

# MASTER PLAN 2021 & RECREATION PLAN 2021-2025



## CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF AUSABLE IOSCO COUNTY, MICHIGAN



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# Charter Township of AuSable Master and Recreation Plan

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## **Charter Township of AuSable**

Iosco County, Michigan

### **Board of Trustees**

Kevin Beliveau, Supervisor

Kelly Graham, Clerk

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Alanda Barnes, Trustee

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## **Charter Township of AuSable Planning Commission**

Kurt Beck, Chairman

Diana London, Vice Chairman

Gina Cinquino

Jeff Lamrock

Mike Pardington

### **Assisted by**

Leisa Sutton, Charter Township of AuSable Superintendent

Northeast Michigan Council of Governments

80 Livingston Boulevard

P.O. Box 457

Gaylord, Michigan 49734

[www.nemcog.org](http://www.nemcog.org)

### **Master Plan Adoption Dates**

Planning Commission: October 20, 2021

Board of Trustees: November 1, 2021

### **Recreation Plan Adoption Dates**

Planning Commission: January 13, 2021

Board of Trustees: January 19, 2021

DNR Approval of Plan Expires on December 31, 2025

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Resolution of Adoption PC2021-01  
Charter Township of AuSable Planning Commission

2021 CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF AUSABLE MASTER PLAN

WHEREAS: The Charter Township of AuSable Planning Commission is required by Section 31 of P.A. 33 of 2008, as amended to make and approve a master plan as a guide for the development within the Township, and;

WHEREAS: The Charter Township of AuSable Planning Commission, in accordance with Section 39(2) of the Act, notified the adjacent communities and the Iosco County Board of Commissioners of the intent to develop a plan and, in accordance with Section 41(2) of the Act, distributed the final draft to adjacent communities and the Iosco County Board of Commissioners for review and comment, and;

WHEREAS: The plan was presented to the public at a hearing held on October 20, 2021, before the Planning Commission, with notice of the hearing being published in the Oscoda Newspaper on September 23 2021 in accordance with Section 43(1) of the Act;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT,

The content of this document, together with all maps attached to and contained herein are hereby adopted by the Charter Township of AuSable Planning Commission as the Charter Township of AuSable Master Plan on this 20 day of October, 2021.

Motion: Diana London Second: Gina Cinguino

Ayes: Diana, Gina, Jeff  
London Cinguino Lamrock

Nays:

Absent: Mike Pardington

Certification

I hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of the resolution adopted at the October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021, meeting of the Charter Township of AuSable Planning Commission.

Jeffrey Lamrock, Chair  
Jeffrey Lamrock

Susan Olpere, Secretary  
Susan Olpere

RESOLUTION NUMBER 2021-27

RESOLUTION OF CONCURRENCE

2021 CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF AUSABLE MASTER PLAN

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WHEREAS: The plan was presented to the public at a hearing held on October 20, 2021, before the Planning Commission, with notice of the hearing being published in the Oscoda Newspaper on September 22, 2021 in accordance with Section 43 (1) of the Act;

WHEREAS: The plan was adopted by the Planning Commission on October 20, 2021;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT,

The Charter Township of AuSable Board does hereby concur with the action of the Planning Commission by means of passing this resolution on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of November, 2021;

Motion: BARNES Second: GRAHAM

Ayes: LONDON, GRAHAM, SAMOTIS, BARNES, BELIVEAU

Nays: NONE

Absent: RAMSDELL

Certification

I hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of the resolution adopted at the November 1, 2021 meeting of the Charter Township of AuSable Board.

Clerk: Kelley A. Graham

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### Location

The Charter Township of AuSable is located along six miles of shoreline on Lake Huron in Iosco County and accounts for 3.7% of the land area in the county. It encompasses approximately 21 square miles (13,518 acres) and has a population density of 97 persons per square mile. The township is bordered by Oscoda Township to the north, Wilber Township to the west, and Baldwin Township to the south (**Figure 1-1**). The township does not have any incorporated places; however, it does contain the unincorporated Village of AuSable. AuSable's downtown is located approximately 15 miles northeast of East Tawas and 45 miles south of Alpena. In the township, north-south traffic circulation occurs along U.S. 23.



Figure 1-1

## History\*

Prior to European settlement, the Chippewa hunted and fished this area and used the river as a transportation corridor. Native Americans ceded the land to the U.S. Government as part of the 1819 Treaty of Saginaw, a treaty that included over 6 million acres. One of the first European Settlers to stake a claim in the area was Louis Chevalier, a French-Canadian fur trader. Chevalier was granted more than 600 acres of land by the U.S. Government. In 1823, he established a trading post about a ½ mile upstream from the mouth of the Au Sable River (named by the French meaning “River of Sand”). Soon after, a small community of fishermen, hunters and trappers was established near the mouth of the river.

In 1857, the township of Sable was organized. However, the name was changed to AuSable in 1877. It was incorporated as a village in 1872. In 1889, it was incorporated as a city. However, the city charter was surrendered in 1931 and AuSable City was dissolved into AuSable Township.

In the late 1800’s and early 1900’s, the twin communities of Oscoda and AuSable grew by leaps and bounds during the logging era. The 1890 Census for AuSable City was 4,828 and AuSable Township was 170. The river served as the avenue to transport logs from inland to the mouth where as many as eight lumber mills operated, some sawing day and night. From expansive docks on Lake Huron, ships carried the timber to markets in Detroit and Chicago.

In 1867, the total annual output of the mills was 48,000,000 board feet of lumber. From 1867 to 1876, the AuSable River Boom Company handled 594,700,341 board feet. The Oscoda Boom Company handled a total of 3,307,419,514 board feet between 1877 and 1896. The annual cut after 1896 was approximately 50,000,000 feet.

Although the logging industry brought great prosperity, as evidenced by the stately homes built during this time, damaging consequences from decimated forests and devastating fires marked the end of this era. By 1900, the combined population of AuSable City and AuSable Township had dropped to 1,868. On July 11, 1911, flames swept in from the surrounding forests and ravaged AuSable and Oscoda. Six hundred dwellings were destroyed along with whole business blocks, mills, factories, and docks. Five lives were lost, and the entire population turned into refugees. Homes and some businesses were soon rebuilt, but the mills and the docks were gone forever.



1906 photo of the AuSable High School –  
destroyed by the great fire of 1911

In 1923, Major Carl Spatz came to Oscoda and proposed the residents create a landing area for Army aircraft from Selfridge Army Airfield. This was the beginning of a defining industry for both Oscoda and AuSable. In 1953, the airfield was renamed Wurtsmith Air Force Base. At its peak, the base military population was approximately 3,135 personnel plus dependents. However, the base was permanently closed by the Department of Defense in 1993. Since that time, both communities have adjusted to its loss. More than 30 private businesses and public agencies have moved onto the former base and over 1,000 jobs have been created there.

\* Sources – 2003 AuSable Township Master Plan and historic Census Data

# Chapter 2

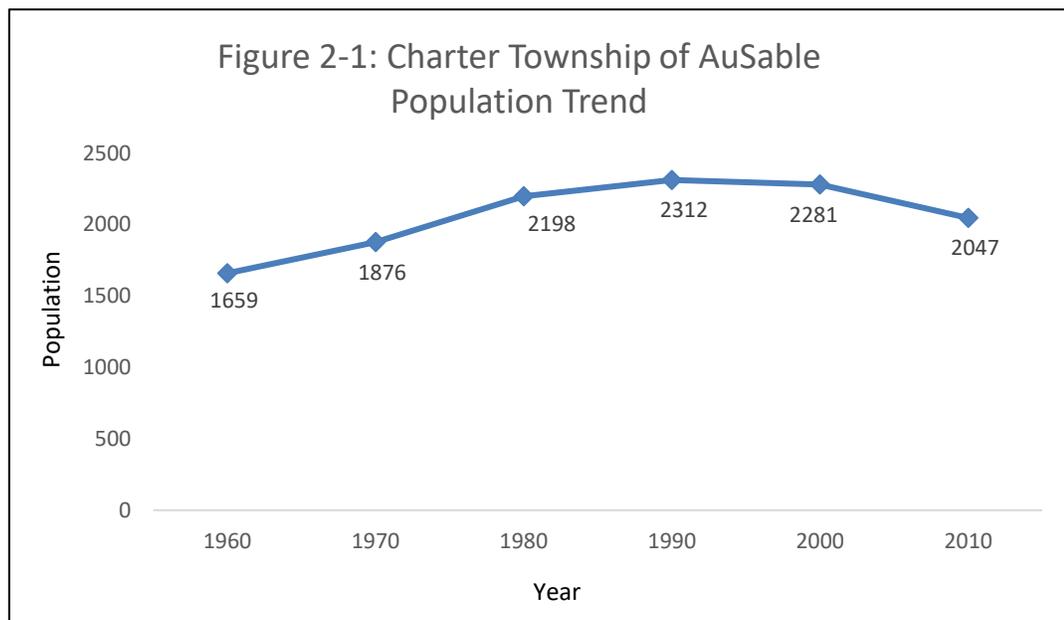
## Socio-Economic Characteristics

An important step in understanding the future needs of a community is to analyze its population, housing, income, education, and employment characteristics. The following chapter contains socio-economic data for the Charter Township of AuSable.

### Population

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the Charter Township of AuSable's population was 2,047, which was a 10.3% decrease since 2000 (**Figure 2-1**). The township's population growth and decline mirrors that of Iosco County and the State of Michigan. According to the 2018 American Community Survey, the township's population was 1,836 with 94.7% of the population classified as white, 1.2% classified as African American, 0.8% classified as Native American, and 1.6% classified as Asian.

