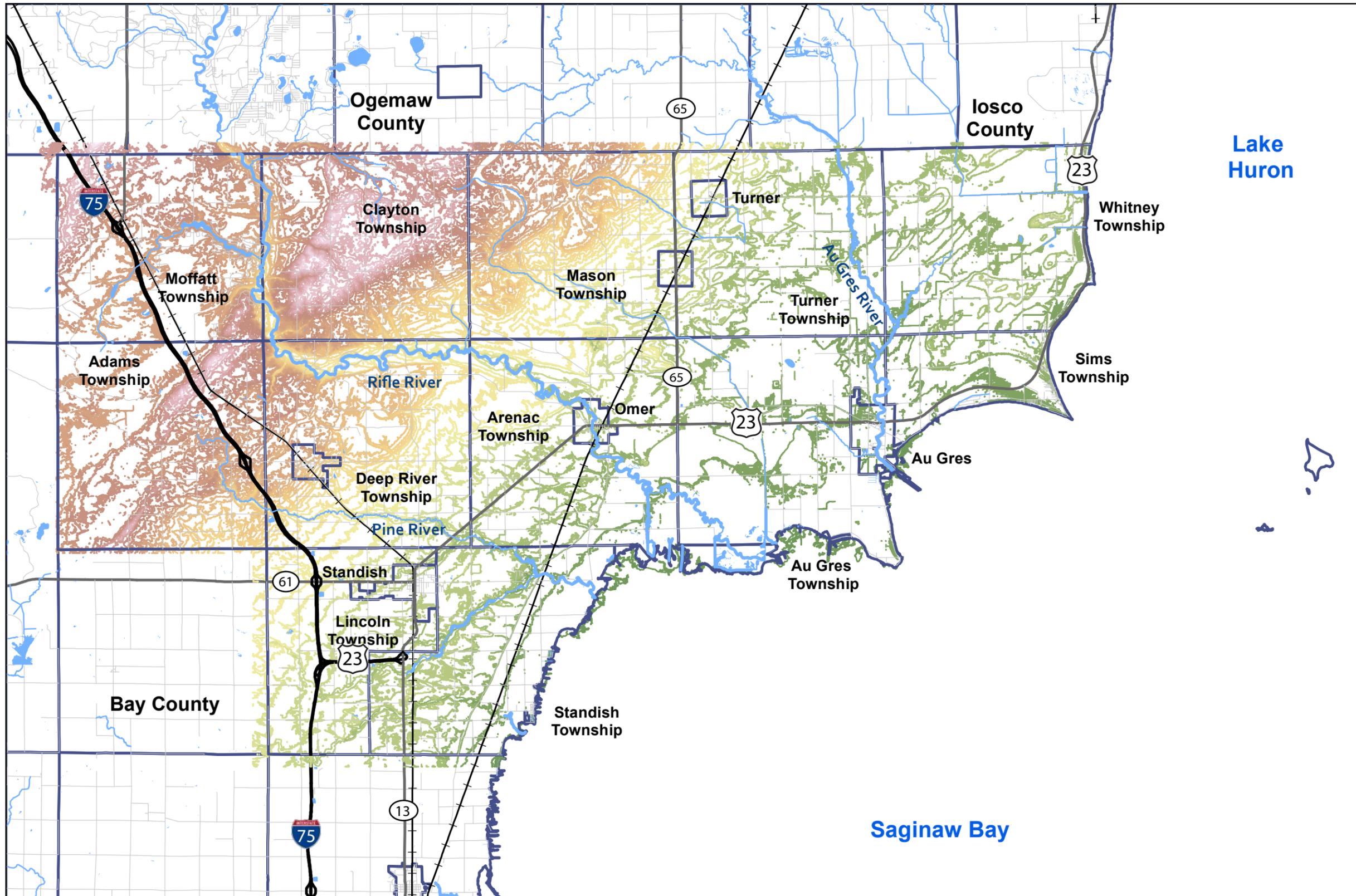
Development around natural water courses has increased the potential for serious flooding. Rainfall that would naturally soak into the ground or take several days to reach a river or stream, now quickly runs off streets, parking lots, rooftops, and through man-made channels or pipes. Development that encroaches on the floodplain impedes the carrying capacity of the water drainage basin and exacerbates flooding. If floodplain areas are left in their natural state, damage to persons or property could be more easily avoided.



There are many benefits of protecting land in the floodplain from development. If left in a natural state the land in the floodplain can provide flood protection for other structures, it improves water quality because the water is naturally filtered, it recharges aquifers, can provide high quality recreational opportunities, and results in reduced flood insurance and disaster recovery costs. Flood prone areas are found throughout the State, as every lake, river, stream and County drain has a floodplain. Therefore, the type of development that exists within the floodplain will determine whether or not flooding will cause damage.

The floodplain in Arenac County is generally concentrated around the Lake Huron shoreline and on the land that surrounds the three rivers in the County, see Map 9. There is a larger floodplain in Au Gres Township and Standish Township due to the low-lying land along the lakeshore. There is also a large area of floodplain in Turner, Sims, and Whitney Townships.

# MAP 4 - TOPOGRAPHY ARENAC COUNTY, MICHIGAN



AREA MAP  
NOT TO SCALE



### LEGEND

#### Elevation

580	750
590	760
600	770
610	780
620	790
630	800
640	810
650	820
660	830
670	840
680	850
690	860
700	870
710	
720	
730	
740	

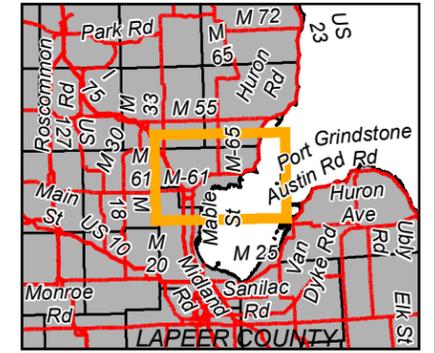
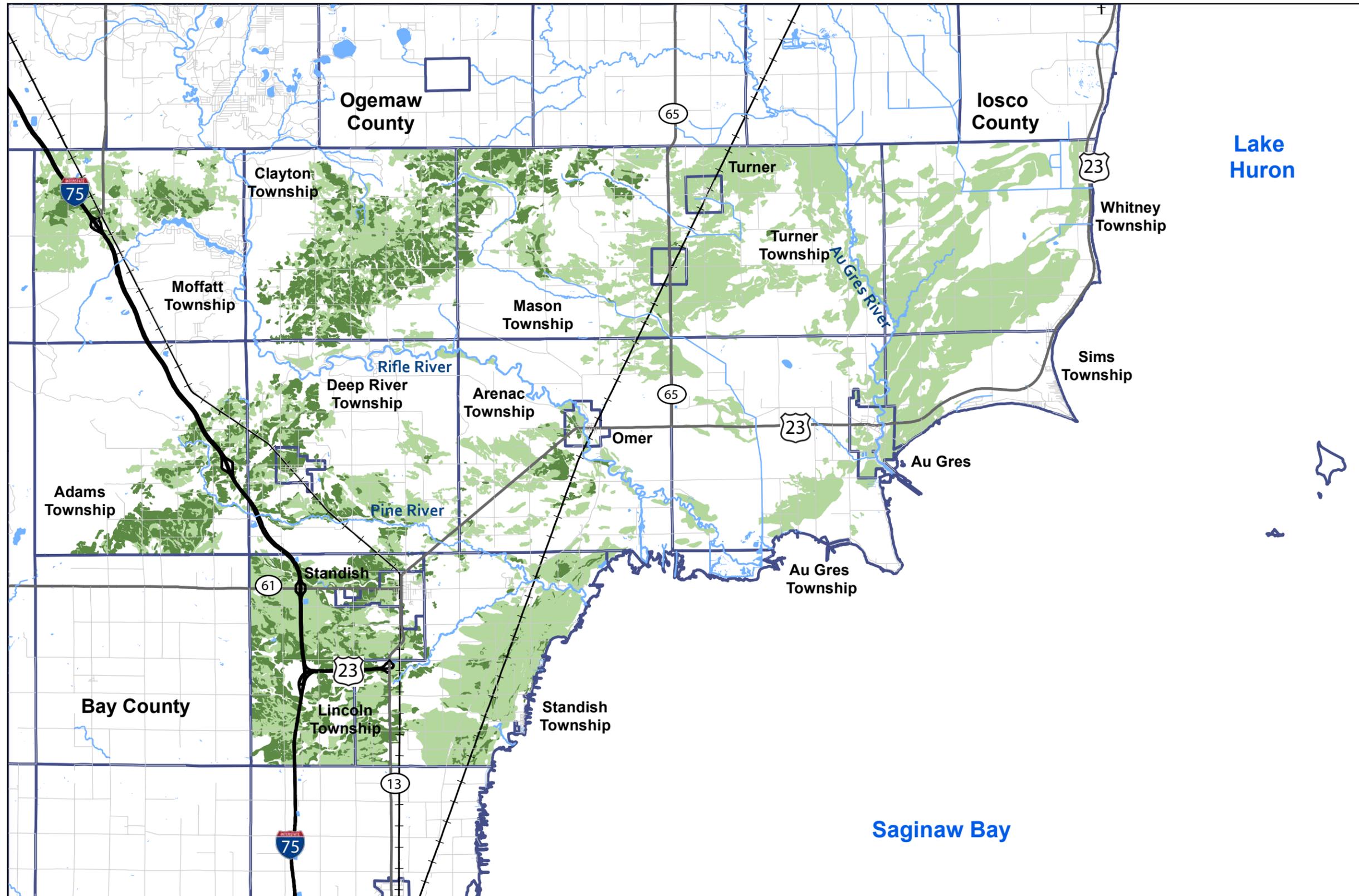
Source:  
Michigan Geographic Data Library

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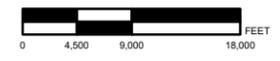
Date October 2019

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# MAP 5 - PRIME FARMLAND ARENAC COUNTY, MICHIGAN



AREA MAP  
NOT TO SCALE



### LEGEND

-  Water Features
-  Prime farmland
-  Prime farmland, if drained

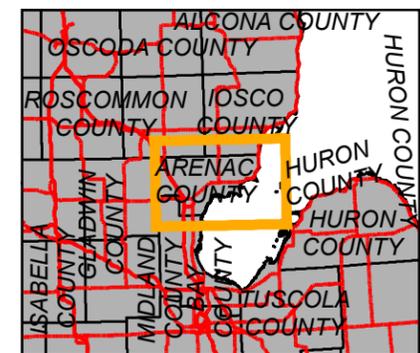
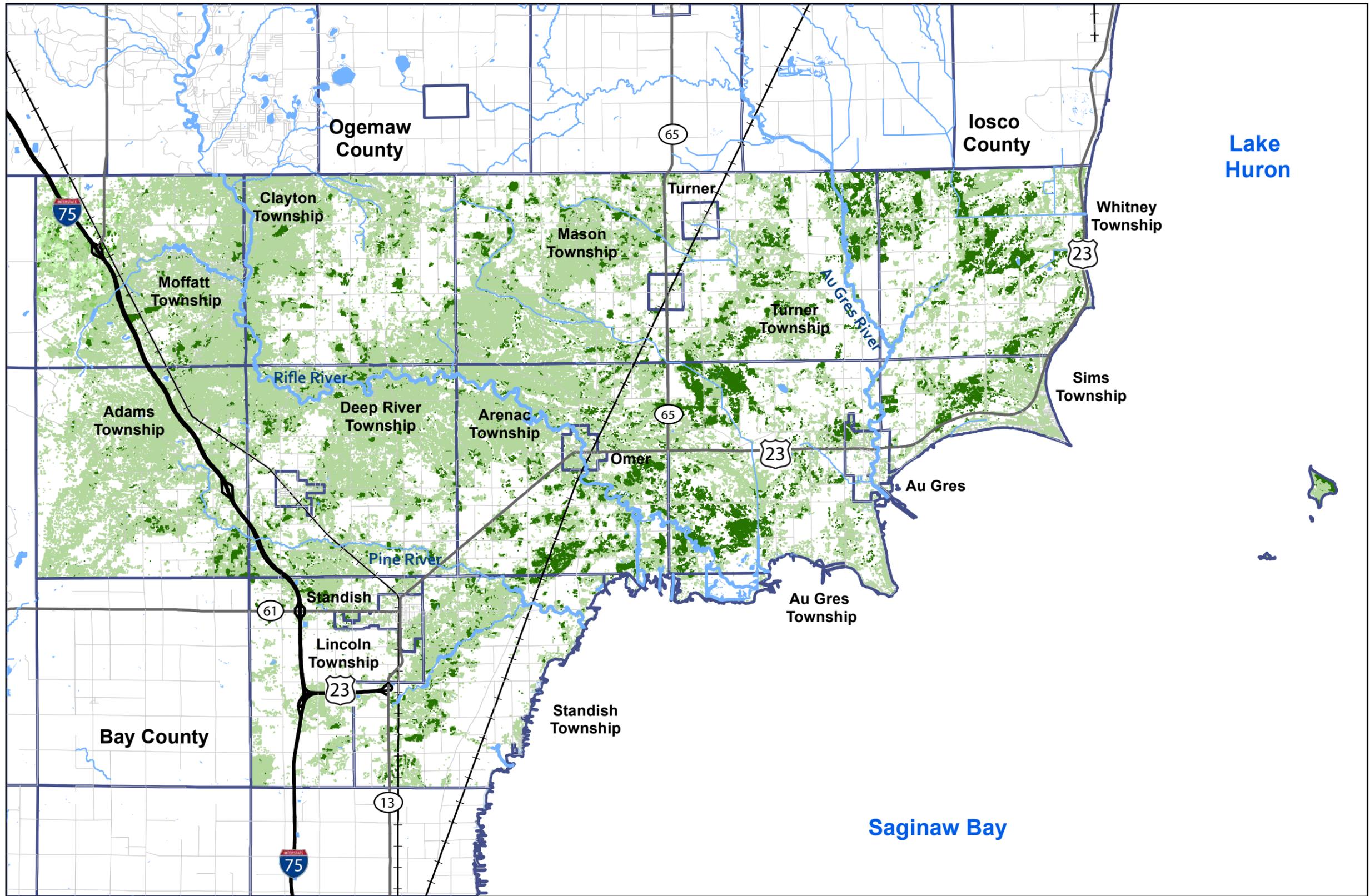
Source:  
Natural Resources  
Conservation Service

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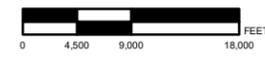
Date September 2020

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# MAP 6 - WOODED LAND ARENAC COUNTY, MICHIGAN



AREA MAP  
NOT TO SCALE



**LEGEND**

- Deciduous Forest
- Evergreen Forest
- Mixed Forest
- Grasslands
- Waterways

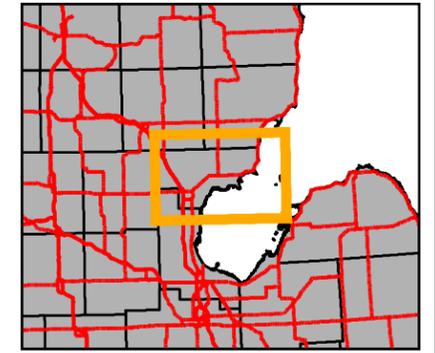
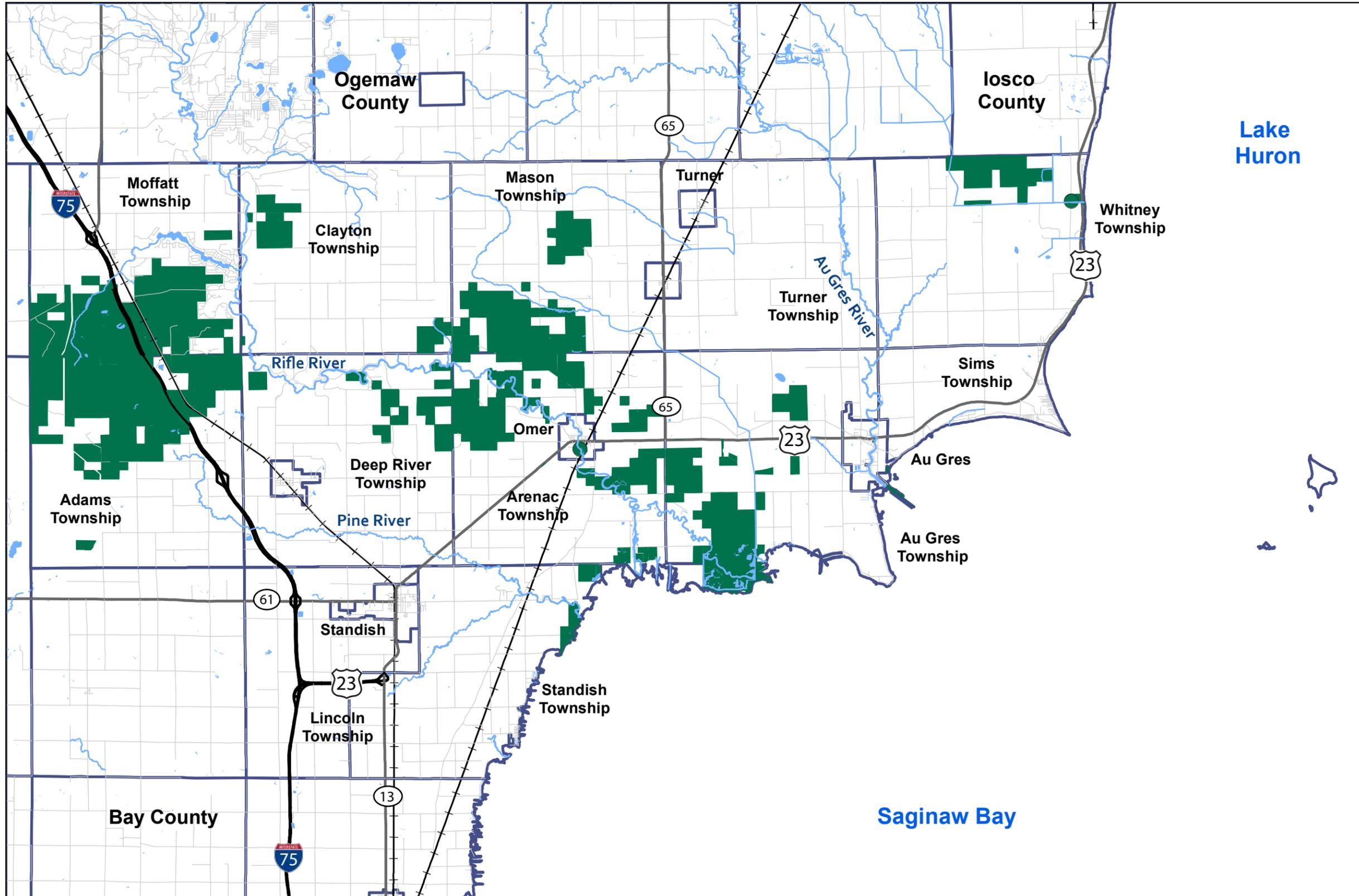
Source:  
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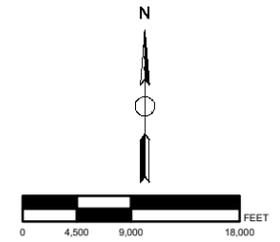
Date December 2019

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# MAP 7 - STATE LAND ARENAC COUNTY, MICHIGAN



AREA MAP  
NOT TO SCALE



LEGEND

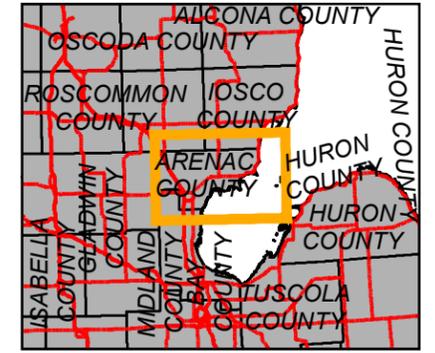
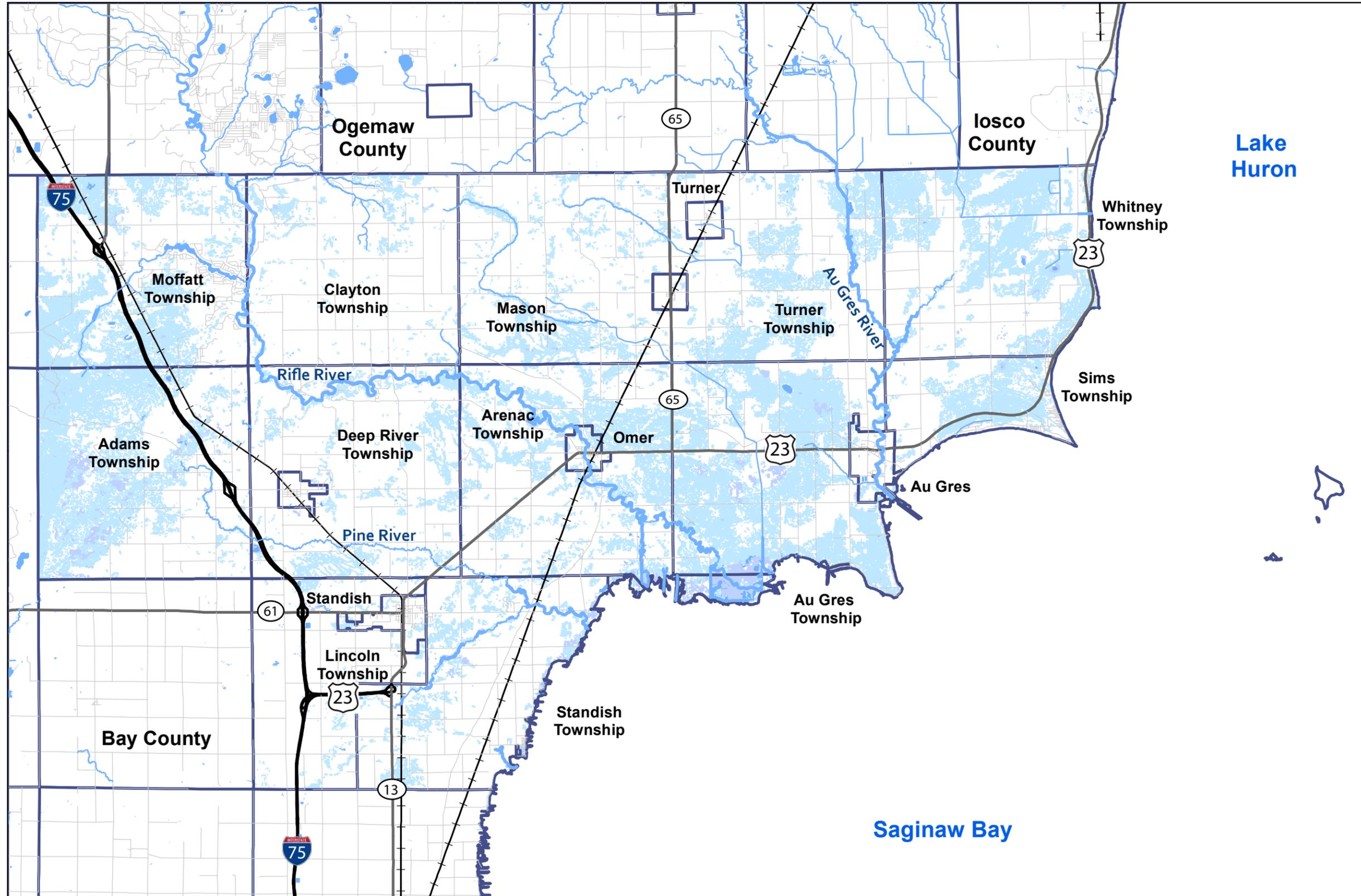
- State Owned Recreation Areas

Source:  
Michigan Geographic Data Library

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Date September 2020

# MAP 8 - WETLAND AND WATERWAYS ARENAC COUNTY, MICHIGAN



AREA MAP  
NOT TO SCALE



### LEGEND

- Woody Wetlands
- Emergent Herbaceous Wetlands
- Waterways

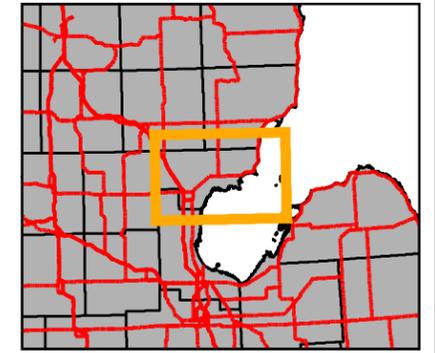
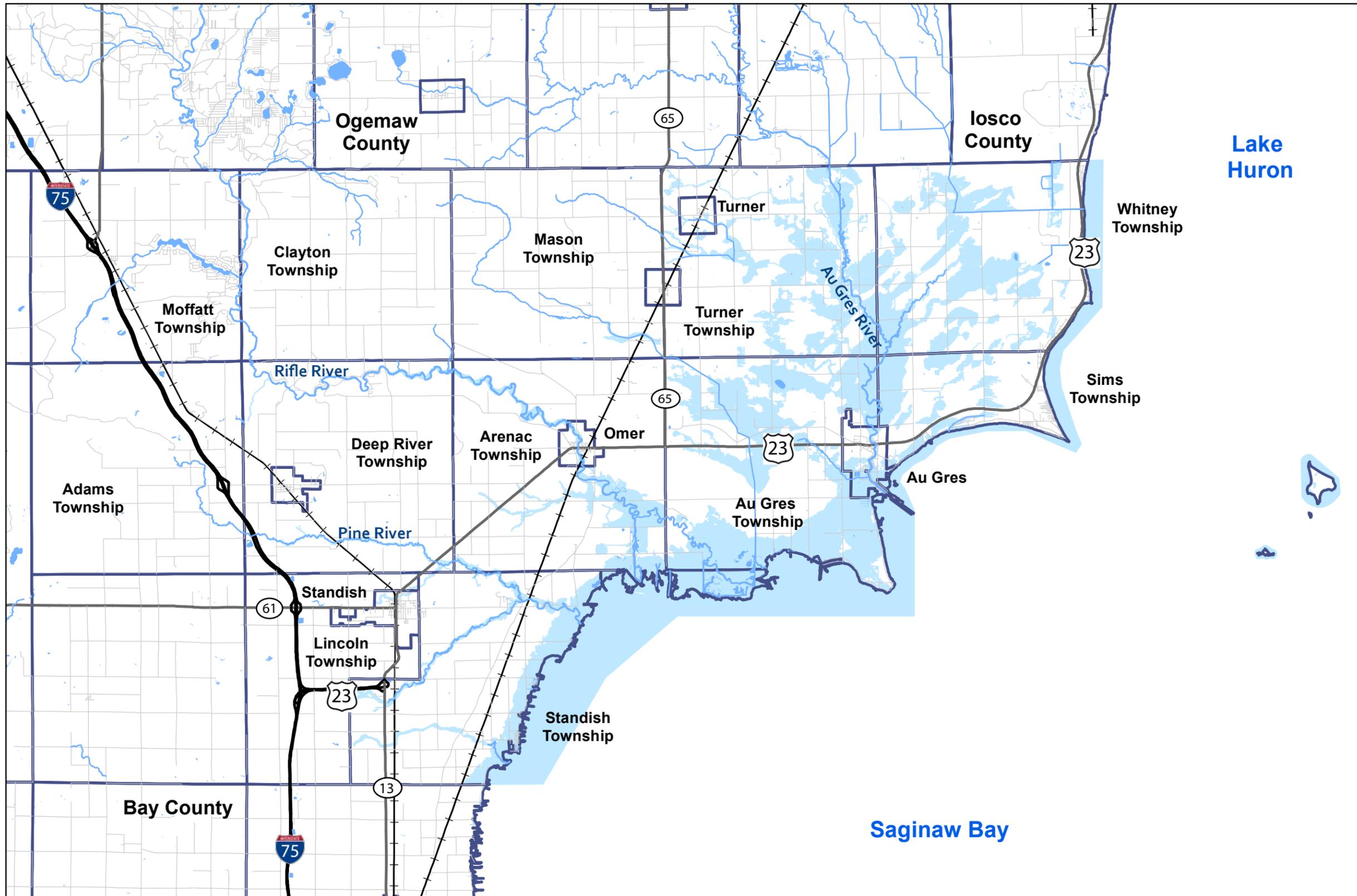
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# MAP 9 - FEMA FLOODPLAIN ARENAC COUNTY, MICHIGAN



AREA MAP  
NOT TO SCALE



### LEGEND

- Natural Watercourses
- 100-Year Floodplain

Source:  
Michigan Geographic Data Library

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# Learning About Arenac County

## Community Facilities

Every community is responsible for providing basic services to the residents such as water, wastewater, police, fire, transportation, and recreational facilities. These public facilities are the foundation of a safe and healthy home for residents and businesses alike. The location of these services, particularly the water and wastewater options, are important for growth because often new business will require these services and it will be difficult for them to locate in a place where they are not available. In the future, the permanent residents, seasonal residents, tourists and any new business will need adequate facilities for future growth and without these facilities it will be difficult for the County to attract new opportunities. In addition to public utilities, the County is responsible for providing a safe, efficient, and well maintained transportation network including rail, highways, and harbors all of which are important for new business and are important economic development considerations.

## PUBLIC SERVICES

### Water and Wastewater

The Cities of Au Gres and Standish have both city sewer and water systems. City water is also available to the City of Omer and the shoreline areas of Sims and Whitney Townships and a small area of Standish Township. The villages of Sterling and Twining have municipal sewage systems. The Whites Beach area in Standish Township is currently pursuing municipal water and sanitary sewer services with an agreement with the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe. Other areas within Arenac County have private water wells and septic systems. The county has no remaining permitted solid waste disposal capabilities.

Arenac County is also home to the Saginaw Midland Municipal Water Supply Corporation. This organization was created in 1946 and provides fresh water to the cities of Saginaw and Midland. The raw water is pulled from Lake Huron at Whitestone Point and pumped 65 miles south to Midland and Saginaw via transmission lines that pass through Arenac, Bay, Midland, and Saginaw Counties. There are two water intakes, one a mile offshore and a second two miles offshore, which can provide a maximum of 230 million gallons of water per day. The pumping station is located in Arenac County. This is critical infrastructure for the entire region.



## Power and Communication

Consumers Energy supplies electric power to customers throughout the County and natural gas to the major population areas. Of the 6,684 occupied homes in the County in 2018, 40.2% are heated with natural gas, 5% with electricity, 32.1% with bottled, tank or LP gas, 1.5% with fuel oil or kerosene, 18.2% with wood, and the remaining 3% with other fuel types including coal, coke, and solar. Telephone service is provided by several companies including Century Telephone Midwest, Inc., AT&T, The Pigeon Telephone Company, and Verizon. Internet is provided by AT&T Internet, Spectrum, Excede Satellite Internet, Frontier, and CenturyLink.

## Police and Fire

Police protection for the entire county is provided by the Arenac County Sheriff Department in conjunction with the Saginaw Chippewa Tribal Police Department. The Sheriff Department works with smaller local police forces which serve only a few key communities in the County. The Arenac County Sheriff's Department provides services throughout the County and is also responsible for the County Jail, working with the court systems, the school resource program, a narcotics operation, and land and marine patrol with a dive team. The department operates 24 hours a day and the office is located in Standish at the County building. The County Jail is also located in Standish and has a capacity of 46 beds. In addition to the Sheriff Department, the City of Au Gres and Sims Township have their own police department which patrol their respective communities. The Saginaw Chippewa Tribal Police Department has been deputized by the Arenac County Sheriff's Department and serves both the County and the reservation. The Tribal Police Force has over 25 personnel who are responsible for dispatch, detention cells, and the court facilities.

Fire protection in Arenac County is provided by five different departments. Unlike the police, there is no overarching agency, instead each local unit is responsible for their own fire protection. Small communities often contract with adjacent municipalities to provide services to a coalition of communities. The fire departments include Au-Gres Sims Whitney Department, Moffatt Township Volunteer Fire Department, Standish Fire Authority, Sterling Area Fire Department, Twining-Turner-Mason Department, and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources -Standish Field office. Additionally, the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe has their own fire department to serve the reservation.



## TRANSPORTATION

The transportation network in Arenac County includes roads, railroads, and marinas. It is the responsibility of a community to provide a safe transportation network because this is how residents and visitors move through Arenac County. The systems should be functional, safe, and in good repair. Map 10 is a depiction of the transportation system in the County, showing roads, rail, and marinas.

## Roads

Arenac County is principally accessible from the north and south by I-75, US-23, M-13, and M-65. East/West travel is limited to M-61, a section of US-23, and paved secondary roadways. I-75 traverses Arenac County from its southwest border through the northwest corner toward West Branch. There are four exits. From south to north they are the US-23 connector two miles south of Standish, M-61 two miles west of Standish, the Sterling exit, and the M-33 exit near Alger. Standish has been long known by Michigan travelers as a place to stop for food and gas on their trips to northern Michigan. Any person traveling on I-75 will pass through Arenac County and anyone traveling on US 23 will pass directly through Standish. These are key groups of people the County can capitalize on by drawing in people and becoming a destination instead of a stop-over.

The Arenac County Road Commission is responsible for County Roads, while Cities and Villages are responsible for their local roads. The Road Commission is responsible for construction, maintenance, and improvements. The County Road Commission and individual Townships use road millages for funding improvements to the various local roads within their jurisdictions. According to the MDOT 2016-2020 5-Year Transportation Program, there are several projects planned for Arenac County including bridge repair and restoration and road resurfacing. Arenac County is different than many Michigan communities because it does not have the typical 1-mile square road network. The vast amounts of state land and undeveloped forest are a barrier to connectivity in the County.

Map 10 classifies the roads in Arenac County and annotates the Average Daily Traffic (ADT) Counts on each of the MDOT roads. ADT is a count used to measure the total volume of vehicle traffic on a highway or road for an average day of the year. These numbers are from MDOT. The traffic volumes of the state trunk lines range from 3,000 vehicles to 19,000 vehicles. I-75 sees the most traffic on any given day, with lower traffic counts on the other State roads in the County. However, these figures are average volumes and there are days where the traffic volume could be 20 to 40% more on various sections of roads, particularly on the weekends. These estimates can provide a preliminary indication of how well a roadway is operating.

In addition to serving the vehicle traffic in the County, the Road Commission also has the opportunity to use some of their funding to provide non-motorized transportation options along County roads. The Iron Belle Trail is planned to run through Arenac County and there are other roads in the County that represent good opportunities for trails. For example, old M-76 from Standish to the County line has a large right-of-way that may be ideal for a regional path. The County Road Commission should consult with the Planning Commission and periodically revisit the Master Plan to guide future action items or policy directions regarding any existing problem areas or future improvements.



## Rail

There are two railroad lines in Arenac County both owned by Lake State Railway. The eastern line crosses the Bay county line in Standish Township and passes through Omer, Turner and Twining. Recently, the DNR secured

an easement along the railroad for the Iron Belle Trail. The trail will follow the railroad through Bay County, Standish Township, Arenac Township, and Omer where it will veer east to follow US-23 up through the northern half of the County. The second rail line also crosses the County line in Standish Township but then heads north through Standish, Sterling, and up to the northwest corner of the County. The Standish Industrial Park is located adjacent to this line and the County is working with the railroad to consider the addition of a spur to connect the industrial park.

## Air

The nearest airport supporting general passenger travel is the Midland-Bay City-Saginaw (MBS) International Airport located in Tittabawasee Township (Saginaw County), approximately 40 miles southwest of Standish. MBS has an average of 56 flights per day. The airport is served by two carriers, Delta and United, with 21 aircraft based at the field – 4 single engine, 6 multi-engine, 10 jet engine aircraft, and 1 helicopter.

## Marinas/Water Access Sites

There are several marinas located along the Arenac County shoreline. While these are not deep water ports for shipping, there are several commercial fishing operations located in the County which take advantage of these marinas. In addition to commercial fishing, the various marinas and launches are crucial to the recreation infrastructure in the County. They provide boaters from the area and from other regions a means to visit in Arenac County via the water. They give tourists who would like to stay in the area a place



to dock, and they provide seasonal dockage for full-time or part-time residents. Three of these facilities are publicly owned access points in the County. They are the Singing Bridge Public Launch, the DNR boat launch at the mouth of the Au Gres River, and a launch in the Wigwam Bay Wildlife Area. All the access points along the shoreline provide access to the Saginaw Bay Water Trail system which stretches from Huron County to Iosco County and connects the Tip of the Thumb Heritage Trail to the Huron Shores Coastal Water Trail. The following is list of marinas in the County:

- Au Gres Harbor of Refuge
- Au Gres Riverfront Park Access Site
- Wigwam Bay Wildlife Area
- Wigwam Bay West Boat Launch
- Wigwam Bay East Boat Launch
- DNR Boat Launch
- Singing Bridge Boat Launch
- Northport Marina
- Riverside Park Docks
- Au Gres Yacht Club
- Point Au Gres Marina and Campground

In addition to the marinas along the Lake Huron shoreline, there are also several other water access points that are mostly located along the rivers in the County. These are important recreational access sites for canoers, kayakers, and floaters. The following is a list of water access sites in the County:

- Rifle River Resort and Campground
- White's Canoe Livery and Campground
- Rifle River Campground and Canoe Rental
- River View Campground and Canoe Livery
- Crystal Creek Campground
- Riverbend Campground and Canoe Facility
- Rippling Waters Campground
- Russell Canoes and Campground Rifle River Access Site
- Big Bend Family Campground
- Pine River Access Site
- Au Gres River Access Site
- DNR State Access Ramp

## Public Transit

Arenac County has a county-wide public transportation system, Arenac Transit. This is a dial-a-ride service out of Standish that serves the entire County. The Indian Trails and the North Star Lines have bus service from Arenac County to major population centers and to other destinations within the state and nation.

## RECREATION

Arenac County contains ample natural amenities such as lakes, beaches, rivers, and woodlands. Much of the land along the shoreline is privately-owned wooded areas with numerous beaches. There are also several parks located throughout the County. A more in-depth description can be found in the County's Recreation Plan, but the following is a listing of the recreation opportunities available in the County.

### County Parks

- Oasis Lake Park and Campground
- County Fairgrounds
- Youngman Park
- Point Au Gres Park and Campground



### City and Village Parks

- Omer fishing access point (at Fire Department)
- Omer playground (at City Hall)
- Omer State Road Park
- Au Gres City Park and Campground
- Au Gres KinderPlatz Park
- Au Gres Industrial Park/Disc Golf
- Sterling Playground (at Village Hall)
- Standish City Park
- Arenac Heritage Route Authority Standish Depot
- Standish City Hall Park
- Turner Village Park

## Township Parks

- Au Gres Township Boardwalk
- Point Au Gres Nature Lookout
- Melita Ball Park
- Maple Ridge Ballpark
- Deep River Township Ball Park
- Lincoln Township Ball Fields
- Mason Township Park
- Moffatt Township Ball Park
- Sims and Whitney Township Beach

## State Parks/Land

- Gladwin State Forest
- Au Sable State Forest
- Wigwam Bay Wildlife Area
- DNR Public Access Site – Omer
- Au Gres River Public Access Site
- Rifle River Public Access Site
- Pine River Public Access Site

## Public Boat Launches

- Singing Bridge Boat Launch
- Wigwam Bay Wildlife Area
- DNR Boat Launch – Au Gres River

## Campgrounds

- Big Bend Campground Inc
- Riverbend Campground and Canoe Rental
- The Whispering Pines Campground
- Russell Canoes and Campground
- Point Au Gres Marina and Campground
- Sleepy Oaks RV Campground
- Riverview Campground and Canoe Livery
- Outdoor Adventure
- Crystal Creek Campground
- White's Canoe Livery
- Rifle River Canoe Rental
- Northport Campground Association
- Brown's Landing RV Park

## Other Private Recreation Options

- Singing Bridge Golf Course
- Huron Breeze Golf Course
- Pine River Golf Club
- Arenac County Sportsman's Club

## OTHER RESOURCES

### Community Center

The Standish Elementary School, located at 583 East Cedar Street in Standish, is owned by the Standish-Sterling Community School District. The Elementary School was closed and is now used as a Community Center. According to the Community Center website, the purpose of the Community Center is to provide a safe and nurturing atmosphere for children during the summer months and after school. The Center works with the local school districts, 4-H at Michigan State University Extension, and other local partnerships. The facility features a



theater, computer lab, game room, arts and crafts rooms, toy room, open space to play, reading stations, a large gymnasium, a meeting and event room, 3 soccer fields, 2 playgrounds, basketball hoops, and a full professional kitchen. In addition to these amenities for the children, the Community Center is also available to rent for outside groups.

## Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe

The Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe is an important presence in Arenac County. In recent years, the Tribe has become an essential partner for all the communities of Arenac County and their facilities are a center point of activity in the County. The Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe is primarily located in Standish Township. The majority of their facilities in Arenac County are concentrated in the southern half of the Township. In addition to these facilities, the Tribe also owns various pieces of land throughout the County. The Tribe is its own governmental unit granted the powers of self-government, the right to regulate property, the right to maintain law and order, and the right to regulate commerce. This creates a unique environment in Arenac County, where the Tribe is responsible for all activities on their own land, and therefore, the two governments –the Tribe and Arenac County – become partners. The Tribal government does not only create the laws on the reservation, they are also the heart of the Tribal community. Members have access to senior care, education, recreation, employment, housing, a medical clinic, fitness center, youth activities, family support, and community events.