The Charter Township of AuSable had 495 housing units that were classified as seasonal, recreational, or occasional use according to the 2018 American Community Survey. During peak summer months, a seasonal increase in the population also creates an increase on demands for local services, such as police, fire and emergency medical services. An approximate estimate for the number of seasonal residents can be calculated by multiplying the number of seasonal housing units (495) by the township's average household size (2.1) to get a total of about 1,040 persons. However, this figure does not include seasonal visitors or tourists who stay in area motels, campgrounds, etc.



## Age Distribution

According to the 2018 American Community Survey, approximately 59.2% of the Charter Township of AuSable’s population is 45 years and older (**Table 2-1**). The township’s percentage of older adults aged 65 years and older is comparable to Iosco County, but is 11.7% higher than the State of Michigan. The percentage of school-aged children is slightly higher than the county, but lower than the State.

Between 2010 and 2018, the Charter Township of AuSable’s median age increased from 49.5 to 53.0 years. During this same time frame, Iosco County’s median age increased from 49.7 to 52.6 years and the State’s median age increased from 38.1 to 39.6 years. The data shows the township is aging at a faster rate than the county and the State, which may impact the community’s services since an older population may request more access to housing, medical care, transportation, and recreational facilities. The older demographic in the township may be attributable to the large baby boom generation (born between 1946 and 1964) aging in place, in-migration of retirees, and out migration of younger individuals.

	< 5 Yrs.	%	5-19 Yrs.	%	20-24 Yrs.	%	25-44 Yrs.	%	45-64 Yrs.	%	65 Yrs. & older	%	Median Age
Charter Township of AuSable	66	3.6	257	14.2	59	3.2	364	19.8	575	31.3	512	27.9	53.0
Iosco County	1,085	4.3	3,542	13.9	1,126	4.5	4,503	17.8	7,749	30.6	7,242	28.7	52.6
Michigan		5.7		19.0		7.2		24.2		27.4		16.2	39.7

Source: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (U.S. Census Bureau)

## Disability Status

Information in **Table 2-2** provides an indication of disabled people residing in the Charter Township of AuSable, Iosco County, and Michigan. Persons with disabilities include those with a hearing difficulty, a vision difficulty, a cognitive difficulty, an ambulatory difficulty, a self-care difficulty, and an independent living difficulty. The percent of persons with a disability is slightly higher in the Charter Township of AuSable than Iosco County or the State. However, it should be noted there is a fairly high margin of error listed for this dataset on the U.S. Census Bureau website.

Municipality	Disabled persons	Disabled under 18 years	Disabled 18-64 years	Disabled 65 years and older
Charter Township of AuSable	25.2%	5.4%	43.3%	79.9%
Iosco County	22.6%	13.1%	32.7%	79.5%
Michigan	14.3%	4.9%	26.7%	34.9%

Source: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (U.S. Census Bureau)

## School Enrollment and Educational Attainment

According to the American Community Survey, of the 1,451 township residents 25 years and older, 610 were high school graduates, while 86 had attended school into the 9th-12th grade with no diploma and 21 had completed less than the 9th grade. Additionally, 347 had attended some college with no degree, 155 had an Associate's degree, 140 had earned a Bachelor's degree, and 92 had earned a graduate or professional degree. The percent of people in the township with a bachelor's degree or higher is comparable to Iosco County, but is 12.6% less than the State (**Table 2-3**).

Table 2-3  
Educational Attainment

Education	Charter Township of AuSable	Iosco County	State of Michigan
Population 25 years and over	1,451	19,494	6,772,215.00
Less than 9 <sup>th</sup> grade education	21	436	200,210
9 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup> grade, no diploma	86	1,731	441,326
High school graduate	610	7,361	1,695,208
Some college, no degree	347	4,884	1,590,065
Associate degree	155	1,911	636,753
Bachelor's degree	140	1,989	1,179,677
Graduate or professional degree	92	1,182	757,375
Percent high school graduate or higher	92.6%	88.90%	90.5%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	16%	16.30%	28.6%

Source: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (U.S. Census Bureau)

## Household Characteristics

Information gathered from the American Community Survey on the township's household characteristics can be found in **Table 2-4**. The information includes the total number of households, average household size, householder living alone, households with one or more persons under the age of 18, and households with one or more persons aged 60 years or older. According to the 2018 American Community Survey, out of the 873 occupied households in the Charter Township of AuSable, 34.8% were reported as householders living alone, 20.6% of the households had one or more persons under the age of 18, and 55.8% of the households had one or more persons aged 60 years or older. The average household size in the Charter Township of AuSable has decreased from 2.3 persons in 2000 to 2.1 persons in 2018. Iosco County has similar household characteristics. Compared to the State, the township has a higher average household size and percentage of households with one or more persons under 18 years, and lower percentages for households with a householder living alone and households with one or more persons 60 years or older.

**Table 2-4**  
**Household Characteristics**

<b>MUNICIPALITY</b>	<b>Total Households</b>	<b>Average Household Size</b>	<b>Householder Living Alone</b>	<b>Households with one or more people under 18 years</b>	<b>Households with one or more people 60 years or older</b>
Charter Township of AuSable	873	2.1	34.8%	20.6%	55.8%
Iosco County	11,631	2.1	33.2%	19.8%	54.8%
Michigan	3,909,509	2.5	29.3%	29.1%	41.8%

Source: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (U.S. Census Bureau)

## Housing

According to the 2018 Community Survey, there were 1,479 housing units in the Charter Township of AuSable with 873 occupied housing units (59.0%) and 606 vacant units (41.0%) (**Table 2-5**). There were 495 vacant housing units classified as seasonal, recreational, or occasional use (33.5% of the total housing units). Additionally, 33 vacant housing units were classified as being for rent or for sale only. The township’s vacancy and seasonal housing percentages are similar to the county but are significantly higher than the State. According to the 2018 American Community Survey, the median home value in the Charter Township of AuSable was \$83,400 compared to the county at \$91,100 and the State at \$146,200 (**Table 2-6**). Approximately 81.4% of the occupied housing units in the Charter Township of AuSable are owner-occupied compared to the county level at 79.6% and the State level at 71.0%.

**Table 2-5**  
**Housing Counts and Occupancy Status**

<b>Area Name</b>	<b>2018</b>					
	<b>Total</b>	<b>Occupied</b>	<b>Vacant</b>	<b>Percent Vacant</b>	<b>Seasonal</b>	<b>* Percent Seasonal</b>
Charter Township of AuSable	1,479	873	606	41.0%	495	33.5%
Iosco County	20,503	11,631	8,872	43.3%	7,666	37.4%
Michigan	4,580,939	3,909,509	671,430	14.7%	290,711	6.3%

\* Percent of total housing      Source: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (U.S. Census Bureau)

Table 2-6  
Housing Statistics

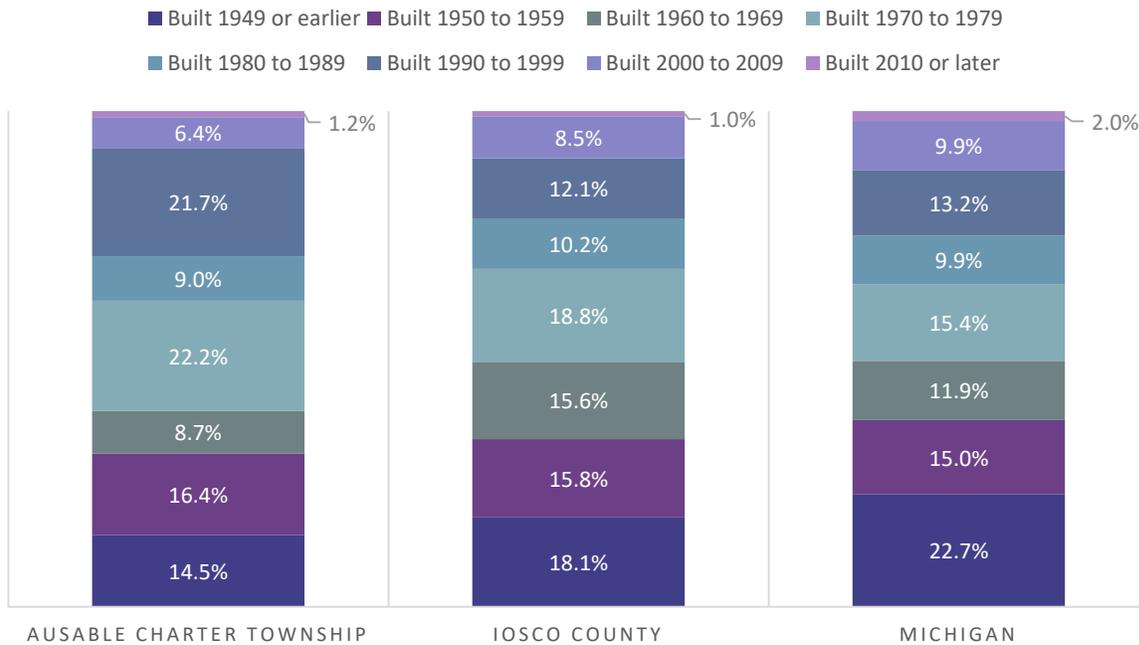
Housing Information	Charter Township of AuSable	Iosco County	Michigan
Median Housing Value	\$83,400	\$91,100	\$146,200
Housing Units without a Mortgage	48.9%	49.2%	39.5%
Owner Occupied Homes	81.4%	79.6%	71.0%

Source: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (U.S. Census Bureau)

### Age of Housing

Approximately 61.7% of the housing units in the Charter Township of AuSable were constructed prior to 1980, with 14.5% constructed prior to 1950 (Figure 2-2). Generally, older housing stock (40 years and older) require upgrades and renovations, which means the township may need to address an increase in housing disrepair and blight issues.