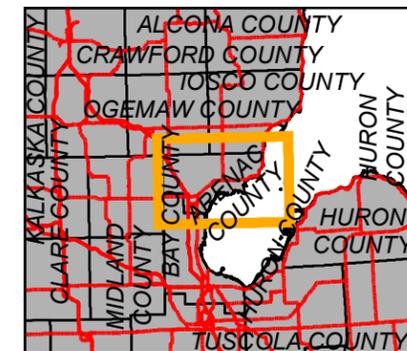
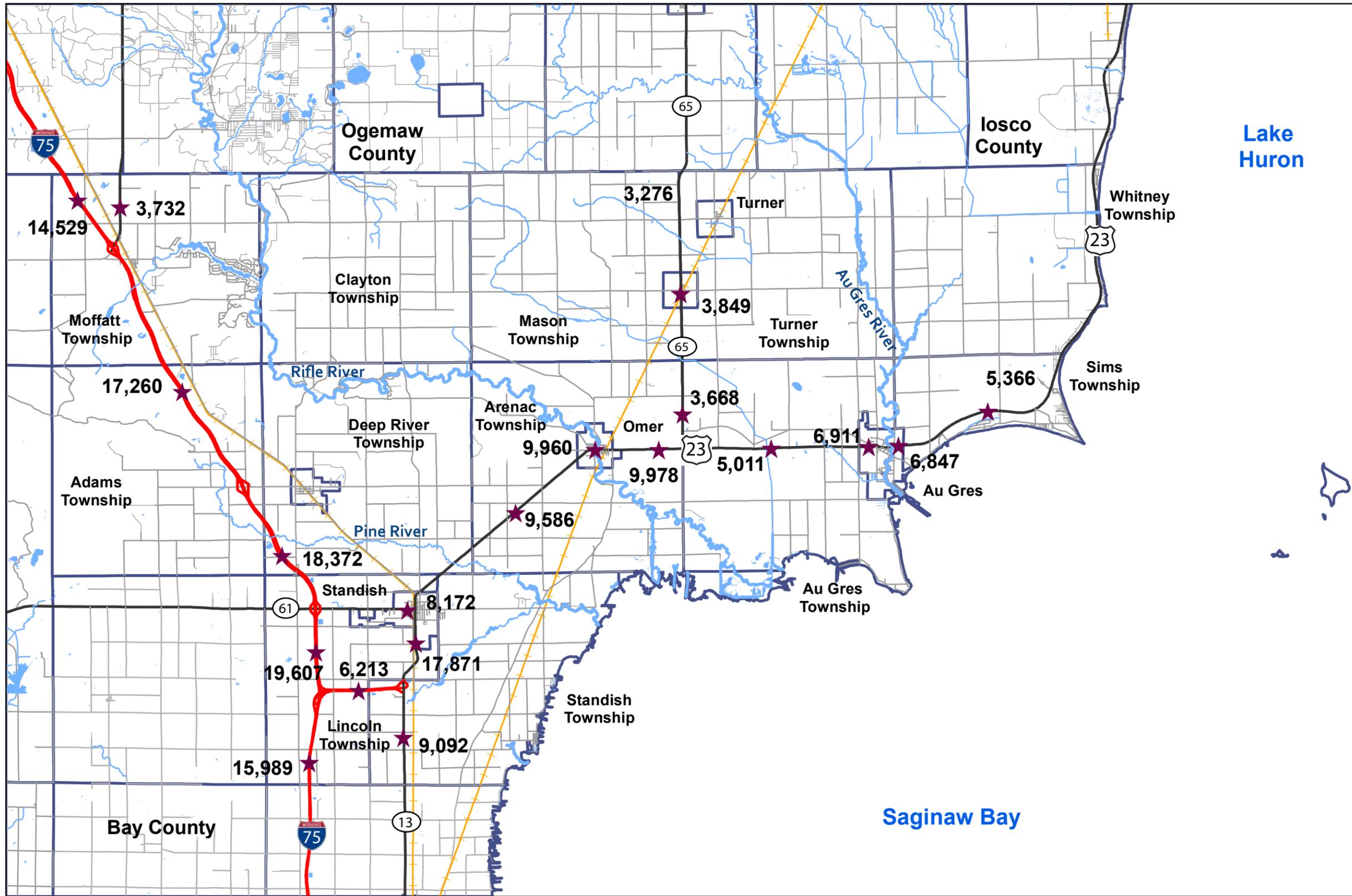


In addition to all these community focused activities, the Tribe also has a strong economic development engine. The Saganing Eagles Landing Casino and hotel are the most visible economic driver for the Tribal community in Arenac County. Additionally, the Tribe aims to expand future operations and economic development opportunities by investing in an electrical substation which would allow them to connect to the grid and purchase power as a wholesaler with the intent to sell the power and distribute it to regional customers. In addition to this, the tribe expects to save approximately half of their energy costs by purchasing directly from the grid. As power demand increases, the Tribe would have an opportunity to increase the size of the substation to address their development needs. One other significant opportunity the Tribe is looking into is to provide water to the region around the Reservation. The Tribe is responsible for their own water and wastewater needs, and therefore they have their own treatment facilities. The White's Beach community, located on the Lake Huron shoreline, has been drastically effected by recent rising lake levels. The community needs a more modern solution to their water and wastewater needs and as the Tribe is adjacent to the community, they are looking into expanding their water system to support the neighborhood.



The Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe is an excellent partner for the various communities in Arenac County. Each year the Tribe offers two grant cycles where any community in the County can request funding for grant projects. The funding for these grant projects comes from the 2% distribution of funds from the Casino and as of 2018, the tribe has distributed over \$200 million to local communities. This is funding that would not be available without the Casino and all the projects that have been funded because of these grant opportunities are a direct benefit from the gaming operations.

# MAP 10 - TRANSPORTATION AND ADT ARENAC COUNTY, MICHIGAN



AREA MAP  
NOT TO SCALE



LEGEND

- Roads**
- Interstate
  - State Highways
  - County Roads
  - Local Roads
  - Railroad
  - ★ ADT

ADT (Average Daily Traffic) is used to measure the total volume of vehicle traffic on a highway or road on an average day of the year.

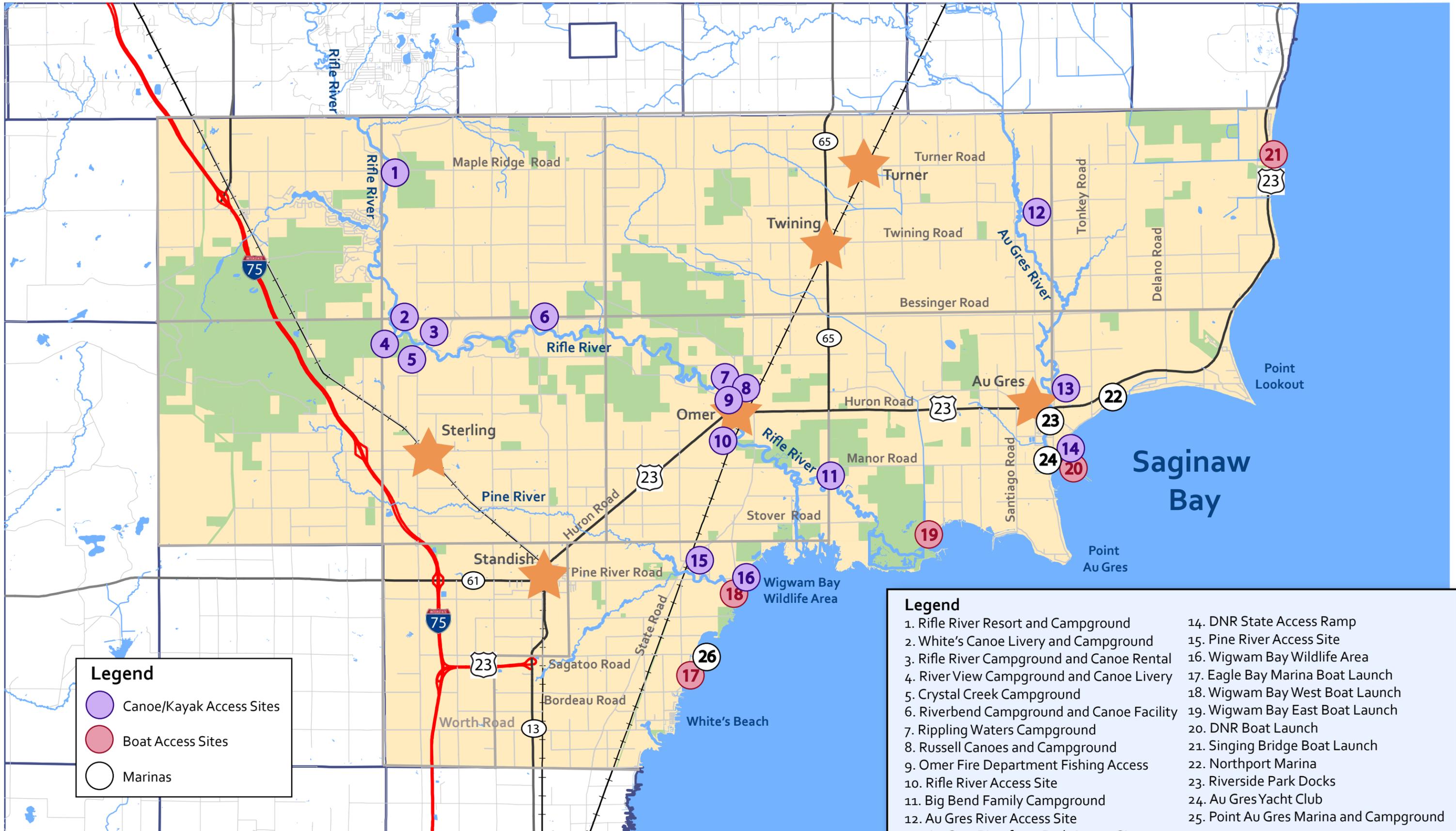
Source:  
Michigan Geographic Data Library  
MDOT

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# Arenac County Waterfront Access Site Map



**Legend**

- Canoe/Kayak Access Sites
- Boat Access Sites
- Marinas

**Legend**

1. Rifle River Resort and Campground	14. DNR State Access Ramp
2. White's Canoe Livery and Campground	15. Pine River Access Site
3. Rifle River Campground and Canoe Rental	16. Wigwam Bay Wildlife Area
4. River View Campground and Canoe Livery	17. Eagle Bay Marina Boat Launch
5. Crystal Creek Campground	18. Wigwam Bay West Boat Launch
6. Riverbend Campground and Canoe Facility	19. Wigwam Bay East Boat Launch
7. Rippling Waters Campground	20. DNR Boat Launch
8. Russell Canoes and Campground	21. Singing Bridge Boat Launch
9. Omer Fire Department Fishing Access	22. Northport Marina
10. Rifle River Access Site	23. Riverside Park Docks
11. Big Bend Family Campground	24. Au Gres Yacht Club
12. Au Gres River Access Site	25. Point Au Gres Marina and Campground
13. Au Gres Riverfront Park Access Site	

# Learning About Arenac County

## Existing Land Use Inventory

Existing land use in the County is a key piece of data. In many cases, the arrangement of existing land uses has set a pattern that is unlikely to change. In other areas, there may be vacant or underutilized land that can be evaluated for its development or conservation value. An existing land use analysis is designed to provide a snapshot in time of how land in the County is being used. It is useful during the development of a Master Plan because it provides a benchmark as to how land is being used. It often lets community members see patterns in growth and development.

Existing land use is determined using several techniques. In Arenac County, given the extant extent and area of the County, aerial photos and the 1992 National Land Cover Data was used. In this dataset, there are seven classifications of land use for Arenac County. Each is described in the following section. Table 23 shows the acreage and percentage of the land cover of all land uses in the County.

**Table 23** – Existing Land Use Analysis

Land Use	Acreage	Percentage
<b>Agriculture</b>	106,291.17	45.1%
<b>Residential</b>	1,127.54	0.5%
<b>Commercial/Industrial/Transportation</b>	848.88	0.4%
<b>Forest</b>	79,186.35	33.6%
<b>Grasslands</b>	495.72	0.2%
<b>Wetlands</b>	46,340.42	19.7%
<b>Open Water</b>	1,131.10	0.5%
	235,421.18	100.0%

## AGRICULTURE

Agricultural land includes land being utilized for agricultural purposes such as crop production, land lying fallow, pasture and grazing land, sod farming and orchards. It also includes farmsteads and related agricultural buildings or single-family homes. This land use makes up approximately 106,291 acres or 45.1% of the land in Arenac County. Agriculture land can be found in almost all the County aside from City and Village municipality limits, along the shoreline, and at recreation areas. Arenac County has a strong history of agriculture which is demonstrated by the Centennial Farms Program and the Historical Society of Michigan. A centennial farm is a farm that is greater than 10 acres and has remained in the same family for 100 years or more. The existence of these agricultural operations in the County highlight the importance that agriculture holds as a tradition and a way of life.

## RESIDENTIAL

The residential land use category is for all types of residential uses, ranging from single-family homes to apartment complexes. In general, residential uses in Arenac County are clustered around the Cities, Villages, and shoreline. There are pockets of residential uses scattered throughout the County, especially along larger

transportation corridors. There are also single-family homes located in the vast interior agricultural land uses of Arenac County. However, those farm homes do not make up the principal land use on the farming acreage and are considered a part of the agricultural use. They are not accounted for in the existing land use chart on the previous page. Overall, residential uses make up 1,127.54 acres of land, or 0.5% of the total land use in the County.

## COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL/TRANSPORTATION

This land use category includes all areas used for commercial facilities, industrial facilities, and transportation. Commercial land uses include retail areas, which are most commonly found in the traditional downtown core of the Cities and Villages in Arenac County. These areas often extend past municipal boundaries along major transportation corridors. Industrial land follows a similar pattern, with the majority of the land located within the limits of a City or Village and then extending out along the corridors. Industrial land is used for processing, manufacturing, fabricating, assembling materials, or for the outside storage of equipment and materials. Finally, transportation land use means all road right of ways. Combined land use by commercial, industrial, and transportation activities totals 848.88 acres or 0.4% of the County.

## FOREST

Those areas that are wooded and covered with trees are categorized as forest land. In Arenac County, the majority of the wooded land is located in the interior area of the County, especially along the Rivers. There is also some forested pockets along the shoreline of Lake Huron, and in preserved state land areas. Overall, wooded lands make up 79,186.53 acres, which is 33.6% of the total land area of the County.

## GRASSLANDS

These areas are dominated by grasses and open space. They are generally used for recreation purposes like park land or can be grazing areas for animals. The majority of these areas represent parks, yards, vacant land, landscaping, or open areas. In general, the largest concentration of grasslands in Arenac County are located in Moffatt Township. There are scattered grasslands throughout the County as well. This land use makes up 495.72 acres, or 0.2% of the County.

## WETLANDS

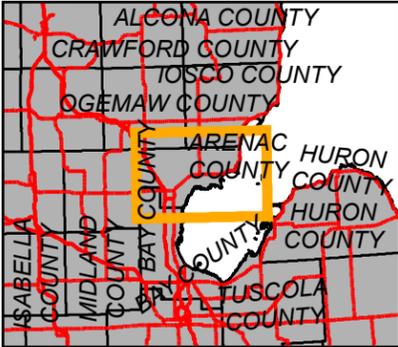
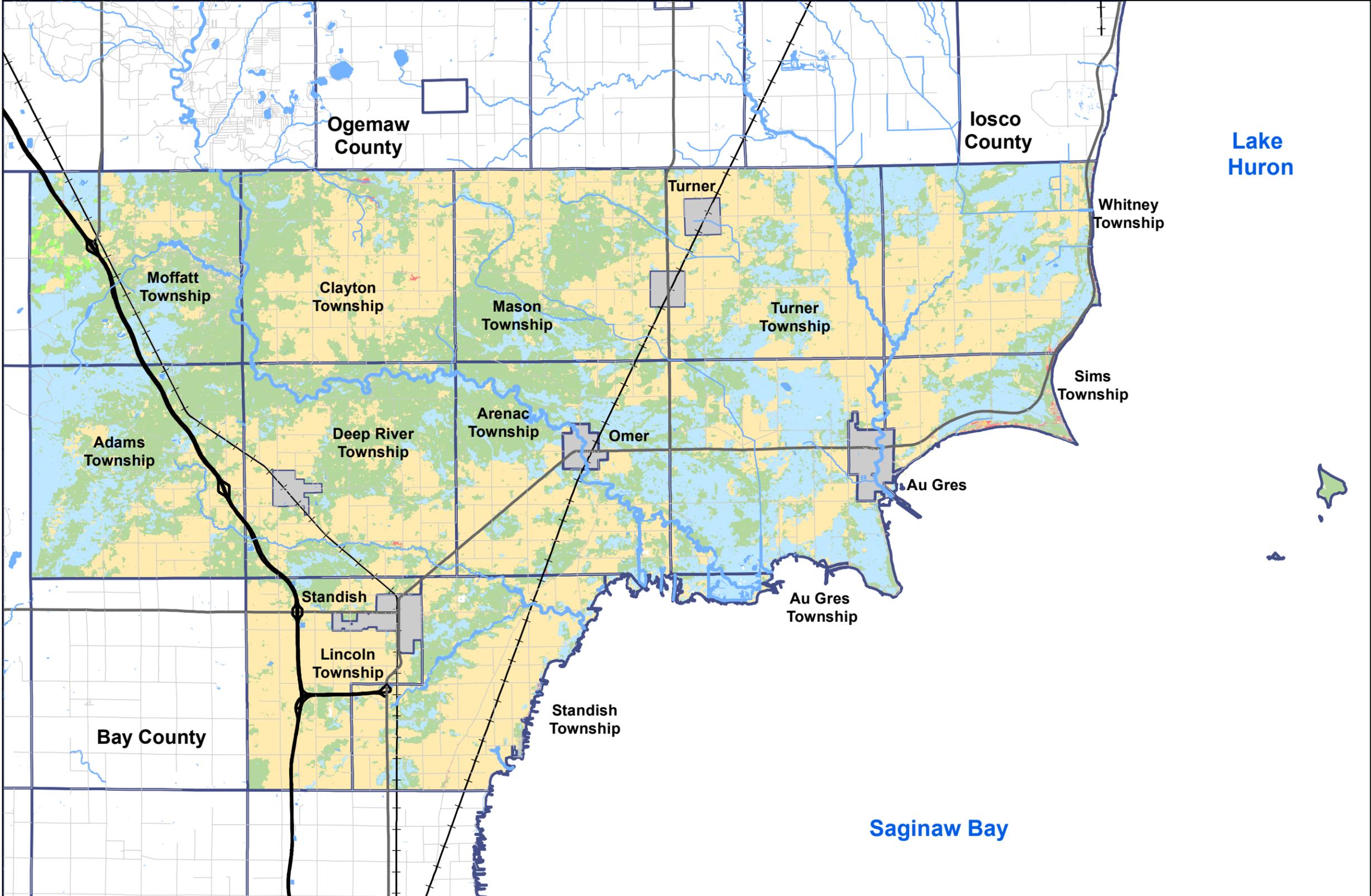
Wetlands are areas where the soil or substrate is periodically saturated with or covered with water for part of the year. Wetlands can be classified as shrub/scrub, forested and emergent. The wetlands in Arenac County are primarily located throughout all of the County, with large portions of the wetland areas located along the western border of the County and the Lake Huron shoreline. However, there are also sections of wetlands in the interior of the County and along the riverbeds. A number of the wetland areas correspond to state forest land. It is important to understand where wetlands are because they can be limiting to potential development, and may impede agricultural operations. Wetlands is the third largest land use category in Arenac County making up approximately 46,340.42 acres, or 19.7% of the land.

## OPEN WATER

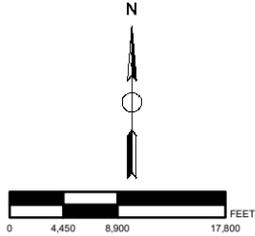
As mentioned throughout this document, Arenac County contains ample rivers and waterways. There is more than 50 miles of coastline along Lake Huron and more than 155 miles of riverbed. These natural features are very important to the County for drainage, environmental preservation, and recreation purposes.

Approximately, 1,131.10 acres of land in Arenac County is made up of water resources. This total accounts for approximately 0.5% of the County. Please note, this only includes the inland lakes, rivers, and streams and does not account for the shoreline.

# MAP 12 - EXISTING LAND USE ARENAC COUNTY, MICHIGAN



AREA MAP  
NOT TO SCALE



**LEGEND**

- Residential
- Commercial/  
Industrial/  
Transportation
- Forest
- Grasslands
- Agriculture
- Wetlands
- Waterways

Source:  
Michigan Geographic Data Library

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# Listening to Arenac County

## BASIS FOR COMMUNITY INPUT

To be effective, a Master Plan should incorporate the input and ideas of residents. By basing the Master Plan on the goals and objectives on the opinions of the residents, land use management decisions become politically feasible and represent the intents and vision of the community. In Arenac County, citizens were given the opportunity to participate in an online community input survey. This was an online survey open to all the residents of Arenac County. A second form of input included a series of stakeholder interviews with key County leaders. Both forms of input are described below.

## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Consultants for this Master Plan update interviewed community leaders, decisionmakers, and representatives of organizations and businesses in Arenac County. The purpose of the meetings was to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to identify major issues, ideas, and concerns facing Arenac County. A total of eight in-person interviews were conducted on November 11, 2019, see Appendix A for a list of interviewee names and organizations and a full summary of their responses.

Although all residents, employees, and visitors, are “stakeholders” in the County’s long-term future, these initial meetings targeted individuals representing a diversity of interests and organizations to explore a range of issues and needs. The individual/small group nature of these discussions enabled participants to be more candid and in-depth than they otherwise might be in a larger community forum. Moreover, discussions could be focused on the topics important to each individual. The stakeholder meetings are one component of the larger community visioning process, which included an online survey as previously mentioned.

## ONLINE SURVEY

The online survey was made available in October and November of 2019, complete with 37 questions each of which can be seen in Appendix A of this document. There were a total of 676 responses. The intent of the survey was to establish an easy means of communication where residents and stakeholders of Arenac County could provide input about the existing community conditions and the need for future improvements. The survey was taken online at <http://www.arenacounty.com/survey>. In addition, the County sent out a press release announcing the launch of the online survey. The press release announced the web domain of the survey, as well as information about the Master Plan update process. Paper copies of the survey were also available at the County Building.

## Stakeholder Summary

One the following page is a summary of six common themes from the stakeholder interview portion of the community input process.

## County of Arenac Stakeholder Interview Summary Key Takeaways

# 6

This document lists six key takaways from the stakeholder interviews conduted on November 11, 2019 with County community leaders, decisionmakers, and representatives of organizations and businesses in Arenac County. The purpose of the meetings was to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to identify major issues, ideas, and concerns facing the County in preparation to update to the County of Arenac Master Plan and Parks and Recreation Plan. This is one of several community outreach activities that is being undertaken for the master planning and recreation planning process.

# 1

The County is a recreation haven for almost all adventurer types. This is the County's strongest asset and economic driver, however, more needs to be done to focus and advertise all the opportunities the County has to offer. Almost all the traffic traveling north on the east side of the State must drive through the County. In the future it will be crucial to draw in these travelers and make Arenac County a State-wide recreation destination.

# 2

There are two very distinct population groups the County, the year-round residents and the recreation focused visitors. The local municipalities have the challenge of catering to the very different needs and service expectations of these two important segments of the County population. The County and local governments need to strike a healthy balance between the groups.

# 3

The current economic development efforts in the County need to be expanded. The program needs a full-time director which will be essential to Arenac County's success.

# 4

A key focus of Recreation development in the County in the future should focus on non-motorized trail development, connecting the County to the Iron Belle Trail and connecting the various communities in the County via non-motorized transportation routes.

# 5

Arenac County has two strong school districts that offer full-time residents the option to choose the type of program that is best for their children. The schools are a cornerstone for the local municipalities and provide a strong sense of community. The County is lacking a community college presence that would help train the local residents and keep them in the area.

# 6

The Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe is an important entity in the County and is working to expand their properties and the economic development opportunities available in the County. While the casino is generally its own entity, the 2% grants they provide to the local governments are very helpful and appreciated.

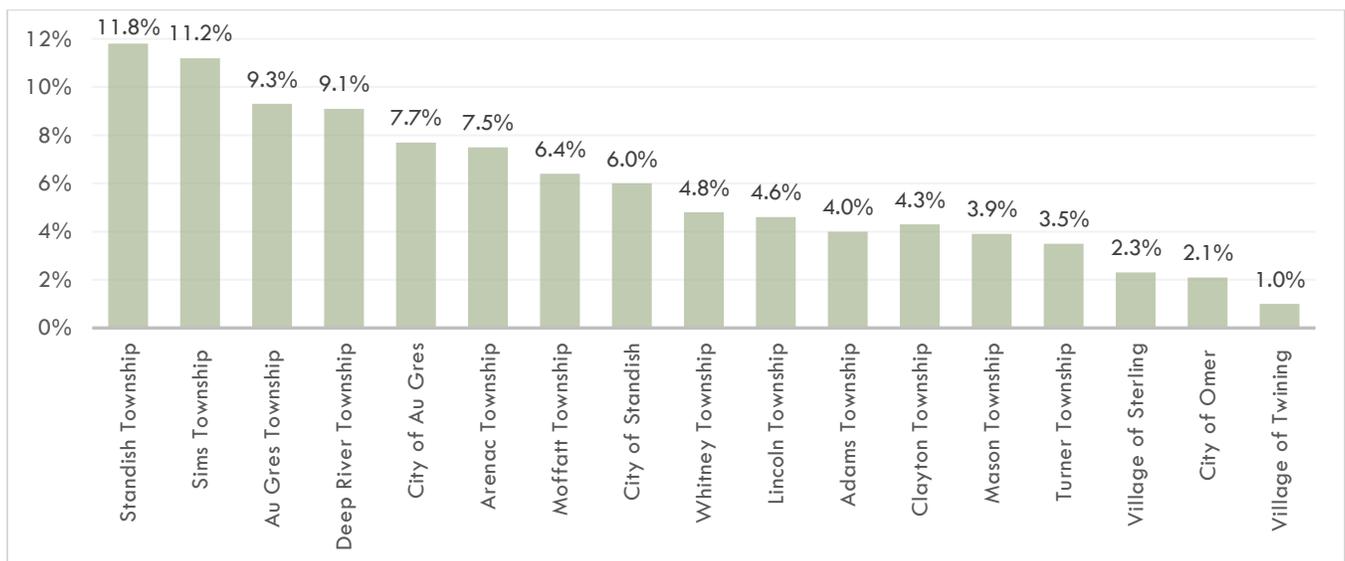
## Survey Summary

During the public input period, the County collected many insightful ideas and suggestions for land use, housing improvements, economic development, protection of natural features, and the overall quality of life in Arenac County. The following information is a summary of the major ideas the County received from the online survey. A complete set of survey data is included in Appendix A of this document.

## Getting to know the Survey Respondents

- The online survey had a total of 676 responses. The majority of the survey respondents live in Arenac County. Overall, 540 respondents (83.6%) live in Arenac County, and 106 (16.4%) live outside the County.
- Of all the respondents who live in the County, most are property owners (88%), other relationships to the County included: renting property (5%), operating a business in the County (4%), and owning a seasonal residence in the County (2%).
- The respondents generally represent all the jurisdictions in the County. There were responses from every community aside from the Village of Turner. See Figure 5 below, to see exactly how many respondents there were from each community.
- The respondents were made up of a wide age range, with at least two responses from every age group. The age group with the largest percentage of respondents was from the 55 – 64 age group at 27.1%, then the remaining age groups in order of respondents are as follows: 65 – 74 with 22.1% of the respondents, 45 – 54 with 17.2% of the respondents, 35 – 44 with 16.9% of the respondents, 25 – 24 with 7.7% of the respondents, 75 – 84 with 5.8% of the respondents, 18 – 24 with 2.6% of the respondents, and under 18 and 85 and older with 0.3% of the respondents each.
- In addition to these general demographic questions, the respondents were also asked why they choose to live in Arenac County. There were a variety of responses, with the most common answers being close to family and friends, born and raised in the County, like the rural/Up North lifestyle, like the community, Lake Huron, and retired here. Other responses included recreational opportunities and affordable housing.

**Figure 5 – Where Respondents Live**



## Summary of Key Points

### Quality of Life

- Generally, respondents feel that the quality of life in Arenac County is good, but has the potential to be great.
- The County has all the pieces it needs to pull together and improve over the next 10 years, it just needs to capitalize on the opportunities.
- Three major challenges facing the County are lack of businesses and services that are essential to everyday life, the majority of the local jobs are seasonal, and crime and drug abuse.

### Economy

- Economic development is crucial to Arenac County's success.
- Attracting and retaining a skilled workforce is a key issue.
- The economy is very seasonal, which is good because tourism is an economic driver for the County, but the seasonal economy does not provide jobs to support families.
- There is a split between the year-round economy for residents and the seasonal economy for seasonal residents and tourists. Both have different needs.
- Expanding and improving on the existing infrastructure will be important for success, including water, gas, and internet.

### Land Use

- Future development should be focused in the existing cities and villages and at key interchanges.
- In general the county needs more commercial and retail businesses.
- Agriculture land is important to the County and should be protected from development pressures.
- There is a lack of good quality housing available for younger families. This includes homes for sale and rental properties. Improving the housing stock in the County and providing affordable options is key.
- Supporting the development of the industrial park in Standish is key.

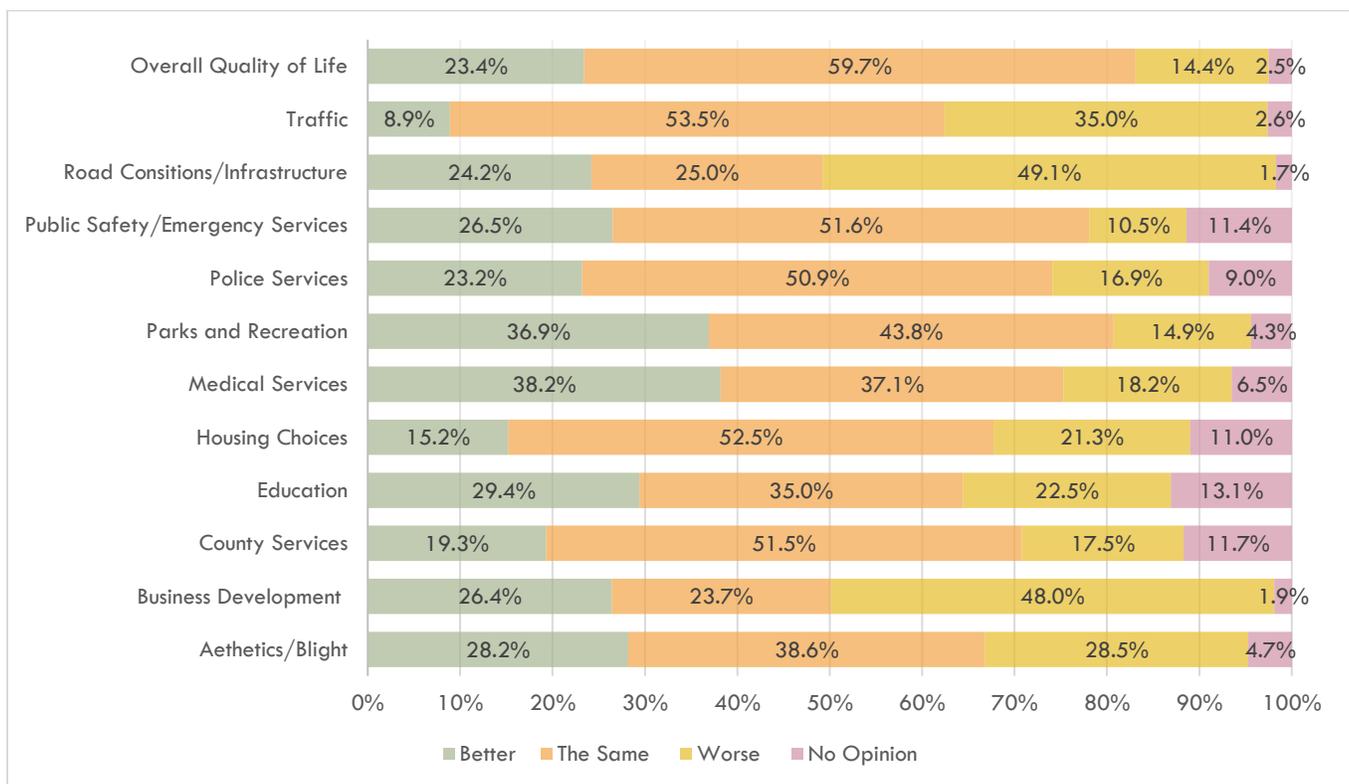
### Natural Resources

- The County is full of high-quality natural resources. These are opportunities to capitalize on in the future.
- The County is fortunate in that it has both water recreation options and wooded recreation options.
- The County has good parks that require just basic improvements to be great destinations.
- The County should support tourism and become a destination. The natural resources are the best way to achieve that goal.

## QUALITY OF LIFE

Quality of life is an important factor when anyone decides to live in or move to a region. Understanding how respondents view the quality of life in Arenac County will guide future decision making and priorities for this master plan. In the survey, respondents were asked to give their opinion on how all the quality of life factors shown in Figure 6, below, have changed over the past 5 years. Over a third of the respondents think that parks and recreation and medical services are better than they were 5 years. However, most respondents feel that these factors in the quality of life are the same as they were 5 years ago. The following categories have more than 50% of respondents say they are the same: overall quality of life, traffic, public safety/emergency services, police services, housing choices, and County services. The categories where a large percentage of respondents indicated conditions have gotten worse are road conditions/infrastructure, and business development.

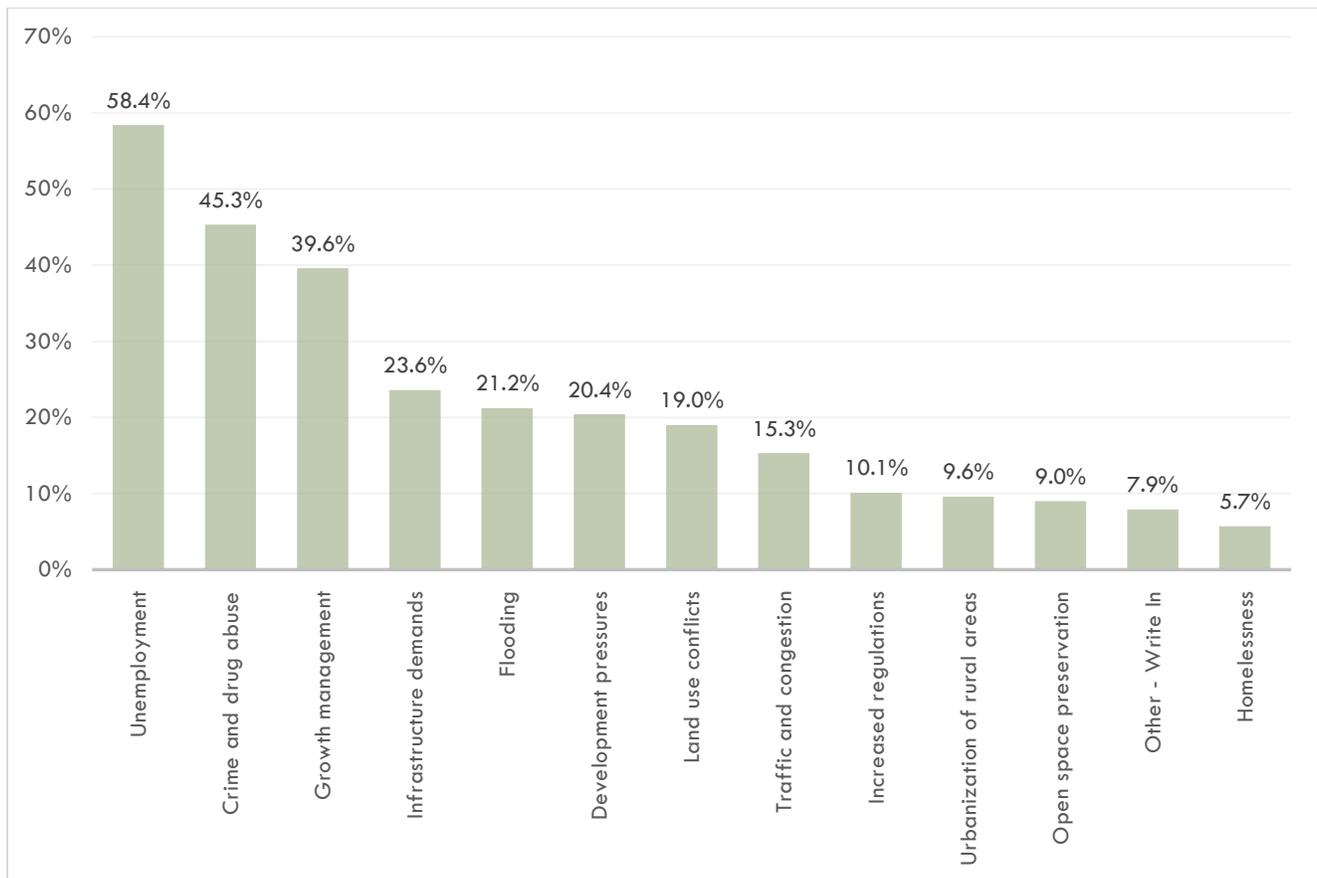
**Figure 6 - Components to Quality of Life**



Additionally, respondents were asked to list three things that would improve their quality of life. There were 310 answers to this question and the most common answers were a grocery store, improved roads, shopping/retail options, jobs, medical services, activities, and restaurants.

When respondents were asked what they believed the main challenges facing Arenac County were today, the top three responses included unemployment, crime and drug use, and growth management. Figure 7, on the following page, shows the ranking of the other responses.

**Figure 7 – Challenges Facing the County**



Respondents were also able to write in an answer and the most common were few high paying job options, attracting and keeping young people in the area, lack of new opportunities for development and businesses, and poverty.

In general respondents were asked to discuss any other issues they believed were important to the future of Arenac County. This question had 220 responses with a wide variety of answers. Some of the most common responses were:

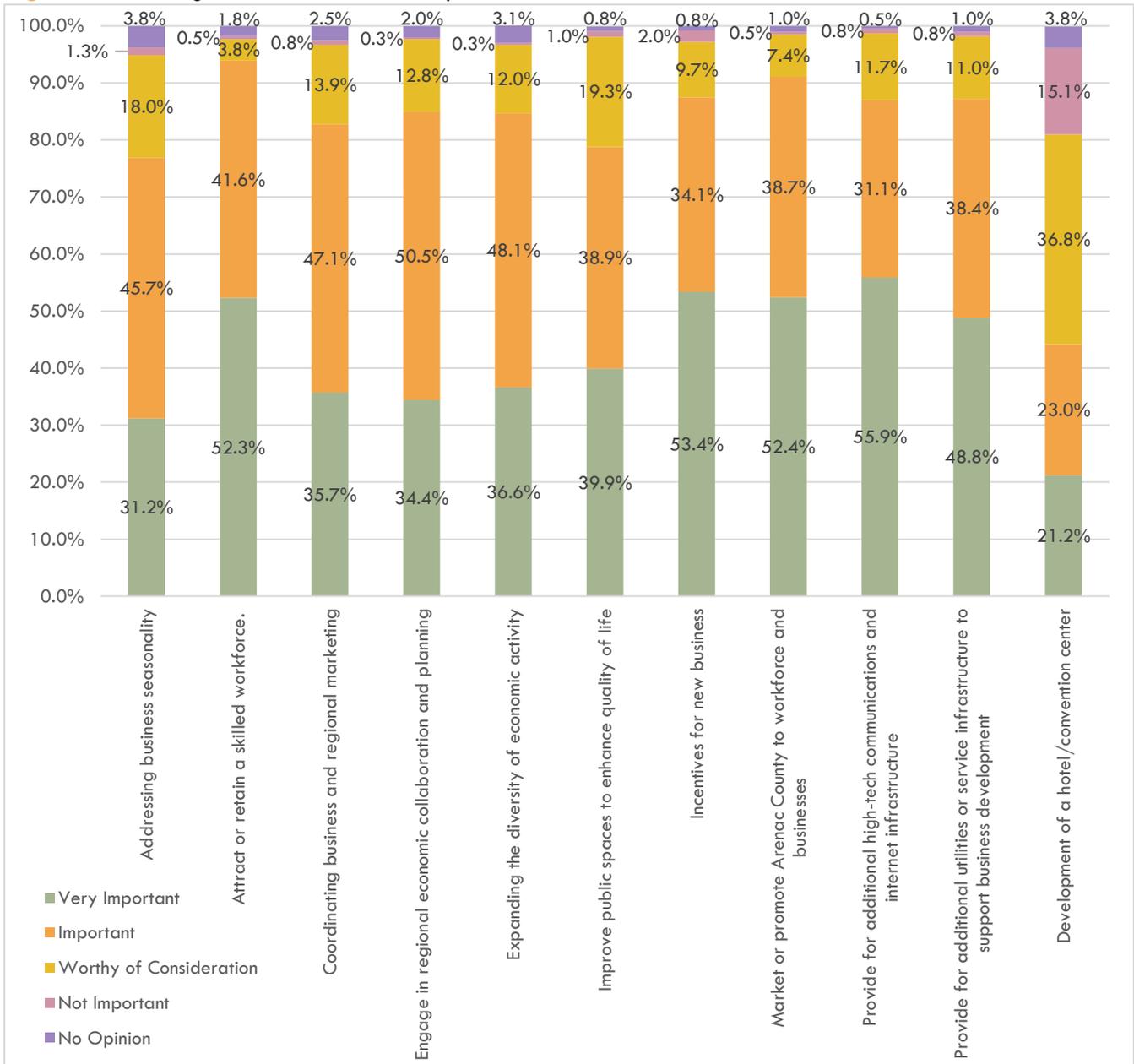
- There is a need to increase the variety of shopping options in the County. Respondents do not want to see another gas station or auto parts store. They want places to buy everyday essentials like shoes, clothes, or kitchen appliances. Their opinions are evenly split on whether that be a big box store like Walmart or Meijer or local mom and pop shops.
- Respondents want an affordable grocery store that has more variety than their current option.
- They would like to see good full-time jobs to support the local community. The seasonal jobs do not provide enough income throughout the entire year to provide a living wage for residents.
- They would like there to be a general policy of reducing barriers to small business opening in the community.

- Arenac County needs to be a destination. The communities should work to make this a place to stop and one way to do that is to improve the aesthetics of the communities with seasonal decorations downtown, new signage, and sidewalks.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development will be key to future success in Arenac County, and prioritizing economic development in key areas will help the County achieve its goals. Generally, the survey respondents think all types of economic development strategies are important. The following chart shows how the survey respondents prioritize each of these economic development strategies.

**Figure 8 – Strategies for Economic Development**



In addition to the strategies above, respondents were asked if there should also be an economic development approach for attracting tourists to the area. The response to this question was favorable, 29% strongly agree with this approach, 40% agree, and only 10% disagreed. The final question pertained to how important the casino is to economic development in the County. The response on this question is more split, but respondents still agree that the casino is important for the economy of Arenac County.

## AGRICULTURE

Generally, survey respondents feel that agriculture is a very important aspect of the Arenac County economy and landscape. They also think agricultural land should be preserved and protected from future development pressures. The residents indicated the top three strategies for addressing agriculture in Arenac County in the future are implementing sustainable farmable practices (chemicals, pollution, tiling, etc.), preserve and protect farmland, and build and support local or regional food economies.

## COMMERCIAL AND RETAIL

Respondents would like there to be more commercial and retail services in Arenac County. Eighty-six percent of respondents would like to see more commercial options, while only three percent said they would not like more commercial options in the County. When asked where the commercial development should be located more respondents would like to see new development in existing cities and villages (81.2%) and around major transportation corridors (66.4%). Only 24.9% of the respondents would like to see development on the shoreline.

## LAKE LEVELS

As the lake levels continue to rise, they affect all aspects of life in the County. Of all the survey respondents, 82% said their property has been impacted by the higher lake levels. Most have seen negative effects on at their homes or personal beaches. Properties along the Lake Huron shoreline, the Au Gres River, and several neighborhoods with canal systems have all been affected. Many respondents indicated they have installed sea walls to protect their homes from the water levels. Other issues include standing water, damage to roads, invasive species and an increase in mosquitoes. In addition to effecting personal properties, the rising water levels have also negatively impacted tourism activities such as access at boat launches and ramps, flooding

## INDUSTRIAL

Respondents believe that in order to have a robust economy the County needs a diverse industrial base. Approximately 34% of the respondents strongly believe industrial jobs are key to improving the economy in Arenac County, while 49% of the respondent agree they are important. In total, 83% of respondents would support more industry in Arenac County.

## HOUSING

Respondents support various types of housing options for the County. The different types are outlined in order of response as follows: single family homes in cities and villages, single family homes in rural areas or subdivisions, senior living options, multi-family housing types, and rental housing. In addition to these, short term rentals and seasonal housing were also mentioned, but at a much lower rate. Respondents generally believe that seasonal housing is a benefit to their community. The seasonal housing owners increase the tax base and support local businesses when they are in town. However, due to their seasonal nature, it is hard to rely on that income for the entire year. In the winter, jobs and the economy struggle without these residents to support them.

along the rivers in the County, and public beach access. Additionally, erosion along the coastline has become a bigger problem in recent years.

## IMPROVEMENTS OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS

The final question was open-ended and asked survey respondents what they would like to improve over the next five years. The following list is a combination of the most common responses.

- Support and encourage more business in the area, respondents would like both small businesses for shopping/retail and a large store for groceries.
- Support small business by providing incentives to new business owners.
- Capitalize on the key areas like downtowns, I-75 interchange, and prison
- Support education options like community college and trade schools to provide training for young families. Work to bring in businesses that can provide a living wage to those trained individuals.
- Expand the municipal utilities like water, sewer, and gas and also expand internet capabilities. Infrastructure is key to new growth.
- Clean up the blight.
- Work on the roads, especially the rural gravel/dirt roads. Some are impassible.

# The Vision for Arenac County

## OVERVIEW

This chapter is the heart of the Arenac County Master Plan and presents the goals, objectives, and action items. Goals are broad-based statements of intent and establish the direction for Arenac County. Goals could generally be thought of as the desired "ends" of successful implementation. They are derived from the existing conditions analysis, larger trends, and the input gathered via the online survey and stakeholder interviews. The plan goals express overarching aspirations that are valued and desired by the County. The plan goals, objectives and action items represent the County's intentions to support and pursue growth and development in Arenac County. The goals are presented here with brief descriptions of each. The following section presents the objectives and action items that support each goal and facilitate plan implementation.

1

### **PRESERVE THE COUNTY'S RURAL CHARACTER**

Keep productive farms, beautiful natural features, and a healthy environment.

2

### **STRENGTHEN THE EXISTING CITIES AND VILLAGES**

Encourage placemaking across Arenac County's town centers to ensure that they serve as quality community centers.

3

### **PROVIDE AND MAINTAIN QUALITY PUBLIC SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Encourage and support careful coordination of local services to ensure quality and cost effectiveness.

4

### **GENERATE AND SUSTAIN ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES**

Retain, attract, and grow quality employers and workforce.

5

### **PROVIDE UNIQUE CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL RESOURCES**

With over 50 miles of Lake Huron shoreline, 70 miles of rivers, and abundant forests, Arenac County will continue as a recreational and cultural destination that serves people of all generations.



## GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTION ITEMS

This section introduces the objectives and action items for each of the five goals. Together, they represent the vision for Arenac County.

### GOAL 1: PRESERVE THE COUNTY'S RURAL CHARACTER

*Keep productive farms, beautiful natural features, and a healthy environment.*

#### **Objectives:**

- 1. Support the ability of farmers to continue to actively engage in farming and sustainable agricultural practices.**
- 2. Direct growth towards existing urban areas.**

#### **Action Items:**

- Actively recruit agribusiness to do business in the County.
- Promote the retention, stability, conservation, and growth of Countywide agricultural activities.
- Develop a local food-promotion program.
- Assist communities throughout Arenac County in updating their zoning ordinance to allow for appropriately sized agricultural uses in non-agricultural districts.
- Encourage long-term agricultural use and preservation of prime agricultural lands.
- Promote GAAMPs – generally accepted agricultural and management practices – as set forth from the Michigan Right to Farm Act (PA 93 of 1981).

### GOAL 2: STRENGTHEN THE EXISTING CITIES AND VILLAGES

*Encourage placemaking across Arenac County's town centers to ensure that they serve as quality community centers.*

#### **Objectives:**

- 1. Make Arenac County's downtowns destinations.**
- 2. Assist cities and villages with stabilization and enhancement of existing neighborhoods in and around their town centers.**



Action Items:

- Support local efforts that identify key redevelopment areas and advertise/market to desired project types.
- Support local efforts to engage various downtown enhancement groups and programs, such as Michigan Main Street Program and the Michigan Downtown Association.
- Support local efforts to develop streetscape plans and related corridor improvements efforts.
- Support local efforts to attract quality business that encourages people to spend more time in the downtown, such as sit-down restaurants and entertainment venues.
- Support the development of local wayfinding signage programs.
- Support the development of quality and affordable housing for all residents of Arenac County.
- Work with local governments to identify potential redevelopment areas for both multi- and single-family developments.
- Support land bank efforts to manage vacant, foreclosed, and blighted properties across the County.
- Address the need for housing for the County's aging population.

**GOAL 3: PROVIDE AND MAINTAIN QUALITY PUBLIC SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

*Encourage and support careful coordination of local services to ensure quality and cost effectiveness.*

**Objectives:**

- 1. Maintain existing infrastructure.**
- 2. Provide high quality public health and safety services.**
- 3. Provide a variety of mobility options.**
- 4. Utilize the County's Hazard Mitigation Plan to protect the residents, visitors, and property within the County.**



Action Items:

- Support plans to repair and replace road and non-motorized infrastructure.
- Maintain and improve current mutual aid agreements for emergency, firefighting and police services.
- Maintain a support services network to assure good quality of life for the elderly.
- Increase transit services within Arenac County to help provide better access to necessary services and employment.

- Assist with jurisdictional needs in terms of public safety.
- Support efforts to improve rail service.
- Continue the development of non-motorized paths to increase connectivity between communities in the County.
- Identify projects from the Hazard Mitigation Plan that can be initiated to mitigate damages from local hazards that negatively impact the County.
- Seek funds to complete hazard mitigation projects as identified in the plan.

#### **GOAL 4: GENERATE AND SUSTAIN ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES**

*Retain, attract, and grow quality employers and workforce.*

##### **Objectives:**

- 1. Build and capitalize on Arenac County's assets to attract economic activity.**
- 2. Promote development and redevelopment of vacant commercial/industrial properties.**
- 3. Help residents develop the skills necessary for employment opportunities.**



##### **Action Items:**

- Maintain a strong local and regional economic base and to provide jobs for residents of Arenac County.
- Support the hiring of a full-time Director of Economic Development.
- Develop agritourism and recreation tourism marketing campaigns.
- Build on existing recreational assets and improve connectivity throughout the County.
- Work with providers to expand wireless/internet services.
- Support the development of Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe enterprises.
- Target development to the Opportunity Zone (Census Tract 9705).
- Enhance the County's GIS mapping viewer with layers related to Economic Development (include Land Bank parcels, Opportunity Zone, etc.).
- Support the development of the Arenac County Agricultural & Events Center.
- Repurpose the former fairgrounds property located in Standish's industrial park.
- Dispose of non-essential County-property to catalyze new development.

- Increase efforts to work with eligible businesses to take advantage of available tax incentive/abatement programs.
- Expand existing industrial sites.
- Support the enhancement of public utilities to support future industrial growth
- Provide for adequate areas for the development of new and expanding commercial and industrial businesses, the location of which, do not hinder the overall rural character of the County.
- Assist the expansion of existing businesses and industries.
- Assist new business start-ups.
- Support redevelopment activities of former school buildings.
- Provide quality education and training to the people of Arenac County.
- Support the programs provided by the Bay-Arenac ISD.
- Support early childhood initiatives to build literacy and math skills.
- Continue and expand mentoring/leadership programs.
- Develop business and school partnerships to provide trade school experience.
- Continue to expand on vocational and co-op opportunities.
- Prepare entrepreneurs of tomorrow: Work toward developing entrepreneurial programs/classes for K-12 children such as Junior Achievement or like programs.

### **GOAL 5: PROVIDE UNIQUE CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL RESOURCES**

*With over 50 miles of Lake Huron shoreline, 70 miles of rivers, and abundant forests, Arenac County will continue as a recreational and cultural destination that serves people of all generations.*

**Objectives:**

- 1. Provide public access to the waterfront.**
- 2. Provide a robust system of parks, trailways and other recreational opportunities.**

**Action Items:**

- Provide reasonable access to parks, water, and recreational facilities and promote a variety of tourism options.
- Encourage expansion of tourism, recreational facilities, and viewsheds, as part of the county's commitment



to developing the overall economy and raising the standards for quality of life.

- Where applicable, recognize and promote natural resource conservation as a component of tourism development.
- Engage MDOT to determine feasibility of adding gateway/entryway signs near Exit 188 and near Exit 202.
- Expand recreation opportunities and facilities to meet the growing needs of County residents and the growing tourist population.
- Preserve the County's natural beauty and assets.
- Expand year-round recreation opportunities.
- Support and plan for non-motorized transportation corridors the County, including the Iron Belle Trail.

# Land Use in Arenac County

Implementation of the Arenac County Master Plan requires collaboration at all levels of government. However, many of the specific land use and development decisions are made at the local level by Township, City, or Village Planning Commissions or Boards. In Arenac County, each community has their own master plan and creates their own future land use map. The map serves as a foundation for the zoning ordinance and zoning map and makes recommendations about how development should occur in each community. A future land use map does not have legal authority, like a zoning map, but it does guide decisions about zoning maps, zoning districts, and rezoning requests. Because Arenac County does not administer zoning, the County's future land use map plays a different role. It is meant to be a resource that local governments look to when creating their own future land use maps and a tool to encourage greater coordination across government boundaries. To that end, the Arenac County Master Plan takes a non-traditional approach the future land use planning and created an economic opportunities map. The economic opportunities map highlights key resources, infrastructure, land uses, and opportunity parcels that may affect the future of development and land use policy in Arenac County.

## ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

This Economic Opportunities map is a compilation of the most important resources in Arenac County and is intended as an inventory to guide local municipalities in their future planning processes. The County respects the local planning efforts that are already underway, and their specified goals and land use plans. This map reflects the general areas of potential growth in Arenac County.

### Agriculture

Agriculture is an important segment of the Arenac County economy. The residents support policies that favor agricultural practices and believe preserving farmland is important for the future of Arenac County. The land that is suitable for farming, categorized as prime farmland and prime farmland, if drained, is 151,657 acres of land in Arenac County. That is approximately 64% of the entire area of the County. As over half of the County is suitable for farming, and the survey respondents indicated that agriculture is an important way of life in Arenac County, it is a valuable resource to protect. If a soil is categorized as prime farmland that is the highest and best use of that property. Agriculture land is often overlooked as a marginal land use, that is less important than development, but that is not always true. Recognizing the value of this land and implementing strategies to protect it will be an important policy for the future of Arenac County. The County does not support policies that encourage development that shifts profitable agriculture land to other uses.

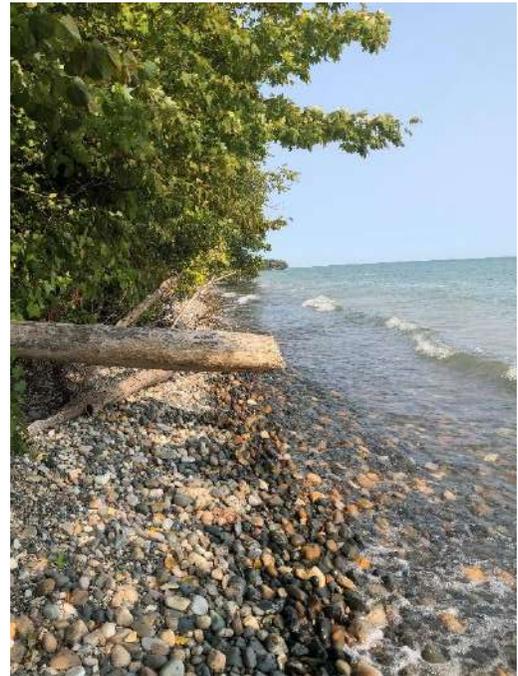


## Recreation

The County is full of high quality recreation options, that provide residents and visitors with a full spectrum of activities in all four seasons. The County is fortunate in that it has both, a Great Lakes shoreline and vast tracks of publicly owned State Land. These two distinct environments attract different visitors depending on personal preference such as boaters or beachcombers vs hikers and hunters. Regardless of why people choose to visit northern Michigan for their recreation, it is very clear that tourism is the lifeblood of many northern Michigan economies. Arenac County is not currently one of the most popular destinations for visitors, but has all the natural resource opportunities to become one of the best destinations on the Sunrise Side of the State.

Along the Lake Huron shoreline visitors have access to clean and clear freshwater, a truly unique resource. The Great Lakes make up 5% of the freshwater in the world, and are the largest concentration of the resource in one location, aside from the glaciers. Even though Michigan has the most Great Lakes shoreline access as compared to any other State in the Country, it is still a precious resource. Arenac County is fortunate enough to have over 50 miles of Lake Huron shoreline. The Lake offers swimming and boating opportunities in the summer and also provides fishing opportunities all four seasons of the year. Arenac County is home to some of the best freshwater fishing in the State.

The Great Lakes are a true opportunity and draw for tourism in Michigan. In 2017 The Michigan Port Collaborative, conducted a study regarding the economic impacts of Michigan's ports and harbors on several local economies across the State. One of the local economies was Iosco County, the County just north of Arenac. According to the study, the economic impact of water-related visitors to Iosco County is estimated at 69.7 million dollars a year. The study found that visitors spend 5.7 million dollars in restaurants and 5.5 million dollars in lodging and vacation rentals. The economic activity supported 585 FTE (full-time equivalent) jobs and the water based activity generated roughly 4.8 million dollars in state and local taxes and 5.8 million dollars in federal taxes in Michigan. If Iosco County experiences this kind of economic impact on an annual basis, it is possible that Arenac County, with its similar natural resources would be able to draw a comparable economic impact as well. The County has three public access sites along the shoreline and the various local communities also have launches, beaches, and marinas. To become a waterfront destination, the County will have to market these key properties so the people who are already driving through Arenac County realize this area could be a new destination for them to explore. Key factors in bringing in more tourists could be prioritizing more public beach access along the shoreline, and developing a transient marina for boating visitors.



Arenac County is also home to a large percentage of forested land, both public and private. This land offers tourists a different type of recreation than the Great Lakes. Here visitors can hike, backpack, off-road, camp, hunt, fish, and access the three rivers in the County. Fortunately, these opportunities are also four-season and can provide economic impacts throughout the year. The County has over 12,000 acres of State Land. Generally, this land is not managed or actively maintained. It is accessible via ORV roads. The only actively managed State Land in the County is the Wigwam Bay Wildlife Area that is managed for hunting and



waterfowl breeding. Recently there has been a surge in the popularity of kayaking, canoeing, and floating down the Rifle River. There are many liveries and campgrounds located along the River that provide visitors with watercraft to float or paddle down the river and then drop off and pick them up at designated points. The popularity of this activity is so large that it can double the County population on summer weekends.

Like water recreation, hunting, fishing and trapping also have a significant effect on the local economies of northern Michigan communities. The Michigan United Conservation Clubs recently commissioned a study to determine the economic effects of these activities. The study found that the State has 700,000 hunters and 1.1 million anglers who spend 8.9 billion and 2.3 billion dollars annually in Michigan. The study found that for every 1 million dollars spent on hunting and fishing related purchases in Michigan, 19.61 jobs are created in Michigan. Michigan is one of the top states for hunting license purchases and the northeast region of the State, which includes Arenac County, receives 451 million dollars annually due to sportsman related expenditures.

To become a hiking, camping, and sportsman destination, the County will have to advertise the opportunities available within its borders. Similar to waterfront tourism, the goal should be to become a destination and draw the travelers who are already passing through the County. The state land presents opportunities for hiking, rustic camping, and hunting. There are numerous private and two County owned campgrounds already located in the County and the popularity of the Rifle River is only increasing each year. Advertising these existing opportunities will be key for success in the future. Another avenue the County may be interested in exploring is snowmobiling. Many of the northern Michigan counties capitalize on snowmobilers in the winter, the DNR does have designated snowmobile trails located in the State Forests and National Forests that they groom, however, there are no such trails in Arenac County.

The County is also fortunate in that the Iron Belle Trail is currently planned to pass through the heart of Arenac County. The proposed route will run along the Lake State Railroad line in Standish and Arenac Townships, then head east along US-23 up to the Iosco County line. The Iron Belle Trail is a statewide project that is planned to run from Detroit to Ironwood in the Upper Peninsula. Trails are a boon for the local economy because they bring in trail users from other communities and the local residents often spend money while they are out walking the trail at local stores or restaurants. The visitors also bring in additional money to the region. Just to the north in Iosco County, the Alabaster Township Trail has been an extremely successful example of the implementation of the Iron Belle Trail through northern Michigan. Once the trail is constructed in Arenac County, it will connect to the Alabaster Township trail.

Arenac County has all the foundation it needs to become a popular destination on the Sunrise Side of Michigan. According to MDOT, there are more than 18,000 vehicles that drive through the County on I-75 on an average day and over 17,000 vehicles that pass through the County on US-23. The County is uniquely positioned in that any visitor on the east side of the state traveling north on a weekend adventure or vacation must pass through the County and if they are traveling on US-23 they must pass directly through Standish. Because of this, Standish has become a pit stop instead of a destination, but that does not need to be the case. The County has the vehicle traffic passing through it. To become a destination it must advertise all the options available for visitors in Arenac County.

## Centers for Public Learning

Arenac County has several institutions that are essential education and community facilities located throughout the County. There are two school districts that operate with the County boundaries, the Au Gres Sims School District and the Standish Sterling Community Schools. A description of the school facilities and a map of the school districts can be found in the demographic section of this plan. The Au Gres Sims facilities are in the City of Au Gres and the Standish Sterling facilities are located in the Village of Sterling and Deep River Township. The old Standish Sterling Elementary School has been transformed into the Arenac Community Center. According to the Community Center website, the purpose of the Community Center is to provide a safe and nurturing atmosphere for children during the summer months and after school. The Center works with the local school districts, 4-H at Michigan State University Extension, and other local partnerships. The facility features a theater, computer lab, game room, arts and crafts rooms, toy room, open space to play, reading stations, a large gymnasium, a meeting and event room, 3 soccer fields, 2 playgrounds, basketball hoops, and a full professional kitchen. In addition to these amenities for the children, the Community Center is also available to rent for outside groups. This has really become a community foundation in Standish and is so important to the families of the community.

There are three libraries in Arenac County, the City of Omer library, the Au Gres Community Library in the City of Au Gres, and the Mary Johnston Memorial Library in Standish. All three libraries are part of the Iosco-Arenac District Library system. They have all forms of print, eBooks, and audiobooks. Each of these three libraries has public wi-fi access. The libraries are a community gathering space for many local groups and the three branches are open Monday through Saturday.

One final community resource is the Bay-Arenac ISD Living and Learning Center that serves Pre-Primary and High School/Young Adult students with moderate and severe disabilities. The Center's programs are intended to strengthen the educational, social, personal, and daily life skills of the students. The facility creates individual learning plans for each student and the facilities include a kitchen and laundry, computer lab, garden, and mobility training center.



## Economic Development

While conducting the stakeholder interviews, the leaders of the County all emphasized the idea of working together to share resources and implement policies that are effective for their region of the County so as not to compete with each other or duplicate efforts. Thinking of the County as different regions means focusing different economic development strategies in different areas to increase their effectiveness. For example, tourism has the possibility of becoming a key factor in the Arenac County economy, so focusing strategies geared toward visitors and seasonal activities would make sense along the lakeshore and in the forested areas of the County. In comparison, the City of Standish, has a well established industrial park with the proper infrastructure to support high intensity industrial land uses which would provide steady full time employment for County residents. It makes sense to market and expand the industrial park to establish Standish as one of the main employment centers in the County. While these two approaches are very different, they are complementary, and all of the communities in Arenac County can benefit from some shared practices such as supporting small business and expanding the variety of retail and restaurants in the County.

The County has many opportunities for economic development. The following highlights some of the key features in the County:

- The Standish Industrial Park is a center of employment for the County and provides many full time jobs to County residents. Currently, the park is at capacity so the current businesses located in the park cannot expand and there are no options for new growth. The County recognized this need and has purchased a new property to move the County fairgrounds. Once the fairgrounds are relocated, there will be more opportunity for expansion. It will also open up land to a possible railroad spur from the Lake State Line through Standish.
- The Saganing Eagles Landing Casino and Hotel is another key resource for the County. There are very few casinos on the east side of the state and the Tribe recently invested millions of dollars into the hotel expansion. While the County does not receive traditional tax benefits from Tribal operations, the casino is still a key destination point for the Arenac County economy. The Casino brings in visitors and the profits from the Casino are reinvested into Arenac County via the 2% distributions program.
- The County is also home to the vacant Standish Maximum Correctional Facility. This property was a state prison that was closed in 2009 and has remained vacant. The County has no control over what happens at this site because it is owned by the State, but if the State were to ever consider selling to a private prison or reopening the facility it would be a significant opportunity for the County. Keeping communication lines with the State open is key for the future of this property.

## Opportunity Zone

Opportunity Zones are a new concept recently enacted in the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. The program is designed to spur investment in under privileged communities that have been cut off from capital and experienced a lack of business growth. The program provides three types of tax benefits for investors that relate to the treatment of capital gains. Each of the incentives are connected to the longevity of an investor's stake in



an Opportunity Fund. The program provides the most benefit to those who hold their investment for 10 years or more. The three types of benefits are:

- Temporary deferral of taxes on previously earned capital gains. Investors can place existing assets with accumulated capital gains into Opportunity Funds. Those existing capital gains are not taxed until the end of 2026 or when the asset is disposed of.
- Basis step-up of previously earned capital gains invested. For capital gains placed in Opportunity Funds for at least 5 years, investors' basis on the original investment increases by 10 percent. If invested for at least 7 years, investors' basis on the original investment increases by 15 percent.
- Permanent exclusion of taxable income on new gains. For investments held for at least 10 years, investors pay no taxes on any capital gains produced through their investment in Opportunity Funds (the investment vehicle that invests in Opportunity Zones).

Arenac County has one designated opportunity zone located in parts of Standish Township, Lincoln Township, the City of Standish, and Deep River Township. This area represents an opportunity for significant investment in the County.

### Arenac County Events and Agricultural Center

The current County Fairgrounds are located adjacent to the Standish Industrial Park. Current businesses in the industrial park are looking to expand their operations, but are limited due to land availability. Therefore, the County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) is looking for a new home for the Fairgrounds. This will provide opportunity for the businesses in Standish and give the Fairgrounds a new permanent home better suited to the specific needs of the fair. The new fairgrounds will be called the Arenac County Events and Agricultural Center and the new site is 54 acres located off US-23, just south of the City of Standish. The proposed design includes an events arena with grand stands, Mid-Way Area, horse arena, animal barns for small animals, horses, cows, sheep, goats, pigs, and dogs, playground, central pavilion, parking, and a campground with over 100 spaces.

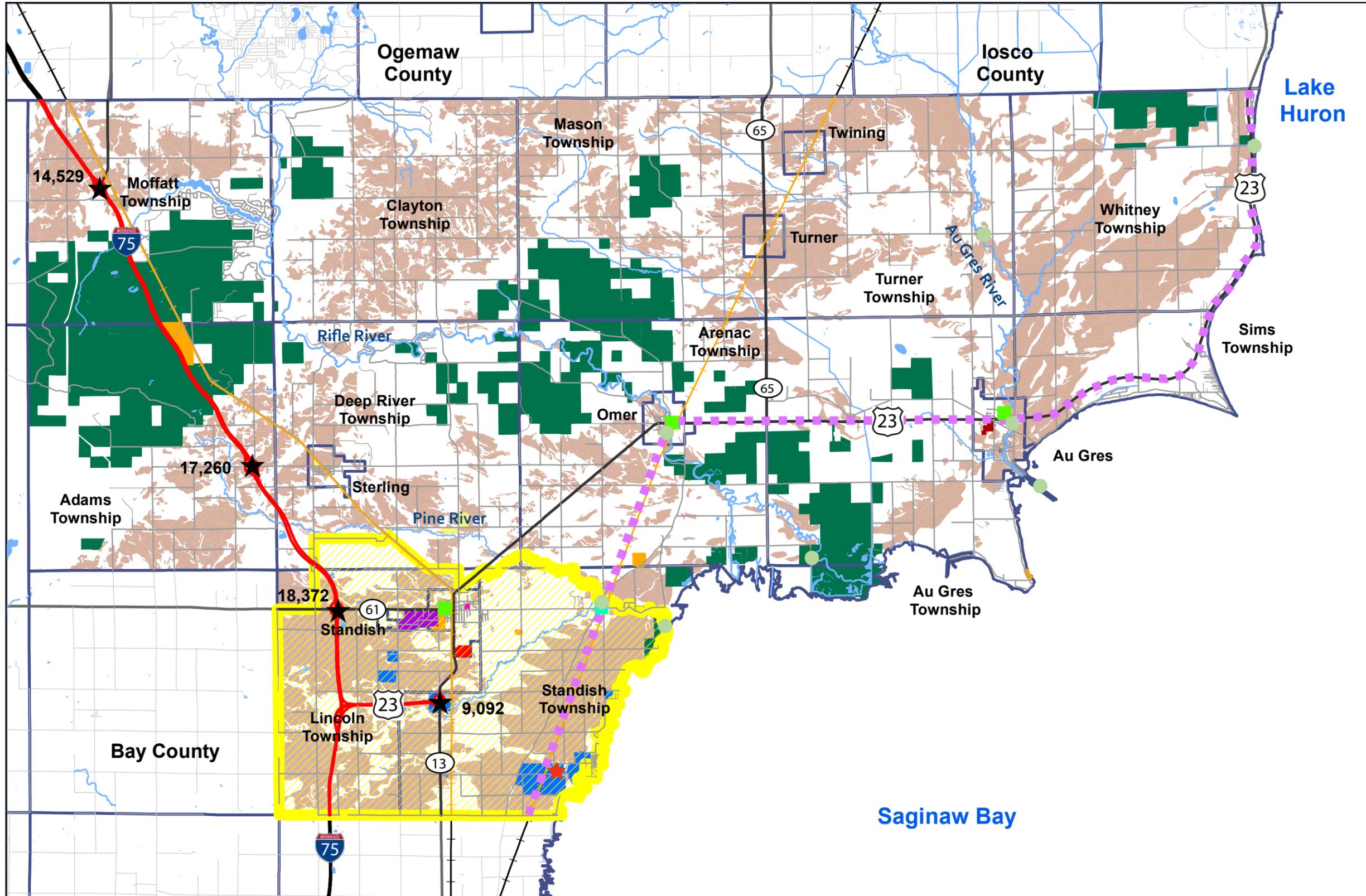
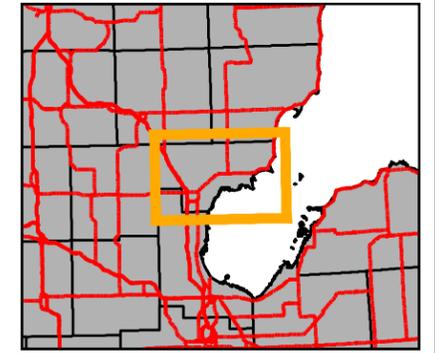
The Arenac County Events and Agricultural Center will also offer a space for various types of other events. The Sales Pavilion will offer vendors a place to sell their products at organized events, and will double as a Farmer's Market. The multi-use event center will be home to a commercial kitchen, and will be able to accommodate events up to 400 – 500 people, such as wedding receptions, bridal and baby showers, graduation and anniversary parties, and other such events. The Arenac County Events and Agricultural Center will also have the capacity to host special outdoor events such as concerts, equestrian events, and other such events.



# MAP 13 - ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES ARENAC COUNTY, MICHIGAN

Source:  
Michigan Geographic Data Library

AREA MAP  
NOT TO SCALE



## LEGEND

- Public Access Points
- Libraries
- Bay-Arenac ISD Living & Learning Center
- ★ Saginaw Eagles Landing Casino
- ★ ADT
- - - Proposed Iron Belle Trail
- County Parks
- State Owned Recreation Areas
- Arenac-Sims Schools
- Arenac Community Center
- Standish-Sterling Schools
- Opportunity Zone
- Standish Industrial Park
- Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe
- Future Fairgrounds
- Prime farmland
- Prime farmland, if drained

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Date September 2020

# Plan Implementation

The Arenac County Planning Commission has discussed and examined issues regarding the future of the County, in addition to receiving valuable input from County residents in the form of a public survey that was specific to this Master Plan and designed to address the range of issues and various concerns confronting the County.

As a result, the Planning Commission has compiled a complete, carefully prepared document that represents the data, efforts, and collective thoughts of Arenac County residents. This Master Plan is only the beginning of a program of action for the next 10 to 20 years. Because the future well-being of Arenac County depends upon rational, coordinated action, the County stands ready to meet with any person or group interested in the future development of the area. The County will be available to help and guide those who need advice or wish to be part of the Master Plan when acted upon.

Carrying out the Master Plan is a task which is led by County officials and the Planning Commission but is also dependent upon every responsible citizen of the County. By working together, Arenac County will continue to be a desirable, attractive, convenient, and welcoming community. The following section discusses strategies the County can implement over the next 5 years and the ways in which they can be used to ensure that the goals of this Plan are met.

## IMPLEMENTATION: COORDINATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The key to a well-planned community is the actual day-to-day use of planning documents, like this Master Plan. It is imperative that the Plan be available to County staff, elected and appointed officials, as well as business owners, developers, stakeholders from the region, and the general public.



The implementation of this Master Plan depends on its continual use by the Planning Commission and the Board of Commissioners. In its best form, implementation of this Plan will result in the achievement of the goals. Implementation is often the most difficult portion of the planning process because, while the intentions of the County, its residents, and stakeholders are clear, the legal ways and available planning tools are often not.

## Regional Coordination

Development, growth, and changes in each Arenac County municipality will affect the quality of life and growth within the entire County. Community needs and resources cannot be managed effectively in silos such as a City, Village, or Township. All of the communities in the County are interrelated and effectively

addressing shared challenges requires planning that crosses local government borders and considers a larger geographic scale.

Intergovernmental cooperation is key in implementing effective strategies that advance the County. The importance of coordinated planning efforts is highlighted in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, which created an avenue for coordination via the requirement that each unit of government who is preparing a plan to notify all neighboring or adjacent communities at the beginning of the planning process. Communities must also notify their regional planning agency, utilities, railroads, and governmental agencies within the municipality. These entities are also required to receive notice of the 63-day review period.

The Planning Enabling Act also calls for coordination by requiring any plans developed by local municipalities be reviewed by the County Planning Commission for consistency with the County Master Plan and the plans of the other communities within the County. Townships must also provide the County Planning Commission with a copy of any new zoning ordinance or zoning ordinance amendments to the County for review. In both cases, the County acts in an advisory capacity and local governments are not required to make any changes based on County comments. But the required review is an opportunity for the County Planning Commission to identify inconsistencies between the local plans and zoning ordinances. With an understanding of all the local plans and ordinances, the County is able to suggest recommendations for consistent planning and zoning across local boundaries. The County Planning Commission can take on a leadership role in coordinated planning efforts, however, the responsibility for coordinated land use regulations and policy decisions lies with the local governments.

Another coordinated planning efforts within the County is the Hazard Mitigation Plan. This is a County-wide planning effort undertaken by the Emergency Management personnel who analyze the potential for natural and man-made hazards and implement policies to reduce the impact of hazards or prepare for disasters. The County is currently in the process of updating their hazard mitigation plan.

## Communication and Community Engagement

Input from the public is a critical portion of this master plan. Goals and priorities based on information identified by the public help build consensus and are easier to implement in the future. Realistic goals and policies give developers, investors, stakeholders, and decision-makers a clear vision on priorities and change in the County so they can tailor projects to meet those goals. Additionally, if the local governments know what type of projects the community will support, they can shape their programs and policies to fit those ideas.



In Michigan, local governments must provide opportunities for the public to speak on planning and zoning matters. However, effective communication extends beyond what is required by law. While it can be challenging to get meaningful public input via traditional methods like monthly meetings, there are many other alternatives a community can implement to engage with their residents. If a community takes a proactive approach to engagement that goes beyond the required public hearing requirements, they will have more

success in engaging their constituents. Other types of engagement could include focus groups, stakeholder interviews, online surveys, or social media, design charettes, or newsletters. In the route for a proactive outreach campaign, the County can be a leader by example for the local municipalities. For the update of this master plan, the County hosted an online survey which was extremely successful and had over 500 responses, they also distributed paper copies of the survey to key areas. The County used social media to advertise the survey and provide updates on the project status, and the County hosted a day of stakeholder interviews. Where local officials and community members spoke with County staff about their priorities and vision for the future of Arenac County. In the future, the local municipalities can reach out to the County for guidance on a public outreach campaign and the County could help coordinate those efforts.

### Community Partnerships

Successful planning efforts must consider opportunities to engage in partnerships with other governmental and non-governmental agencies alike. While some of the goals of the master plan may be addressed through local and County policies or ordinances, many may only be accomplished through participation with non-governmental partners. Partners could include natural resources organizations, schools, non-profits, regional agencies, the Tribe, or citizen groups. By working with local organizations outreach into the community is easier, the work is more efficient, and there are more avenues for funding.

With limited resources and staffing at the County and local government levels, community partnerships will be essential in plan implementation. As the County has the most resources, they can be the authority to help assist with coordination when creating effective community partners.

### Economic Development Planning

Economic development is a regional planning effort that requires a much larger scope than other traditional planning efforts. Jobs, development opportunities, and the labor market extend out past local jurisdictions. They are often considerations based on the regional capacity which is why successful economic development planning occurs at a higher level than local government. To be truly effective economic development will consider workforce training, housing, and potential properties for development across the region and coordinate those efforts between communities for effective implementation. Economic development strategies that cross local government boundaries can help communities attract new investment, support local business operations, and create a competitive economy with more business options and a larger variety of services.

Arenac County already has an economic development corporation in place which makes the County the ideal agency to continue to spearhead economic development efforts. Throughout the public outreach campaign for this Master Plan, it is clear that the community stakeholders and public members think an active and fully funded EDC will be the key to Arenac County's success in the future. The EDC can spearhead projects for industrial growth in the interior of the County, market the County as the great tourism destination it is, and also work with local utilities to upgrade the County infrastructure, especially internet access.



## Identifying and Pursuing Capital Improvements

According to state law, the County can form and implement a capital improvements program (CIP). Given the reality of limited available funding at any time, and if the various County departments would collaboratively, prioritize specific projects, and create implementation schedules, the process for long-range planning would be a coordinated effort. A Capital Improvements Program which serves as a schedule for implementing public capital improvements, which acknowledges current and anticipated demands, and which recognizes present and potential financial resources available to the County, could be regularly implemented by the various departments in the County. Long-range programming of public improvements should prioritize projects on the basis of community need, be developed within the County's financial constraints, be based upon a sound financial plan, and allow for program flexibility. Per the Planning Act, the Planning Commission would be the coordinating arm working with the various agencies in this process. The Planning Commission should also continually evaluate community conditions and development factors, and continually review proposed improvements and related expenditures. With a clear understanding of the development and land use changes in the County, the Planning Commission could review projects to assure conformity with the Master Plan and make recommendations regarding prioritizing projects and methods of financing.

## Grant Opportunities to Support Proposed Capital Improvements

This Master Plan can be used to identify potential funding sources to support proposed capital improvement projects, such as grant and loan programs to help fund priorities. At the Federal level, there is the Housing and Community Facilities Programs, the Public Works and Economic Development Program, Rural Business Enterprise Grants, and the USDA Rural Development Water and Wastewater Program, to name a few. At the State level, a funding source may be the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, which offers grants from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, and the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy, (DEGLE) State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF/DWRF). Finally, the Michigan Department of Transportation also administers Federal funds appropriated under the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (Public Law 112-141, MAP-21).



## Plan Updates

Master planning should be a continuous process. The objectives, policies, and recommended actions are based on the community's understanding of today's problems, technology and implementation procedures. A plan review and update procedure are necessary to address changes in community values, living patterns and perception. Therefore, the Plan will be monitored annually, updated periodically, and evaluated at a minimum of every five (5) years. The only way to make a plan truly work is to use the plan, to reference it, and to correct it or change it when it is not accurately reflecting current changes and conditions.

The stakeholders in the monitoring and update process should include the Planning Commission, County Board of Commissioners, staff, and a representative sample of interested citizens. Just as citizen involvement was an

integral part of the process that culminated the Plan, it continues to be necessary if the Plan is to remain relevant to the aspirations and needs of the community. Representatives from the schools, business and development communities, and other public agencies and groups concerned with the County should also be included in the review process.

The monitoring process, intended to be conducted annually, involves assessing factors such as socioeconomic data, development activity, changes in technology, and indicators of public opinion. An evaluation of the relevancy of the Plan in light of changing conditions is performed, and the results of the monitoring are reported in the Planning Commission's Annual Report. When the monitoring process reveals changes in the community to a degree that seriously impacts the relevance of the Plan, the Planning Commission will suggest a Plan update. The update is intended to address only those aspects of the Plan found to be outdated and no longer relevant.