FIGURE 2-2 AGE OF HOUSING STOCK



### Income

According to the 2018 American Community Survey, the Charter Township of AuSable's median household income is \$43,787, which is \$1,685 more than the county and \$11,151 less than the State income levels (Table 2-7). Additionally, the township's median family income and per capita income are more than the county, but less than the State.

Table 2-7 Income			
Income Category	Charter Township of AuSable	Iosco County	Michigan
Median Household Income	\$43,787	\$42,102	\$54,938
Median Family Income	\$51,818	\$50,398	\$69,691
Per Capita Income	\$26,528	\$25,075	\$30,336

Source: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

Information about the income sources for the Charter Township of AuSable, Iosco County, and the State of Michigan can be found in **Table 2-8**. Within the township, the estimates show 61.5% received earnings from employment, 53.2% received social security income, and 37.0% received retirement income. The lower percentage of people receiving income from employment as compared to the State relates to the township's older population that is receiving social security income, retirement income, and cash assistance income. The percentage of the population receiving supplemental security income and cash assistance is lower in the township than the county and the State, while the percentage of the population receiving food stamps/SNAP is higher in the township than the county or State.

Table 2-8 Income Sources						
Income Sources Subject	Charter Township of AuSable		Iosco County		Michigan	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent
With earnings	573	61.5%	6,734	57.90%	2,901,782	74.2%
<i>Mean earnings</i>	\$53,026		\$52,657		\$77,802	
With Social Security	464	53.2%	6,106	52.50%	1,350,120	34.5%
<i>Mean Social Security income</i>	\$18,534		\$20,036		\$20,260	
With retirement income	323	37.0%	3,923	33.70%	878,167	22.5%
<i>Mean retirement income</i>	\$21,679		\$22,594		\$23,305	
With Supplemental Security Income	38	4.4%	760	6.50%	243,843	6.2%
<i>Mean Supplemental Security Income</i>	\$9,750		\$10,570		\$10,350	
With cash public assistance income	9	1.0%	340	2.90%	98,318	2.5%
<i>Mean cash public assistance income</i>			\$1,965		\$2,683	
With Food Stamp/SNAP benefits in the past 12 months	159	18.2%	2,048	17.60%	551,968	14.1%

Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

## Poverty

Information from the American Community Survey shows poverty rates based on income levels for the past 12 months in the Charter Township of AuSable, Iosco County, and Michigan (**Table 2-9**). The percent of families, individuals, and individuals 65 years and older living in poverty is lower in the Township than in Iosco County and Michigan. However, the poverty rate for families with a female head of household is considerably higher in the Township than the County or State.

**Table 2-9**  
Poverty Rates

	<b>Charter Township of AuSable</b>	<b>Iosco County</b>	<b>Michigan</b>
Families	8.4%	11.3%	9.5%
Families with female head of household	58.3%	38.5%	27.0%
Individuals	11.1%	16.4%	14.1%
Individuals 65 years and older	5.5%	7.2%	9.0%

Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

## Labor Force

### Employment and Unemployment

The civilian labor force is defined as all civilian individuals over age 16 who are employed or actively seeking employment. Labor force numbers can change rather quickly in response to economic conditions. During prolonged periods of unemployment, unsuccessful job seekers can drop out of the work force by going back to school, leaving the area in search of work elsewhere or by stopping the search for work.

**Table 2-10:**  
Employment Information Iosco County 2015 - 2019

<b>Year</b>	<b>Civilian Labor Force</b>	<b>Number Employed</b>	<b>Number Unemployed</b>	<b>Unemployment Rate</b>
2019	10,220	9,610	610	6.0%
2018	10,065	9,423	642	6.4%
2017	10,114	9,376	738	7.3%
2016	10,106	9,370	736	7.3%
2015	10,094	9,324	770	7.6%

Source: Michigan Labor Market Information

Information about labor force, employment, and unemployment for Iosco County can be found in **Table 2-10**. In 2009, the county saw a significant increase in its unemployment rate as a result of the 2008 Recession. Since that time, the county’s unemployment rate has steadily been declining. Unfortunately, the county’s 2019 unemployment rate (6.0%) is higher than the State of Michigan (4.1%) and the U.S. (3.7%). Overall, the unemployment rates in the county generally mirror those in the State and U.S.; however, they are consistently higher. Over the past five years, the number of persons employed and in the labor force has remained relatively consistent.

## State Equalized Value

Characteristics of property values can be obtained through the analysis of the state equalized value (SEV). Overall, the Charter Township of AuSable’s residential SEV increased between 2014 and 2018, despite the SEV decreasing in 2015 and 2016 (**Table 2-11**). Additionally, the commercial SEV decreased by approximately \$1.1 million, while the industrial SEV increased by \$291,200. Since 2014, personal property has decreased by \$2,304,300. Overall SEV has decreased but has been slowly increasing since 2017.

Year	Agricultural	Residential	Commercial	Industrial	Personal Property	Real + Personal Property
2018	0	\$83,944,600	\$11,903,100	\$1,974,800	\$4,317,300	\$102,139,800
2017	0	\$83,637,100	\$11,766,600	\$1,817,100	\$4,492,400	\$101,713,200
2016	0	\$80,651,900	\$12,473,100	\$1,849,500	\$4,786,050	\$99,760,550
2015	0	\$81,371,600	\$12,951,500	\$1,770,900	\$7,420,570	\$103,514,570
2014	0	\$81,985,100	\$13,009,600	\$1,683,600	\$6,621,600	\$103,299,900

Source: Michigan Department of Treasury

# Chapter 3

## Community Services and Facilities

This chapter will explore the location and extent of existing services. Services are provided in many ways by public or quasi-public agencies or by private enterprise. Each service provider makes the service available to the best of its capabilities. The resulting service levels determine the capacity of a given location to attract various types of land development.

### Township Government

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#### Township Government

The Township Board governs and conducts the business of the Charter Township of AuSable. The Board has a supervisor, clerk, treasurer and four trustees. The Board may appoint additional committees and hire staff as deemed necessary. The Township is organized as a Charter Township under the Charter Township Act, Act 359 of 1947. Charter township status is a special township classification created by the Michigan Legislature in 1947 to provide additional powers and streamlined administration for governing a growing community. The Township Hall is located on Fifth Street and is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. five days a week. The Township Hall is available for rent.

#### Township Staff

The Township has an administrative staff consisting of the Superintendent/Zoning Administrator, Ordinance Enforcement Officer, Assessor, Administrative Assistant, DPW manager, DPW Assistant, and Utility Billing staff.

#### Planning Commission

The Planning Commission is a 5-member committee appointed by the Township Board. The Planning Commission provides general planning guidance, site plan review, may grant special use permits, recommends amendments to the zoning ordinance, and is responsible for creating and overseeing the Master Plan.

#### Parks and Recreation Committee

The Parks and Recreation Committee is a 7-member committee appointed by the Township Board. The committee has three township board members, the DPW superintendent, and three members of the community at-large. The Committee functions in an advisory capacity to the Township Board. The Township Board has the authority to commit funds for parks and recreation, accept grants and purchase land on behalf of the community.

#### Zoning Board of Appeals

The Zoning Board of Appeals is a committee appointed by the Township Board to hear and decide, upon appeal, any request for the interpretation of the Township Zoning Ordinance and/or to grant any variances of the Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Board of Appeals has five members and meets as needed to hear cases.

## Department of Public Works

The Department of Public Works (DPW) is responsible for the repair and maintenance of all Township infrastructure including but not limited to streets, street lights (decorative light poles only), parks, wastewater treatment, and the water and sewer mains, lift stations and wells.

## Other Services

The Oscoda-AuSable Senior Center provides a community meeting place for senior citizens and is jointly funded by Oscoda Township and the Charter Township of AuSable.

## Water Supply and Sewage Disposal

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Water service in the Charter Township of AuSable is provided through the Huron Shore Regional Utility Authority (HSRUA). The authority is comprised of seven municipalities: Oscoda Township, Greenbush Township, Baldwin Township, Alabaster Township, the Village of Tawas, and the Village of East Tawas. A regional water transmission main runs parallel to US-23 and the township water mains tie into it (**Figure 3-1**). The Township is responsible for the construction and maintenance of these lines.

The HSRUA operates a water treatment facility in Baldwin Township, which has the capacity to produce 5 million gallons per day. Current demand is approximately half of this amount, resulting in additional system capacity. No water allocations are assigned to an authority municipality. Each community pays for water through a master meter system. Currently, the Charter Township of AuSable accounts for 16-19% of the system's consumption.

The region does not have a wastewater treatment authority. The township owns the sanitary sewer system and contracts with Oscoda Township to treat the effluents at the Oscoda Township Wastewater Treatment Facility (**Figure 3-1**). Based on utilization, Oscoda Township is in the process of re-opening the lagoons on the former Wurtsmith Air Force Base.