Updates will be performed as needed, indicated through the monitoring process. At five-year intervals, a thorough review of the Plan will be performed to evaluate its effectiveness. The main feature of this review would be a study of all the action recommendations. Each recommendation will be examined for continuing relevance and success in implementation. The evaluation will involve two considerations. First, the effectiveness of the technique by which the recommendations were implemented will be examined. Second the action itself will be studied to determine whether the action achieved the desired objective. Those recommended actions not implemented will also be reviewed for continuing relevance and probability of implementation. This review will help the Planning Commission adjust the Plan to better achieve the goals and objectives, implement County policies, and maintain the credibility of the Plan.



# Appendix A:

PUBLIC INPUT RESULTS

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# **Arenac County Stakeholder Interview Summary**

This document summarizes the process and results of the stakeholder interviews with the Arenac County community members in preparation to update to the Arenac County Master Plan and Parks and Recreation Plan. This is one of several community outreach activities that is being undertaken for the master planning and recreation planning process.

## **Stakeholder Interviews**

Consultants for the Master Plan update interviewed community leaders, decisionmakers, and representatives of organizations and businesses in Arenac County. The purpose of the meetings was to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to identify major issues, ideas, and concerns facing Arenac County. A total of eight in-person interviews were conducted on November 7, 2019, see the section below for a list of interviewee names and organizations.

Although all residents, employees, and visitors, are “stakeholders” in the County’s long-term future, these initial meetings targeted individuals representing a diversity of interests and organizations to explore a range of issues and needs. The individual/small group nature of these discussions enabled participants to be more candid and in-depth than they otherwise might be in a larger community forum. Moreover, discussions could be focused on the topics important to each individual. The stakeholder meetings are one component of the larger community visioning process, which includes a project website and a community survey.

## **Interview Participants**

- Dale Wiltsie, City Manger of Au Gres
- Darren Kroczaleski, Standish Sterling School District Superintendent
- Lee Ann Fischer, Operator of Housing Consulting Services, LLC
- Jeffrey Collier, Au Gres Sims School District Superintendent
- Gerald Nelson –City Manger of Standish
- Blair Dyer, Road Commission Manager
- Brian Smith, Economic Development Director, Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe
- Curt Hillman – Economic Development Corporation, President

## **Key Takeaways**

- Arenac County is a recreation haven for almost all adventurer types. This is the County’s strongest asset and economic driver, however, more needs to be done to focus and advertise all the opportunities Arenac County has to offer. Almost all the traffic traveling north on the east side of the State must drive through the County. In the future it will be crucial to draw in these travelers and make Arenac County a State-wide recreation destination.
- There are two very distinct population groups the County, the year-round residents and the recreation focused visitors. The local municipalities have the challenge of catering to the very different needs and service expectations of these two important segments of the County population. The County and local governments need to strike a healthy balance between the groups.
- The current economic development efforts in the County need to be expanded. The program needs a full-time director which will be essential to Arenac County’s success.

- A key focus of Recreation development in the County in the future should focus on non-motorized trail development, connecting Arenac County to the Iron Belle Trail and connecting the various communities in the County via non-motorized transportation routes.
- Arenac County has two strong school districts that offer full-time residents the option to choose the type of program that is best for their children. The schools are a cornerstone for the local municipalities and provide a strong sense of community. The County is lacking a community college presence that would help train the local residents and keep them in the area.
- The Tribe is an important entity in Arenac County and is working to expand their properties and the economic development opportunities available in the County. While the casino is generally its own entity, the 2% grants they provide to the local governments are very helpful and appreciated.

### **Ideas and Issues by Key Topics**

#### **Recreation:**

A central theme in the majority of the interviews was how important recreation is to Arenac County. The main recreation the County has to offer is water-based, but there are also many other options in the large swathes of wooded land in the County. A significant recreation issue in Arenac County is the lack of public beach access, the County has 20 miles of shoreline with about 200 yards of beach. However, Arenac County does not have large sandy beaches, the coast is much more marshy, and is excellent habitat for waterfowl fishing. If Arenac County wants to be successful in the future, it needs to protect its natural resources and clean up the watersheds and the Bay.

Over the past 5 years, the County has seen a distinct change in the type of visitors to the area and a change in the type of recreation they are looking for. It used to be that 90% of the visitors to the County came for the fishing, now it seems to be a 60% fisherman and 40% family split. When families visit, there is no beach for them to access the water. Developing areas in the County where the public and visitors can access the water needs to be a priority for the near future. Amenities like a beach, splash pad, pavilion, kayak launch are going to be very important. The DNR boat launch in Au Gres is the busiest boat launch in Saginaw Bay, and there is a possible opportunity for another public beach next to the ramp. However, this is state property and the County needs to pursue this option with the DNR. Additionally, the City recently acquired a state harbor and is working to rehabilitate it for future recreation center in downtown Au Gres.

Finally, supporting trails in the County is also very important, routing the Iron Belle Trail through the County will bring a lot of people in. Supporting other local trail projects is also important such as a potential path between Standish and Sterling.

#### **Economic Development:**

There is a general feeling the Arenac County needs to expand on their current economic development efforts and really push the County as a great place to live. There are so many opportunities for potential residents, they just don't realize what the County has to offer. There should be a focus on enhancing the quality of life and attracting young people to the area. There are several examples across the Country of very rural areas that have marketed themselves to

attract young families by offering a unique lifestyle, affordable land, and a location close enough for commuting to larger cities and airports. The County has great potential for this as well. Another area of great potential is the Opportunity Zone in the south section of the County near the casino. The tribe hopes to capitalize on this opportunity and spur investment in this area. The County needs a full-time dedicated economic director, a trained workforce, and a community college system to help train individuals.

#### Collaboration:

There was a strong theme of collaboration between all communities and agencies throughout most of the interviews. The stakeholders view the County in sectors, in which each area has an expertise to capitalize on. For example, Au Gres should not compete with Standish for industry and employment. Standish has the area and infrastructure already in place to support these types of businesses and the other communities in the County can supplement the Standish workforce for new industry/business. Additionally, Standish has the major services for County residents like the courthouse and hospital. These are important sectors that support Arenac County and it is good they are focused together. Comparatively, Au Gres is a tourist destination. The City focuses on recreation, tourism, services, and has a housing stock that consists of larger more seasonally dependent homes. This nature of the City of Au Gres lends itself to supporting tourism and recreation industries and the City is focusing on capitalizing on those assets. The more rural areas of the County should also focus on recreation. The County has almost every natural resource available for residents and visitors to take advantage of, and the remaining Cities, Townships, and Villages should support recreation. Collaboration between the communities will lead to a successful Arenac County as a whole.

#### Housing:

The housing in Arenac County is very diverse and is heavily characterized by location. There are full-time resident homes located throughout the community and heavy concentrations of seasonal homes along the lakefront, rivers, and in the wooded areas of the County. Generally, the full-time residents live in and around the Cities and Villages. Standish has a housing stock characterized by smaller older homes for the full-time resident. Standish also has a very high occupancy rate, there are almost no homes available on the market. This is a challenge for Standish and the local businesses because the area is growing, but there are no homes available for new residents. The only places available for expansion in Standish are along the edge of town and around the old elementary school. Au Gres is another location with high desirability for homes, for both full-time residents and seasonal residents. Any residents looking for acreage, must go out into the rural townships away from the population centers. The County is similar to the majority of the Country in that it lacks middle housing options. There are very few opportunities for young families because they cannot afford the housing in the County. Due to the seasonal nature of the housing stock, the market is only just beginning to come back, but there has been positive signs in the recent past.

#### Transportation:

US 23 is a very important transportation corridor in the County, this is how most people move through the region and it doesn't serve Standish and Au Gres in the best manner. Au Gres has the widest portion of US 23 in the State. It's width is a real concern for the pedestrian scale of Au Gres. Additionally, Standish would like to work with MDOT on their upcoming US 23 project to do a complete redesign of the road and focus on sidewalks and streetscaping. The business

community would like to participate in the design process and work to develop a streetscape downtown.

The County Road Commission is in a good place with funding, the County has a millage and most Townships also have their own millage. The Road Commission does an asset management plan every 3 – 5 years and they focus improvements to all of the roads, but mostly to the important County corridors. They would like to coordinate projects with the local communities to use resources in an efficient manner. The County focuses on Old 76, Mapleridge, and Arenac State Road. Additionally, the Road Commission is supportive of non-motorized pathways along County roads. Most of the roads do not meet state non-motorized transportation guidelines, but the ones that do are good opportunities for pathways. In three years to Road Commission plans to rebuild Standish to Sterling on Old 76, this road has a 150' right-of-way and is a good opportunity for collaboration to build a path. Some challenges the Road Commission is currently facing are the significant increase of traffic due to the casino and ongoing issues with road ends that abut the waterfront. The Road Commission is working with the tribe on possible transportation projects in the future to better serve the traffic in the area around the casino. The County lacks strong public access to the shoreline, and one way to provide that access is leaving the vacated road rights-of-way open to public use along the shoreline. However, the Road Commission often faces issues of encroachment with property owners on either side of the right-of-way.

#### Marketing:

The County needs to strengthen marketing to show the rest of the State what Arenac County has to offer. The County also needs to rebrand and focus on what quality of life potential can be in the area. Arenac County is 45 minutes from the tri-cities area and close to two international airports. Anyone driving north on the east side of the State has to drive through Standish and the people who continue on 23 all drive through a beautiful section of the County. In addition to these elements the County has almost any recreation opportunity residents and visitors could want to participate in, aside from downhill skiing, and the most beautiful shoreline in the Saginaw Bay. There is no advertisement to encourage visitors or tourism. The County must capitalize on all of these elements and the people already funneling through area. Generally, they also felt the local businesses and residents could work to push good ideas and activities on the visitors. Could implement a training program and seminar that teaches locals how to become effective marketing tools for Arenac County. County undersells the opportunities available here.

#### Education:

There are two main school districts in the County, Standish-Sterling and Au Gres-Sims School Districts, both districts are very good and offer significantly different education opportunities for the students who are enrolled. The third district, Arenac-Eastern, in the County is currently closing and the other two districts will absorb those students. Schools are the main rallying point for the Arenac County community and through all the ups and downs of the economy schools remain a constant. It is important to the community and the districts that they work together to make education strong in Arenac County.

The Standish-Sterling District has an early education childhood development center that focuses on preschool – kindergarten. The oldest child in that building is 5 and it provides an environment that parents favor for their young children. The district also has the secondary

education center with AP classes, metal and woodshop, and can send students to the local career center where they can advance those skills and even participate in a robotics program. This district also has a strong focus on after school programs. The district busses students to the local community center after school which provides hot meals, has organized activities to get kids to learn a new skill, play a sport, and build in-person relationships with their peers. Provides a strong sense of community for the small town/rural district.

The Au-Gres-Sims district is different from Standish-Sterling in that they are a destination district. They are a public district that has a private school feel, with small classes, an enclosed campus, a focus on high-tech and global opportunities and offers students the ability to dual enroll in high school and community college. They also send students to the career center and all of the students are in one area. Due to their size, they have focused on differentiating themselves from the other districts in the region.

### Tribe/Casino

The 2% grants given out by the Tribe are exceedingly appreciated by the local municipalities. All interviews who have benefited from a grant stated they were so helpful for the whole area. The Casino is a great draw for tourism in the region and really helps the City of Standish due to proximity. The Tribe hopes that the expansion of the hotel will allow a greater profit and then the tribe can give more back to the local communities in those successful grant programs.

The tribe is trying to develop jobs in Arenac County, but they have faced staffing problems. They have created full-time positions with benefits, but there are not enough people to fill those positions. They have a workforce development program for the casino. Additionally, the Tribe gives money to the schools for computers and science, in hopes that the students can more easily access opportunities and return to benefit the community as adults.

Recently the tribe installed a substation and plans to be its own utility. They will buy power directly from the grid as a market participant and use energy to drive development in the casino area.

### Other Thoughts

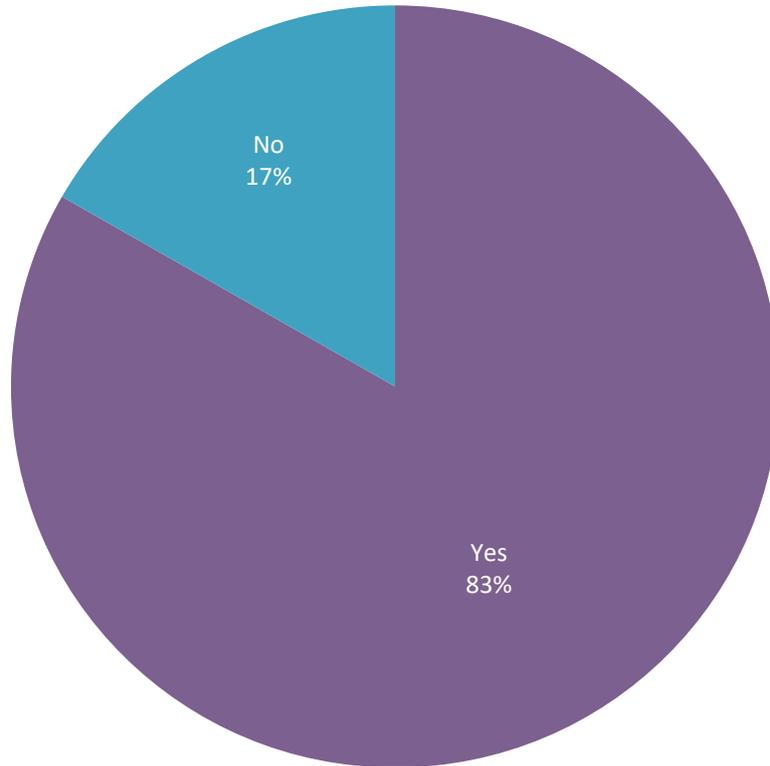
The County is beginning to have a serious issue with flooding and the high lake levels. Sims and Whitney Townships are losing a lot of shoreline and the river is also causing a lot of flooding issues in Au Gres. There are cottages so close to the waters edge they could begin to fall in. Lakefront and riverfront protection is important.

Fairgrounds move is going to be very beneficial for the Standish community, and the existing prison is a possible asset that could really effect the Standish economy in the future, if it were to reopen.

# Arenac County Community Input Survey

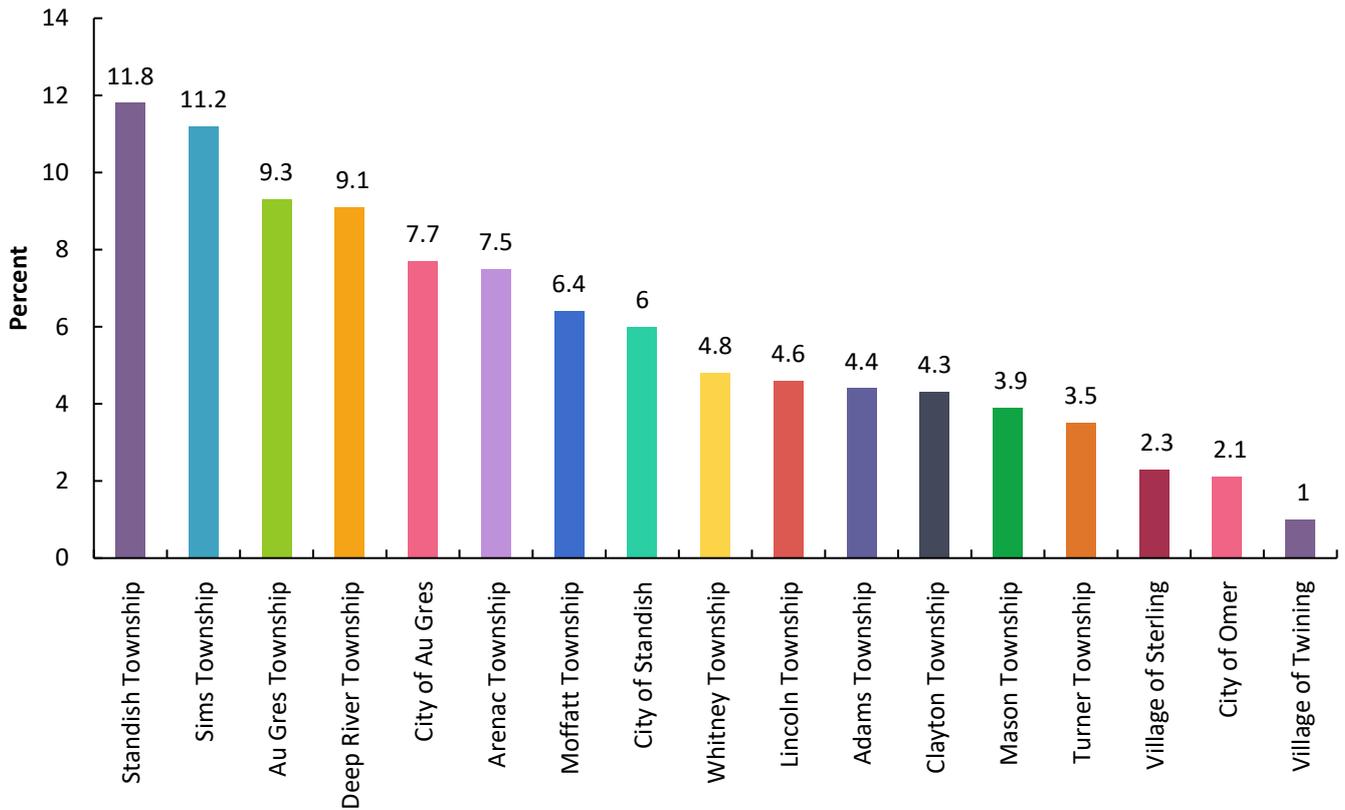
Responses - 651

## 1. Do you live in Arenac County?



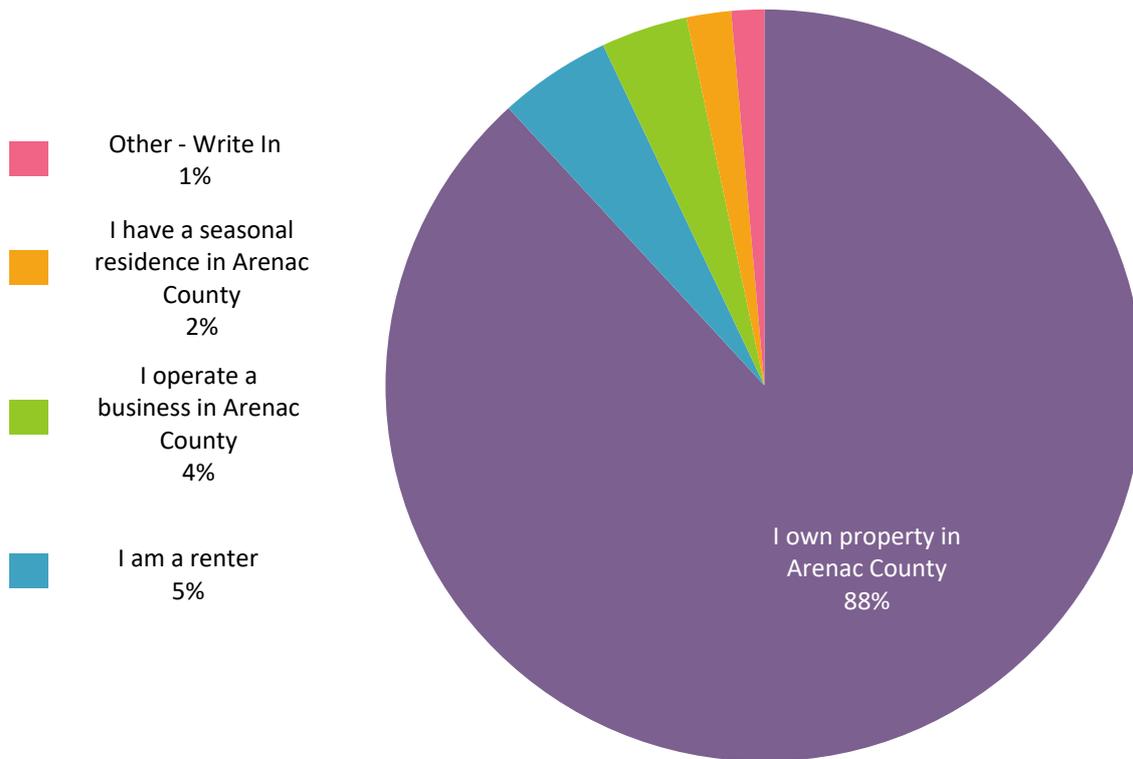
Value	Percent	Count
Yes	83.3%	518
No	16.7%	104
	Totals	622

## 2. Where do you live?



Value	Percent
Standish Township	11.8%
Sims Township	11.2%
Au Gres Township	9.3%
Deep River Township	9.1%
City of Au Gres	7.7%
Arenac Township	7.5%
Moffatt Township	6.4%
City of Standish	6.0%
Whitney Township	4.8%
Lincoln Township	4.6%
Adams Township	4.4%
Clayton Township	4.3%
Mason Township	3.9%
Turner Township	3.5%
Village of Sterling	2.3%
City of Omer	2.1%
Village of Twining	1.0%

### 3.What is your relationship to Arenac County?

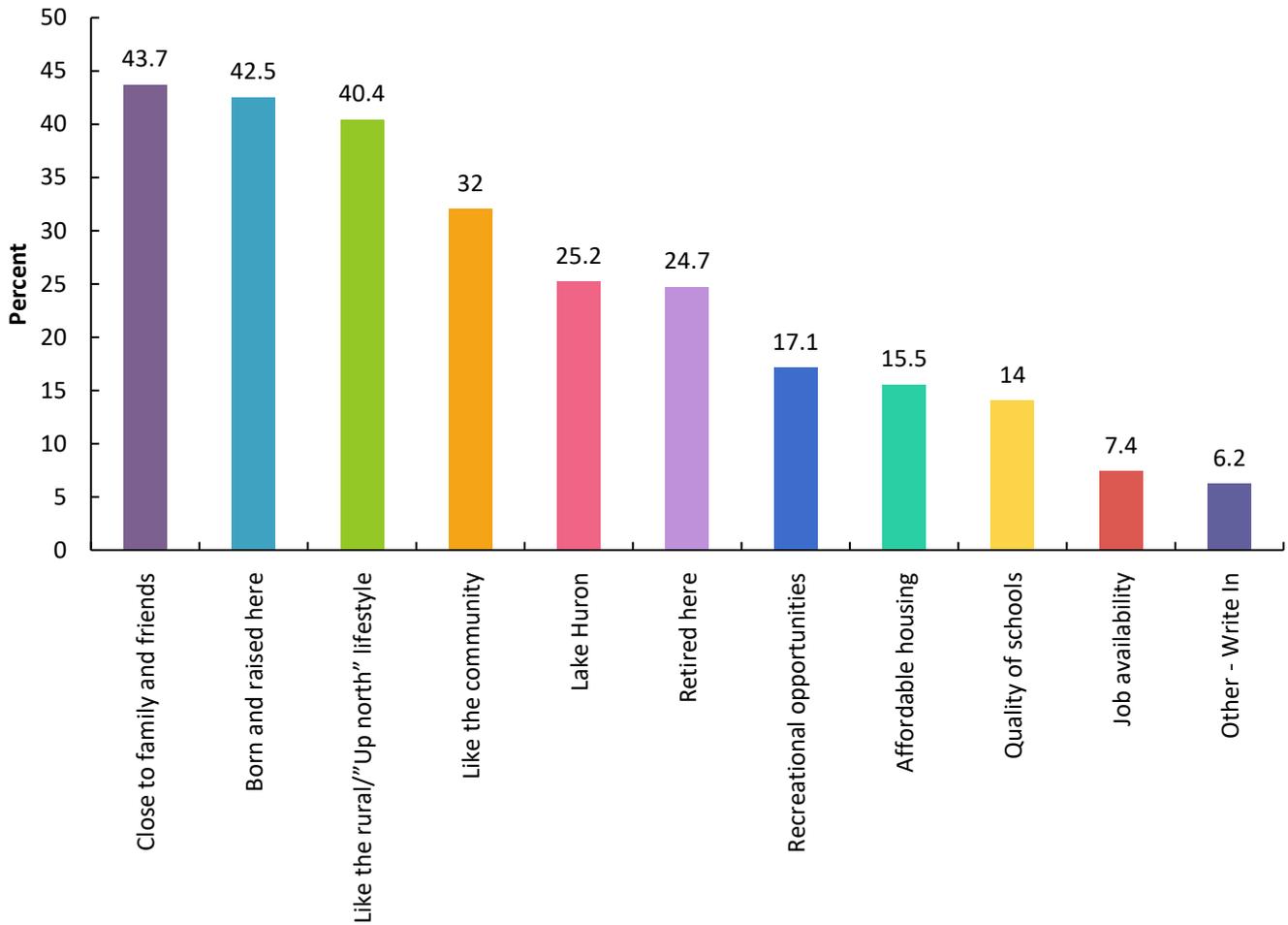


Value	Percent
I own property in Arenac County	88.2%
I am a renter	4.8%
I operate a business in Arenac County	3.7%
I have a seasonal residence in Arenac County	1.9%
Other - Write In	1.4%

#### What is your relationship to Arenac County? Other – Write In Responses

Other - Write In
Also operate a business in Arenac County
I have a second home there
I own property, reside in, operate a business in and out of standish
Live and work in the county
Live in one of my husband's parents' house
Live with a property owner
Own property and operate business

#### 4. Why do you live in Arenac County (please check all that apply)?

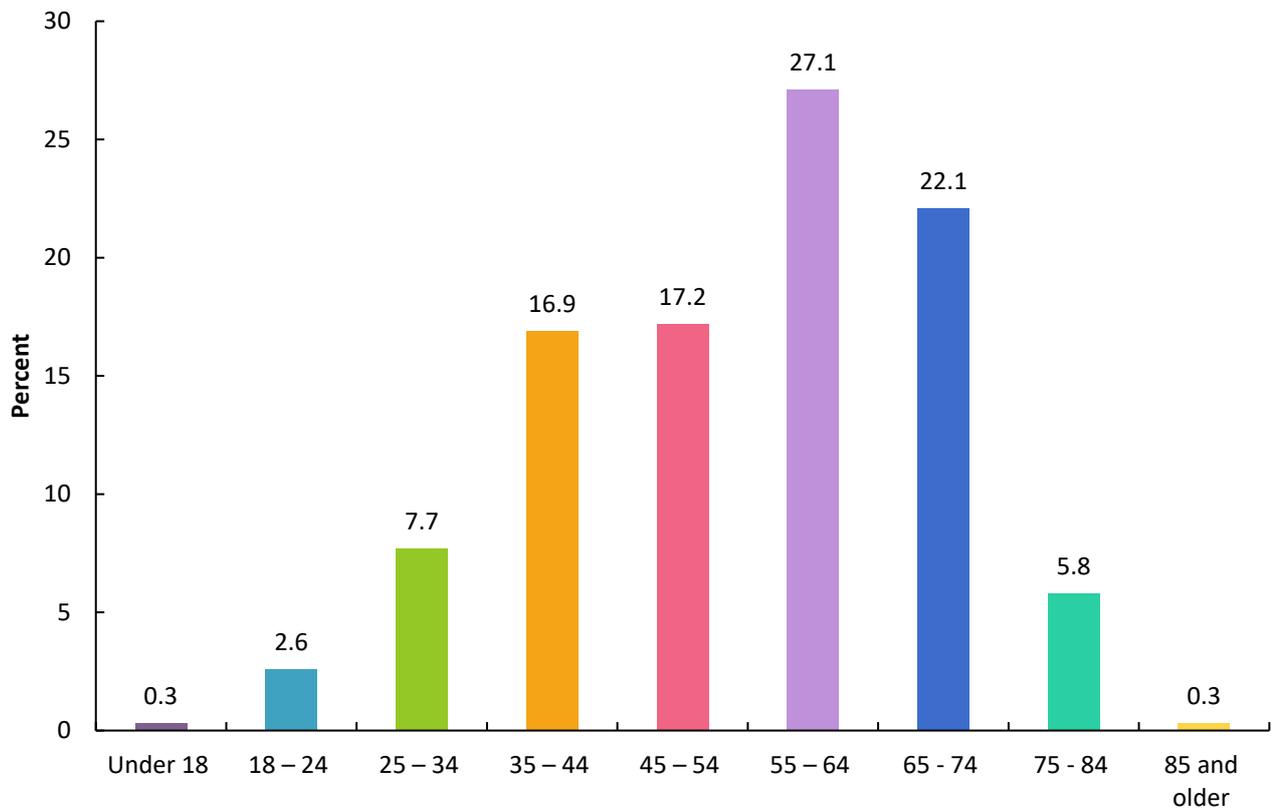


Value	Percent
Close to family and friends	43.7%
Born and raised here	42.5%
Like the rural/'Up north' lifestyle	40.4%
Like the community	32.0%
Lake Huron	25.2%
Retired here	24.7%
Recreational opportunities	17.1%
Affordable housing	15.5%
Quality of schools	14.0%
Job availability	7.4%
Other - Write In	6.2%

**Why do you live in Arenac County? Other – Write In Responses**

5th generation farmer
Affordability
All of the above
All the above
But our back roads are terrible, must address the roads people who live here use, better for areas to improve
Can't move away right now
Family homestead
Farm
I inherited the family cottage!
I like living on the Rifle River
I like the availability to the Huron National Forest, Au Suable River
I'm Stupid
Inherited a house
It was my summer home growing up.
Live and own 2 businesses
Married a resident
Married in
Married my husband and that's where he was born and raised
Moved here 30 years ago due to job but didn't know what a dump it was.
Moved here for a job and didn't know what we were getting into.
Situational
Started a business, married a local
This is where my business has
Transferred here for my job in 1994 and then retired here.
Wanted to start a small farm
Was close to our jobs at the time but not now , have to travel 75 miles one way to work .
Was raised here
Was raised here, left and came back. This area is not convenient for my job but love the secluded woods and water where I live.
central location to family and work at the time we purchased. Property was in an area close to town and schools.
inherited property

## 5.What is your age?



Value	Percent	Count
Under 18	0.3%	2
18 - 24	2.6%	16
25 - 34	7.7%	48
35 - 44	16.9%	105
45 - 54	17.2%	107
55 - 64	27.1%	168
65 - 74	22.1%	137
75 - 84	5.8%	36
85 and older	0.3%	2
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>621</b>

**6.Regarding the following categories, how do you feel Arenac County has changed in the past 10 years?**

	<b>Much Better</b>	<b>Better</b>	<b>Same</b>	<b>Worse</b>	<b>Much Worse</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Aesthetics/Blight	13 2.8%	119 5.4%	181 38.6%	117 24.9%	17 3.6%	22 4.7%	469
Business Development	10 2.1%	115 24.3%	112 23.7%	183 38.7%	44 9.3%	9 1.9%	473
County Services	4 0.9%	86 18.4%	241 51.5%	69 14.7%	13 2.8%	55 11.8%	468
Education	19 4.1%	117 25.3%	162 35.0%	79 17.1%	25 5.4%	61 13.2%	463
Housing Choices	7 1.5%	63 13.7%	242 52.5%	82 17.8%	16 3.5%	51 11.1%	461
Medical Services	18 3.9%	159 34.3%	172 37.1%	67 14.5%	17 3.7%	30 6.5%	463
Parks and Recreation	12 2.6%	159 34.3%	203 43.8%	60 13.0%	9 1.9%	20 4.3%	463
Police Services	16 3.5%	91 19.7%	235 50.9%	58 12.6%	20 4.3%	42 9.1%	462
Public Safety/Emergency Services	12 2.6%	111 23.9%	240 51.6%	36 7.7%	13 2.8%	53 11.4%	465
Road Conditions/Infrastructure	12 2.6%	100 21.6%	116 25.0%	149 32.1%	79 17.0%	8 1.7%	464
Traffic	4 0.9%	37 8.0%	249 53.5%	135 29.0%	28 6.0%	12 2.6%	465
Overall Quality of Life	5 1.1%	104 22.3%	278 59.7%	60 12.9%	7 1.5%	12 2.6%	466

## 7. Considering the future of Arenac County, how important are the following issues?

	Very important	Important	Needs to be considered, but not a priority	Not Important	No Opinion	Responses
Access to lakes and rivers	197 42.1%	153 32.7%	97 20.7%	15 3.2%	6 1.3%	468
Agriculture	188 40.6%	206 44.5%	49 10.6%	10 2.2%	10 2.2%	463
Economic development/Job creation	307 65.7%	143 30.6%	12 2.6%	2 0.4%	3 0.6%	467
Education options	258 55.4%	161 34.5%	30 6.4%	7 1.5%	10 2.1%	466
Housing choices	140 30.0%	224 48.0%	82 17.6%	12 2.6%	9 1.9%	467
Infrastructure expansion/maintenance (water, sewer, etc.)	172 36.8%	197 42.1%	76 16.2%	13 2.8%	10 2.1%	468
Medical Care	232 50.0%	190 40.9%	38 8.2%	1 0.2%	3 0.6%	464
Preservation, protection, and enhancement of natural resources	224 48.0%	163 34.9%	71 15.2%	8 1.7%	1 0.2%	467
Preservation of scenic character	191 41.1%	170 36.6%	87 18.7%	12 2.6%	5 1.1%	465
Tourism/Seasonal economy	224 48.0%	168 36.0%	59 12.6%	13 2.8%	3 0.6%	467
Transportation choices - Walking and biking	118 25.3%	159 34.1%	151 32.4%	33 7.1%	5 1.1%	466
Transportation choices - Bus	68 14.5%	182 38.9%	158 33.8%	46 9.8%	14 3.0%	468

## 8.Are there any other issues you believe to be important for the future of Arenac County?

Response
Availability to receive gas for every home availability
County needs to consider better spending of tax dollars need to understand budget and have better priorities
Arenac county needs to try and be a destination, and not a gas and food stop.
Need more jobs to keep people in our area instead of moving away to get good jobs to support them an family.
Community building activities; Art, music, craft, hobby, athletic/recreational interactive opportunities
Not right now.
I would like to see a resolution passed for Moffatt township residents (Forest Lake) to allow golf carts on neighborhood streets.
Too much nepotism in the SS schools. Too many married couples in that school district ! Highest paid employees in Arenac county are in that school district and county employees wages and benefits are poorly paid. Embarrassing to say the least.
Pinconning has a boys and girls club for kids after school and something for them to do without getting into trouble , Standish and could use something like that . There are no jobs or new businesses opening , and not many good places to eat or stores to shop in ,in any of the towns , the county should encourage more choices of stores to the area , everyone has to travel an 1/2 hour to the city to have access to stores . So many of our small towns don't have much to offer , no one wants to live and pay taxes to a city or county that has nothing - they move and the area loses tax revenue , or because of no jobs , many residents just stay poor and are dependent on the welfare system , The county stays poor overall .
The speed limit on m65 from 23 north has drastically changed things. I feel it has created unsafe driving conditions, as people now travel 65 mph in that stretch and those turning onto dirt roads from m65 have trouble getting on/off safely. I also feel the lack of ARTS in our schools is hurting our kids. Lack of jobs makes it near impossible for those left in the area to live
Better access I recreational lakes and rivers go ALL one levels and get some jobs with better medical care here so no one has to drive 40 miles for services. This just adds further expense having to travel so far for medical care.
Mosquito control
To have people in the system that are fair minded and know what they are doing. That's not the case now a days. Seems like they do what they want and you pay the price. I worked in Standish for many years and I would NEVER live in are arenac county
I feel Standish which ls the largest town,and surrounding towns of Arenac are becoming a ghost town atmosphere. Our business are redundant for such a small community. We dont need more gas stations, family dollars or auto parts stores. So many of our businesses dont have small town charm, they look run down. And they dont support any decent living wage or growth for advancement. There is nothing here to to help the town grow and prosper. It's not quite tourist town because we have no businesses to support this. Our rifle river is becoming a dumping ground. Tubing, kayaking and camping are a great activity but it does nothing for the community. It pads the owners and leaves the rivers full of beer cans, jello shot cups etc. If your in town for say medical services etc and you need to come back in an hour good luck. There is nothing to do but sit. The wages of the area businesses do not allow for people to shop in the area. People avoid family fare for large shopping because it's to expensive, unless forced to like the elderly who dont feel comfortable shopping in the larger town or others with transportation issues. Bring in some more continued education facilities. Bring in businesses to support our tourist industry. Bring in more medical facilities. And lastly our housing is an issue as well for younger people as well. There are no decent places to rent, apartments are limited, homes are few and far between, buying market is not positive. We need our younger generations to stay or come back to possibilities and opportunities. I love this area. It has some beautiful scenery and areas. The rest is falling apart.
Neighborhood watches would be helpful

Love the bike path along 23. If back lot residents lose lake access property values will plunge. (Wallace and Ore)

Don't be afraid to bring a Wal-Mart or Meijer or a save a lot into the community, people need more options, the current grocery store is too expensive I have lived here for decades until I moved thus town is pathetic no place to eat that is, a real restaurant. There are too many auto parts stores we need more restaurants and shopping options Not all people in this town are rich they cannot afford to live there.

The Condition of our local roads throughout the county are horrible and unacceptable it puts our residents in great danger as certain times of the year they are impassable for emergency vehicles .

Fishing brought back , fire department , police slow traffic down through Au Gres , and slow the gravel trains down , start ticketing

Bring back a shopping center!! Close, variety of products and competitive prices

Growth need new stores.

Local shopping options, one can't buy any decent clothing without going a long distance, (but you can get dance lessons). Only 2 pharmacies, nothing recreational, even the county fair has suffered TERRIBLY over the past 20 yrs

Ditching needs to be done in the hole county! To get rid of the backup water!

Being made aware of things that are happening in our county. More communication overall between services like sewer or the gas line as well as places in the county that could house certain type of people. So on.

For the municipalities to work together for the betterment of the county, not for personal gain. Quit with the giving themselves pay raises.

Would be nice to have bike trails. More restaurants and community things to do. For instance pickleball opportunities

No

Everyone has to travel outside of Arenac county to shop for clothing and deals on food.. Need more options so people can stay here and shop and spend their money

New fairgrounds a terrible waste of funds. Should be working harder to be bringing in new job opportunities and housing. Education should be a priority, not schools closing. Need to start looking at the County as a whole, not just tourist, water areas. So much potential but absolutely no effort being put forth to work together.

Keep the sheriff Dept and 911 Dept well funded and Fire Dept's and EMS well funded

Keep working on improving roads

with all the cars that travel thru the county, we have NO draw to get them to stop and spend money.

No.

Additional affordable shopping!

Helping businesses grow

We need more Lake Huron access. Need better restaurant choices and reasons for people to stop going through Standish.

Wkill the phragmites. DNR responsibility because they would not let us do it years ago

Keeping it clear of any toxic dumps and landfills.

I would like to see blight addressed. Rural land owners can be the worst offenders! Letters should be sent to ANYONE that have caved in buildings, junk cars, overgrown weeds etc...

clean up the bligh

I would like to see something like a theater, something where the kids can have something to do besides go to the woods and get high and drunk. There is NOTHING, no bowling alley, no arcade close by. Give people something to DO, HERE in our towns/county.

Therapy options in the area (speech, occupational, and physical therapy for children). Developing a plan for the Arenac Community Center. Developing a plan for Arenac Eastern and the prison. More community activities in Standish, Sterling, Omer, and AuGres.

Clean up all blight along US23, especially in Standish (old Spartan Tire building).

Hoarding needs to stop in houses and yards. Litter signs need to be put up. County needs trash cleaned up, roads need to be safe and cleaned up, more flower plants thru the village of Standish, sterling needs to grow, WE NEED A MEIJERS HERE. FAMILY FARE NEEDS TO GO. Businesses need to be responsible for keeping up their yards. No junk, raceway needs to be cleaned up and reopened!!!! Movie theatre in Shopco would be decent.

No

Is there any committed, countywide ideal of what Arenac County is trying to be known for?

More road improvements. Too many unpaved roads.

Bring a Meijer or Walmart to Standish. We Need them.

Road improvements

Future business breaks for new businesses, that come in. Give them any possible break financially at least first year. So they can grow and stay, small business, turns out to be big business and profitable for community, for bringing funds to our community.

No more land fills

Bring in new businesses. Fast food, shopping. Would help with jobs and the look of the town. Bring in more people to help the economy. There is nothing to see or do.

Need retail like meijer or ALDI or both. Sidewalk improvements for business. Aesthetic improvements. We need to attract a community college or satellite such as SVSU. We need to bring in factories or warehouses or other employers to attract middle class workers. We need this to also stop the brain drain of our kids leaving their hometown,!

Improve street fronts for businesses in Standish.

I'm not happy about the thought of the fair location being changed. The Arenac County fair needs to stay where it has always been and that is right where it is at.

More shopping choices... an all around store like Meijer, Walmart, or Costco. Also Helena leaving Standish is a major blow to the local farmers.

Need rail trails, hiking trails, perhaps at Oasis Park. I travel to a rail trail weekly, and in doing so I go for dinner, and groceries. My money is going outside of the community

No more marijuana grow facilities and less poisoning of the waterways for weed control.arenac county is a nice place to live.

We need more stores meijer or walmart. We dont need gas stations or pizza shops but something that is going to bring people here

I am not sure. Sometimes we only see a need for something when we need it ourselves. But I am happy to support needs that may help others. Often I am not sure what our community has to offer. I live in Bay County. So perhaps mosquito control for Arenac County? I shop, eat and socialize within Arenac County. My children also attend SSC Schools. I also volunteer in Arenac County-mainly Standish. BUT let's not forget Arenac County is not only the City of Standish its Twining, Turner, Alger, AuGres. They blight in Turner is sad.