Due to high lake levels negatively impacting the septic systems on parcels south of the township on US-23, the township submitted an application to extend the sewer line. The project is anticipated to cost approximately \$6 million. Additionally, the Township intends to submit another grant application to construct a lagoon treatment facility to better stabilize future sewer rates. In 2020, dead end water lines will be removed, and new water lines will be added on McNall and Denise Court. The new water lines will provide better fire coverage and water service to homes.

## Utilities

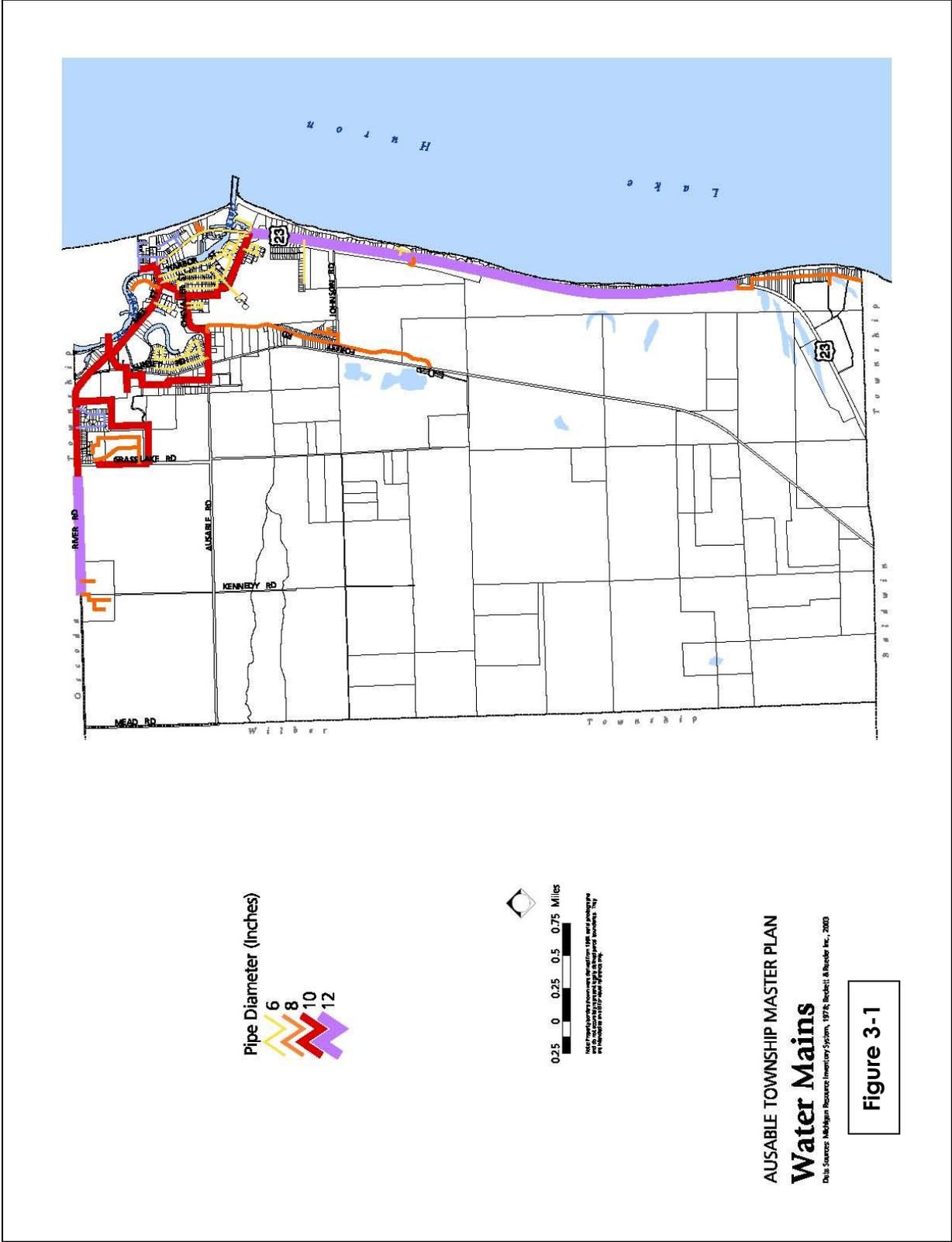
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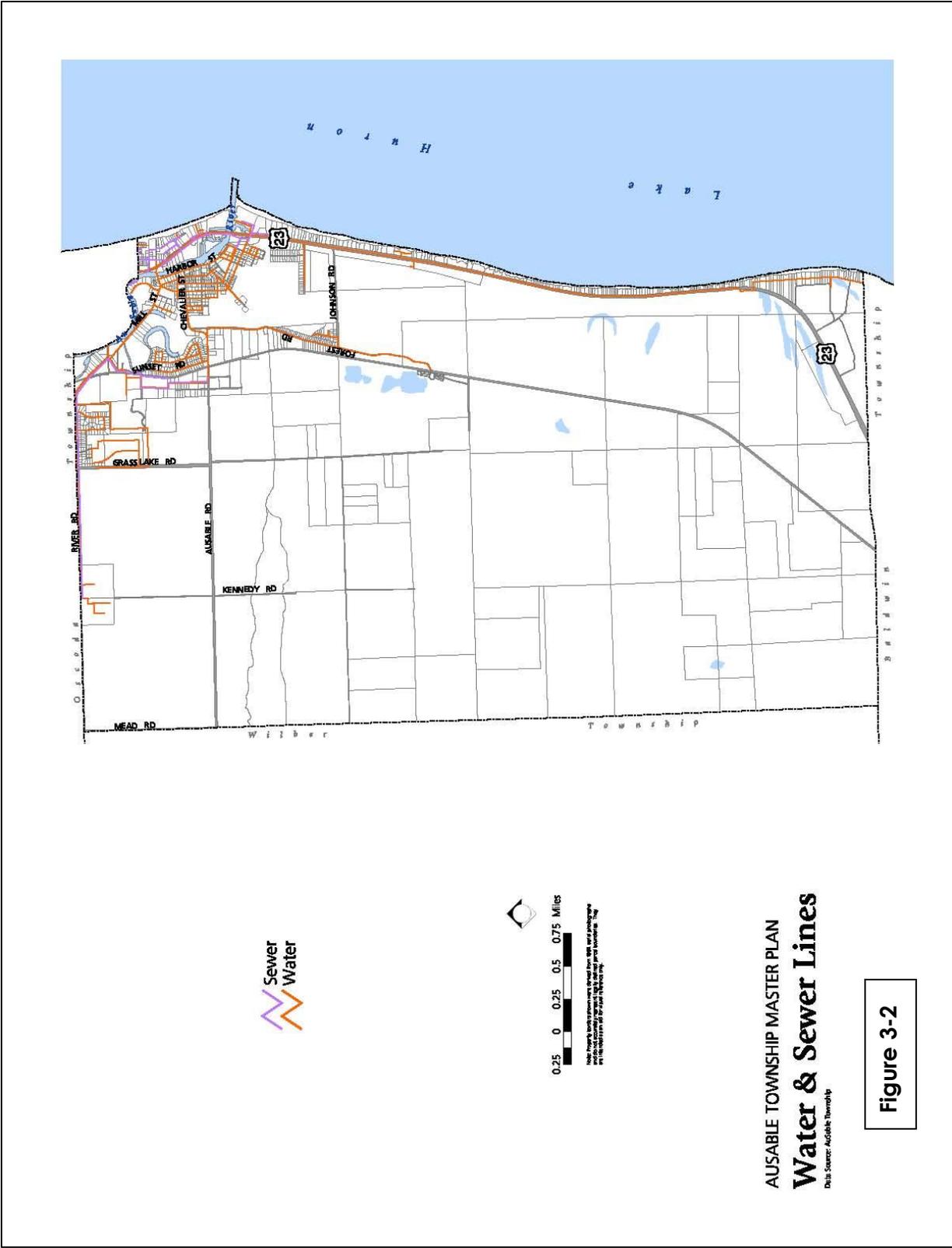
Consumers Energy supplies electric service and DTE provides natural gas in the township. Telephone service is available from a variety of providers.

## Postal Service

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Township residents are served by the post office at 221 N State Street in Oscoda.





## Public Safety

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Law enforcement services are contracted through Oscoda Township, which has nine patrol officers, one detective, and two part-time officers. A Michigan State Police post is located in the City of East Tawas, and the County Sheriff's Office is located in Tawas City. The Iosco County 911 facility is located in the Baldwin Center (the former County Annex Building) on US-23, northeast of East Tawas and houses state-of-the-art computer systems to receive emergency calls and direct law enforcement, fire, and ambulance units to the emergency scene.

The township contracts with the Charter Township of Oscoda for fire services. Emergency medical services serve three regions in Iosco County, and have 11 full-time and 16 part-time staff members.

## Medical Facilities

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Access to medical services, such as optometrists, dentists, and doctor offices, are located in nearby communities. Ascension St. Joseph Hospital is located in the City of Tawas. The Alcona Health Clinic, Aune Medical Center Rehabilitation Services and Oscoda VA Clinic are located in Oscoda. AuSable Valley Community Mental Health Services is a tri-county comprehensive community mental health services program in Iosco County.

## Transportation

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The Charter Township of AuSable's road network is quite limited with the local road layout dictated by the presence of water courses or wetlands (**Figure 3-2**). US-23 is the primary access road through the Charter Township of AuSable and connects the township with Alpena in the north and Saginaw and Bay City in the south. Despite providing transportation access for tourism and industry, the highway is wide, busy, has limited street parking and walkability, and has vacant commercial buildings. These issues in addition to vehicles not stopping, do not make US-23 a successful downtown business corridor.

Several section-line roads provide access to the northern quarter of the township. River Road is the primary east-west route in the township, which carries traffic to M-65 and Hale. The southwestern portion of the township is either not publicly accessible or only accessible by two-track roads associated with the Huron National Forest. Additionally, the village is not laid out in a "grid" pattern, which creates safety issues at intersections with acute angles.

### Sidewalk Network

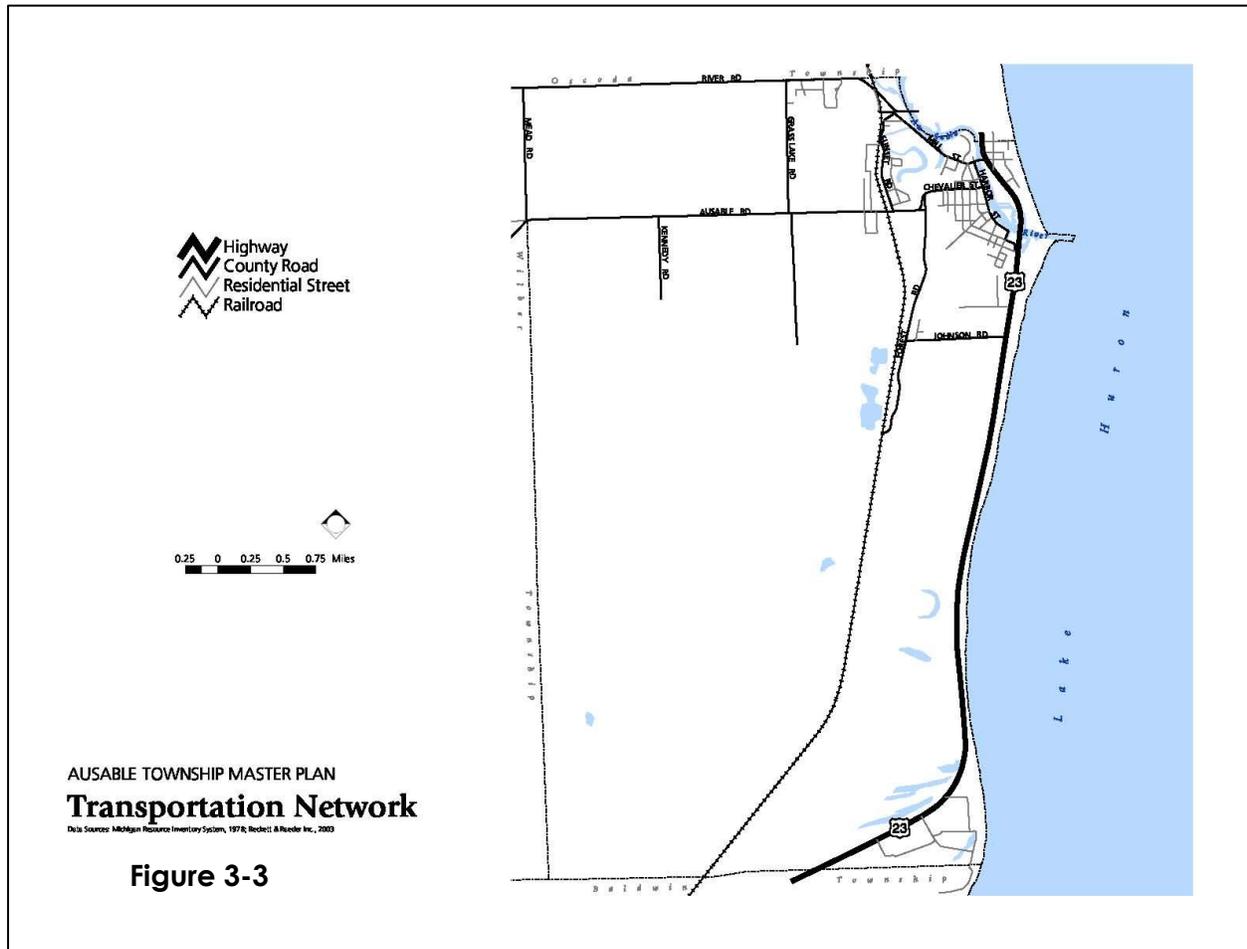
The sidewalk network in the Charter Township of AuSable is somewhat limited with sidewalks in some residential neighborhoods. The sidewalks are not connected to one another and are not in all of the neighborhoods.

## Railroad

Lake State Railway Company owns and operates a north-south railroad line approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile west of the Lake Huron Shoreline.

## Public Transit

Iosco Transit Corporation provides demand/response service in Oscoda and Tawas, and time share/flexible route services to other areas in Iosco County. It operates from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday thru Friday.



## Schools

The Charter Township of AuSable is served by the Oscoda Area Public Schools. The Oscoda Area High School is located at 3550 East River Road and has grades 7-12. Enrollment in the high school is 637 students. Richardson Elementary School is located adjacent to the high school at 3630 River Road and has grades Pre-K-6<sup>th</sup> grade. Enrollment at the Elementary School is 634 students.

## Libraries and Museums

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Libraries are located in Oscoda, Tawas City, and East Tawas. The Wurtsmith Air Museum is located in Oscoda and the Iosco County Historical Museum is located in East Tawas.

## Cemeteries

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There are three cemeteries located in the Charter Township of AuSable. The AuSable Township Historic Cemetery was platted in 1868 and markers show the first burial was in 1867 and the last was in 1928. The Pinecrest Cemetery and Pinecrest Sacred Heart Cemetery are located on Adams Street.

## Local Churches

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### Churches within the Charter Township of AuSable

- Huron Shores Church-Nazarene

### Churches in the Charter Township of Oscoda

- Hope Anglican Church
- Oscoda United Methodist Church
- Hope St. Johns Parish
- Sacred Heart Catholic Church
- Oscoda Baptist Church
- Church of Christ
- Oscoda Assembly of God
- Anchor Baptist Church
- Trinity Lutheran Church
- Grace Community Church
- Trinity Church
- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
- Fresh Start Fellowship of Oscoda
- Huron Baptist Church
- Pentecostal Lighthouse

## Charter Township of AuSable Finances

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Munetrix ([www.munetrix.com](http://www.munetrix.com)) is an online system which displays fiscal data for local units of government in order to provide transparency and an understanding of local unit finances to the public. Information provided in this section was generated from F65 forms to give a summary of the Charter Township of AuSable's financial health (Northeast Michigan Council of Governments sponsored the Munetrix data).

The Munetrix "Stress Meter" provides an overview of Indicator Scores used to calculate the financial stress of a municipality. The Indicator Scores give an overall picture of the soundness of local governments, the trend of stability over time, and allows the identification of local units that are most in

need of help. Scores are generated based on the criteria of population growth, real taxable value growth, large real taxable value growth, general fund expenditures as a percent of taxable value, general fund operating deficit, prior general fund operating deficit, size of general fund balance, fund deficits in current or previous year, and general long-term debt as a percent of taxable value. The lower the number the more fiscally sound a local unit is determined to be. There are three score categories: Fiscally Neutral (stress scores of 0-4), Fiscal Watch (stress scores of 5-7), and Fiscal Stress (stress score of 8-10). Between 2006 and 2018, the fiscal stress indicators and stress scores for the Charter Township of AuSable classified as Fiscally Neutral with stress scores of 1 and 2.