We need more sit down restaurants also a store where you can purchase clothing or Target or a walmart

1. Jobs at a facility/plant that would pay enough to support a young family. 2. Continued support of the community center 3. Enhanced trades programs for students. 4. Educators from outside the area.

Increase the pay for our law enforcement so that we don't continue to be a revolving door. New guys come in and and leave almost immediately for the next county who pays more. The community doesn't get to build relationships with the staff. Once our seasoned deputies leave, there won't be anyone left who the community knows. It's costs more to continue training new staff than it does to raise pay rates. But this is a commissioner issue.

Corruption of law officials. Keeping a strong agriculture industry and the realization of it being a business. Keeping a strong fair out of the local government hands.

The placement of halfway houses should be regulated. I find it absolutely disgusting that there is a halfway house a block away from a bus stop.

Driving up 33 or m 65 you see all these towns like Hale for instance all decorated with nice side walks and benches. For the amount of traffic that comes through Standish, it seems like we would make it a bigger priority to clean up the town and eventually add sidewalks at the very least when a new business or renovation is done require a new sidewalk be added. I know we can't compete with Frankenmuth but some seasonal decorations would be nice. Make the guy down across from burger king put up a privacy fence if you're going to allow him to have a car lot there and try to motivate spartan tire building to renovate or demolish the building. And the half way house motel or whatever is going on there should be looked into. Homes that have been vacant for more then 3 years should be demolished if the owners don't show decent improvement in the overall preservation of the home/business. Do something to allow a nice sit down restaurant to be established in town and a Kroger or meijer, I would even settle for a Walmart. Though it may hurt a couple small businesses, it also gets people that normally drive through to stop and residents to stop driving to west branch or bay city to shop and go out to eat!

A bike trail would be amazing!

To many people on drugs.

Not that I can think of right now.

-Recycling - needs to be easier (pick up) and free or profitable to encourage use (available at campgrounds too)  
-Affordable/Quality daycare -Developing the Community Center with activities for all ages

We need more walk-in clinics or 24 hour care.

Services like high speed internet. Less than a mile from the traffic light and can't get water,natural gas or internet.

More opportunity for small businesses to come into county. Shop local, support local. We are an urban area and have the ability to have self sustain. Recreation is another important area. We have shorelines, but lack walking trails, biking trails. Promote growth!@!!!!!!!

Improve the fairgrounds and we need some where to hold large gatherings like wedding receptions and banquets and other activities

Ditches that haven't been touched in 20 years...openess between cities and townships

Fix our back roads so people can travel places, we live here pay taxes for Twenty years and IAM taking my money from our wallet to pay for stone to belayed on the road. Yes it's a Seasonal road but funny everybody uses it all year round. We put a lot of time in blowing, grading and removing tree limbs and down trees on VanHorn Rd. between Hammel Beach Rd. and Bessinger Rd. to get to the Transfer Station and recycling bins for two Township's. As a resident here in Whitney Twp. the northern end of Arenac County, we're on the back burner in many areas when coming to road repairs and conditions. Yes our biggest enemy is the rain, but if the proper materials were used it would pay out in the end for everyone. Some people up here get involved with Township's and on boards by Popularity votes and do nothing. I've been there and seen this people from both Township's for over 8 years, the best thing they do is know where to go cash their monthly pay check, it's said. Who ever is above these Township employee's in Arenac County Mr. Arenac County Commissioner, also have forgotten your JOB over looking what's going on with the people who voted you your position, Thank you for your survey Arenac County. Thomas J. Alden

More accessible mental health alcohol recovery programs.

Bike trails throughout the county including Au Gres area

1. We need someone that knows how to actually take care of the dirt roads here. The current people keep using the wrong stone, angles on the blades and speeds of the equipment. Someone needs to go to school for it. 2. We desperately need companies like Wall Mart, Myers, and the like to build in our county. It will bring jobs and more people and more tax revenues, which we need in order to provide the services needed. Progress is going to put some mom and pops out of business. But those folks can not offer better prices, they wont bring in more folks. Would love to see a Dunkin' Donuts, or a White Castle, or a TGIF.... its time to bring us into the 21st century! 3. Its time to give up that sleepy little senior community feel and start building... if done right we can keep the country atmosphere and have the businesses needed. 4. Time to put these propane companies out of business... natural gas, and city water would help everyone in the community's

No more gas stations or car dealerships. Bring in something that is actually useful and helpful for the community. Something more for the kids in the community would be nice too.

Cut back on the marijuana facilities. That is the one reason I will not spend any money in or around Au Gres. I just don't like being around marijuana.

.

I believe that allowing medical marijuana facilities in our country has lowered our quality of life, decreased property values and setting the wrong example for our children and their future. We need to improve our town and it's positive features

The parks need to be overhauled/updated. Working restrooms not porta-potties. The County needs to invest money into it's work environment as well (raises/better pay to employees so they can invest their money back into the county).

No

Free Places for locals and tourists to spend time-beaches, parks etc.

Affordable public transportation Shopping — most people travel to bay city or west Branch for groceries, electronics, clothing, household goods etc

Fix roads and offer something to keep small businesses alive

Arenac is a great little 'pass through' county as travellers head to their destination. I would love to have more reasons for people to stay here and more to do for those that already do. I would love to see the villages embrace their small town feel - gazebo, town square, local festivals, etc. Even replacing the signs as people enter a village or city - ensuring it looks nice is a good first impression. \* Find a way to make/ help homeowners care for a house or tear it down if it isn't safe (Sterling has a couple of houses/buildings that are just falling down). They are bringing down home values and unsafe.

We need to bring in more stores, Meijer, clothing, sit down restaurants. Could bring hotels in to areas at exit from 75, at exit to 23 and 61. Could have shopping centers at these exits. We are a dying small town. We need to do something, or in ten, twenty years we will be a ghost town. We have to travel to Bay City, Saginaw, West Branch to do any shopping. Sad we can't shop right here at home! Bring in a theater! Open up Standish to new ideas! Let's thrive!!

Encouraging more businesses to open up. The entry into Standish from the south is such an eyesore

More shopping would be better

Nothing comes to mind

Get rid of common core in the schools ,

Better roads that go to 2 businesses at the end of Townline rd. in Sterling.

Rural gravel roads residents have to fight tooth hook and nail just to be able to have access to a gravel pile . Release your gravel to residents that have had no gravel put down on there roads for the last ten years. Do we always have to listen and be satisfied with the sob story of how much the gravel cost. I believe my taxes contributed to the purchase of that precious pile of gold. Gravel please out at white beach area. We are no longer just the slums of arenac county. Were residential and we have great potential as water front owners . we are trying to increase our value of our properties. We have the potential of becoming your waterfront treasure. please help.

We need more options for extra curricular activities for kids during the summer and after school

There is a need for people to stop and stay in the area to make a purchase other than gas on their way through. all we have is the casino. No gift shops. to stores. I cannot even run to town and buy a crock pot the size I need if mine broke. We do not even have a decent clothing store. The grocery store you have to buy on sale otherwise the items are over priced. I see my neighbors in neighboring towns. Not in this town.

We need to bring in bigger chain stores such as Meijer or Walmart it would create huge amounts of jobs as well as giving some of these small Mom Pop shops some competition to help keep the prices lower so we're not forced to travel to the city to purchase items that a can't be found in this County or B you can't afford to buy in this County

No

Better I 75 access would bring more business to the community.

The business and overall aesthetic in Au Gres needs to change. It is a shell of what it used to be. I am from Au Gres and only return because people I care about live there. When I think of Au Gres, I think blah. What is there? Why would I want to go? The thing that I used to love about Au Gres was the beach but now whenever I go, the beach is overgrown and poorly taken of, or I have someone yelling at me that I'm in their yard. When the easement is for the community. If it's hard enough for me to go to the beach, where do people that want to stay in Au Gres go? Tawas? There goes your business because they are in Tawas for a beach day. Au Gres is making some strides in the right direction with the new coffee shop, the new IGA, Ali's up north and the new legalization of recreational marijuana but even with that, the real question is how are you going to maintain these businesses? You need tourists or something memorable so people want to come back time and again "because there is nothing quite like being in Au Gres". Au Gres needs some serious tender love and care, we have all the tools we need to be a successful community but for some reason they aren't being utilized.

I believe we should embrace the fishermen that come to our area, as they stay, eat, and spend money in our community. We need to bring more people to Arenac County to provide jobs for those that live here. Maybe create a swimming beach for families at the DNR launch in AuGres. This would hopefully entice people to stay at the City campground, instead of staying in Tawas.

Mosquito control!!!! Our area needs it badly!!!

No

Business developments should not be given such difficult time upstarting. Too many regulations. Deters entrepreneurs and even the likes of Chain restaurants. Run out of town?! Looks like a ghost town for travelers driving thrust on 23

Jobs!

Respect for private property.

Just look at Tawas, AuGres and Omer need support to grow,

I think that Arenac county is on the right path getting up to date on all areas of services and development.

Fix our roads

More for our children to do. More cost effective shopping options.

Places to shop including groceries and clothing.

There needs to be things for kids to do. I think a lot of families go to the city to have family time.

New restaurant choices, particularly a nice sit down place

Quality jobs

Recreational areas for children and pet owners in the parks. Such as water parks, playscapes, dog parks, walking and bike paths. Also pavilions and bbq's for family reunions and cookouts.

Places to shop that are affordable, decent restaurants, and hotels.

More paved roads

I Think the maintenance of the infrastructure is very important but I don't think it needs to be expanded at all.

I like arenac county as a small towns feel. I like seeing and living around woodland and the Rifle River. We dont need all of those big town that tear down the woodland or destroy our natural resources

Public beach development Something done with empty business buildings Improving the appearance of towns by planting trees etc

Stop keeping businesses out and fight to get a major retailer like Meijer's in arenac county.....seems like the arenac commissioners would rather let standish rot before they let in an outside company. No more fast food or gas stations.....do something with the prison besides let it crumble. Fix the roads

Consider the needs of residents, not just tourists traveling through on their destination north. I moved back here after being gone for 20 years. Big changes noted in the area of fast food. No real growth and opportunity for residents.

We need to focus on businesses, beyond the obligatory marijuana dispensaries that are popping up everywhere. Yes, they're businesses too but they have what? 3-5 employees each? We need to drive enough jobs so we can grow the tax base, which in turn will allow us to improve roads, schools, utilities, and the like.

Thanks to President Trumps economic programs things are improving. We need good jobs in the area not more tourists and traffic.

Less waste in county government

Business development to keep families from moving away. We plan to move once our kids graduate do to minimal opportunity and activities to do with our families. Shopping outlets. Can't even buy a pair of shoes or pants in Standish. Very sad.

We need to get new businesses in Arenac county. We need to improve downtown so when we have hometown days we can attract people. A new bigger grocery/clothing/shoes/etc store. Something like Walmart, Meijers. We also need more educational programs so that people in our community can further their education. Turn some of the old elementary into college classes, like Ross medical school, skilled trade classes, welding classes, etc.

No

No

Blite, Noise, ease to dispose of recyclables, housing rules (not legal to live in a garage), good paved roads, and control of marijuana outside production to not interfere with residential living, regulations,

Arenac needs to expand its tourist economy in the summer...this place should be a stop for tourist !!! Arenac co is dying. We have junk fast food and NO DEPARTMENT STORE!!!! And now West Branch is getting a meijer!!!! People drive 40 min to shop...that's ridiculous!!! We DO NOT need another dollar store...we need a REAL store.

Heavy travelled raods like east City limits need help

As far as Au Gres, we need to get business's back in. The taxes in the town are ridiculous which is why I bough in Whitney Twmp. There is nothing to offer for the current taxation. For the county, to bring in restaurants that aren't bar food, ie Italian, steak houses. As far as cities and tourism follow the changes that are happening in Tawas. Look at the mistakes in the past and the good changes in the present and incorporate in the future. For

Au Gres to flourish, there needs to be tourism and a reason to stop on people's way through the highway to their other destinations.

Ambulance and fire services need more help

No

Need to bring in more diversified businesses.

This flea bit town needs more than fast food and a casino. There is no where to shop, no jobs and crappy side roads. Sheriff is a drunk and the whole cop shop is nothing than a "good old boys club" Hospital has gone to hell even with St Mary's. Medical services choices had vanished. No surgeon, no Pediatrician, no specialists (ie: cardiac) and limited primary care providers. Limited childcare options and limited transportation options. Just to name a few.

GOOD PAYING 40 HR. A WEEK JOBS !!!

Development in all area's. An average income person can't rent an apartment because only low income subseid are available. New chain stores and restaurants are turned down. Any thing east of 23 is labeled wet lands, which rules out development.

Need to focus more on our roads , the condition of a lot of them is deplorable !! So many of the dirt roads are nothing but rust holes, the county doesn't even put gravel down just keep grading them into a gully . Our sheriff department needs to be revamped, poor sheriff and the department is just a buddy club . Could use something more to attract tourist other then a Indian run casino . Most of the nice camp grounds have been taken over by a big business and not inviting or family friendly, just a place to party .

Consolidate some of the townships to streamline functions and decision making by fewer groups and use scarce resources for more effective impact.

None

More economic development around the marina and lakeshore. Restaurants with bay views, shops within walking distance of the pier/beach, and a push toward seasonal/tourism would boost Economic growth.

Cleaning up the shitty looking buildings in Standish.

..

Bring other businesses in to the area. Like retail and grocery.

The dirt roads NEED to be Addressed, some of them are in useable in the spring months or heavy rains. We live on Bessinger road and are selling our house because the roads are too hard on our vehicles. Safe ROADS should be a TOP Priority!

Main Street beautification (welcoming) projects, safe routes to school and trade school opportunities.

We need change in this area. If don't change, we can not grow. It's hard to except change but it needs to happen. Otherwise this county will see a hit from the surrounding Towns and City's around us that are excepting change. Roll with the times people. Out with the old, in with the new.

We need a larger merchant store to give options to the locals for shopping, a meijer or walmart. Something other than a dollar general, gas station, fast food, or hardware. All the small buisness are pretty much gone at this point. We need options and standish needs a nice park like omer and sterling. Not to mention the fairgrounds needs to allow the railroad spur to come into the industrial park. It would benefit everyone. The fairgrounds can be moved anywhere. Yes it is not ideal, but it's still better to keep production up.

Getting RID of the marijuana stores that make our city smell horrible and give us a bad name!

New business retail

Better wages for non-minimum wage jobs.

Just more job choices.

The schools need to teach skilled trades. Not everyone wants to attend college, but some students need to have building trade class available.

Business growth, a small community can support itself by having local choices and buying local. I know most would agree that these trends can come back and promote the growth we lack.

Put the right people in the right position. Put good managers in place to direct personnel and plan and manage projects efficiently.

Open restricted land to orv access

More community activities for families. Please

Curtailling the marijuana businesses

Would love to see Arenac County attract lots of new business--like Vantage Plastics and also attract the tourists in the summer. There are too many people just driving through not stopping.

Ditch's need to be cleaned out and dug.

An imperative need and focus priority for strong technology infrastructure and secure, dependable WiFi broadband access for entrepreneurial and consumer venture.

Economic development! We need more stores and restaurants! We hardly even have a store to go buy a child's birthday gift besides Dollar General! We always drive to bay city or west branch to get groceries and shop for gifts, household items.

Child care options

Make Au Gres a destination!

Indoor center for kids of all ages to play

Modernizing. I feel there has been little progress in certain areas. I would like to see the downtown develop and be more scenic and thriving with shops, businesses, and restaurants, especially with the location of US 23 and cities in Arenac county. I feel they are not being used to their fullest capabilities

Keep windmills out of Arenac County.

Taxes are too high, because of new school and there is no work. This creates a population moving elsewhere, when people have to drive 30 to 40 miles for employment.

Standish needs a better grocery stores,department stores.We should of had Meijers,It would be nice to see Aldi's or even sav-lot.We have to many fast food not enough family restaurants.

Traffic flow in Standish and W Branch

No

Education, especially in the trade and service fields Blight control - removal of rusted machinery, autos, dilapidated buildings Removal of dead trees and tree limbs that impact power during storms Beach and berm erosion

Continue bike a walk path to TAWAS

No

YES YOUR FANTASTIC PRISON SITTING IDLE, WHY NOT USE IT FOR A JUVENILE LOCK UP. OR A TEMPORARY HOUSING UNIT FOR THE HOMELESS. EDUCATION, THIS UNIT HAS MANY GOOD USES IT COULD HELP TO CHANGE MANY DECLINING OR DECREASED AREAS IN ARENAC COUNTY. HOW ABOUT USING IT TO HEKLP EVALUATE MENTAL HEALTH, SINCE THE MID 80'S AND ALL THE ASYLUMS CLOSED, MENTAL HEALTH HAS BEEN NEGLECTED TO THE DEGREE OF MASS SHOOTING, DRUG USE , PROSTITUTION

decent job opportunity...better housing whether it is ownership or rentals doesn't make a difference....better roads for sure..better regulations on the roads we do have now, such as speed limits and blight within city limits of several towns in Arenac county....businesses that meet the needs of residence such as grocery shopping and clothing and basic human needs

Arenac County needs to be more open to the financial opportunities that could arise with the Marijuana Industry. This area really needs the jobs that the industry could bring in.

Location and implementation of new fairground.

Parks on the Bay are needed. Beach front activities needed.

Traffic lights, turn lanes, a walmart, or meijers. Speed limit adjustments town expanding near tractor supply. Still 55mph. forest lake and areas All riders ATV etc, golf carts. Riding lanes if needed. Allowing riders and clear laws.

get business back in the City of AuGres

A place for shopping. We only have Dollar Stores,thrift shops, gas stations, and 1 grocery store. We have to go to West Branch or Bay City to shop. We also need something for young people to do. Also more activities for active 65 and older.

Needs to bring in places people can shop instead of going to Bay City and West Branch. How can we keep our money in Arenac if there's no place to shop.

That the county does nothing to encourage the sale, production, processing, growing, and dispensing of medical marijuana. It's a Pandora's box.

Roads need more attention if country wants to attract more businesses and residents.

Bring more jobs, less marijuana to area. Fix roads! Businesses are moving, school numbers are low! Need work to keep families here! Arenac County Park is a gem in the rough, spend money to keep clean, find somebody to run it!!

N/A

More public boat launches. Maybe at singing bridge

Need more business/shopping in Standish

Elect new officials at the courthouse.

Not @ this time, Thank~You

No

Too much blight!!! Residences with junk in & around homes.

I think they should open recreational trails for snowmobile and off road recreational vehicles to bring more people to the county.

The good old boys, need to come to a end. Towns are dying

It has been rumored that a Meijer store was being considered and that it was rejected by the city council. If this is true, it is very disappointing. There is no local access to a store to buy toys and very limited access to buy clothing and home goods. It would have provided jobs as well. I think it would have been an economic win for our county. It's hard to have hope for economic development when these things are rejected.

Yes take better care of secondary roads and more money to make our parks nicer and open young man park

Taxes in certain areas are too high

Fix the fairgrounds and the track!!

Leadership needs work. People have to work together.

We need a place to shop for clothes and household goods, such as Ollie's [who is currently looking for store options]. We've had a Big Wheel; Pamida; and Shopko. We need a store like Walmart or Meijer. We currently have several auto parts stores, but no real place for necessary home shopping and have to go out of the area. PLEASE consider this!

Arenac county is stagnant. Communities like Au Gres, Omer, Twining and Whittemore are turning into ruins. Businesses are failing and closing, and the empty buildings turning into blight. Work opportunities for people to earn a decent living wage are scarce.

Mostly new business and more jobs in our area so people dont have to go so far to work or shop

Create an environment more enticing for business to locate here vs. W. Branch or tri cities.

Arenac county needs to grow up and start courting major retailers. Pretty much everyone goes to West Branch to shop....standish is not a destination, it is a tourist pass through.

community programs and opportunities for both youth and senior citizens

Yes... should have allowed Meijer to build here for economy and jobs. It shame you didn't. Standish in my opinion is the gateway to the northeast. We want the economy to grow, let those businesses build here.

Need more accessibility for snowmobiles.

Lentner road north off US 23. Fixed. All the property owners on that road pay taxes twice a year (myself included) at this time I cannot access my property because of road condition.

I'd like to see rural roads being black topped. Perhaps budget for 5 to 10 miles a year. Arenac is growing and I'd like to see an upper middle class ,and middle class neighborhood,s rather than trashy lower class trailers and such. Blacktop roads save money in the future also, get one road fixed up it,ll last 25-30 years. They attract better housing possibilities. Easier to maintain.

Keeping the ditches clean and the roads in good repair.

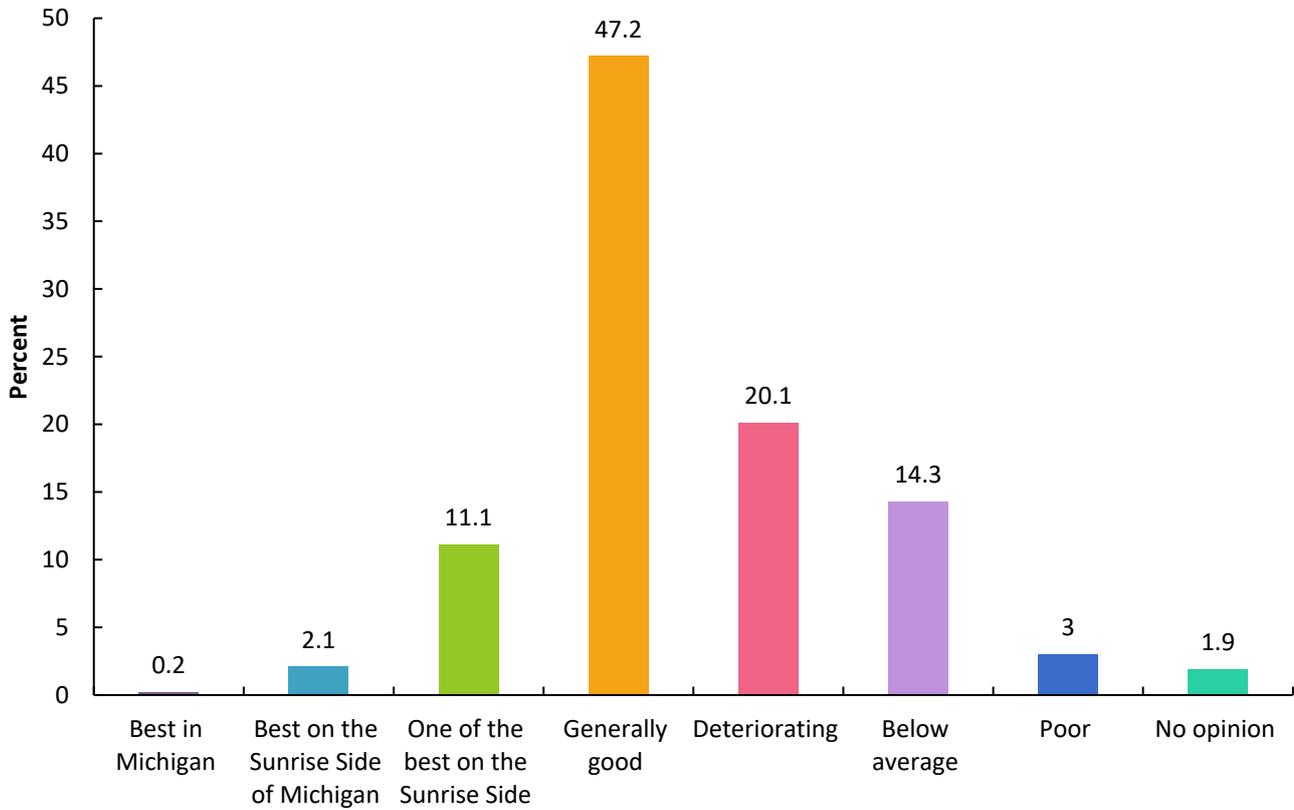
Better rural internet Transportation for elderly

Public access to our rivers and lakes! We do have some, but not all are user friendly.

Replacing Bridges, improvements of the roads and drainage of them. Expansion of natural gas to rural areas.

Continue/FINISH bike trail from Tawas ,south to AU Gres

## 9.How would you characterize the quality of life in Arenac County?



Value	Percent	Count
Best in Michigan	0.2%	1
Best on the Sunrise Side of Michigan	2.1%	10
One of the best on the Sunrise Side	11.1%	52
Generally good	47.2%	221
Deteriorating	20.1%	94
Below average	14.3%	67
Poor	3.0%	14
No opinion	1.9%	9
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>468</b>

**10. Describe three things that you would like to have available in Arenac County that would improve your quality of life.**

Response
A better road Hook up to gas Shopping
Help with Conservation practices on the ground Better government representation County government working better with townships
Clothing store. Grocery store good restaurant
Department store, fine dining.
Better medical , less rules and regulations. City people move up here to get away from all the crap then want to start it up here. Grade a road once in awhile in the summer time. Why have a road commission?
Jobs. Social events for people besides bars.
1Transportation- links with adjacent counties — medical, services, entertainment, amenities 2Homeowner services 3communities' appearance
1. Transportation for elderly and handicapped. 2. Filling empty store fronts with businesses needed in community. 3. Closer access to a larger shopping mart like Meijer, Walmart, etc.
Clean drinking water Sewers Municipal water
affordable things for family's with kids to do, affordable stores to buy things in, better roads
Paved roads all throughout this county. Cut the grass along the the roadsides more than once per year, area appears unkept, poverty area. Parks need great improvement also.
More businesses -jobs . An actual clothing , shopping center . Something for the youth
Quality shopping center that does not charge an arm and a leg. Support for the youth, though rec., 4h, community center
Better schools, more jobs, housing
Indoor walking area Indoor place for kids to play More walking trails
Medical facilities Better shopping alternatives Better lake river access when to don't have a boat.
Closer affordable food Closer medical Snow removal
Honest business people. Better shopping and better medical availability
Closer shopping opportunities, closer quality continued education,
Better pay for education and police, parenting classes and improved roads.
More paved bike paths, more business in Augres.
Better places to live, expand the hospital so they can do more better care for the people of arena county.beautify the town.
Better parks, more restaurants, cheaper grocery store
Get rid of the majorana places 2) fix your gravel roads
High speed internet in rural areas that is affordable
Better local roads Better medical services Employment opportunities
Lower city tax strat incourage business to start up.

Paved roads. Availability of city water and gas. Super center grocery
More stores
Shopping center More enrichment classes, and activities at the Community Center Full support for the community center
Medical, stores.
A major shopping center (strip mall), senior center improvements, quality improvements to county fair
More destination attractions, recreational activities
Economic development (businesses) Better restaurants Sherrie/police not seemingly harassing the people on Point Lookout
More Street Lights on roads! Four lane highway! Bike trail along US-23 on lake side of road!
Business choices as in more businesses as well as taking care of the businesses in the area. As well as non profits. A good outdoor community space to be used for many events and to stop people from parking down town by the light obstructing drivers' view.
Bike trails Hiking trails Opportunities for community involvement
More doctors that take new patients Walk in clinic, like a RediMed A big supermarket, clothing store, Meijer, Walmart ,target, where a person could buy shoes or clothes if needed
Medical services, job opportunities, great schools.
None come to mind
Jobs jobs things for youth reasons to stay
Higher paying jobs Attempts from the city to attract new industries, currently cities are full of restaurants and gas stations. Education that is eyeing the future industries rather than based on agriculture (graduated 10 years ago, may be outdated).
another general/grocery store would be nice with reasonable prices. competition is good. businesses staying open later than 6PM that have items of interest. we have hunting, fishing, water sports people coming thru and they have needs
More kid friendly attractions,
Hospital care. Doctors
Access to river and lakes. Dust control on dirt roads. Mesquito control.
Affordable shopping, community rental hall, blight policies.
More businesses
More doctors Better shopping Development along Lake Huron
AFFORDABLE GROCERY STORE LIKE AN ALDI. BETTER ROADS , POLICE PRESENCE IN MY AREA RESTAURANT OTHER THAN FAST FOOD THAT IS NOT DISGUSTING PLACE TO SHOP FOR OTHER ITEMS THAT IS NOT OUTRAGOUS.
Kill the phragmites. Better medical dental care. Better restaurants
Better health options
Major department store, Meijer or Walmart. I go to Bay City why not spend in Arenac county? Sit down chain restaurants along the lines of Bob Evans, Olive Garden etc. There are a couple of family owned. No variety. NO

**MORE GAS STATIONS! ENOUGH CAR DEALERS! DO SOMETHING WITH THE DEFUNCT PRISON!**

Development and preservation of the rural areas can co-exist

roads

Better restaurants. Higher paying jobs. More for young people to do.

More stores: hardware & meat/vegetable markets.

1) Beach 2) Theater 3) An Antique Mall

My quality of life is great here, especially since AuGres has an excellent grocery store!

More therapy options More physicians in the area Movie theater in Standish Tim Hortons in Standish

Better roads!

Meijers, ordinance on yards and businesses and better roads

Better medical, better shopping ( more grocery stores) fix the roads. You all get our taxes for roads, fix them. There should be no dirt roads...

A break wall at pine River access, and the river dredged to access larger boats

Improved transportation systems. Perhaps private companies should be allowed to operate car or van services to the general public. There seems to be none of this in predominantly rural areas in Michigan.

More policing.

Meijer or Walmart Good sitdown restaurant, Applebees, Logan's, Ponderosa or something like that. The people on the board that says what can and cannot come into Standish need to get their heads out of the hole it is in. We have 3 car part stores, 3 pizza places, 2 dollar stores and 3 gas stations with another one being built. But only one grocery store, and no clothing stores. WHY DO YOU KEEP TURNING DOWN THE BIGGER STORES?? We could use the jobs and the products the stores have. We go to the bigger cities to spend our money.

Education, higher education options Clean, family dining that stays open past 8PM, especially on key nights such as recitals, graduation, etc. Another traffic light in Standish Or a left turn signal, especially during peak travel times. Traffic is miserable!

Better roads Internet availability

Surrounding areas, have many more businesses for us to shop at and they there for, employ more people, which we go to, to shop at. I would like to see us, get a Walmart or Meijer , at least contact these companies or others. To see if they might be interested in building here. Example, the casino brought more jobs, for our community.

More public asses for rifle river. Affordable camping Spraying bugs

1.Fast food with drive thru 2.Better medical with more doctors or clinic. 3.Better place to shop We have weed places, pizza, high priced groceries

More jobs

Restaurants, meijer and aldi, event center.

Water delivery services Better internet services Jobs

Roadside recycling & something with info to welcome new people to Arenac co

A decent hotel for relatives to stay at.

An all around store like a Meijer, Walmart, Costco. Something with better prices than the current grocery stores.

Rail trail Meijers grocery Quaint coffee shop

Larger farmer market Bette4 road conditions
Paved bike path,
Competitive grocery store chain department store Elementary school back in Standish
More employment opportunities
Maybe mosquito control. I miss SHOPKO. More awareness of what we do have. Or what we may need. Who knows there maybe a volunteer willing to help.
New businesses. New businesses. New businesses
no particular order. A quality store like a Meijer, Aldi, Kroger. A sitdown restaurant that if you slipped down the steps you wouldn't be in the middle of 23. A road commission that would fix and maintain roads properly. It has changed in years need new personnel
Better doctors that are willing to stay in the area. A stable fairgrounds that is being supported by the local government. A road commission that wants better roads and not quick fixes that make them temporarily look good and won't push their milages on us.
Nice sit down restaurant Kroger, meijer or at the least a Walmart A movie theater would be nice, even if it was a drive in at the fairgrounds! A home depot, harbor freight or even a menards would be nice. A large professional building like the McLaren building by the river in bay city may bring some more doctor's to the area. Maybe were the Spartan tire building is :o) or on m61 near the hospital
Recreation options, shopping and road conditions
Safety for our children. Attack businesses that are not drug related. Stop all these low lifestyle that are moving into our communities.
More public transportation such as bussing and taxis. A large store like Meijer or Wal-Mart. A motor sports complex!
More opportunities for the handicap/disabled
More shopping choices
24 hour clinics After school programs A retail store
More road patrols, internet choices, better roads.
City water, high speed internet, better roads.
Recreational, trails trails trails!
Places to shop. Jobs, lower taxes.
More shopping for food and clothes
-better mental health services. (It is unacceptable that someone has to hurt themselves or someone else before something can be done for those with mental illness) -More learning/development opportunities for adults. -A better community link between the town's in our county so we all are aware of events and activities happening.
1) Bike path connected to Tawas 2) parkour playground & fitness activities for children and adults 3) community center in Au Gres
Jobs, day care options
Another boat launch to the North end of Arenac Co. Better Rural roads and third AuGres store's that stayed open better business.
Businesses in Au Gres Entertainment events

Rural internet

Less pesticides and chemicals used With all of the marijuana workers coming in the town is beginning to change

Better busing transportation

1. City water, and natural gas, would be a great start 2. Walmart, Meyers, some better restaurants... Krogers... 3. Better response time for the police department (but this cant be done until we get more monies in the bank, and that requires bigger businesses and more people living here) 4. More city planned events!

Parks for children Choice for restaurants Choice for shopping

A cheaper grocery store, a place to buy everything you need without having to travel or visit 5 stores (walmart) and a stop light at the 4 way by the schools. These kids do not know how to use a 4 way stop sign and there should also be crosswalks. Many students walk to the other school for sports.

Meijer

More outdoor ada Better government relations

.

Improve education system. Improve infrastructure of our county and township boards. Make county more attractive to potential businesses and residents

More job opportunities. Better maintenance of county roads. Arenac county road commission is terrible at that. Where do the tax dollars go?? City water availability everywhere if possible.

Places to take kids to play/enjoy. Larger scale restaurants...sit down, not fast food.

Parks that have paths with active equipment, more beach accesses, less (no) drug/medical sale facilities

More doctors Department store Movie theater

More parks, programs for kids ,food banks

More local businesses

More walking trails

Urgent Care facility County Park that is not \$10/ day Community Feel/ small town feel embraced

more activities for children & families, more daycare options, more availability for preschool

Shopping centers, more grocery stores.

Clothing stores, more food options like restaurants and fast food and entertainment options

1 Better medical 2 Better choices for shopping. Options are minimal forcing me to do the majority of my shopping out of town (west branch and bay city). This takes time away from my family and increases my carbon footprint. 2 more options for outdoor exercise. More walking/ running and biking paths. I'd love to see a rail trail like system!

More shopping choices so things aren't so much more expensive than the bigger stores

Better snow removed on back roads

More businesses

Keep it country,development is kinda good but the reason i moverd here is because I wanted out of city life this is a beautiful area lets keep it that way

Unity,Dream again, plan again, Make something New, take risk. There has been a lot of prayer released over our county. 1. Diffnantly Another traffic light in town 2. Gravel available for troubled roads 3. (Welcome Financial

opportunity ) big box business use of prison added teachers ,coaches young adult and children devolpers Home economics Utilizing of church buildings and services

Better hospital, meijer family fare is overpriced and bringing a meijer in would also create jobs.also more programs for kids to do other than through the school program

a better shopping experience, stores with a better quality merchandise at a reasonable price compared to our surrounding towns.. A community center for the middle age and senior group where they can socialize other than bars in the Standish area. We do have the senior center in Omer which is away from the majority of the population of the county and we do not have a decent busing system to get those who cannot drive there. Non denominational. A nature park and bike trails that is county, not private.

Local Businesses striving rather than business chains overtaking the small communities Combined sports/ transportation to students for athletic and educational purposes Stronger blight ordinances

More events in activities for families interest to do in the joy you have to bring people to the community for the community make money

Jobs, competitive wages with surrounding area business. Wages are below average in this area. County work, not just on roads but our ditches as well. New business perhaps utilizing the many abandoned buildings we have

Store like Meijers, not ShopCo Community Recreation Building not a part of schools More and Better internet and cable choices

Closer retail access.

More public access to the beach. More job opportunities. More community Engagement and events.

More things for children to do.

1. More jobs for people without college degrees. 2. A limit on marijuana farms/dispensaries/shops!!!! We have WAY too many of them in AuGres! 3. An indoor track/gym/community center for activities during the long, cold winter.

Bike trails, water park for kids, and mosquito control

Youth fun facilities Better fairgrounds Parks

Improve economic opportunities. Improve education. Bring in more business.

Affordable groceries. I would like to shop locally, but I always go to Bay City for nearly everything because I save money doing it.

Workout facility with pool /aerobics. More recreation - movie theater, miniature golf, kite shops, etc. Perhaps welcome Food Trucks @ new area by the River. Public beach besides South end only@ Arenac County Park.

Medical providers. Better grocery.

Bike trail, Economic development, adult education and recreation opportunities,

A large community center that is available for rent for large gatherings.

Beach, Uber, more recreational things

Thing for our children to do More stores, we have nothing other then dollar stores to shop at now. Less bars & gas stations

Entertainment such a movie theater, adventure park (Indoor and outdoor), swimming pool that was actually available for swimming Shopping-department store and more grocery options

Cheaper place to purchase groceries. Nice park to take my kids.

Better restaurant choices Backroads improved

Entertainment, availability to shopping, quality jobs
Job development, recreational areas such as dog parks and play areas for children.
Affordable place to shop
More retail More entertainment
Meijer, nicer affordable housing, downtown shopping
Better quality shopping
I would enjoy a bike path through the county. Job creation would help all other aspects.
Open to more state land and cleaner road side and less deforestation and cleaner rivers and access
shopping, dining, manufacturing or other new employers
More walking trails Public beaches More bar/restaurants
More retailers, more entertainment, more employment opportunities
The biggest thing is somewhere to purchase basic household items, somewhere to buy a gift, somewhere to buy new underwear! Holiday traffic is a definite issue!
Better access to public transportation More jobs A full sized retailer like a Walmart or Meijer, without making us drive 30-45 minutes to one
Jobs, Full service Hospital, less government
Good restaurants, bike trail
New business, job opportunities, use the prison grounds, activities for children to do without having to drive. Need reasons to stay and not move away.
A grocery store. That's all I can think of
Better health care, more recreational activities, better grocery and restaurant choices!
Something for the kids to go and do. Bring businesses in competition is good. Tear down empty houses
Additional grocery stores Improved roads Restaurants and entertainment
Internet available Roads
More primary care physicians. Competitive grocery store. More family dining choices.
Au Gres = Hardware store, good sports store, high tech businesses !!!
DEPARTMENT STORE!!!!ASAP
An affordable general store like Meijer
I would like to see portions of the Iron Belle Trail developed.
Shopping opportunities for household goods
More grocery stores! Better and affordable department stores! More good restaurants, not fast food, but family sit down restaurants! I
Better restaurants Better grocery stores- the ability to find quality food. Shopping
More emergency services. Roads being fixed rather than patched. I.e. main st rd in twining.arenac eastern opened back up

Health care, shopping, community activities
Bike trails. Better roads...
Shopping such as Lowes, Home Depot, Menards, Best Buy. Adding grocery stores like Meijer and Kroger. And other stores to increase traffic and interest in coming to Standish.
Things for kids to do, more family activities and some type of competition for stores.
Affordable shopping Affordable childcare Maintenance of side roads
<b>GOOD JOBS, TO KEEP THE PEOPLE HERE</b>
Good paying jobs, non-ego tripping police, Better traffic help for Friday nights, Sunday afternoons.
Organized recreational activities, craft classes, better everything. Drive 30 miles for milk, paint, entertainment, restaurant, doctor, gasoline and save \$50.00. SAD
Improved roads , more child care .
We shouldn't have to drive 30 minutes from Standish to have a decent job, or to save money grocery shopping. The city needs to get a grip on blight.
Better road maintenance, especially the gravel roads that turn into mud pits after rain. More job opportunities. County ordinances to reduce trash and salvage vehicle accumulation on residential and commercial property so the county doesn't look like a third world country.
Meijers is needed
Nature trails, pride and aesthetics of the city.
Restaurants on the water, thriving aribnb access, better access to fishing/cruising charters.
Healthier food choices besides fast food, a better grocery store, ?
.
Shopping, recreation, restaurants
Urgent care facility. Senior citizen center in Standish. More local activities for seniors during daytime rather than evening due to limited daylight.
The county is losing businesses, especially Au Gres. We need something to bring in young families to our county. We are not going to be able to sustain the existing businesses if we don't bring in some young families.
Paved roads, bike path and more jobs
Walkable trails - shopping options - short term rentals on Lake Huron.
A meijer, nice family restaurant and a planet fitness.
Emergency walk in clinic ... A county park for kids to play Meijers
Getting rid of Mr. Collier to help further education as he is ruining the school system, provide more job opportunities, and restore and sell property along 23 (old businesses)
Retail store sporting goods store more stuff for families
Better paying Jobs Better Roads Less City-its
More bike or walking paths. More paths for ORVs. More community centers.
Biking trails Walking trails. Small Business Growth.
Grocery store Medical services Dining options

Homeless and drugs are very present in the county. Residents just need to open their eyes and realize this. Adult education. Enhanced education for children. Provisions for children that teachers identify that need extra help with daily personal care, social care, education.

More medical facilities, more jobs available,

1. more retail / dining 2. better communication between townships and existing businesses 3. better advertising of community events

Not many well paying jobs in the area.