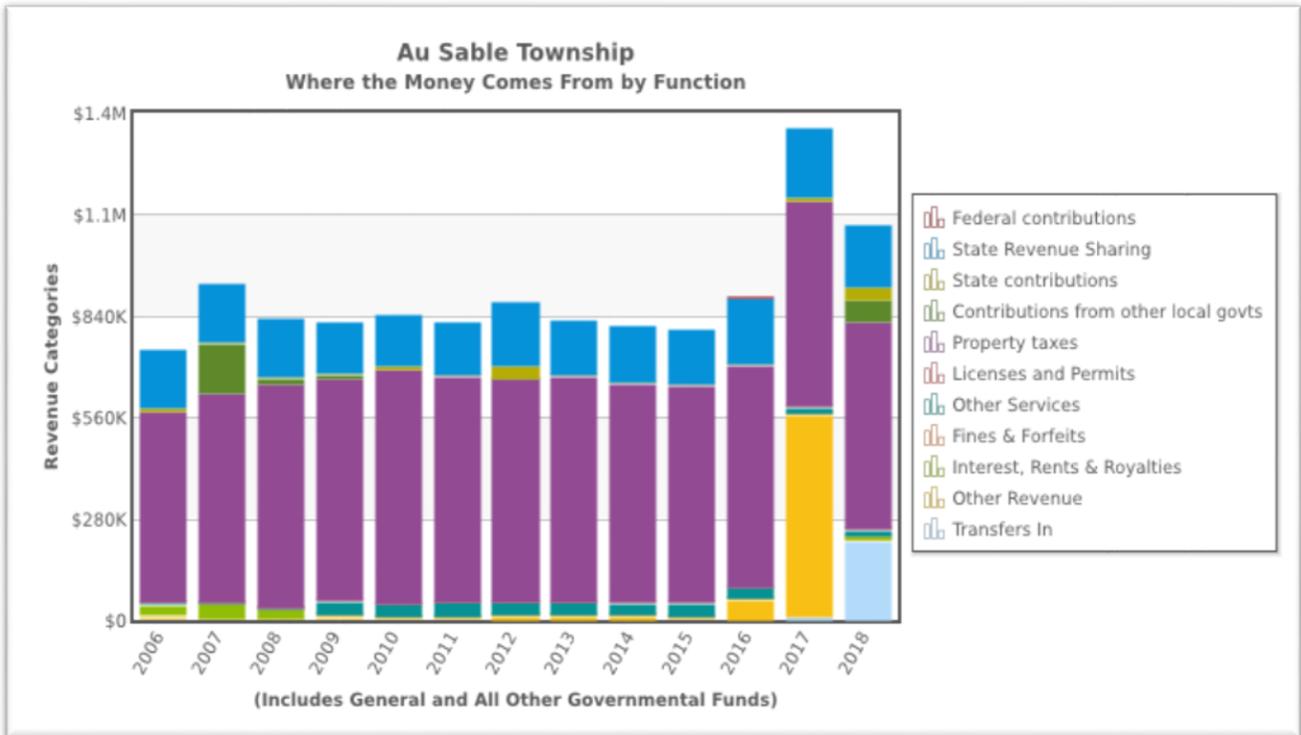
### **Revenues and Expenditures**

Revenue is generated from tax dollars received from residents and businesses, which are generated from the millage rate multiplied by property valuations. Revenue is also generated from other sources, such as State Revenue Sharing, State and Federal grants, permits, and fees. Historically, the township's largest revenue source has been from property taxes (**Figure 3-4**). Additionally, revenue from State Revenue Sharing has been fairly consistent. In 2017, \$553,614 from "other revenue" sources was received by the township and in 2018, the township transferred \$214,970 into the general fund.

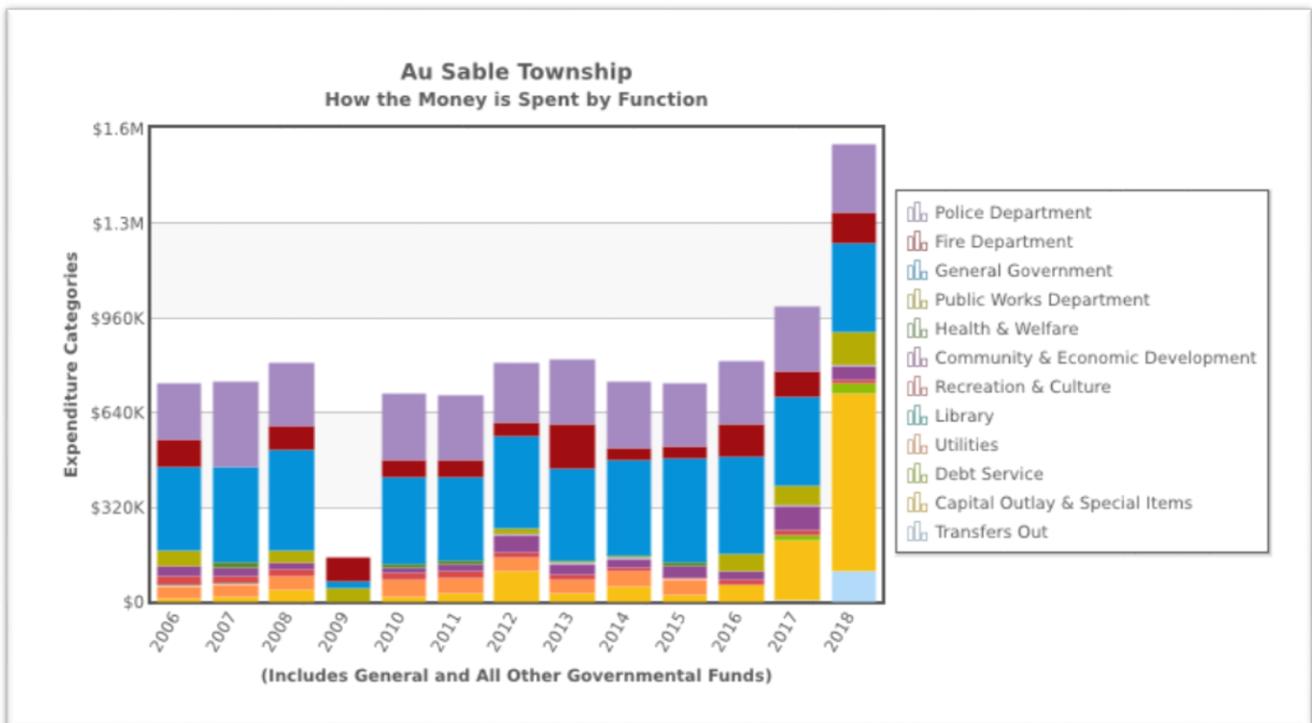
The breakdown of the township's expenses from 2006 to 2018 can be found in **Figure 3-5**. The majority of the township's expenses are for general township expenses, and police and fire services. In 2018, construction of the new Township Hall on US-23 began and resulted in the township having a \$601,347 expenditure for capital outlay and special items.

The township's revenue and expenditures can be found for 2006 to 2018 in **Figure 3-6**. The Fund Equity shows the township had been building fund equity until 2017 when a large capital expense impacted the balance.

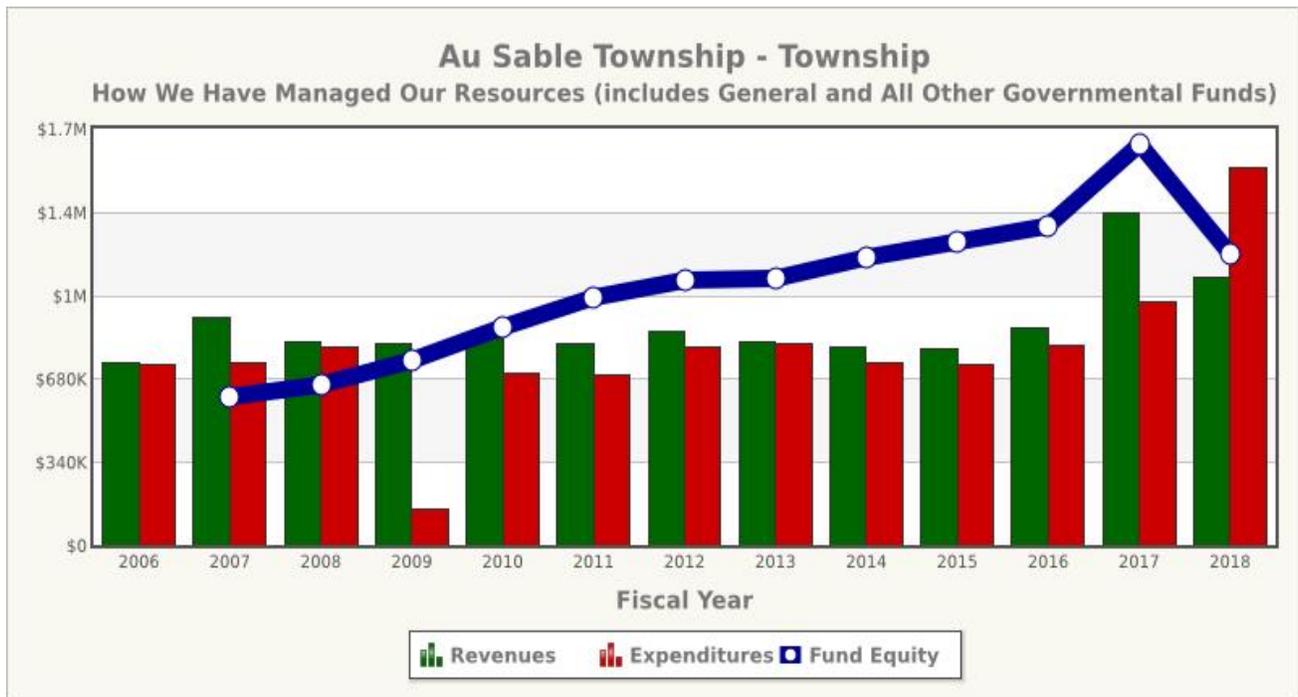
**Figure 3-4: Charter Township of AuSable Revenue Breakdown**



**Figure 3-5: Charter Township of AuSable Expenditures**



**Figure 3-6: How the Charter Township of AuSable Managed Its Resources**



# Chapter 4

## Natural Resources

### The Lake, the River, and the Woods

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The Charter Township of AuSable is defined by three important natural features: the Au Sable River, Lake Huron, and the Huron National Forest. These natural features provide scenic views, recreational opportunities, and fish and wildlife habitat. Additionally, the functions provided by these natural features are imperative to the community's health. For example, wetlands filter pollutants from run-off to protect water quality and provide habitat for wildlife and waterfowl.

### Climate

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The Charter Township of AuSable has long snowy, cold winters, moderately warm summers, cool springs, and colorful falls that provide an ever-changing landscape. The climate is heavily influenced by Lake Huron. In the fall, the lake warms the land and prolongs the growing season, while it cools the land in the spring and summer. Since the lake moderating effect diminishes further inland, the township has warmer falls and cooler springs than inland locations. The township also experiences lake-effect snow and rain, fog events, and increased winds due to its proximity to the lake.

The area's average annual high temperature is 55 degrees Fahrenheit and the average low temperature is 35 degrees Fahrenheit. The coldest month is January with an average temperature of 12 degrees Fahrenheit and an average high of 30 degrees Fahrenheit. The average annual snowfall is 52 inches with an average of 15 inches falling in January. The warmest month is July with an average high temperature of 80 degrees Fahrenheit and an average low of 57 degrees Fahrenheit. Nearly 70% of the precipitation is rainfall with an average annual precipitation of 31.34 inches.