Family activities Bike path from town to Tawas Holiday activities

Bike trails, more public swimming access sites, more pickleball courts

Paved hiking and biking trails, some fishing areas on the Rifle, Pine and AuGres rivers that are handicap/disabled accessible, currently are none that I'm aware of. Handicap/disabled accessible hunting areas.

1-more upscale dining 2-more social events

Beaches, parks, dining

Paved bike path, community center with a gym, lounge, and WiFi, and a healthy food chain such as tropical smoothie cafe.

Handicapped accessible park, activities for young children and teens, access to necessities for our elderly

The marijuana businesses closed. More programs geared for the "golden years" populations. County parks improved so that they are as successful as the privately owned parks!!

State of the art technology infrastructure, Art and theater, increased service industry options.

Entertainment options More job opportunities Park improvements

Larger grocery store with curbside pickup or delivery Shopping to get household items, gifts, occasional name brand items with competitive prices More restaurant options

Child care options Access to affordable healthy foods Clean housing

Options for fresh produce and groceries not Walmart in Tawas. Some better options for restaurants and food. A quality downtown

More restaurants More shopping experiences-stores, markets More conveniences...things to do

Better/more dining and shopping options, job opportunities, walkable "downtown" area

Easier access to quality affordable clothing and food options. More recreational opportunities for kids and teens.

Nicer park, kid friendly and safe activities

Place for kids to go

More community events to get people involved and create the feeling of community Assistance to new business ventures/entrepreneurs to turn old empty building into new businesses

A hardware store, a pharmacy, a fast food outlet, and a couple decent restaurants and bars.

Meijers grocery store or an Aldies, more housing for young families.

Bike path options (Pt Augres to AuGres Center and Point Lookout to AuGres Center) Improved natural history/wildlife education options (boardwalks in wetlands and forests) Water/Sewer access (Pt. Augres)

Something for kids to do and adults like putt golf.

Better beach access

More businesses Reasons for people to visit the area Better quality of life
I'm good, could be more stuff for younger people. Oasis Lake and camp ground could be really nice but they aren't at all.
Medical services More businesses
Better restaurant s merchandise stores like Walmart or Meijer
Affordable transportation, better housing for low income with actual standards/quality, more jobs
Trade schools Blight removal Beach erosion prevention
Better shopping choices More jobs Better road maintenance
Protection from flooding Better cell coverage
public transportation
Improve roads Improve infrastructure (water,sewer) Internet, improve phone strength (towers)
More Hospitals, lake access, horse trails
JUVENILE LOCK DOWN..2. MENTAL HEALTH EVALUATION 96 HOURS MINIMUM. SHELTER FOR THE HOMELESS, WE ARE A VERY COLD STATE AND MANY PEOPLE FREEZE TO DEATH ON THE STREETS
Public trails, canoekayak route on upper Au Gres river, attracting industrial development
available affordable grocery shopping center available affordable clothes shopping opportunity better school systems
More jobs, better paying jobs, jobs with benefits, opportunities for higher education within the county
Businesses moving into The area to Fill empty storefronts, more shopping choices within our county, more hours for public bussing
Beach. Pool. Parks and walking areas
Walmart, meijers, Recreational vehicles allowed Neighborhood program, neighbors helping neighbors
More stores,activities for 65 and older. More activities for the younger generation.
Parks/recreation Transportation Shopping choices West Branch meets a higher mark.
Major retaile store, good set in restaurants
Better infrastructure, especially our sidewalks & City sewers in Standish. People have to walk in the street because the tree roots have caused the walks to heave unevenly. I'm ashamed of our block of Grove St from Cedar South to the Family Fare shopping center. Every time we get a good rain, my drains gurgle when I run my faucets, flush the toilet or run the washer.
Better medical care, hospitals. Convenient and cost effective food stores, such as Meijers.
1. Small business growth. 2. Family park with playscape, pavilions and bbq grills. 3. Also a dog park.
Better roads Varied commercial establishments Improved cell phone coverage
Fix roads Create jobs
Hiking/biking trails Public beaches
Healthy grocery options Bike/walking trails Better restaurants and cultural options
Better access to Lake Huron/public beaches. More options/availability of quality primary care physicians Affordable high speed internet in rural areas

Access to competent medical care Indoor lap swimming pool Community programs offering activities, educational programs, ie photography.

Restaurants. Nice public beach areas More stores

More restaurants More stores for shopping

Better roads conservation police

Sprinkler park, better library, something youth based.

A clean and better grocery store Better medical

Improved roads & sidewalks. More police to reduce noise and speeding.

More lighting down M-13 it is hard to see in dark, snow, and rain. Better drainage for snow and rain. Maybe emergency lights that rotate or are a different color to show distress for side of road that can be pushed also for assistance/help.

Argent Care Clinic Expanded Park Facilities Expanded Community Center

Off road trails opened Grading the dirt roads more often Better roads and keeping grass trimmed on the sides of the roads

Economic growth, road repair for the gravel roads (Langdon road on the border of Arenac township and Standish township has been in disrepair or years ), and preservation of the shoreline.

More things for our children and grandchildren to do out side things skate park

A Meijer grocery store Medical facilities Restaurants

Better roads. Higher paying jobs.

Better choices in restraunts, better maintenance on secondary roads. Better hospital

Affordable housing Public transportation Access to better medical care

Improved recreational area. More retail. Lowes, Home Depot, Menards, Kroger, Meijer, Walmart

1. Hardware store 2. Better bridge over US23 3. Tear down the old Flamingo bar!

Landline based Broadband internet access at my home (currently unavailable) More sit down, non-fast food restaurant options Improved/additional options for Lake Huron Access

I think too much emphasis is put on tourism and not enough on jobs for the community, or places to shop.

Better access to medical care. Standish is a band aide stop. Your care gets farmed out. Better job opportunity. Without those items our community because destitute.

Better health care providers. Instead of PAC...doctors available un the clinic. More than one grocery store so prices are lower. Better paying jobs so people cqn stay in the area. Also more support for our police department financially and morally

Bike & hike paths. Sewers

More competition among business to create better prices for consumers. One grocery store is not ideal! Replace Shopko business with a similar store. Somewhere to buy clothing, shoes, & household items. More restaurants.

A Walmart, Meijer's, Aldi's something so folks don't have to drive to Bay City or west branch

improve road access to public lake access points improve sports programs for grade school youth available legitimate help for seniors seeking medical insurance options both pre and post age 65

Jobs.. Jobs.. Jobs..

Natural gas, hi speed internet and a paved road. Old m10 is a piece of shit to live on. It gets destroyed by the heavy trucks going to the bean and grain. Only other issue I have is I have to drive 35 miles minimum to get a decent paying job. I don't know how you get more industry in this area. That's a million dollar question.

1.Black top roads in rural areas.                      2. Beautification of our highways, flowering trees and flowering shrubs on I-75 other major roadways.(exit 202 )                      3. Trails to ride near rifle river and lake huron areas. Use the natural beauty of our county to bring in visitors.

More shopping, (clothing, shoes, home goods)

A place to shop. Meijers Wal-Mart like that.

Internet better jobs and transportation

Movie Theater Reasonably priced grocery store Clothing/Shoe store

More restaurants a dog park things for kids to do

Lower taxes.

Higher education opportunities Jobs Recreational availability

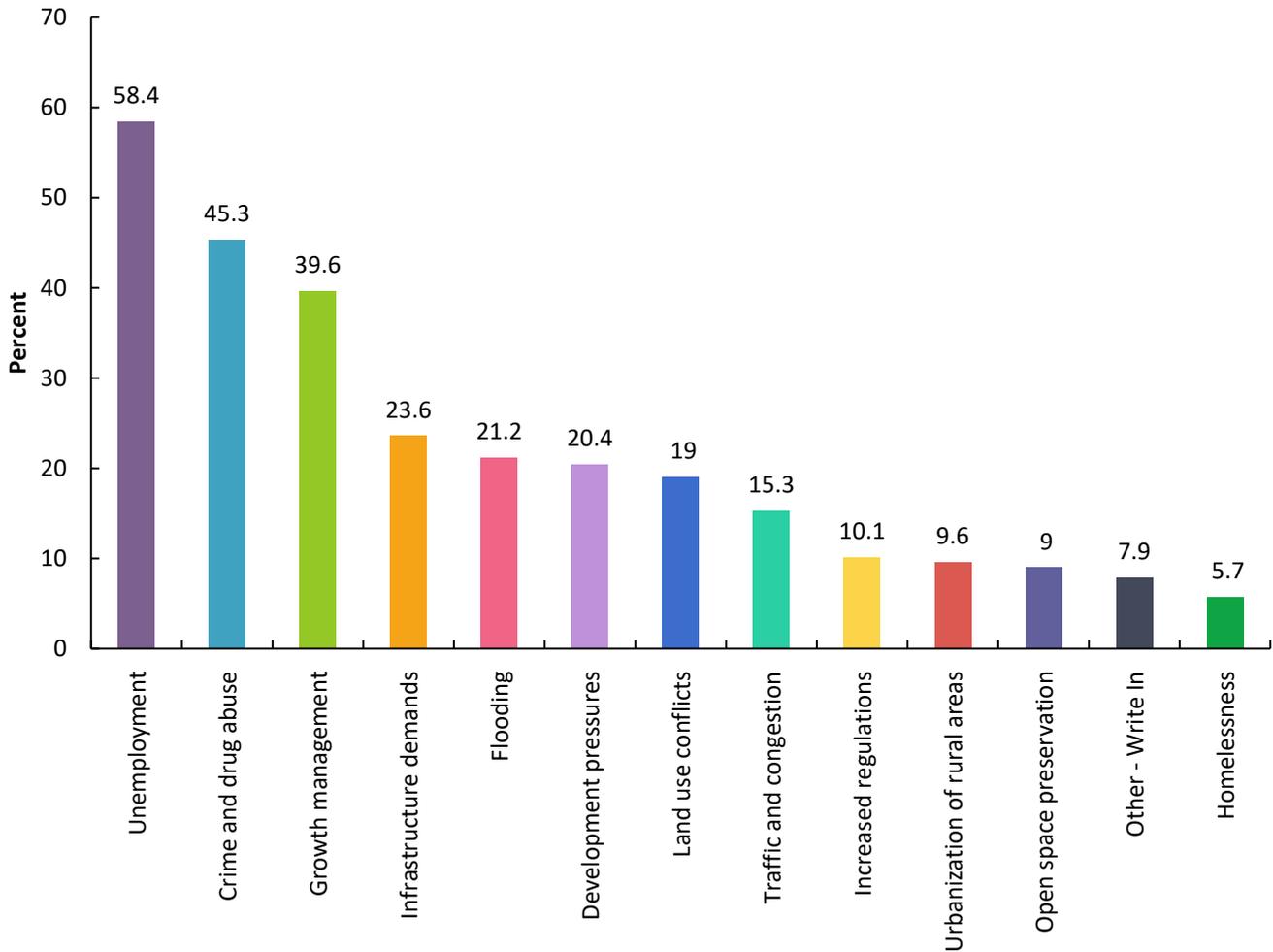
Availability of natural gas. Reliable internet service. More entertainment opportunities.

Better dining choices Retail Nicer parks/water access

Better school, better roads, better police

Bike path for walking and biking exercise.

**11. What do you believe are the main challenges Arenac County is facing today (please check all that apply): ?**



Value	Percent
Unemployment	58.4%
Crime and drug abuse	45.3%
Growth management	39.6%
Infrastructure demands	23.6%
Flooding	21.2%
Development pressures	20.4%
Land use conflicts	19.0%
Traffic and congestion	15.3%
Increased regulations	10.1%
Urbanization of rural areas	9.6%
Open space preservation	9.0%
Other - Write In	7.9%
Homelessness	5.7%

**What do you believe are the main challenges Arenac County is facing today? Other – Write In Responses**

Attracting and keeping young professionals in the area.
Dirt roads
Drug abuse. Businesses being stopped from into town
Fix and maintain roads
General population has few options for good jobs. Economy is poor
Getting locals to support local businesses and stay local for shopping/entertainment
High water wave action erosion on Saginaw Bay.
Higher wages, cheaper and easier access to health insurance. Reorganization of F.I.A. No one usually answers phone. You are on phone waiting literally for hours for assistance.
Lack of affordable housing
Lack of good jobs.
Lack of new development
Lack of shopping oppurtunities
Limited options for growth
Local attitudes to change
Loss of businesses (AuGres)
MENTAL HEALTH
Marijuana Facilities - Remove - Crime..!!!
Mismanagement in several areas
Need of food
Needs a beautification committee to clean up main street and make it more inviting. Haven't seen much improvement since the depot was added. Hoped the businesses would follow suit when that went in. Would personally like to see the cable internet make it to Adams township but that's just mine and thy neighbors benefit.
No medical, better schools
Politicians/ leadership
Poverty
Poverty- low paying jobs
Racial discrimination And lack of diversity in education.
Recreation - keep developing to bring in tourism.
Stagnant wages (except minimum wage that is increasing) and rising cost of living expenses
Standish downtown blight
Taxes
Too many marijuana related businesses

Upkeep

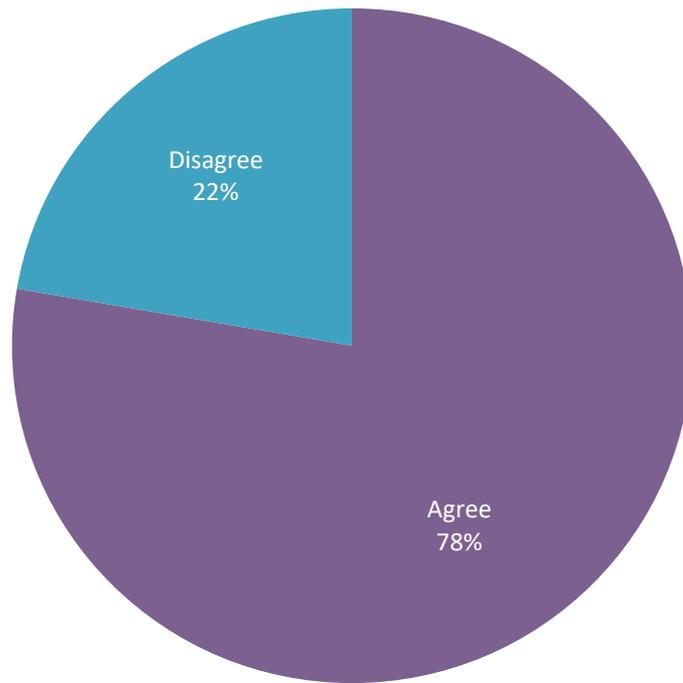
We need jobs for those who actually live in Arenac County, and sufficient shopping to warrant staying local.

We need leaders that will promote new businesses to come to our area.

most jobs are low income part time

road conditions

**12.Five years from now I see myself living in Arenac County.**



<b>Value</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Count</b>
Agree	77.7%	358
Disagree	22.3%	103
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>461</b>

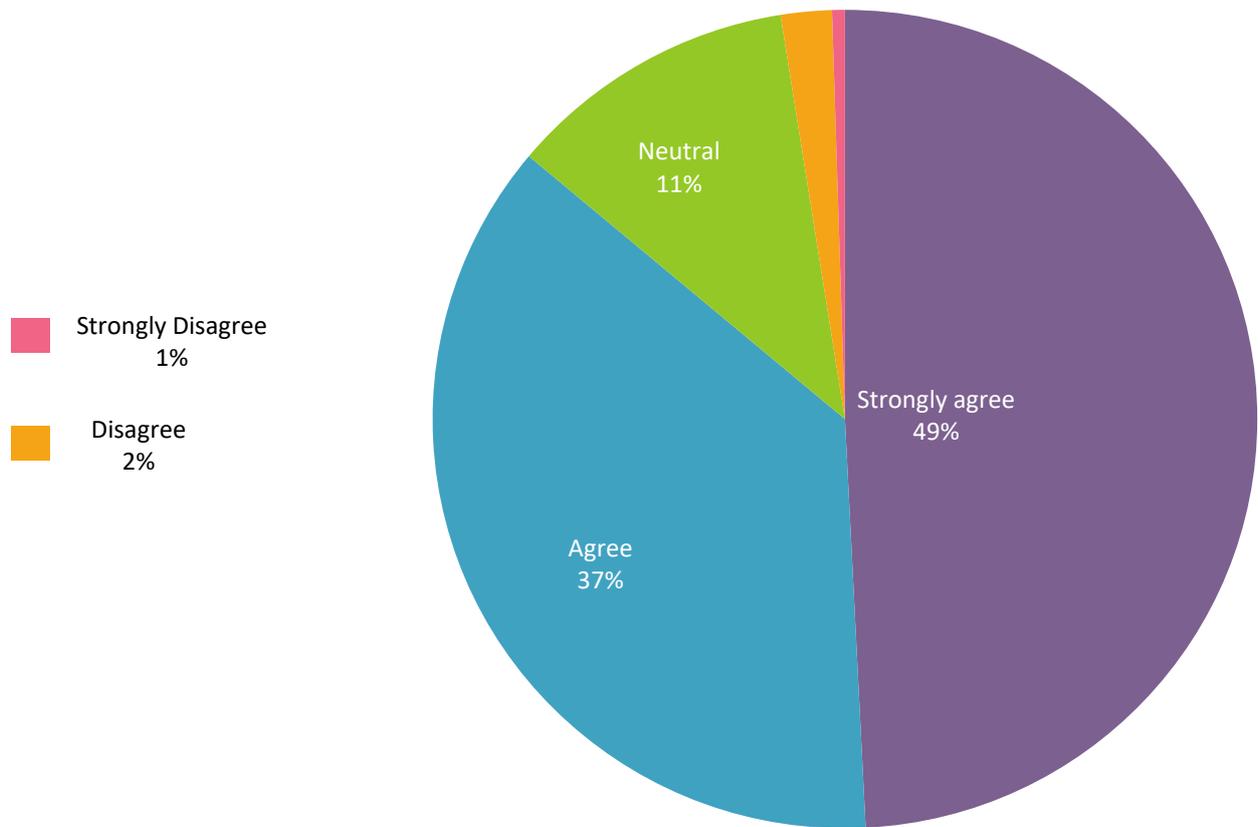
**13.How important are the following strategies in addressing issues related to agriculture in Arenac County?**

	Very important	Important	Needs to be considered, but not a priority	Not important at all	No Opinion	Responses
Build and support local or regional food economies.	186 42.9%	193 44.5%	39 9.0%	7 1.6%	9 2.1%	434
Enhance the business environment for agriculture.	170 38.9%	193 44.2%	53 12.1%	8 1.8%	13 3.0%	437
Farming practices (chemicals, pollution, tiling, etc.).	199 45.6%	158 36.2%	57 13.1%	10 2.3%	12 2.8%	436
Preserve and protect farmland.	199 45.5%	168 38.4%	59 13.5%	6 1.4%	5 1.1%	437
Reduce conflicts between agriculture and residential uses.	143 32.8%	164 37.6%	106 24.3%	12 2.8%	11 2.5%	436
Support best management practices for livestock production and management.	133 30.4%	195 44.6%	80 18.3%	10 2.3%	19 4.3%	437

**14.What are your feelings regarding the agricultural land use statements below?**

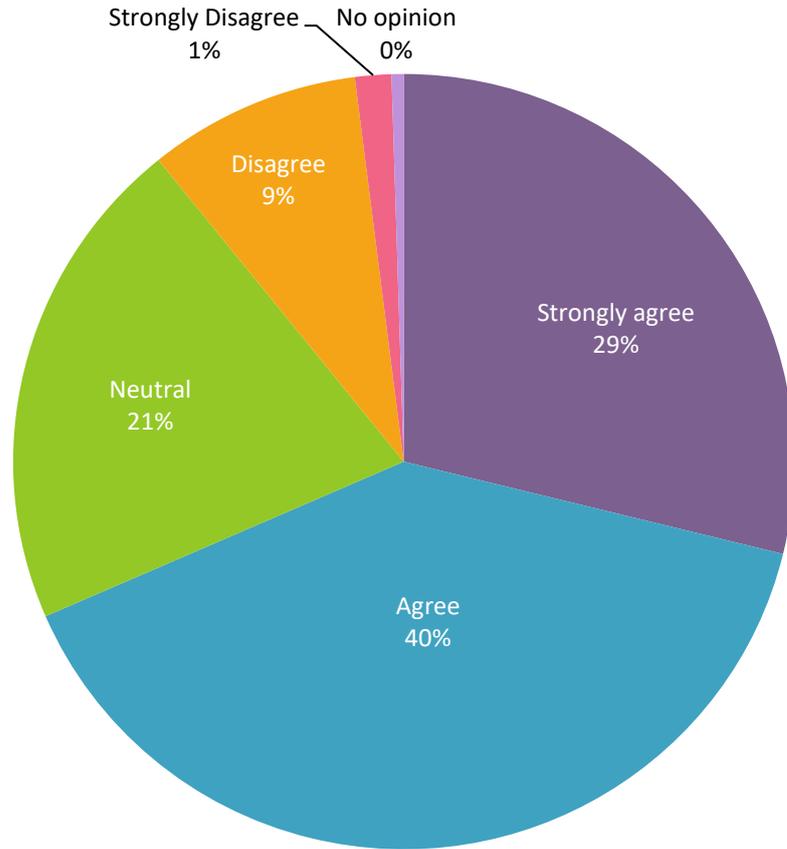
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No opinion	Responses
Agriculture is an important aspect of the Arenac County economy.	208 47.4%	173 39.4%	40 9.1%	8 1.8%	1 0.2%	9 2.1%	439
Agriculture is an important aspect of the Arenac County landscape.	173 39.6%	182 41.6%	65 14.9%	7 1.6%	1 0.2%	9 2.1%	437
Arenac County should preserve agricultural land.	156 35.7%	183 41.9%	70 18.1%	11 2.5%	1 0.2%	7 1.6%	437
Using agriculture land for new development is appropriate for accommodating growth.	35 8.0%	137 31.4%	137 31.4%	101 23.2%	22 5.3%	3 0.7%	436

**15.Arenac County needs more commercial and retail services.**



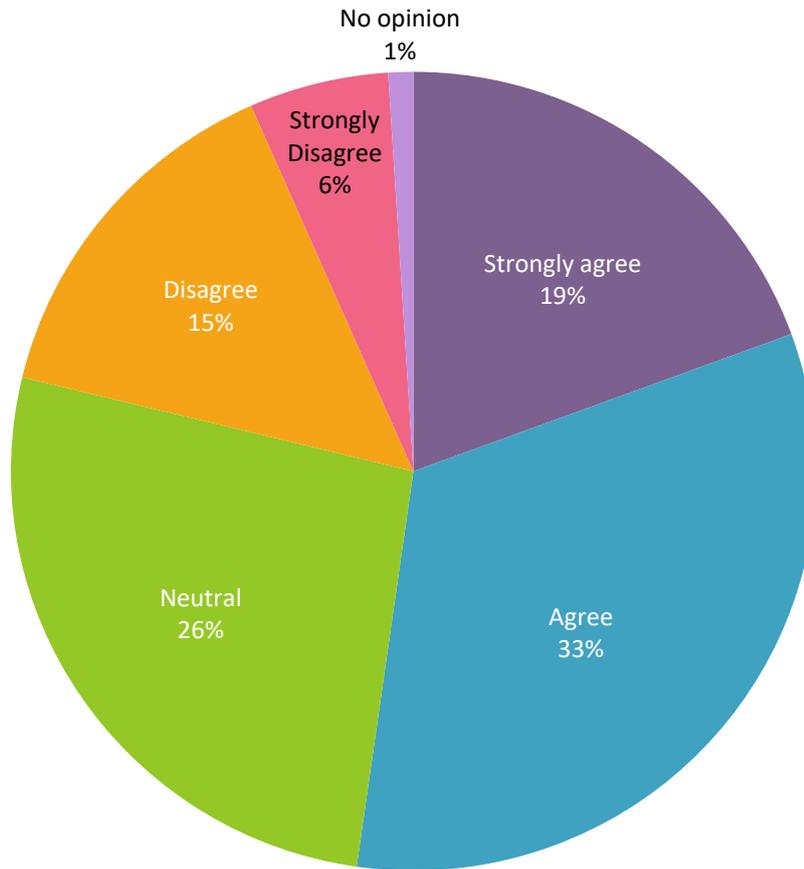
Value	Percent	Count
Strongly agree	49.2%	195
Agree	36.9%	146
Neutral	11.4%	45
Disagree	2.0%	8
Strongly Disagree	0.5%	2
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>396</b>

**16. Economic development efforts should be focused on the tourist industry and attracting visitors to Arenac County.**



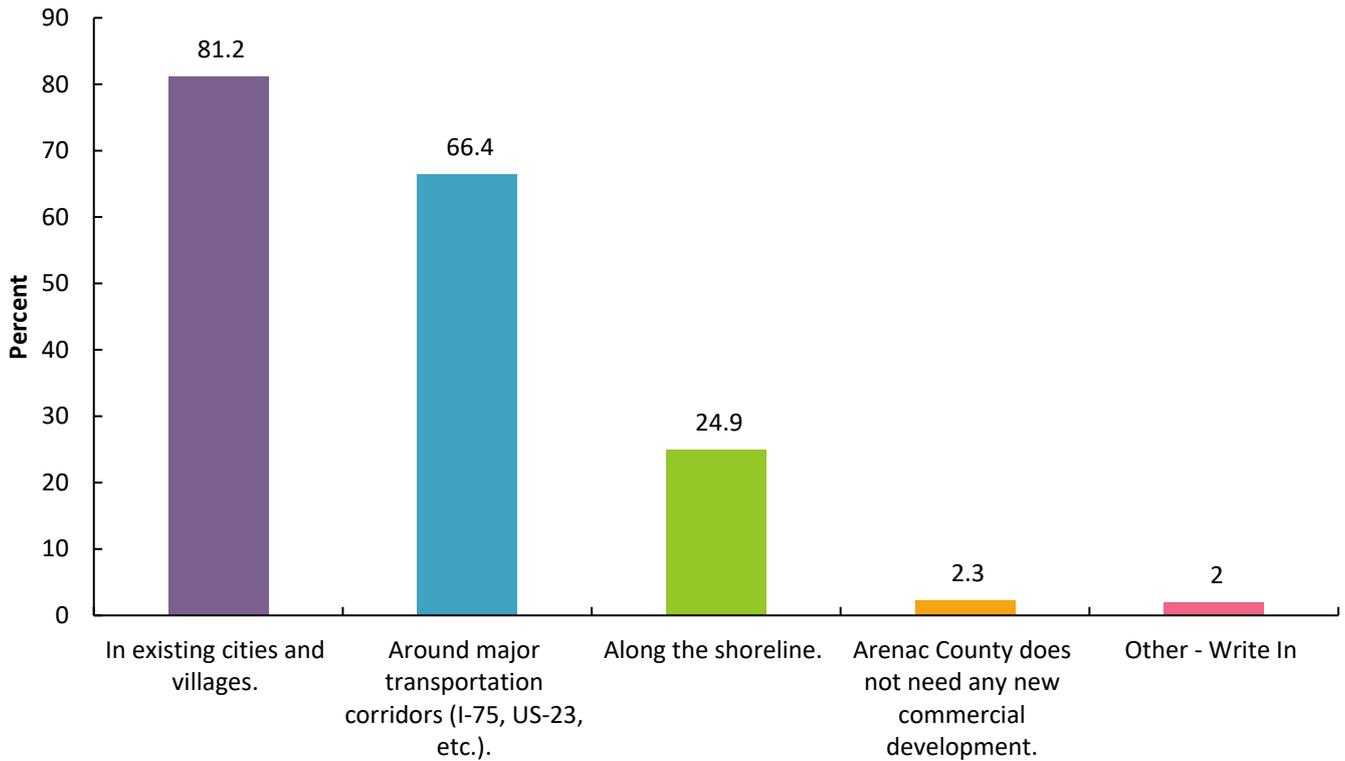
Value	Percent	Count
Strongly agree	28.8%	114
Agree	39.6%	157
Neutral	20.7%	82
Disagree	8.8%	35
Strongly Disagree	1.5%	6
No opinion	0.5%	2
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>396</b>

**17. Gaming and casino-related activities are an important aspect of the economy in Arenac County.**



Value	Percent	Count
Strongly agree	19.4%	77
Agree	32.8%	130
Neutral	26.5%	105
Disagree	14.6%	58
Strongly Disagree	5.6%	22
No opinion	1.0%	4
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>396</b>

**18.Future commercial development should be targeted in these areas (please check all that apply):**

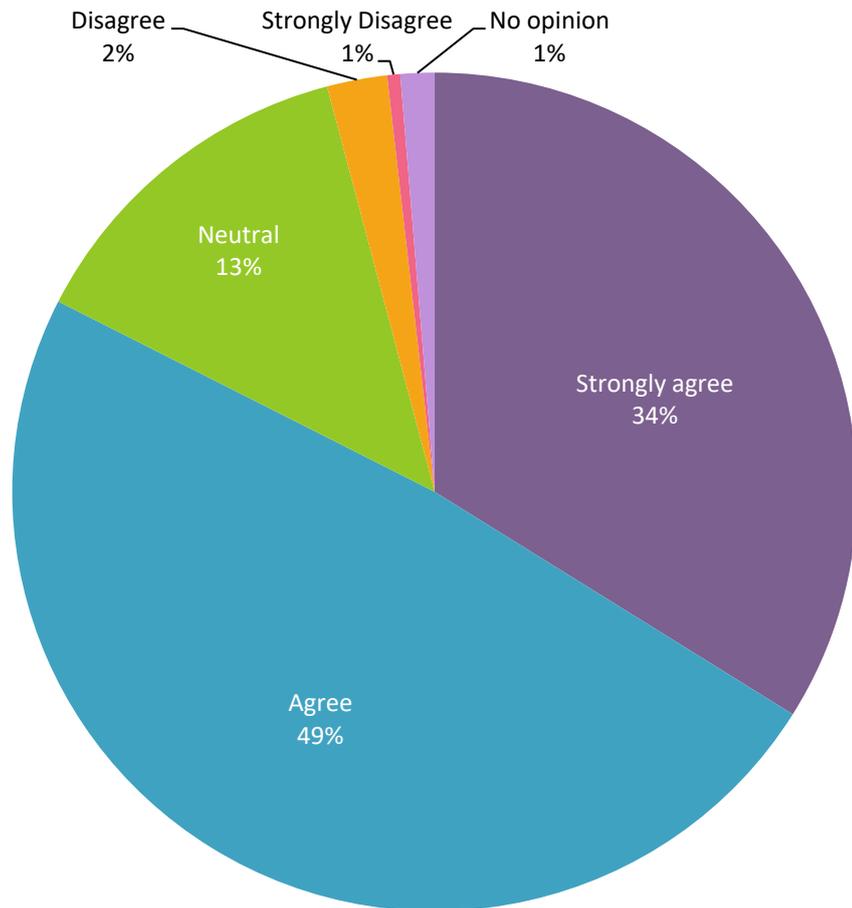


Value	Percent
In existing cities and villages.	81.2%
Around major transportation corridors (I-75, US-23, etc.).	66.4%
Along the shoreline.	24.9%
Arenac County does not need any new commercial development.	2.3%
Other - Write In	2.0%

**Future commercial development should be targeted in these areas. Other – Write In Responses**

Considered as individual possibilities one by one, each different
Downtown Standish needs attention
Fill current empty commercial properties
MORE FAMILY ORIENTED DINING PLACES THAT ARE NOT FAST FOOD
North of Sterling
There are so many empty buildings that make the areas and arenac County look terrible so any new commercial development should take place in those areas
We need a replacement for SHOPo
in the small towns in Arenac county that have no development for basic human needs

**19. Arenac County needs a more diverse industrial base in order to grow its economy and provide more jobs.**

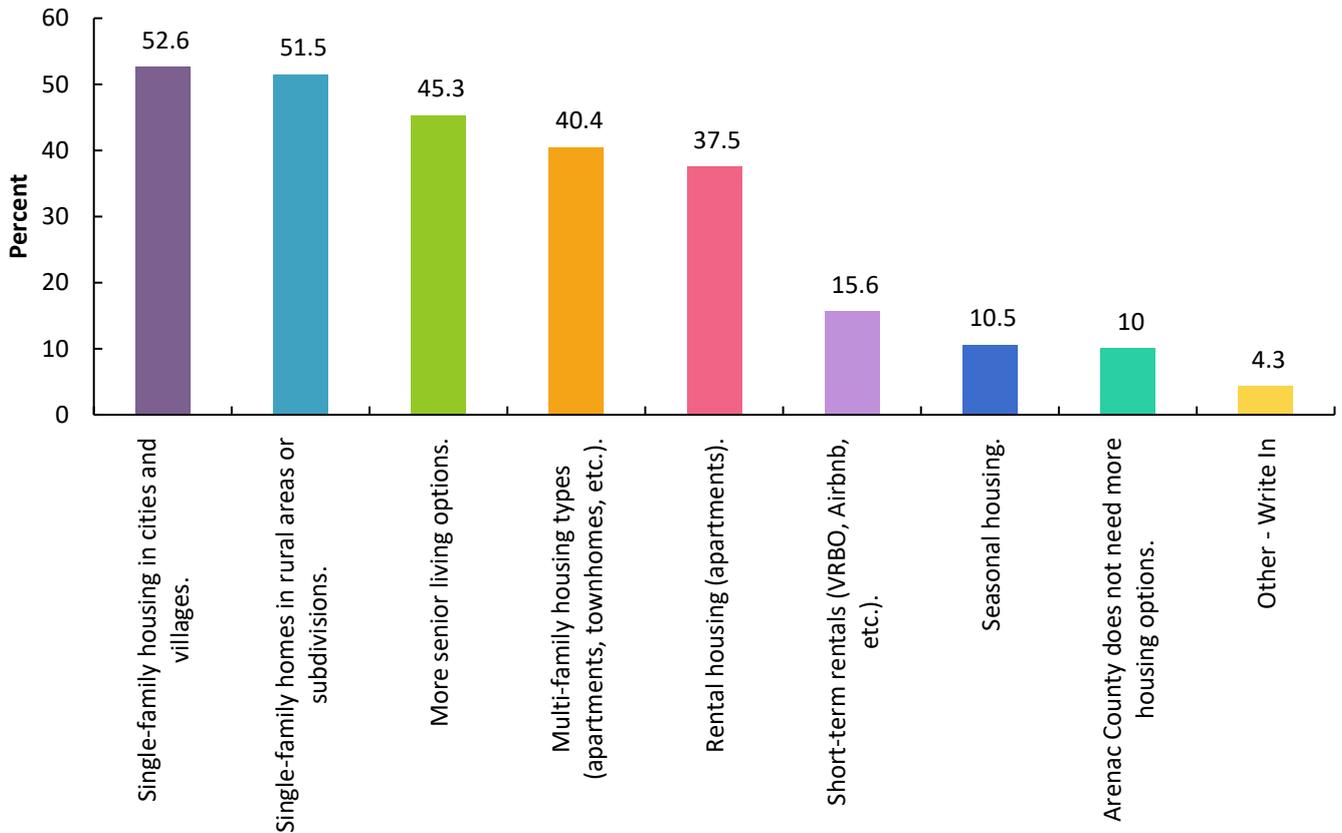


Value	Percent	Count
Strongly agree	33.9%	134
Agree	48.6%	192
Neutral	13.4%	53
Disagree	2.3%	9
Strongly Disagree	0.5%	2
No opinion	1.3%	5
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>395</b>

**20.How important are the following economic development strategies to the future of Arenac County?**

	<b>Very important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Needs to be considered, but not a priority</b>	<b>Not important at all</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Addressing business seasonality.	123 31.2%	180 45.7%	71 18.0%	5 1.3%	15 3.8%	394
Attract or retain a skilled workforce.	206 52.3%	164 41.6%	15 3.8%	2 0.5%	7 1.8%	394
Coordinating business and regional marketing.	141 35.7%	186 47.1%	55 13.9%	3 0.8%	10 2.5%	395
Engage in regional economic collaboration and planning.	135 34.4%	198 50.5%	50 12.8%	1 0.3%	8 2.0%	392
Expanding the diversity of economic activity.	144 36.6%	189 48.1%	47 12.0%	1 0.3%	12 3.1%	393
Improve public spaces to enhance quality of life.	157 39.9%	153 38.9%	76 19.3%	4 1.0%	3 0.8%	393
Incentives for new business.	210 53.4%	134 34.1%	38 9.7%	8 2.0%	3 0.8%	393
Market or promote Arenac County to workforce and businesses.	206 52.4%	152 38.7%	29 7.4%	2 0.5%	4 1.0%	393
Provide for additional high-tech communications and internet infrastructure.	219 55.9%	122 31.1%	46 11.7%	3 0.8%	2 0.5%	392
Provide for additional utilities or service infrastructure to support business development.	191 48.8%	150 38.4%	43 11.0%	3 0.8%	4 1.0%	391
Development of a hotel/convention center.	83 21.2%	90 23.0%	144 36.8%	59 15.1%	15 3.8%	391

## 21. What type of housing does Arenac County need (please check all that apply)?



Value	Percent
Single-family housing in cities and villages.	52.6%
Single-family homes in rural areas or subdivisions.	51.5%
More senior living options.	45.3%
Multi-family housing types (apartments, townhomes, etc.).	40.4%
Rental housing (apartments).	37.5%
Short-term rentals (VRBO, Airbnb, etc.).	15.6%
Seasonal housing.	10.5%
Arenac County does not need more housing options.	10.0%
Other - Write In	4.3%

### What type of housing does Arenac County need? Other Write In Responses

AFFORDABLE housing...Au Gres' prices are higher than surrounding areas and not compatible with incomes. We put too much emphasis on tourism and the local residents suffer.

Again all of the recent questions should be addressed by giving incentives to fill current empty business properties

All of the above.

Cheaper rentals

Condo units

Don't know

Don't know housing needs

I'm not sure what is needed

More than 2 bed room apartments

Not sure

Not sure on housing demands. Seems like plenty of houses are for sale so I don't think the demand is high. A Marriott or similar hotel in town would be advisable as we don't have much to offer there.

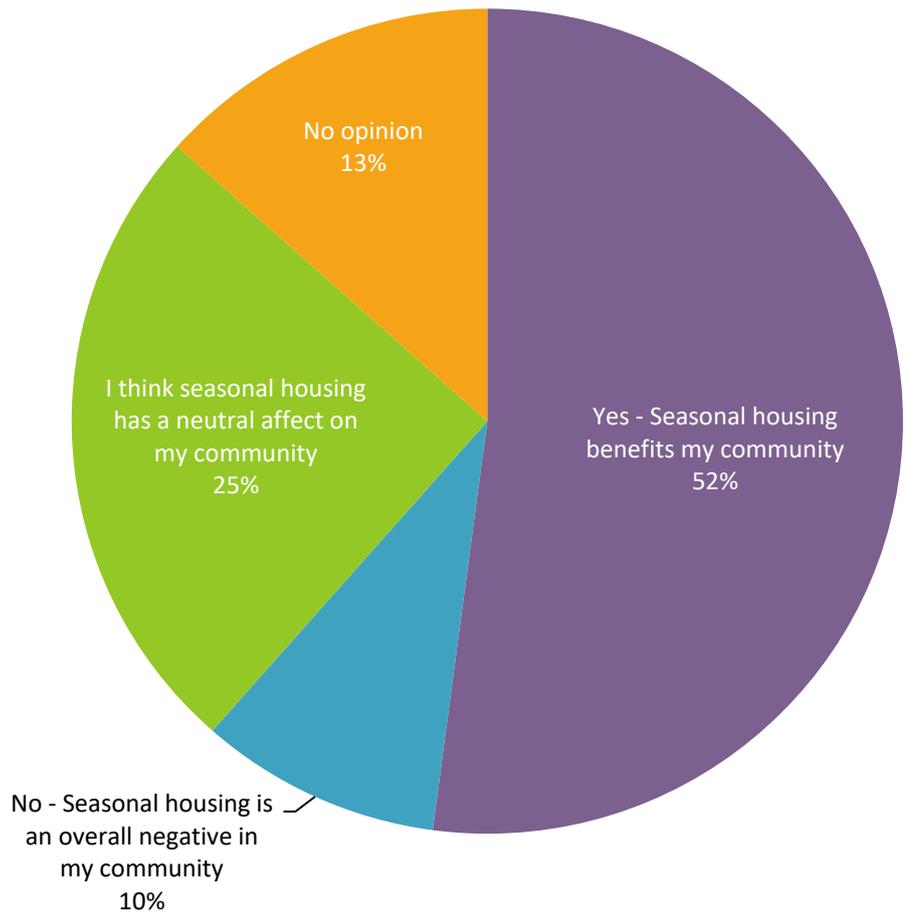
SHELTERS /SHORT TERM LIVING UNITS

Single family rentals that are in good condition.