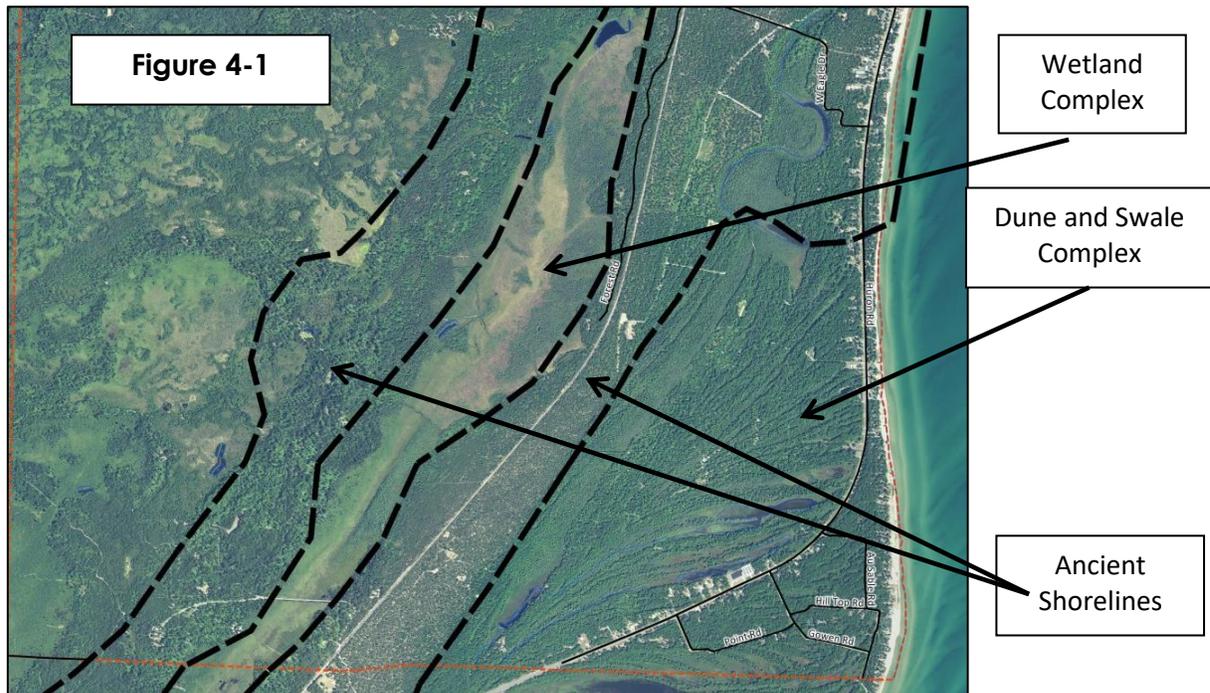
### Coastal Resources

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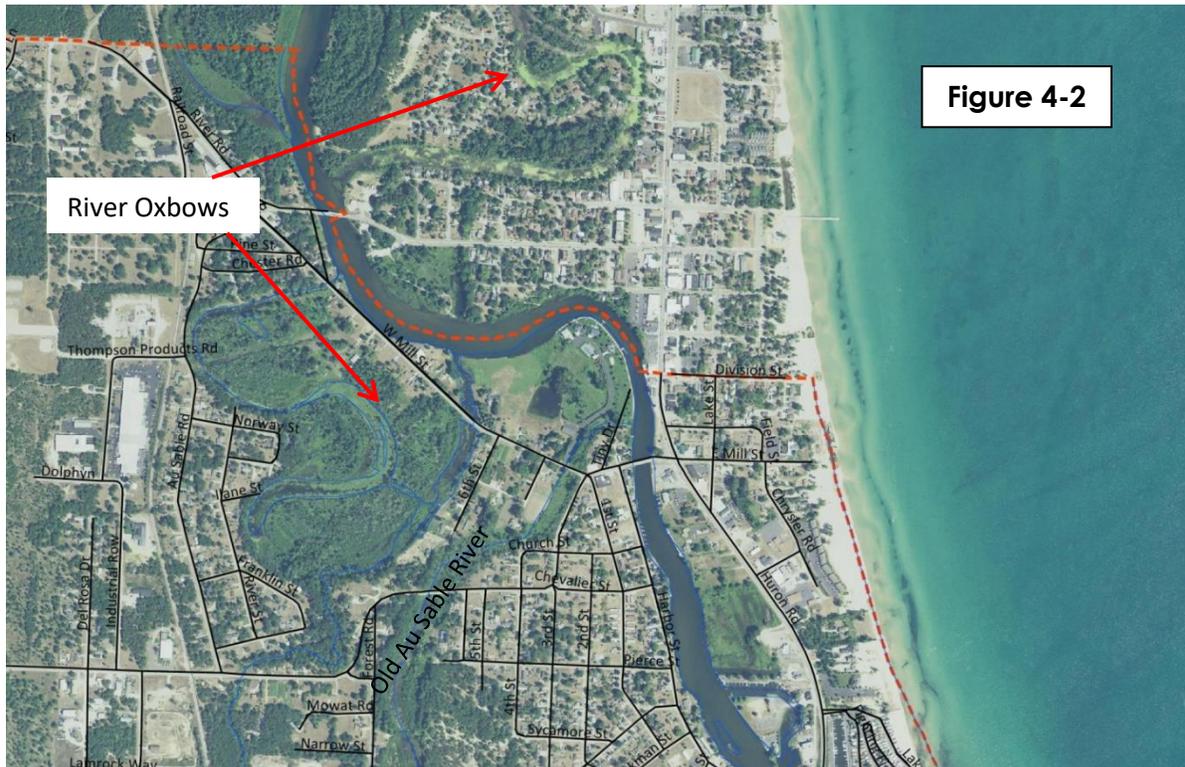
Over two million years ago, glacial activity created the surface geology and soils in Lake Huron and the Charter Township of AuSable. As the continental glaciers melted, water flowed across the landscape to create landforms and pool into the expansive pre- and post- glacial Great Lakes. During different time periods, the glacial Great Lakes were either much higher or much lower than the lake levels experienced in recent times.

Ancient Great Lake Shorelines can be found inland from Lake Huron in the coastal regions of Alcona (e.g. Cedar Lake area), Alpena (e.g. Devils Lake area), and Iosco Counties. In the Charter Township of AuSable, two ancient, wide sandy shorelines (up to one mile wide) parallel the current shoreline and have a wetland complex about seven miles long and ½ mile wide between them. Much of the wetland remains undisturbed due to the muck and peat soils, high-water table, and difficulty to access it. The Lake State Railway is located on one of the old shorelines.

Dune and swale complexes are a series of alternating linear old beach ridges and depressions that parallel the Lake Huron Shoreline. The sandy ridges are usually covered with oak, pine, and aspen forests with junipers, bearberry, and grasses in the understory. The linear wet depressions may support forests (northern white cedar, white spruce, balsam fir, and red maple trees), lowland brush (tag alder, willows, sweet gale, highbush cranberry and Labrador tea), or open wetlands (sedges, cattails, marsh marigolds and rushes). The width of the ridges and associated swales is dependent upon the underlying geology and length of time in which the lake levels receded. The distance between old beach ridges can range from less than 100 feet to over one mile. A large wooded dune and swale complex is located in sections 27, 28, 32, 33, and 34 of the township and is one of the 95 dune and swale complexes currently identified around all of the Great Lakes shorelines (**Figure 4-1**).



Before the lumberjacks arrived and the community was established, beach and low sand dune deposits diverted the Au Sable River southward with evidence of two old outlets south of the current river outlet. The lower six miles of the Au Sable River show evidence of the river constantly eroding the streambed, creating oxbows and wetlands, and changing the channel over time to shorten its course and empty into Lake Huron at the Old Au Sable River Outlet (**Figure 4-2**).



With nearly six miles of sandy beaches along Lake Huron, the township is a prime place to live and play. During low lake levels, the beaches are sites of deposition and build up, while during high lake levels, winds erode the sand deposits. The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) administers the High Risk Erosion Area program. The program’s purpose is to prevent structural property loss in a shoreline area determined by EGLE to be subject to erosion as required by Part 323 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended, and the corresponding Administrative Rules. The program increases consumer awareness, provides technical assistance, reduces the loss of natural resources, and reduces the need for public disaster assistance. The entire coastline of the township is classified as high risk erosion areas. Lake Huron’s current record high water levels are causing increased erosion and flooding along the coastline. **Figure 4-3** shows Lake Huron water levels between 2012 and 2019. In April 2020, record lake levels were recorded, and 2020 projections predicted the levels will exceed record highs set in 1986.