The planned senior living complex to become a reality!

affordable

**22. Seasonal housing makes up a large portion of the housing market in Arenac County. Do you think seasonal housing is an overall benefit to your community?**



Value	Percent
Yes - Seasonal housing benefits my community	52.1%
No - Seasonal housing is an overall negative in my community	9.4%
I think seasonal housing has a neutral affect on my community	25.1%
No opinion	13.4%

### 23. Feel free to elaborate on your response pertaining to seasonal housing.

Response
Seasonal housing should be licensed and regulated
Just brings people from the city up here to tear up our roads and they do donuts and spin around, tear up our woods and trails act like fools and are drunken loud mouths , it don,t enhance my living or neighborhood.
Not a lot of understanding of needs, benefits between seasonal and year-round residents (us-them)
No comment.
Seasonal bring in a lot of money and tourism
Should be green with insulation easy convert to retirement singial family
Seasonal housing has as many positive as negative attributes. Positives - bring temporary visitors to the community which supports local businesses, provides jobs to trades as seasonal homes must be built and maintained, provides an influx of money to the area, provides tax revenue Negatives - increases traffic, increases crime, no attachment to community, increased seasonal strain on utilities/services
N/A
Just like the tourist, they come and go. Some down keep up on their properties and others just trash before leaving. They don't care too much about the town or county, or anything.
The country as a while is experiencing homeless issues, the last thing we need is more seasonal housing that stays empty for large portions of the year and draws elderly and retired people to the county. These fluctuations cause employment issues throughout the year driving young people away as they know as winter comes their employment is cut. This impacts investment in new industry investment as industries prefer stable consistent income rather than seasonal spikes. We should if anything be providing more low cost housing which will bring more people into the community and may drive new businesses to invest in the area creating a more diverse economy which is healthier and less prone to instability.
as mentioned earlier, tourists come for many reasons either to spend time here or drive thru. Having cabins for rent would peak an interest to the tourist, or pass thru if they are tired
Seasonal housing is fine as along as it is owned property and not leased property. Leased properties should remain at a minimum- not promoted by county.
Seasonal housing has its place, but I am more concerned about the year round residents. Been here nearly 40 years and I wonder why we haven't capitalized our areas near the expressways 61/75 have gas stations. Big deal. A few restaurants would be great Wendys, KFC etc... How about a chain hotel? Again, what are we going to do with that prison? The former pumpkin farm is for sale Marathon station is finally gone and there's an abandoned house across the road. Not to mention a 2 story house not far from there that is the perfect example of blight. Hmmm... the opportune place for any type of development.
Reference short-term rentals
We live in Whites Beach/Pt Wenonah area and are currently working very hard to get sewer and water brought in. I think there are other shoreline communities that also need W/S systems. They should be encouraged and supported. We need to protect the lake. I see lots of white foam on windy days, is that PFAs?
Seaonal houseing is huge here, lots of snow birds. I am a business owner here and work with the public, so I know. They even have huge campers they stay at our local campgrounds, 6 mths out the year there, because its cheaper that way, then to get a house or rent here.
Generally these are second homes and pay a higher amount of tax
Focus needs to be on those who permanently reside here. Limited nice housing for those seasonal vacationers
Seasonal housing brings income to the community. It also brings a diversity of people.

This is a long survey

Its here yes we don't need more people from out of town to come here and hangout the summer is busy enough. The seasonal living group doesn't add to our community

Seasonal housing pertaining to snow bunnies and hunting camps bring people to the area who have money to spend in the area if we give them the opportunity to do so. As I pointed out, they and the full time residents currently have to travel to bay city, Saginaw or up to west branch currently unless you feel like spending at least twice as much at family fair or ace. Same for most doctors appointments unless it is just my insurance network that doesn't have providers in the area.

Need apartments that are not limited to serving low income tenants

If it wasn't for seasonal housing along the lakeshore There wouldn't be as many houses. So wouldn't be as many taxes. Arenac county is a tourist county mainly because the seasonal housing, so many being along the lakeshore.

Seasonal housing can help but we need to have things for those people to spend there time and money on in this country not going elsewhere to shop

I have no comment

Bringing in the flatlanders brings in business... more money for the mom and pops, which should equate to more taxable income.... If done right everyone benefits

I am aware that seasonal travel and housing are important in the county. I feel that our time, money and resources should target those who are here full time. Embrace the seasonal travelers but do not cater to their needs and neglect the needs of those who choose to be in out County all the time.

A big draw to are actually county is our beautiful shoreline. Those lucky enough to live there should be able to enjoy it, races are paid. However business and community are only supported part year

The seasonal housing people spend money in the community but more businesses need to be opened to get more people to come here

Nothing comes to mind

Arenac counties shore line/ hunting / fishing/ boating/ hiking Has not even tapped into its potential

We have a lot or recreation areas in Arenac County. Saginaw Bay area and Rifle River Area. We also have a lot of seniors that go south for the winter months. This area is a sleeper area and need things to keep the population here and spend there money here rather that in surrounding towns.

It's great for summer but we almost fully depend on these summer vacationers, we need other options to help during the winter months to support our businesses and grow our community.

Seasonal housing as in "snow birds" live here about 6 or more months out of the year. They spend a lot of money in the community.

It does not provide consistent revenue to the businesses

We need year round funding not short term businesses suffer in the winter to survive when their expenses are the highest

Seasonal housing provides revenue for local government and also our local business.

Seasonal housing is what helps to keep us on the map of places to go

I feel that though seasonal housing does provide a good amount of property taxes but does not provide for year round money flowing into the local economy by the homeowners

It hasn't been a boon nor has it been a detriment.

They have no respect for the people living here

We need fulltime residents. People who put their money into the community 100%. Part-timers only spend their money here when their here. Usually during summer months.

Seasonal housing options bring people to the community who may not otherwise spend time here.

It's a tax base for the schools

We need to embrace to tourist industry as it can boost our economy

Seasonal housing including campgrounds brings a huge amount of people to Arenac County that has a large impact on our economy.

Don't know much about it.

During the summer months the economy is great but we need more income aligned housing to attract young families. That's were the long term sustainability is.

I have no opinion on seasonal housing.

Seasonal housing drives demand for small business for maintenance and repairs, as well as increased sales in local retailers during the on season.

Helps

We do not get to "count" the seasonals as residents which does not add to our Census count for funding.

Seasonal housing would pull more tourists to stay in area for vacations, of course providing more seasonal job opportunities for teens.

Seasonal property pays taxes

Arenac county has seen businesses expand in past 10-15 years. The problem is to get competent help. Teach the residents that working needs to be a way of life, welfare is not. To many "help wanted" signs, no one wants to work.

Seasonal housing pays full time taxes and uses less resources

Provides tax dollars

Not sure what you mean by seasonal housing. Is this question about the people who live here only 6 months out of the year? If they are willing to have a second home here and pay the taxes and keep it up, it is better then having alot of empty homes.

Seasonal visitors have disposable income that is spent in our communities

Seasonal housing is important as it directly connects to the local economy. With a significant portion of our economy dependent on tourism we have to accept the seasonal housing - that is bringinG tourists to our area. The water is an asset and we need to recognize that seasonal housing is the draw!

TAXES

It's been stable and I don't see big changes

Seasonal owners dont take care of there places cuz they are only here once in awhile. Junk in yards, party on weekend

Seasonal housing brings tourism, local spending and stronger taxbase in the county.

there is no seasonal housing in my tiny village...no one comes here to vacation..it is a dead zone

I do not believe that seasonal housing is necessary in this area. There are no migrant jobs around any more. There are also tons of campgrounds in Arenac County for seasonal living.

we need to take care of the people that live in the cities there needs.....Dollar Generals in all the towns is not a great thing.....nothing to shop at in Standish, or Au Gres dollar general doesn't answer what people need

Seasonal housing encourages tourists which in turn brings their dollars into our community, which benefits all.

More people means more dollars being spent during seasonal times.

Seasonal housing adds tax money to local schools and governments

Seasonal living supports local businesses throughout the year

People leave for the winter and take their money with them including income tax

Needs more permanent housing

Camp grounds are the main seasonal housing in Clayton twp. They may benefit the county, but does nothing for the twp. Summer brings problems, traffic, drugs and alcohol.

I live in an association and we have many seasonal residents

Hopefully it brings more purchase power to local restaurants and stores.

All they do is bring in people that doesn't care about our home area litter is horrible on state rd

It helps bring in alot of money

Again, we need housing for the people who live here year round. I've seen too many people move out of the area because of lack of jobs and affordable housing. How can our local businesses survive if we have more and more residents moving out?

We would benefit more from people here all year long

Enact and enforce blight laws

Not at this time

Seasonal housing isn't a big issue. As long as the high paying jobs are in Saginaw, bay city and midland, you will struggle to build arenas county.

Seasonal housing is good tax money for our county, also for local businesses.

It can't hurt to bring in seasonal retirees to spend money on the community

Seasonal housing provides a larger property tax income. And brings families into the area shopping, buying, fixing, eating, and using recreational facilities

I didn't know that seasonal housing was such an issue.

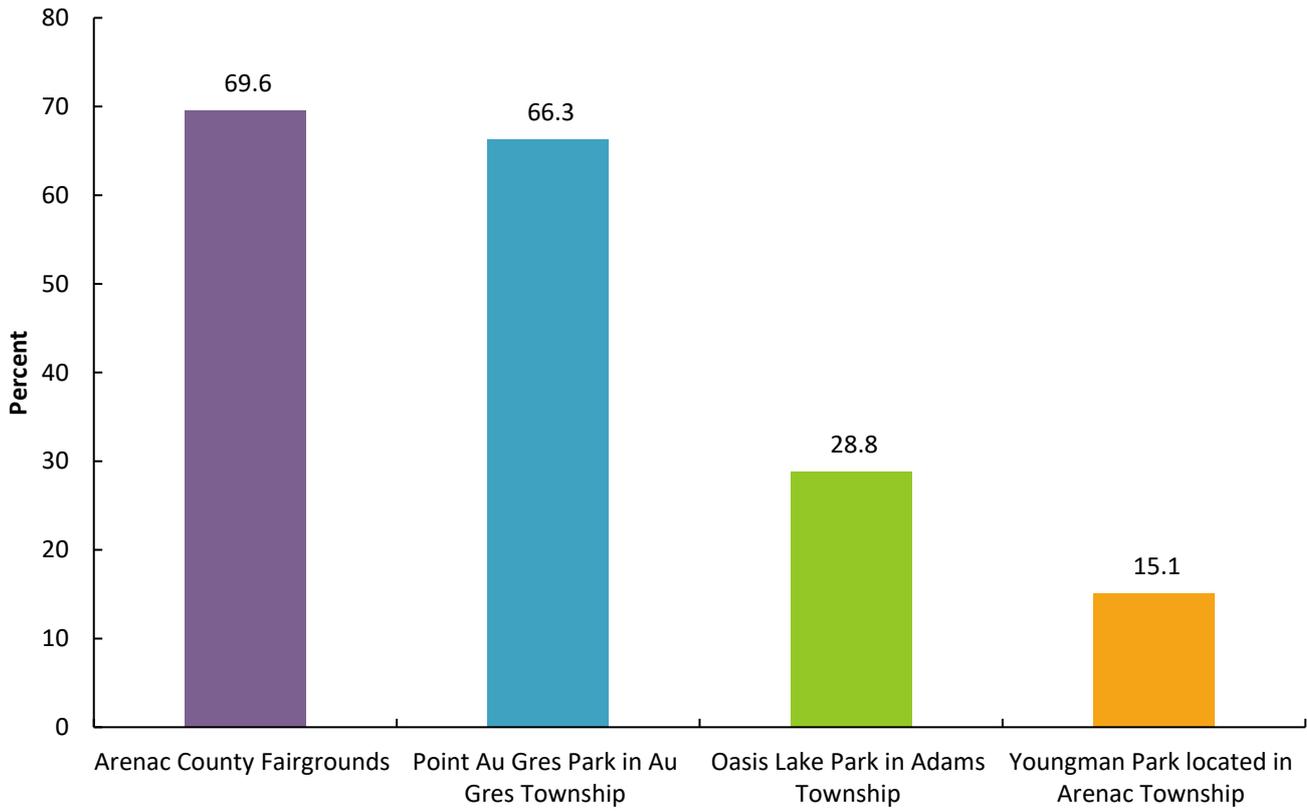
**24. How important are the following strategies in addressing issues related to housing in your community?**

	Very important	Important	Needs to be considered, but not a priority	Not important at all	No Opinion	Responses
Addressing blighted or substandard housing stock.	176 47.6%	123 33.2%	46 12.4%	12 3.2%	13 3.5%	370
Preserving, maintaining, and improving existing housing stock.	132 35.5%	182 48.9%	44 11.8%	4 1.1%	10 2.7%	372
Providing for more affordable housing opportunities.	126 33.9%	150 40.3%	76 20.4%	7 1.9%	13 3.5%	372
Providing for several different types of housing.	93 25.1%	160 43.2%	94 25.4%	10 2.7%	13 3.5%	370

**25. How important are the following strategies in addressing general issues related to transportation?**

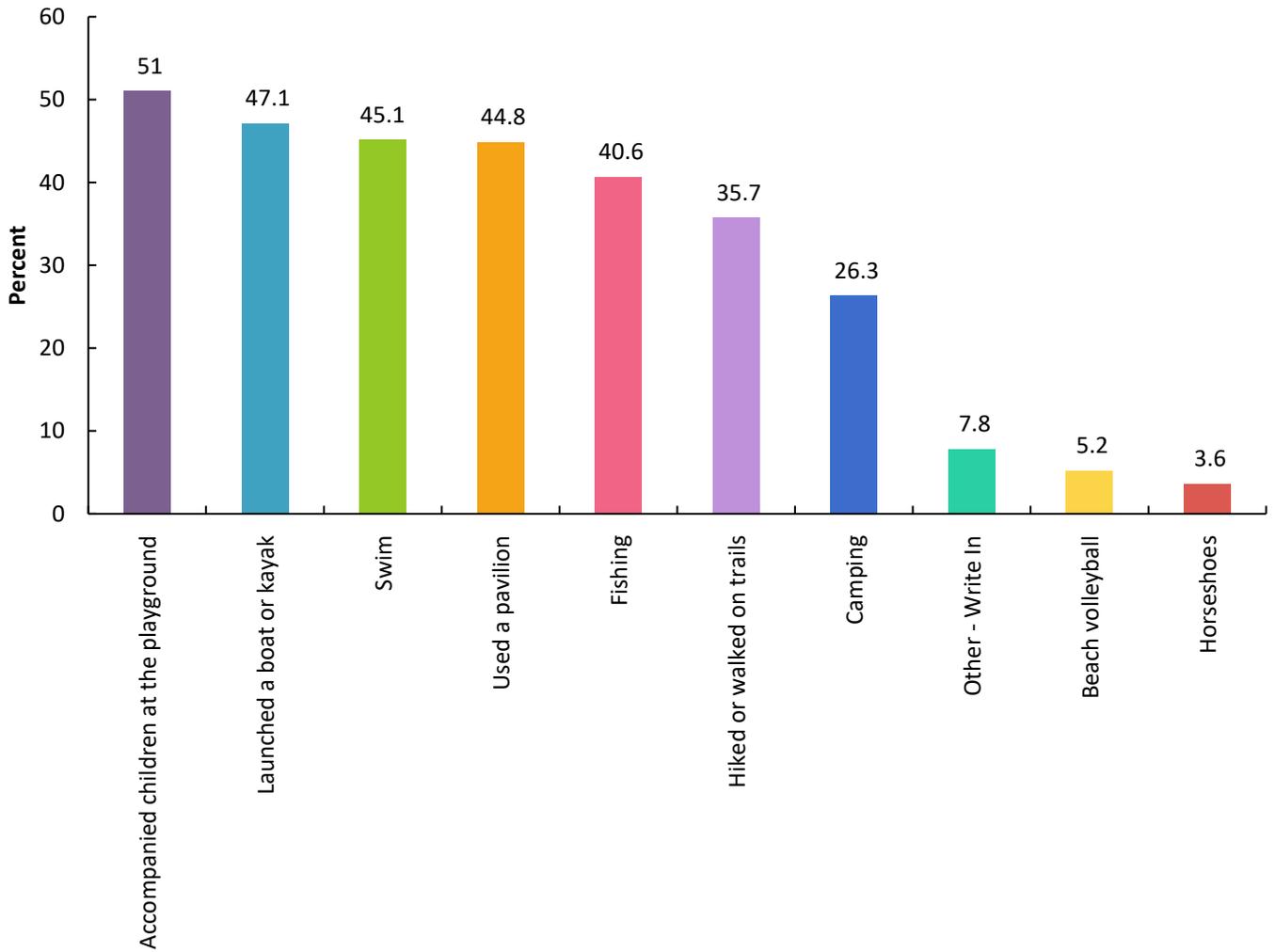
	Very important	Important	Needs to be considered, but not a priority	Not important at all	No Opinion	Responses
Maintaining and improving existing roads	271 72.3%	93 24.8%	10 2.7%	1 0.3%	0 0%	375
Maintaining and improving rail infrastructure	84 22.5%	140 37.4%	102 27.3%	28 7.5%	20 5.3%	374
Expand Arenac County Transportation	83 22.3%	127 34.0%	128 34.3%	23 6.2%	12 3.2%	373
Add a deep water port	41 11.0%	74 19.8%	129 34.5%	65 17.4%	65 17.4%	374
Improve or expand non-motorized pathways (biking, walking, etc.)	94 25.1%	104 27.7%	131 34.9%	32 8.5%	14 3.7%	375

**26. Which parks owned and operated by Arenac County have you visited in the past year (please check all that apply).**



Value	Percent
Arenac County Fairgrounds	69.6%
Point Au Gres Park in Au Gres Township	66.3%
Oasis Lake Park in Adams Township	28.8%
Youngman Park located in Arenac Township	15.1%

**27.I have participated in the following recreational activities in an Arenac County park in the past year (please check all that apply).**

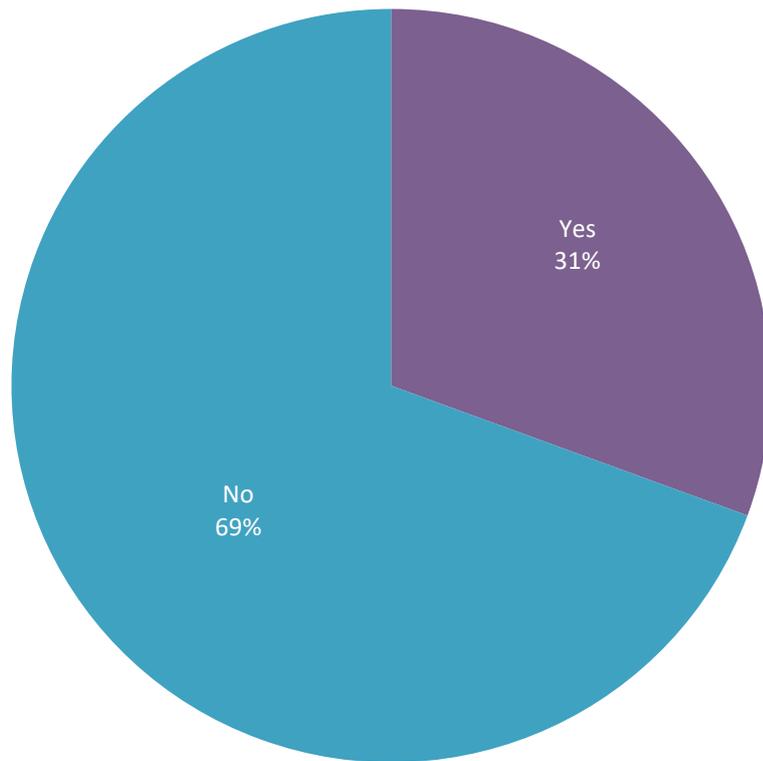


Value	Percent
Accompanied children at the playground	51.0%
Launched a boat or kayak	47.1%
Swim	45.1%
Used a pavilion	44.8%
Fishing	40.6%
Hiked or walked on trails	35.7%
Camping	26.3%
Other - Write In	7.8%
Beach volleyball	5.2%
Horseshoes	3.6%

**I have participated in the following recreational activities in an Arenac County park in the past year. Other Write In Responses**

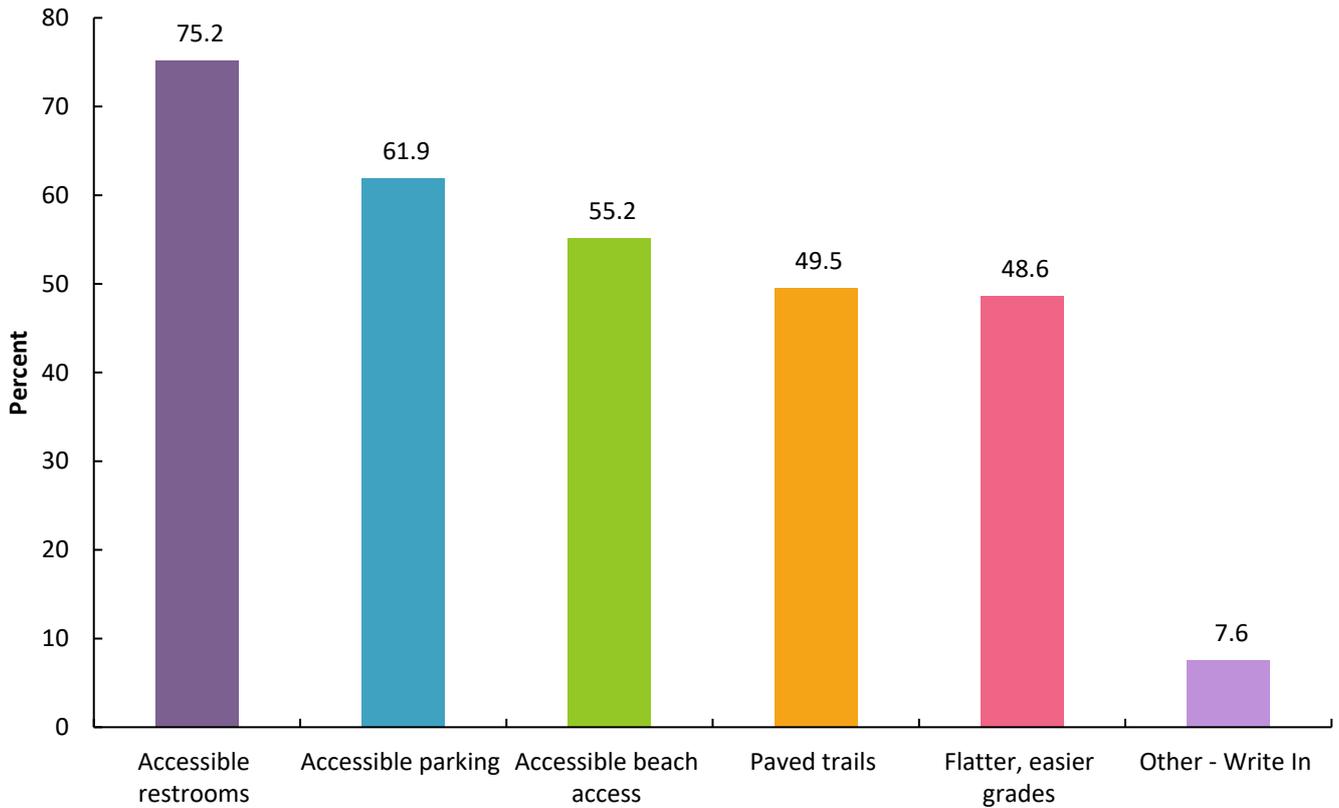
Fair
Hunting
Arenac County Fair
Attended fair and other events at fairgrounds
BBQ
Biking
Canoeing and tubing
Enjoyed the quiet of nature there.
Events at the fairgrounds
Events at the fairgrounds
Fireworks
Health problems have kept us from enjoying the parks this year.
Horse back riding, on state property.
Horseback riding
NONE
None
Picked up passengers
Picnic
Shooting / Hunting
Walked my dog
fishing, kayaking, biking but not at an Arenac Co park
none

**29.Do you or any of your family members have a disability?**



<b>Value</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Count</b>
Yes	30.6%	114
No	69.4%	258
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>372</b>

**30. Please indicate which of the following would make the recreational facilities in Arenac County more user-friendly (please check all that apply).**

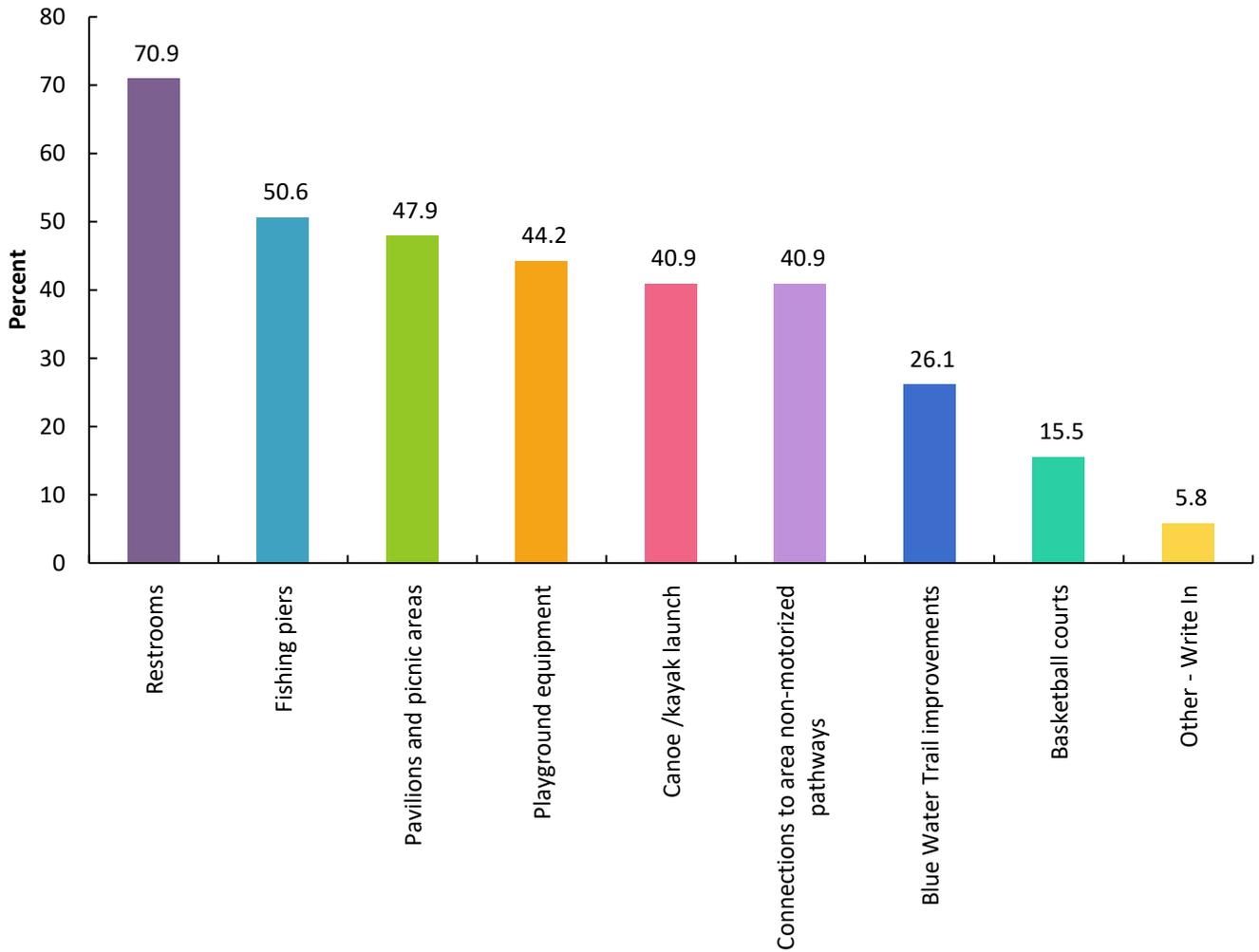


Value	Percent
Accessible restrooms	75.2%
Accessible parking	61.9%
Accessible beach access	55.2%
Paved trails	49.5%
Flatter, easier grades	48.6%
Other - Write In	7.6%

**Please indicate which of the following would make the recreational facilities in Arenac County more user-friendly. Other – Write In Responses**

Other - Write In
Clean restrooms.
Decks, floating decks
Don't charge for parking.
Playscapes and swings for disabled children
Wheelchair accessible playground equipment such as swings. Handicap swings, etc.
accessible to those without vehicles
playground equipment for disabled & for seniors

**31. What additional facilities/amenities would you like to see added to the County's parks?  
(please check all that apply).**

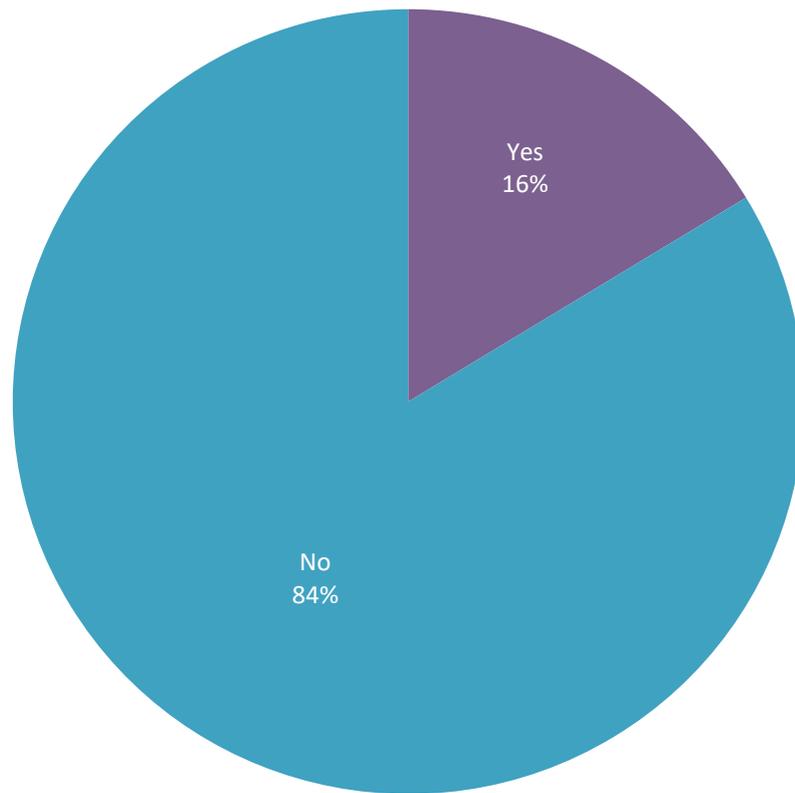


Value	Percent
Restrooms	70.9%
Fishing piers	50.6%
Pavilions and picnic areas	47.9%
Playground equipment	44.2%
Canoe /kayak launch	40.9%
Connections to area non-motorized pathways	40.9%
Blue Water Trail improvements	26.1%
Basketball courts	15.5%
Other - Write In	5.8%

**What additional facilities/amenities would you like to see added to the County's parks? Other Write In Responses**

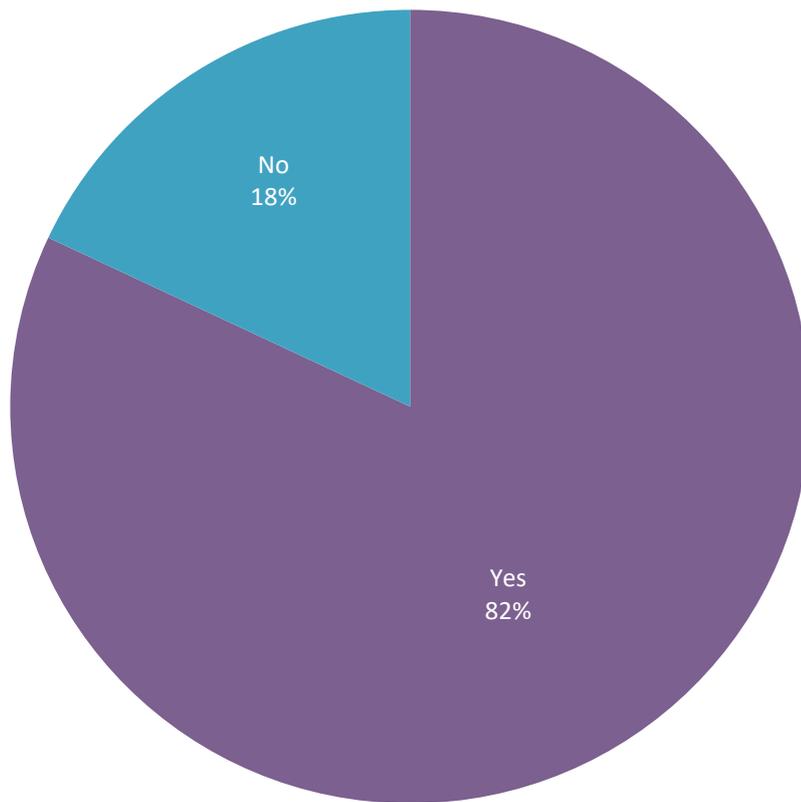
Bike trails
ATV trails
Baseball grounds
Bathrooms at the fairgrounds
Beach
Deer hunting is really big in this area. Perhaps better parking in state land areas.
Fenced dog park area
Fenced dog park areas
Horse trails, groomed hiking trails
MORE LIGHTING FOR SAFETY
More hiking trails better website that tells visitors where to hike
More parks
Pickleball courts
Playground equipment for those with special needs
Restrooms with running water
Running water and electricity hence cleaner parks
electricity, plumbing

### 32. Do you own waterfront property on Lake Huron?



Value	Percent	Count
Yes	16.3%	61
No	83.7%	313
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>374</b>

### 33.Has your property been impacted by fluctuating lake levels?



Value	Percent	Count
Yes	82.0%	50
No	18.0%	11
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>61</b>

### 34. Feel free to elaborate on your response pertaining to fluctuating lake levels.

Level has enhanced our property
Patience; wait for change
The rise in lake levels is at all time high. It's affecting sea wall structures. It's also causing some flooding. Although water levels fluctuate over the years, it has reached its apex this year.
Nothing can be done on rising water levels
I have a belief that the Corps of Engineers has control of the rise and fall of our Great Lakes to a degree
I pray it is part of the natural cycle, but fear it is a result of changing weather patterns driven by climate change. Definitely believe we should treat climate change like the race to space in the 60's.
Water levels are up and I think it's great. We need help with the fragmities to be able to enjoy the water and view.
It's a fact of life if you live by the water!!!
We cannot use the property as we planned when we purchased. We never thought we would have to put in a sea wall to save our house.
I have owned my home since 1962 and had it raised in 1986, during the last high water period. My home itself has not been impacted, but there is standing water in every low area in the neighborhood. Our road has flooded several times this summer. The roads are awful in my subdivision. Because of all the standing water, I have a feeling that many trees will die... The maples started turning red back in August. Many other trees have fallen this year. The property behind my house is full of water. The property next to my house is full of water. The mosquitoes are terrible. Living near the water is both a blessing and a curse.
Had to reinforce sea walls, loss of beach, inability to put out dock.
High water has done damage to our seawall.
I live on the AuGres river...the levels are very high..flooding is occurring in surrounding areas away from the river. Depending on how the winds are blowing, water is over the seawalls
Loss of approx 1/2 of usable beach area, from last year. However, lake levels will fluctuate from one decade to another. It is all part of living along the Great Lakes shoreline.
I'm on a canal system (Au Gres Township) that goes out into Saginaw Bay. We are worried some about the water levels.
have a floating dock
We had 40 feet of sandy beach when we bought our house 3 years ago, now we have none because of the higher water level on Lake Huron.
Beaches are non existent. We will have to upgrade our seawall if Lake levels do not recede. Higher water table which causes our sump pump to run more and risk flooding.
The high lake levels have been costly as the need to replace decks, sea walls and landscape due to the water and winds.
Lake goes up and down, that is an unavoidable fact of living on the edge of a lake.
Experienced minor flooding several times in summer/fall 2019
Too many fragmites and cant get to our canal or woods cuz water too high
High water levels have impacted our roads more than it has to our home property.
Hoping the water doesn't come up any closer!

We live on a Canal System - and water levels might be a problem as time continues and levels rise.

It hasn't been a problem yet. The evasive plants have been.

Lake Huron water level is very high this year.

Erosion. Loss of property.

**35. Do you believe that Arenac County has been impacted by fluctuating lake levels? Please respond here and feel free to elaborate on your response.**

Land owners need to understand that the lake level is cyclical. They need to build accordingly.

Not really this what the lakes do. You build or buy close to water you better be prepared for when it rises, storms or ice and it's not the tax payers responsibility to fix your mistake.

yes

Yes. Shorelines are much smaller with less beach area.

Yes

Yes but you need to clean up the beaches. They are gross

I believe that citizens have forgotten how high the water levels used to be. They were down for so long that now they are panicking with the levels returning.

Yes, some of the sea walls are in bad shape around Au gres

Clean up the Fragnities

Yes

Yes, losing beach areas and homes along the water. Property is decreasing.

Don't know

High water has affected the sewage systems of property near Saginaw bay

Climate change and water levels are an ever growing these to our way of life. We should always consider the impacts this may cause during development and Street the community towards a more green environment.

Yes, according to the news. But I am not personally affected.

Yes. With the water this high it impacts boating and launch sites

Yes, it always will be.

Yes... flooding in my back yard

Absolutely

Yes, and I believe it will continue to be affected.

Perhaps the Lake Huron shoreline has been impacted Inland waterways are subject to seasonal, (snow melt), factors. Also the cleaning of streambanks on the Rifle, and Au Gres rivers is very important.

Yes, flooding , people had to replace and buy much. So it effected , spending , jobs , way of there life.

Yes

Yes, there is more flooding

Yes, dropping water levels I crease phragmites and algae

No, it rises and falls. It is nature deal with it. Not losing or bringing dollars to Arenac. Next

Yes. I have friends who had homes flooded

It was severely impacted when the levels were low. The fishermen had trouble launching their boats and fishing.

I've heard complaints from residents, mostly to do with drain/road commission not maintaining ditches to handle storm waters when we already have high water tables

Yes!

No the water levels are in cycles, it's high now, it will lower and rise, it's "normal "

Yes. It is impacting the people that live along the lake shore. Building sea walls and water breaks to keep the waves from eroding the land. Many people who live along the rivers will be flooded out more often. Impacting farmers too. With higher levels the rivers and ditches are higher. Drain tiles are underwater. In rain events rivers and ditches will flood more often.

No

Yes

It has always been this way and will continue to be this way... the lakes go up, the lakes go down... you learn to live with it.

no

Yes, I believe it affects the access to boaters, swimmers . Affects fishing.

Yes

Yes, we live near the shore and visit often. We can see the evidence often overnight as it varies compared to dock levels.

Yes. High levels have improved boating, but I am not sure how much higher the homes on the lake can handle. River flooding is not good...

Yes

Yes canal flooding

No. The majority of those who own lake property know the levels fluctuate.

Yes

As a person who deals with tourists daily yes. The lake levels have brought people up to check on their homes and boats. Which might normally come up every other weekend. And when it's down it is impacted by people not being able to use boats etc as much. Brief statement

No. It's a cycle. I think the levels will go down, just as they went up, over the next 10-20 years.

Yes. Too much flooding

Of course.. It is what it is... Water damage in many forms to property owners

Yes...we wanted to buy a seasonal home on the lake, but are re-considering this area due to no beachfront.

I believe higher levels help get boats up the AuGres river which is good.

yes. Every dock owner had to contract with someone to raise and or lengthen their docks

Not yet, though that is most likely on the horizon

No, If you want waterfront property take the high and low water levels that come with it, don't expect me to bail you out no pun intended

Yes

I've seen the water levels before out at the marina. Water so low no boat could launch. Instead of water front property it was sand front property.

Unsure

Yes.

Yes. With the Lake Huron's high water level, there is no beach. I live 1/4 mile from Lake Huron and didn't walk the beach once. In Tawas, there was little beach, which brought people onto the grass. I fear for tourism not to mention the erosion of the beaches and the impact in the future.

Yes, all of Michigan has been impacted by fluctuating lake levels.

NO

The water is back up, appealing and nice.

More than likely it has

Not particularly. The lake level has returned to more normal level now, but if it decreases again the lake access is restricted.

Higher levels are better.

Yes

No

Not really, it tends to go in cycles, higher some years and lower others. Need to prevent our Great Lakes and other water sources from being pumped out for other usage. Leave and protect more wetlands. Stop blowing up Beaver Dams. They create an important environment for wildlife.

Yes, but this goes in cycles always.

Nothing can be done about Mother Nature.

Yes, instills fear and concerns

Yes the ditch and creek connection to existing road side ditch full of silt and no longer flows towards lake many properties along Dreyer rd are flooded

Yes, i am close to the water front and people are freaking out in sims township

yes

Yes! I would assume lakefront property values have gone down.

Yes, we have property 1 lot off the lake in Au. Gres and have seen the levels cause erosion, and limit access to areas that were once walkable.

Yes very much so

This is an age old problem. Have lived here long enough to know there will be high water levels and low water levels. When you buy Lake Huron property, you had better be prepared for both. Those water levels are controlled by Mother Nature.

Not sure on this

Yes, a great deal of beaches have been lost due to rising waters.

Act of nature, lakes will fluctuate and it does affect tourism.

no

Yes flooding on my property and not waterfront

yes

Yes

YES, WE HAVE TO GO OUT FARTHER IT SEEMS TO GO FISHING.

Yes, there is a threat to property and homes with high water levels. There is negative economic impact with low water levels in rivers.

Yes. Water levels are finally rising causing flooding and high water levels in some areas of the coastline

Absolutely!the lake levels are higher than I have ever seen them. This affects the amount of beach and the erosion causes Many problems for residents and seasonal residents as well as for the parks.

What goes up comes down.

Yes. Home buyers afraid to buy close to shore as waters rising. Very different shoreline years passed. Waters were reseeding. Sea walls a scare also. Many need to adjust to water levels. Costly

yes I do think it has had a large impact on Arenac County

The entire shoreline of Michigan has been impacted negatively. It's time to consider how to stop the erosion of the shoreline from the ever increasing water levels.

Yes. We own home off the Point Lookout Lakeside. Our deeded easement accesses are being encroached upon by Lakefront homeowners with seawalls and other out buildings. Makes it more difficult year after year to access the beach.

Yes, beaches are disappearing

Yes, low water levels impact local economy

Absolutely. When I was first looking to buy in 2012, the lakes were low therefore the housing market was low. I was told it hurt tourism. The housing market has been increasing but the water levels have hurt all the Great Lakes. The erosion is a huge factor. It's starting to affect tourism. I have friends who rent the same cottages yearly and the lakes were so high it was past the stairs. They had never seen anything like this.

Yes

No

Yes. Some hunting areas are affected by high water levels. When water levels were low, it was very difficult to boat or swim.

Yes but it is a natural thing to happen I remember it in the 70s

Yes. There are always negative and positive results. Lake levels are high now which is great for boating but not for lake home ownership.

Yes but its back now

The rising levels are starting to do real damage. The shoreline has none to hardly any beach.

Of course

Not significantly, no. There has been some flooding and erosion, but not so much that it has caused excessive hardship.

Yes. There is no beach anymore. That is what drives the business from tourists to our communities. Without the revenue many of our loc businesses fail to be able to provide through the winter season where revenue is low.

Nope, water levels will always rise and fall

All shoreline and riverside properties are being adversely affected by the extreme high water levels we are currently having causing erosion and flooding

Not sure

No.

I'm not sure on this issue.

Yes

Yes, weeds and debris.

Yes very much so and so expensive for homeowners

### 36.What do you like best about Arenac County?

Good hunting and fishing a casual laid back community
Just a nice place to live.
I like living in my quiet calm neighborhood and I want it left that way
My community
People look out for each other (known or not)
It's natural resources such as lakes, rivers, forests, and trails. The slower pace of life. The down to earth nature of its population.
Small town living.
that it feels like a safe place to live
Small town friendliness , pretty safe for kids and families, I love it here 58 years
That I don't work in the county any more
It has so much natural beauty. So much unavailable. Or not utilized properly.
Small town
Small town feel and the people
All
Access to the Great Huron Lake. A growing community. Heritage.
I live in a neighboring county (Iosco) and travel, visit and shop in Arenac County regularly. I enjoy the recreational focus of Arenac County and would love to see that expand.
Lake Huron access
All the rivers And lake
The non profit organizations.
Access to lake huron close to bay city and events there
i have always loved the laid back feel of country living in Arenac County
It is a beautiful county with a lot of potential.
quiet laid back lifestyle
The casino, in the sense of what it has done for the county, especially 2% distribution funds. It's a shame some gov't entities didn't work with them at the very beginning. I feel most of the improvement to Arenac County has been due to the generosity of The Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe and we should be focusing on it as a way to beneficially grow the county.
Rural area
Hunting fishing woods and agriculture
low living expenses, (water, sewer) no close neighbors, tourists come up, but they leave after a few days, and they spend money in our county
The landscape
If there was something I would say....but can't think of anything.

I love where I live. Quiet, wildlife, beautiful country, small town living, peaceful.

Not much

Living on Lake Huron and support from the community to community members. The community is very giving.

the shoreline

Friendly people, safe area

Quiet low traffic

its home

Lake Huron

People and the wildlife.

It's rural community/feel. - Yet AuGres could use more retail establishments.

It's not overcrowded. I like to see trees instead of ugly buildings. I like the fact that there is room for the wildlife.

I love the park in Omer and the Omer Courthouse. I like going on a hike on the "Wah Sash Kah Moqua" nature trail. I like the Halloween party at the Arenac Community Center. I love that AuGres is getting a splash park.

Nature, wild life, rivers

Quietness, privacy, and ability to commute easily to other parts of Michigan.

I like the nature around it and the land and water. Provides fishing, hunting , trail riding , ect.

Small town felling

The people are very friendly. The water. Wish there was more to be able to do with grandchildren.

Smaller communities, sense of family.

Small and safe.

Location

Quiet,relaxed lifestyle.

The community its self and being close to the lake.

Rural

Rural housing

The people.a patriotic community.scenic quiet and rural.

Rural setting

It hasn't changed in forty years. It has to change one year for the better. The old guard needs to step aside and let new businesses in. Not another gas station, auto part store except tire repair, pizza joint or a car dealership that spans the whole town. One day it might change and I would like to see it.

The small town feel

It is up north but near the city. Having that country living feeling that make you relax and enjoy life.

We have a great community of people who care. If we show some initiatives to make positive changes. People will help either personally or monetarily. We just need to do a better job of coordinating and encouraging positive growth. Look at the color scheme of the old Granton for instance. The new black and grey doesn't fit the town. However they are newcomers to the area so we'll let it slide :o) the old normans looks great and I'm looking

forward to more improvements, even if it's only a fresh coat of paint and some big potted flowers along 23 in town! People of Arenac county are always there for you when you need them! Let's do what we can to let people passing through see how great our area is.

I'm comfortable here. It's home...

Laidback

The variety of living. From the lake and tourists that are there. From fishing, boating and water activities to only a mile away having a rural agriculture setting.

The small town feeling of this community. Relaxing and beautiful year round.

City of Au Gres

The small town feel and the community that is willing to grow, help and dig in and get things done when it comes down to it

Small town community feel. When there is a need, the community comes together!

We finally got a grocery store in Augres

Rural

The community of people

The small town feel.

The country atmosphere is huge for me. The Hunting and fishing. By and large most of the folks are friendly. We just need to get out of the dark ages. I would love to see some groomed ATV or ORV trails. That would bring many into the area who would spend money given the right businesses... and connect them if possible to the Michigan ORV trail system... also I love the Rifle River... it needs to be monitored and patrolled as families should have to worry about the language and stupidity of those not wanting to actually take in the River but view it as a free for all party place... I live on the River and the drunks and underage drinkers sometimes get to be to much... better management at the RV parks along the river would help a great deal...

rural community life

Nature! Arenac County has some of the most beautiful places in Michigan.

The people

Non congestion, quiet , beautiful countryside

Woods and Farmland

Hometown atmosphere

The amazing community, small towns that help each other and support each other. It's a great place to raise our family. We choose to live here by choice, both myself and husband work drive to work in other counties because we love the area.

It is a growing city which has much to offer. Unlike Pinconning which is going backwards. They have an abandoned building at the traffic light, that is a disgrace to the town.

I like the small laid back towns. I want to continue to raise my family here and eventually retire in my beautiful little town.

Quiet, laid back, low traffic

small town vibe

Rural communities. Small town feel but close enough to bigger cities.

Smaller communities

Safe close knit community

How beautiful it is ,i dont have neighbors crowding me on both sides

Recreational natural resources opportunity of rural sport. Waters edge / wooded natural beauty I have heard others that travel north call Augress area . The paradise of the county . Why can't we improve our untapped Whites beach area potential Turning blight areas into park areas with lighting or rented potential of outside pavillions/ horse stables/trails/ putt putts and horse shoe pits/ dog parks/ splash parks/ picnic areas anything but blight. I enjoy our variety of restaurants Quick stop shopping /family dollar /dollar genral Access to prescriptions being filled in town Auto care Would like to see another large full service gas station there is so much congestion around gas stations. Love farming 4H community

Small quiet

My home location. If there was chip and seal or asphalt on the road it would be much better than the mud hole we get every spring and the slop when it rains.

Small community where most locals know each other and help each other. Great place to raise children, schools systems have suffered recently though.

Small community feel. Born and raised here. Comfort in knowing most people in your community. Family history in the area. Rural area, rivers, woods, farm land

library is great

The country atmosphere but it would be nice if retail was a bit closer.

The shore and the new coffee shop.

The community itself. We all come together for each other. We live in a great community here in Au Gres

I appreciate the small town feel in AuGres. We looked for a new house recently, and decided we would stay in our old house and do updates, just so we could stay in AuGres. It's nice, quiet, and friendly.

The small community feel. Being in the country. The farmland.

People

My parents moved up here permanently in 1973. I graduated from high school here. Even though I went away to college, and then worked in the metro Detroit area for several years, I returned home because I enjoy the country life. I finished my career in Iosco County...because I could not find a job in Arenac County. At least, not a good job. For services, I go to Bay City. All of my doctors are there. I do my shopping there. Things are too expensive in Standish. I am on a fixed income as I am now retired. It's worth a trip to Bay City to buy my groceries at Aldi because I can get quality for half the price than here in Standish.

Safe, calm pace. Friendly

Rural landscape, access to Lake Huron

The myriad assortment of recreational opportunity afforded here specifically hunting and fishing. It is a quiet peaceful area and still in relatively close proximity to large cities for shopping and entertainment not afforded here.

It's simple to me.

The friendly easy laidback country living.

Family and friends live here. It also feels safe. I wish there were more sidewalks out of city limits. I wish there was a nice public beach on Lake Huron, like Tawas has.

Small town feel

Familiar

I recently moved, but still work in Arenac County. My family has strong ties to the agriculture community and I love that that way of life is still appreciated. This is a close knit county and I enjoy that feeling of "family".

Low crime levels, sense of community

The beautiful landscape and quiet country lifestyle.

Peaceful place to live

Good place to live

Its home to me. Its the rural feel

lake access

The preservation of many of Arenac County's historical assets. There are strong community groups who dedicate their time to ensure these assets are maintained and developed for future generations. City streetscaping projects have assisted in the beautification of Arenac County. Brings curb appeal to

Not much right now.....you let ogemaw steal Meijer's away from us

Feeling relatively safe in my neighborhood. Living near my son and grandchildren.

That I can own a home extremely cheaply in a relatively crime free area

Quiet at times

Honestly the people

The water and nature

The living of life the feeling of community. Neighbors knowing neighbors, looking out for them. Being able to feel safe walking.

Nature

Small town atmosphere, not a lot of traffic, nice folks!!!!

It's my hometown...

I have lived here most of my life. I like knowing people and the friendliness of our residents.

love it

Feeling like home. Not typical City feeling seclusion.

I came here from Novi and with all its amenities there is nothing compared to the communities here. I would take my granddaughter to school and to see families helping families is heartwarming. People helping people. The economic difference shocked me but how people are willing to step up and help is surprisingly welcome. The food bank is amazing , the help at Christmas to bring families with little to have a Christmas is nothing short of amazing along with the volunteers who make this happen. I am proud to call this area home.

The people

Lake Huron

Nice and quite place to live ... People are so nice ...

Arenac County is a very nice area. Nice people nice place to live. However it needs to make improvements moving into the 21st century.

Nothing much anymore other than our home is paid for and our son lives close.

LAI D BACK LIVING,,, THE PEOPLE THAT LIVE HERE

Variety of commerce. I prefer going into Arenac county (I boarder bay county) over run down cities to the south.

Standish Sterling Schools

The lower cost of living and rural feel outside of the cities is nice, but having more growth in the cities to increase access to amenities is important.

Close community

Au Gres

Decent to raise kids.

Good place to live and raise children

I like living up north and by Lake Huron.

Lake Huron DNR boat launch

Up north feel but still close enough to major shopping — it is not a "City" atmosphere.

Schools

Mostly quiet and small with lower crime then Big Cities.

Everyone talks to all people. It's a very welcoming community.

It's a friendly community and several people help with various events and activities.

Peaceful serene atmosphere

This is where my home is. I make it the best I can.

quality of life and not super busy like tawas.

My community and town

People are very caring.

Small Town atmosphere

It's not Bay County. We like the up north feel but require access to bay, saginaw, genesee for business, we also require access to the bridge, traverse and alpena for business. So the location is just what we needed.

Small community with a great school district

People

That it is a small farming community--very quiet. Excellent schools and an excellent place to raise your children and grandchildren. We have lots of tourists in the summer--that helps our economics.

The water recreation combined with the rural aspect. A rare combination anymore.

Love that my family and many good people live here!

I like that we are just up north enough. We can enjoy many outdoor activities- especially the lake. I like the people.

Rural area, not a lot of congestion

Small town living in beautiful scenic area of Michigan that supports common unity of most michiganders that love nature/hunting/fishing and recreational activities.

All of my family born and raised in Arenac but will never live there.

Community and proximity to outdoor recreation opportunities

I use to live in arenac , I have recently moved. There is nothing like 20 yrs ago. The grocery store is over priced. So I now travel beyond Standish.

The people

schools and location

People Quiet

Farm lands

Lake living Small town

Close to lakes, rivers and camping.

Rural lifestyle Convenience/fast food restaurants

rural type communities, although people don't come together like they used to

Easy access to main roads and a variety of food stops

Small community, peace and quiet

WHITE'S BEACH AREA, LAKE HURON, AND FISHING. WISH THE RACETRACK OUTSIDE OF TOWN WOULD REOPEN. WITH FAIR PRICES TO BE USED AS A FAMILY OUTING. AND THE FAIR IS GETTING SSO HIGH IN THEIR PRICES AND THEE BUMP AND RUNN RACES THERE ARE NOT VERY SAFE, THE PROMOTER HAS BEEN TOLD OF PRROBLEEMMS BUT NOTHING HAS BEEN DONE 3 YEAR.

small communities

The small town communities

The neighbors and friendly residents.

Quiet lives. Nice roads

Schools

wild life sun sets and rises.....life in general slower easier

We enjoy country living but do not enjoy living in a gravel road.

Country living, and ease of access to I 75.

Location, close to expressway, water, parks, wildlife. We need an Aldi or Meijer.

Lake Huron

It's natural beauty and quiet up north living.

Surely not the roads

Lake frontage and low property evaluations which lead to lower property taxes.

People!

Water and woods within minutes

The relaxed atmosphere of the community.

I love the sense of community.

Lake Huron. Views. Golf. Pickleball.

The sites
Born n Raised in Arenac Co. n raised our family in this county too. My family n friends live in Arenac Co.
Quiet, scenic & peaceful
Its home.
Possibilities for improvement
The outdoors and up north feeling
The sense of community.
The up north feel and laid back attitude . Our Police and all first responders hunting and fishing
Not much. This survey is really making me wonder why I continue to live here.
The country living
Camping tubing hunting boating!! Town Railroad
The privacy
Rural community. Proximity to Bay City/Saginaw/Tawas Area.
slower paced life, rural setting.
Friendly people small town feeling
Being near the water.
Simplicity
Beautiful area
Right now, not much. Arenac needs to stop keeping new employment opportunities out ....they rejected Walmart because they feared it would put pamida out of business, what is there now? An empty building.....big wheel, pamida, Shopko, all in and gone
The quieter and friendly community living away from the busy cities
The Up North atmosphere, small town feeling, and generally very nice folks.
Its quite
Rural living and the very light traffic to deal with.
The country feel. Friendly people.
Relaxed way of living, wildlife, access to Bay & Lake.
The small town feeling
People
The water Lake Huron Saginaw Bay
Our small farm.
The families that make up this community . The beautiful wild life The hunting, fishing, boating Arenac county has it all.
Laid back...

The lake

Generally safe, friendly, and quiet community.

Close proximity to Tri-Cities

### 37. What would you do to improve Arenac County within the next 5 to 10 years?

Promote hunting and fishing
Keep city people away
Bring more jobs to keep young people in our area
More age diverse population would help in many ways; related to economic opportunity
Think survey pretty much spoke for itself.
Fix roads Get state to move on vacant prison; get it occupied Municipal water/sewers
Clean up Skidway Lake
would like to see better roads and things for family's with kids to do
Roads , buisnessesss , affordable housing , things for families - nice parks .
Get new people in the governmental business that are honest and want to work with the common person not for who has money
We plainly need some new growth in multiple areas. And we need the infrastructure to support it. We need new fresh leadership rather than the same old same old from varying backgrounds. If you do the same thing your going to keep getting the same results. Ghost town
Bring in a chain store,better resturants.expand and get more help for animal control.
Add more restaurants around i75 and more jobs. You can't bring people in without jobs
Improve local roads , improved employment opportunities
Lower property tax , business inseatives , improve lake Access for boat launches focus on fishing first.
Help at the community center. Pray for it's success.
Address blight/empty buildings along US-23. Attract new businesses with recreational or seasonal interest opportunities to serve the resident population as well as the tourists.
Economic development...way too many closed up or struggling businesses
Put Street lights up and bike trail!
I would for sure work on the infrastructure that we already have. Keep it maintained and of quality use. Make sure the non profits are getting their voice and their support. Not discarded. Biking pathes to connect from all over the state to come through this county. Try to bring in more commercial businesses considering we don't have many. Also, cash in on the tourists. Arenac county is one of the stops for those heading north or south. We should focus on them for the money needed to improve elsewhere. More events to be held in proper places. Down town needs to have different parking measures. Summer needs to hold more events while the tourists are here. In the winter it may die but snowmobiles may be where we have to look into next. Those traveling in the winter on their machines. Make existing restaurants update and keep an eye on their management. A gross place to eat is one no one will go to again. Blight has to be addressed right away, no time limits based on the condition. A crack down on drugs as well in neighborhoods.
Bring in more businesses, address non motorized transportation.
too much to list here
Fix the roads, expand cities and village's. Gain commercial and industrial jobs.
Bring in more Commercial retail businesses and add incentives to bring in more factories for manufacturing
Add a shopping center.. A clothing store

Have the County Commissioners assume control of the County Road Commission which is being explored currently in state legislature. Too much road taxes being imposed on county residents for roads! 2 mil county road tax, most township residents have road and/or ditching millage in addition. Residents should not be tax burdened in this area. The county needs to work together as a WHOLE for improvement. Not just focusing on certain areas of the County specifically. This mindset and manner of governing is a huge part of the problem. The basic issues of why we're dropping in population numbers, lack of jobs, housing, medical, good education is being totally ignored in lieu of new fairgrounds and rail trails. Starting with getting the basics in place is much needed!

Improve infrastructure

Roads

a mini Meijer or similiar store that would stay open to 10/11 PM or a tourist trap to get people to stop, putt putt or something that interests families to say lets stop and check it out. Standish has many gas stations and many fast foods, but sonic would be very appealing

Encourage community growth and support.

Bring in new business. Change with the times.

We need a store like Meijers on I-75 exit 190. I am glad Shopco is gone. They put a 79 dollar price tag on a pair of 19 dollar jeans and marked them down to 19 dollars. That was their business practice on many items. I did not shop there because of that.

Leave

Give high incentives to businesses to fill empty business properties

encourage business growth for year round employment . Renovate Standish prison into assisted living facility for veterans

Improve and maintain sidewalks and enforcement on blight at a county level , if we want people to come and stay we as a government must put our best foot forward

AFFORDABLE SHOPPING AND BETTER ROADS ESPECIALLY GRAVEL ROADS ARE A JOKE IN TURNER TOWNSHIP.

Kill the phragmites

throw out the county board of Comm.

Development of major shopping, dining and manufacturing. We have 2 prime areas 23/75 and 61/75. Think about what's there now. Nothing to attract the current residents, tourists or future residents. Convenient locations for current, get the passing tourist, keep a few here. Improve our golf course into something amazing, get that fairground underway, what about the Sagatoo Rd marina how developed and advertised is that? Outdoor adventures is in some legal trouble what about other camping opportunities right off the expressways?

get rid of the road commison

Fix existing roads

Reopen the state harbor and maintain a navigable river

AuGres could use more retail establishments.

Make sure the business' that are approved fit the area, and DON'T overcrowd us.

Build a dock or deck at the DNR launches. Take off the green and yellow paint on the old school house by the casino. Build a splash park in Standish. Offer very cheap/reasonable rental agreements to businesses who want to work in the Arenac Communtiy Center to encourage businesses to rent a room. Build a bigger farmers market.

Clean-up the parks. Youngman park is a joke. Oasis Lake would be great if the bathrooms weren't disgusting

Roads, do good with dirt roads, clean up trash

Communication of both Govt. and private events in the area by both written, and electronic means.

Roads.

Bring in the bigger grocery/clothing store. Better restaurants, not fast food.

I'd like to see higher education - a satellite college site. Utilize the Standish prison for something! Demand the State to do something with the prison. Such a waste.

Business growth, not enough young people stay here because of lack of good paying jobs.

Make side streets around us 23

More jobs, more businesses

Businesses to work and shop and eat in.

Maintain what we have now! I have lived further North and also in Saginaw. This county is just great the way it is. Thank you

A larger chain store.

Bike trails, building trail system that is foamy orientated

Improve roads, allow department store or large grocery chain into Standish.

Add a traffic light at south end of standish on m23. keep trails and roads on stateland accessible. quit poisoning ditches for weed control.

Bring in more business, help the fairgrounds grow and bring in people to our community, help small business owners, fix our roads, the city needs to keep our streets cleaner, lower taxes so we can afford to fix up our houses,

More businesses such as, larger chain grocery store, Retail store and family restaurants

Higher wage job options

1. Internet speed and availibility 2. Roads 3. Leadership 4. Vision for growth 5. New blood

More businesses, particularly retail - something to come in at Shopko.

Either get our local mom and pop cable company to expand or have another like it help bring reliable inexpensive internet without. Also block all solicitation phone calls which inhabit our community to being productive.

Read my previous comments.

More businesses!

county wide recycling

More grocery stores and retail stores

Police, roads and utilities

Improve the roads. Expand utilities providing rural residents and businesses with high speed internet because it is almost aa necessity in today's society. Expand city water service. Expand on recreational activities such as kayak, tubing, and biking/walking trails.

Economic development and Rec development. If you build it, they will come!

New shopping stores. Ability to buy local. Increase jobs. Fix roads.

Closed dilapidated businesses and uninhabitable houses.

Focus on growth in companies and in jobs ,get the fairgrounds done

Improve skilled trades education to help increase the employee pool for businesses in our community.

In the next 5 years please fix our back roads, we're no different than those on main Street

Bring new businesses that attract a spectrum of Socio-economic classes- not just all blue collar production work.

I would carefully assess the community housing as more people will need housing due to drug-related jobs. I would keep a close eye on drug populations as families and people move from larger areas into the community. Drugs have increased in the area to youth and many areas of life could diminish due to that. Crime rates could be affected etc.

Add a traffic light at Grove street and US23. More businesses.

Get big business into the downtown areas (wall mart, Meyers and the like)... bring in city water and natural gas lines to the country side... do not allow fracking... increase police presence on the lakes and rivers... there are many more things....

expand business and industrial opportunities to create more and better paying jobs

Upgrade and add parks with picnic areas, splash pad, places for families to come together.

Better maintain back roads. Send road grader operators to school to learn how to grade roads properly. Fix and re opens bridges that have been closed on back roads. Keep brush cut in ditches so water can flow and cars can see deer before they jump out.

Help clean up existing building to attract more businesses, possibly offering tax incentives to new or existing businesses for expansion projects. Make our county a destination place not a drive through. Communities in arenac county need to work together on projects to attract tourism. Clean up blight. We're not getting help from county or township to clean up neighborhoods. Not getting any results when reported blight

Have a better infrastructure

Keep it growing. Take advantage of good opportunities!

Any free access sites/activities to promote family activity and provide low cost fun for the families.

Bring a train ride excursion to Standish once a year.

Fix the roads and bring in some businesses

Ensure that the schools have funding and provide opportunities for all students. Provide business opportunities to those that want to bring wholesome fun and community involvement. Fund the parks and make the passes affordable. \$10/day for Oasis made us turn around and leave. Ensure public transportation is available that can cross or meet other busses are county lines. Care for winter roads better. Ensure checks and balances on county budget - there may be a lack of this with the way it has always been done..

better quality of restaurants ; more activities & recreational areas for families and small children

Bring more businesses in. This would bring more job opportunities and the need for housing, hence more jobs for building contractors.

Properly maintain current roads. Do not pave dirt roads, just use tax money to consistently repair and maintain roads as they are. Possibly expand outward with city water, not necessarily sewer. Try to attract clothing stores, outdoor activity stores and motorsports. Add additional traffic lights at grove and 23 or 76 and 23 even if only used certain hours of certain days. It would help break up traffic on school days and weekends so cars aren't backed up on 76 to townline rd.

More shopping

New businesses

Simple.... Remove Blight areas get rid of it We have a false image of looking old and broken down Would be more pleasant to see planted open grass then crumbling foundations and piles of junk automobiles. pass ordinances to rid of the junk automobiles. Does it cost a lot of money to just clean us up. Allow us to build to store it instead of pile

it. Improve our rural roads with some gravel please help us get out of the mud and on our way Jobs jobs jobs no matter what it takes let's Climb out of being the poorest county in the state of Michigan. Develop the untapped Omer area beautiful river running through it Develop it! Bring it back to life again. Invite business and community events such as: Calendar Events: Arts / talent center fair grounds race track Library events holiday Santa house Easter hunt Bakery Create community Drive

Add a bigger chain store to keep grocery prices low and add more jobs. Focus on fixing roads and building more community parks/recreation areas for families

Not 5 to 10 years but NOW! GET SOMETHING HERE SO THE POPULATION DO NOT GO ELSEWHERE TO SPEND THERE MONEY.

Concentrate on education and transportation of students. Local family owned businesses thrive. Community cleanliness

I think we need to incorporate more events or festivals year round. I think we need to bring in bigger chain stores to help create jobs. I would like to see our parks and Fairgrounds expand and be more family oriented as far as people being able to use them on a Sunday afternoon for some place to go and something to do.

Reuse rebuild on what we already have - the prison, Arenac Eastern school...buildings no longer in use and going to waste, huge opportunity to grow business with minimal effort. Road improvements including digging ditches that are flooding every year

Build a Meijers close to I 75

Have an I 75 exit/entrance between Alger and West Branch and get a few retail outlets.

fix up downtown give the fix up grants

Diversity within the education system, job opportunities, customer service improvement. More housing options, and more public access to the beaches.

Make it more appealing to tourist and young people to want to raise a family in

I would like LESS marijuana shops/farms and more action against the opioid epidemic. Most people think we don't have a problem, but as a nurse, I can assure you that we do!

Better fairgrounds Support of community center

Improve the rural roads by paving them; bring water and sewer to Standish Township; bring in more choices for entertainment and high-speed internet as they are severely limited right now; leave the Fairgrounds where it is; increase the animal control budget, as this county has many irresponsible pet owners; Animal Control also needs either a new building or more space at their existing building as they are always filled to capacity; consider expanding affordable shopping opportunities -- West Branch was certainly very successful in accomplishing that.

Jobs housing education

Bike trails, some economic development to save our towns, kayak/canoe trails, conservation efforts regarding clean lake waters.

First and foremost improve access to Saginaw Bay for recreational use. This is a gem in our backyard that is not being fully utilized.

Fix and maintain rural roads

Promote up north living create a Tawas environment. Sorry but they do have it together .

Not sure

Provide more entertainment opportunities so people don't have to drive 30 minutes to do anything. Fix current roads and decrease the amount of dirt roads especially high traffic, constantly maintaining dirt roads. Provide a means for shopping for a birthday present or household item that isn't cheap.

Continue to improve the roads. Develop more living wage jobs. Add recreational areas for families such as play areas, playscape and outdoor water parks. Also fenced dog parks, bike and walking/hiking trails. Pavillions and bbq areas in existing and new parks and or rest areas. A fenced dog run at rest areas with clean up station would be wonderful.

Bring in affordable places to shop

Improve shore line activity

Try to attract and retain young professionals with job opportunities, good education facilities and options, and continuing access to the lakes and rivers in the area.

more employable businesses and dining establishments

Clean up blight. Crack down on drug abuse. Rail Trail connections - from South and North end of county.

More jobs, less hatred of outsiders

Improve holiday traffic flow through Standish. Have a major store to shop in, ie. Meijer or similar.

It's all about the jobs, baby. The majority of us here have to drive 30-45 miles to work.

Just a grocery store and more wheelchair access

Allow new businesses. Create a safe place for the kids of this community to go. Like a boys and girls club. A place that has activities during the summer and weekends. Activities that would challenge them to become better.

More fishing opportunities for vacation folks. Have high tech businesses.

Add some businesses ..

Shopping and roads

Economic development. Training for skilled workers. Promoting tourism. Promote volunteerism for our non-profits and organizations. Continue to improve our parks and trails.

Bring in Meijer or Walmart type store. Create jobs and help local community invest local instead of going outside arenac county

Increase tourism, add availability to the basics such as good food from the grocery stores. Balance businesses with residential.

Fix the roads. Offer incentives to businesses that build in the county

Increase health providers and shopping

Promote business growth, attract the gamblers and travelers to more than fast food and gas. Maintain my side road. Affordable child services.

**BUILD NEW FAIRGROUNDS TO HOST YEAR ROUND EVENTS,,WITH PLENTY OF ROOM TO EXPAND !!!!  
LOTS OF ROOM ON THE M-13 SITE, AND HIGH TRAFFIC VOLUME ,,EVERYONE WILL KNOW WERE IT IS A  
PLUS !! NEED ALOT MORE BUSINESSES HERE THAT PAY WELL,,WE HAVE THE ROOM FOR THAT.  
STANDISH IS NOT A TOURIST TOWN SO LETS JUST DROP THAT NONSENSE**

Better jobs that can support a family.

Fix, pave roads, and dig ditches like was done in the northern part of Aenac County

Make it more attractive to tourists and take care of the existing roads

Encourage business development with aggressive tax incentives to lure more manufacturers to build facilities here to expand higher wage job opportunities to bring people back to the area.

Improve roads, improve bay access, build bike paths, walking trails, 4 wheeler/SXS trails. Beautification of the city

Get people to clean it up and make it more presentable. Market the county better.

Better side roads, more businesses, presently no competition between grocery stores. Neighboring towns getting new business, not Standish.

Something has to be done to bring businesses to the area. The majority of the population is retirees and this area needs to draw families to the area. This would help our existing businesses and our schools.

Things for kids to do also more sit down restaurants bathrooms to be fixed at the parks add a shower at oasis

Pave the dirt roads!

Open up industrial areas for more manufacturing w/ incentives (economic growth) and improve/invest in the current Cities for more welcoming tourism opportunities along US23.

Retail store

Lower crime, lower drug use, block Marijuana dispensaries and Sales. Better wages for skilled (non- minimum wage) jobs.

Add more job opportunities & more bike & walking trails.

Try to find ways to stop the youth from leaving for work in other area's.

More diverse businesses

Improve education by getting the community excited about school.

more access to retail opportunities. government is inhibiting growth with too many regulations.

Clean up blight, make it look more appealing.

Try to get businesses in the communities.

Pretty much anything needed

Pave more roads Construct subdivisions Add more business Address the empty and deteriorating business buildings

Beach improvements, ice/fishing, Fix the highway exit at sagatoo and 23 Expand city services. Younger people moving north are put off by the internet, propane and septic

It would be nice to see old business buildings put back into use for businesses such as a daycare facility for all age levels, a type of recreational building for programs like karate, dance, tumbling, kids aerobics, and it would be nice to have another meeting facility like the VFW was and also a public pool for public use all year that is affordable for everyone.

More jobs, more recreational activities, more community oriented activities.

I would improve on the County Parks--these parks are mostly for us, the members of this county. Also put more money into the roads so the local people have a good place to drive--I mean the back dirt roads. Try to organize happenings that will draw people here for a weekend or more--would love to see an "all about farmers weekend" with parades, animals, BBQs flea market and all.

Entice businesses with tax incentives and community support. Promote what we're good at and stop trying to be what we're not.

I don't want it to be a large city but I would like more options in the business environment.

We must improve Au Gres! It is somewhat unsightly and doesn't offer much ... many tourists drive through - imagine if we gave the a reason to stop!! They might stay! We must focus on the tourism industry and a continue to allow seasonal rentals, etc. Honestly, right now that is why many people come to this area. Without...they don't have many options to enjoy Lake Huron!

Improved safety and police force. More opportunities for entertainment in all seasons indoor and outdoor for kids and teens.

Support and improve local businesses, keep the people that live and work here happy and supporting their community.

More housing, more on the job training. Turn empty state prison into a trade center for the youth and older adults. Perfect and I'm sure our government would give grants.

Bike path construction, Senior living options.

Need family things to do. Better grocery store. Dollar General needs to be cleaned up like newer ones. It pretty trash inside so is Family Dollar.

Clean up the blight, especially in Standish and have a nice new fair grounds.

Fast food Medical care More business

Add business, address main roads looks, make more back roads paved.

Increase police force Improve lake shore Eliminate blight

Allow businesses to join our community and require better maintenance of roads.

Shoreline flooding security

have place where the kids have something to do ie. YMCA type place. Be able to have a small business come in and last more than a 1-2 years. Bigger senior center -with transportation availbe

Walking and biking trails

Not sure

CHARGE A SINGLE PRICE LIKE MAYBE 12.00 PER DAAAY PER ADULT AND THAT WOULD INCLUDE ALL THE RIDES AND THE GRANDSTANDS EVENTS FOR THAT DAY. GET RID OF THE BUMP AND RUN DEMOS AND DO SOME LAWNMOWER RACES, OR TOILET RACES SOMETHING FUN TO WATCH. OR SNOWMOBILES OVER WATER IN THE SUMMER. YOU HAVE A NICE FACILITY IT SHOULD BE USED, NEED A CONSESSION STAND AND BATHROOMS

Capitalize on developing natural areas.

Add bigger businesses that can offer competitive wages, benefits, and advancement opportunities

Increase the housing, find a way to bring real businesses back to Au Gres and Standish, open a shelter for Those who are homeless or couch surfing, ensure that our families are not hungry. The most important of all are the children.

Better public beaches. Restaurants on water

Road changes, adjusting to traffic as needed. Lights, turn lanes etc.

stores in these cities.....

More job opportunities, better back roads, more shopping opportunities, more activities for senior citizens and young people.

Aldi or Meijer for affordable groceries. Meijer or similar store to replace Pamida. Please not Walmart.

Draw small businesses to fill empty downtown buildings. Draw unique affordable eateries/resturants for l9cals and those traveling up north or staying in the area. Adding family friendly parks and campgrounds.

Fix the roads

Roads. Roads. Roads!

Create jobs, tax cuts for businesses new businesses, blight control on us23 enforce

More industry, promote on local fisheries, more hiking/biking connections to promote healthy lifestyles

Make it a more attractive place for businesses, particularly manufacturing/industrial.

In 2015, a considerable amount of my trees were cut down around the power lines instead of trimming them. I wish we wouldn't take the easy way out and consider the importance of our land and the long term effect that it costs our ecology. It would be nice to see the economy grow and take a page out of what Tawas is doing. Improve the parks, add more restaurants that are more than bar food and fried foods. Diversify without losing our small town feeling.

Upgrade outdoor courts. Make more Pickleball courts. Build community center like Tawas Get rid of blight along thorough fares. Make it appealing to people driving thru so they want to stop and stay awhile.

More businesses

Replace the courthouse personnel.

Make the roads A lot better , add retail store/stores, a sit dwn restraunt, MORE activities for kids!

Get rid of the blight problem. Habitat for humanity housing.

Housing units for younger families.

Add more retail services Improve parks & community center Develop new fairgrounds Coordinate events to showcase area

Fix roads Keep roadsides trimmed Add small businesses Open trails

Improvement to gravel roads. Increase variety of retail development. Improve substance abuse treatment.

Clean the county up and try to get business to the area

Bring in business try to reduce taxes

Allow a Wal-Mart or a Meijer to come in. Stop trying to turn our rural areas into urburn ones and trying to cityize every where in the county. Some of us moved to rural area because we wanted out of city life

More things for the community!! Need to spend money on fairgrounds!! Bring flattrack racing back!!

Protect our environment from pollution, windmill and solar farms.

Work with MDOC to reopen the prison. Not necessarily max security. This could help improve jobs and housing opportunities.

Attract business & improve housing/infrastructure.

broadband internet access to ALL areas. increase in industry in the area to support higher wage jobs.

Our roads!!!

Get more job opportunities for the residents, as well as more diversified shopping options.

Clean up the vacant buildings.

It in sewers along US23. Expand and connect bike & hike paths

Get a Meijer's, Walmart, Aldi, clean up standish. Make standish a destination not a pass through on the way to somewhere else

Improve employment opportunities that offer better saleries and benefits. Take advantage of our Lake Huron shorelines to provide more accessability for boating, fishing and swimming. More bicycle trails away from busy roads.

It needs more business - and manufacturing establishments.

More businesses

Natural gas and high speed cable internet everywhere. The only other thing you need are factories with good paying jobs. That would bring in blue and white collar workers to stay in arenas county. I hate driving south 40-70 miles everyday. I would take a pay cut to be closer to home.

Black top rural roads. The dirt roads are in bad shape in the spring and in the winter.

Shopping would bring in more tourism. Like a Shopco, Pamida, would make shopping easier for locals too.

Run a community fiber optic cable. Electric bus for transportation.

Encourage a broader range of business into the area,. It would be great to have an OBGYN and family medical providers, rental car company, trade schools

More restaurants businesses put something in that building where Pineada used to be we need it variety store up here

Not sure.

Add higher education opportunities Add industry for jobs Add more shopping and restaurant availability

See previous comments.

Fill up the abandoned commercial buildings offer incentives for large and small businesses for example Au Gres looks so depressed like a ghost town

Improved infrastructure.

Bike trail extension. Better marina facilities.

# Appendix B:

## ADOPTION DOCUMENTATION

# AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

STATE OF MICHIGAN }  
County of Arenac } ss

Jennifer Grezeszak, being duly sworn, deposes and say I am the General Manager of The Arenac County Independent, a newspaper printed and circulated in said county; that the annexed is a printed copy of a notice which was published in said paper one time on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of December 2020.

Jennifer Grezeszak  
Jennifer Grezeszak

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 2<sup>nd</sup>  
day of December 2020  
Julie Ann Parliament

Julie Ann Parliament  
Notary Public, Ogemaw County, Michigan  
Acting in Arenac County  
My commission expires April 10, 2022

**ARENAC COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION  
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

Notice is hereby given that Arenac County will hold public hearings for the purpose of hearing comments and input regarding the draft of the Arenac County Master Plan and the Arenac County Recreation Plan. The plans evaluate land use, demographics, community data, recreation opportunities, public opinion, and proposes goals, objectives, and action plans. The Master Plan was developed pursuant to the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008), and the Recreation Plan follows the guidelines for Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans as published by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Copies of the Master Plan and Recreation Plan are available for review online on the County website and at the Arenac County Board of Commissioners office, at the Arenac County Building, 120 N Grove St, Standish, MI, 48658.

If you are interested in submitting comments regarding the proposed Arenac County Master Plan or Recreation Plan, please send written comments to Nancy Selle, Arenac County Planning Commission, P.O. Box 747, Standish, MI 48658. Comments must be in writing prior to the December 21 public hearing. For more information, please contact Nancy Selle, Planning Commission at (989) 846-2011.

A public hearing to take input on the draft plans will be held on Monday, December 21, 2020 at 4:30 PM in the Arenac County Building, 120 N Grove St, Standish, MI, 48658 in Room 211. All interested persons are encouraged to attend the public hearing to ask questions or to make comments. Any individuals needing assistance should contact the County before the meeting.

**Topic: Planning Commission Public Hearing 2021-2025 Master Plan and Recreation Plan**

**Time: Dec 21, 2020 04:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)**

**Join Zoom Meeting:**  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86517678664?pwd=Q3NlcllCaEx3YzVZbTlNWWkwdVhKdz09>

**Meeting ID: 865 1767 8664 Passcode: 128484**

Nancy Selle  
Arenac County Planning Commission

**Resolution of Adoption**  
**Arenac County Master Plan**  
**By the Arenac County Board of Trustees**

**Whereas**, the Arenac County Planning Commission has elected to draft and adopt a Master Plan, pursuant to the procedures set forth in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, MCL 125.3801, *et seq*; and

**Whereas**, a community input survey was made available to residents during the fall and winter of 2019 for the purposes of gathering input from the public, and

**Whereas**, the draft Master Plan was made available for review from October 14, 2020, to December 21, 2020, and

**Whereas**, the Arenac County Planning Commission held a public hearing on the proposed Master Plan, inclusive of the charts, maps, demographic data, future land use plan, and goals for Arenac County on December 21, 2020, at the County Building and via the Zoom online meeting platform, and

**Whereas**, the Arenac County Planning Commission after a public hearing held on December 21, 2020, adopted this Master Plan.

**Now Therefore Be It Resolved** that the Arenac County Board of Commissioners hereby adopts this Master Plan.

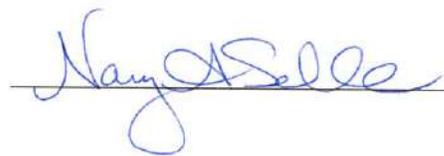
Motion by: Hergott Supported by: Woolhiser

**Ayes:** 5

**Nays:** 0

**Absent:** 0

**Resolution declared adopted January 12, 2021.**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk  
Arenac County