Figure 4-3

Average Lake Huron water levels by Month in feet 2012-2019



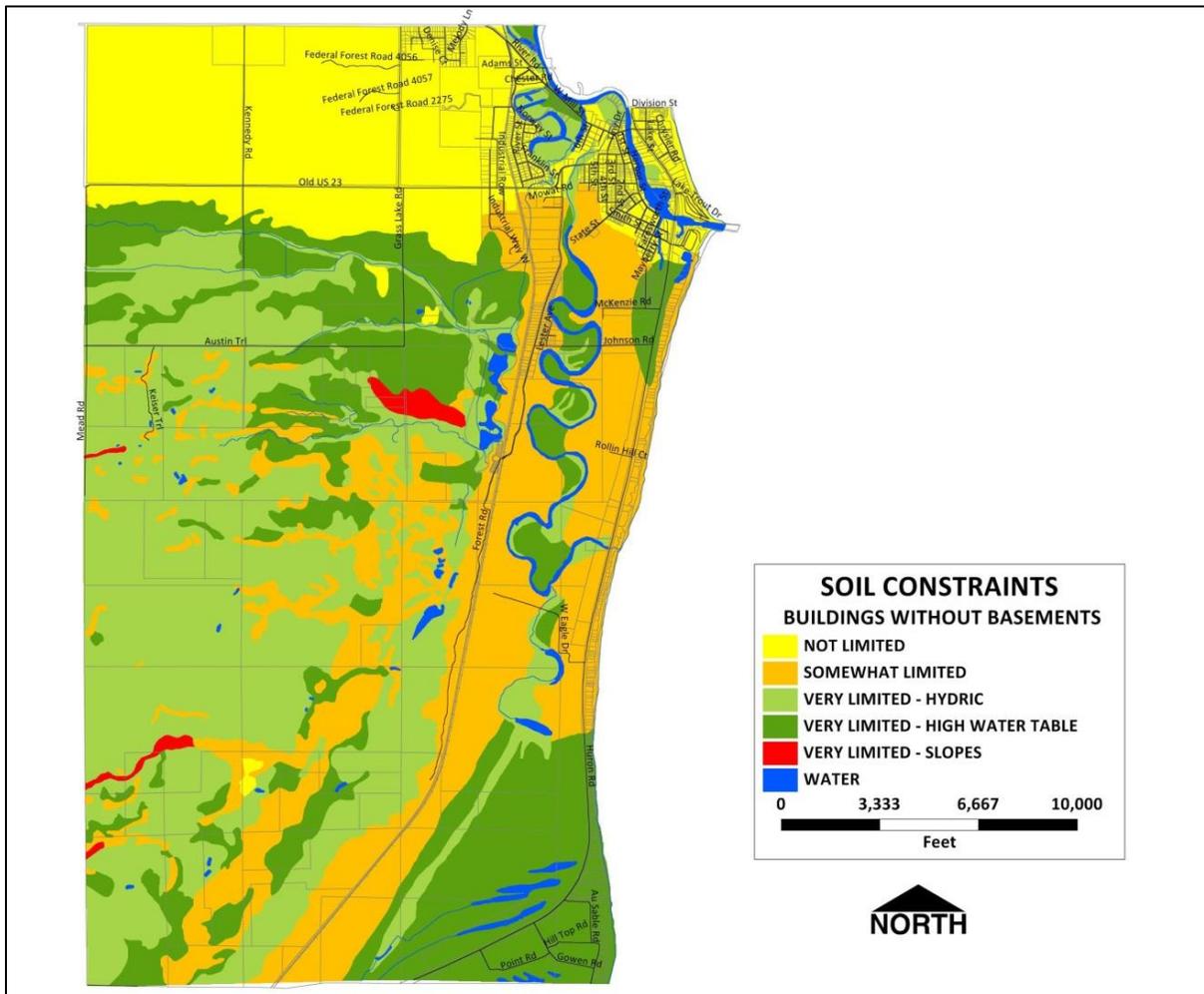
## Soils

The Charter Township of AuSable is located in a relatively level coastal lake plain. Short, steep slopes are found along the Au Sable River. Gently sloping ridges and knolls can be found throughout the community. According to the *Soil Survey of Iosco County, Michigan*, published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, there are 32 soil classification types within the township. Soil survey maps were acquired from the Natural Resource Conservation Service and used to analyze soils conditions and generate soil maps to identify areas most suitable for development, areas with development constraints that are more suitable for low density development/less intensive development, or set aside as parks and natural areas.

## Building Site Development

The USDA soil survey rates soils for various uses, such as building site development, and identifies the limiting factors, such as steep slopes or a high-water table. The rating system classifies areas as “not limited,” “somewhat limited,” and “very limited.” Using the rating system developed by USDA, soil limitations for buildings without basements have been mapped (**Figure 4-4**). Areas with well-drained soils, slopes of less than 10% and proper depth to the saturated zone are well-suited for building development (depicted as yellow on **Figure 4-4**). Areas with well-drained soils, slopes between 6-18% and adequate depth to the saturated zone are classified as somewhat limited for building development (depicted as orange on **Figure 4-4**). Areas with high water tables, organic soils, slopes greater than 18%, ponding and shrink-swell are very limited for development (depicted as red or green on **Figure 4-4**).

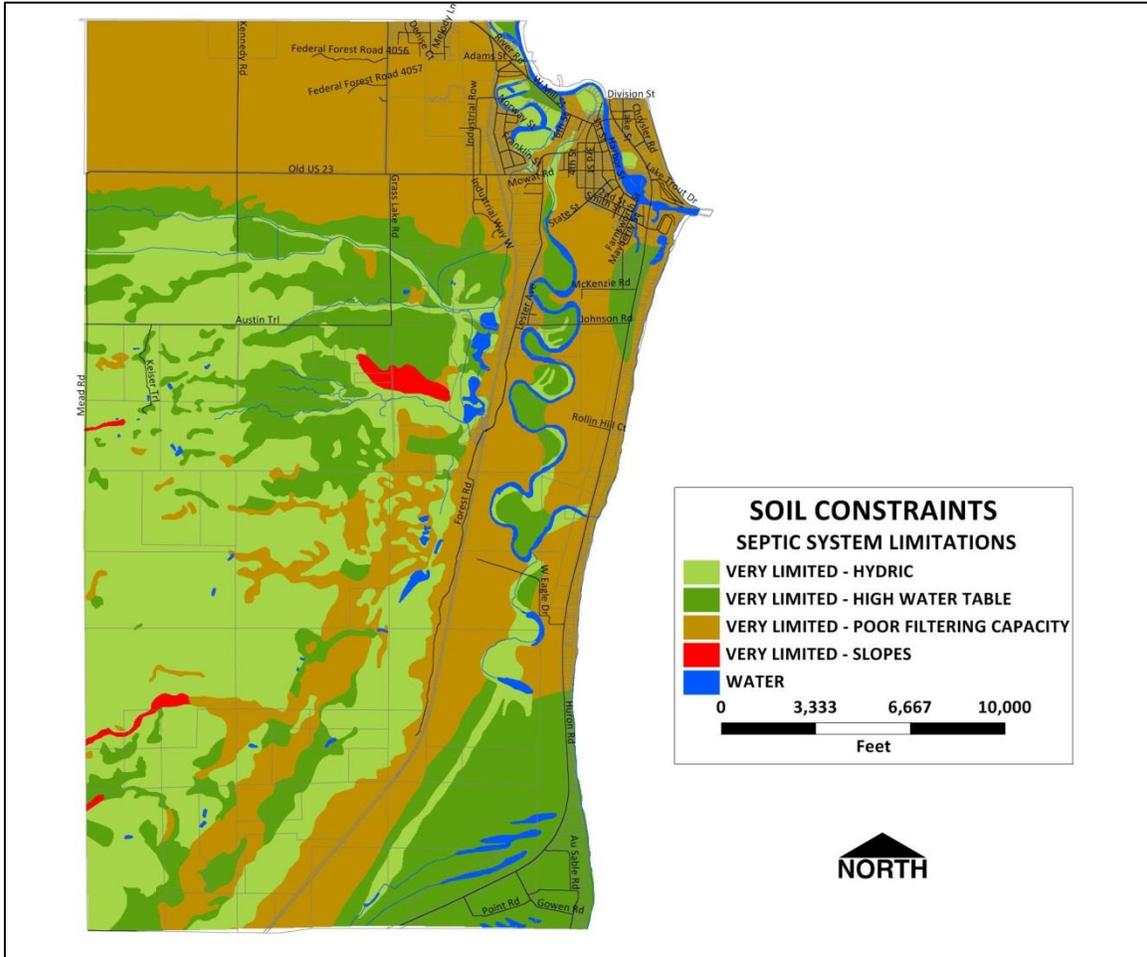
Figure 4-4



### Septic Systems

The USDA soil survey rates soils for septic system limitations. Criteria include depth to water table, wetness, filtering capacity and ability to perc water. The rating system classifies areas as “not limited,” “somewhat limited,” and “very limited.” The Charter Township of AuSable’s septic system limitations can be seen in **Figure 4-5**. Very limited soils include sandy soils (depicted as brown in **Figure 4-5**), organic soils (depicted as green in **Figure 4-5**), and soils with high water tables (depicted as green in **Figure 4-5**). Limiting density and types of development or installing a public water and sewer system for high density development are the likely the best options to protect the groundwater resources in these areas.

Figure 4-5



## Water Resources

The Township contains the last two miles of the National Scenic Au Sable River before it flows into Lake Huron. The Au Sable River runs approximately 138 miles through the northern Lower Peninsula, including the towns of Grayling and Mio, and enters Lake Huron at the Charter Township of AuSable. It is considered one of the best trout fisheries east of the Rockies and has been designated as a blue-ribbon trout stream by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. The Charter Township of AuSable is the site of the finish line for the annual Au Sable River Canoe Marathon, which attracts thousands of visitors to the region.

Nearly 1/3 (6 miles) of the Charter Township of AuSable's border is Lake Huron Shoreline, which is a key element in defining the character of the township. Lake Huron is the second largest of the Great Lakes (surface area is 23,000 square miles); has the longest shoreline (3,827 miles) and 30,000 islands (mostly concentrated in the Georgian Bay area).

## Forests and Wetlands

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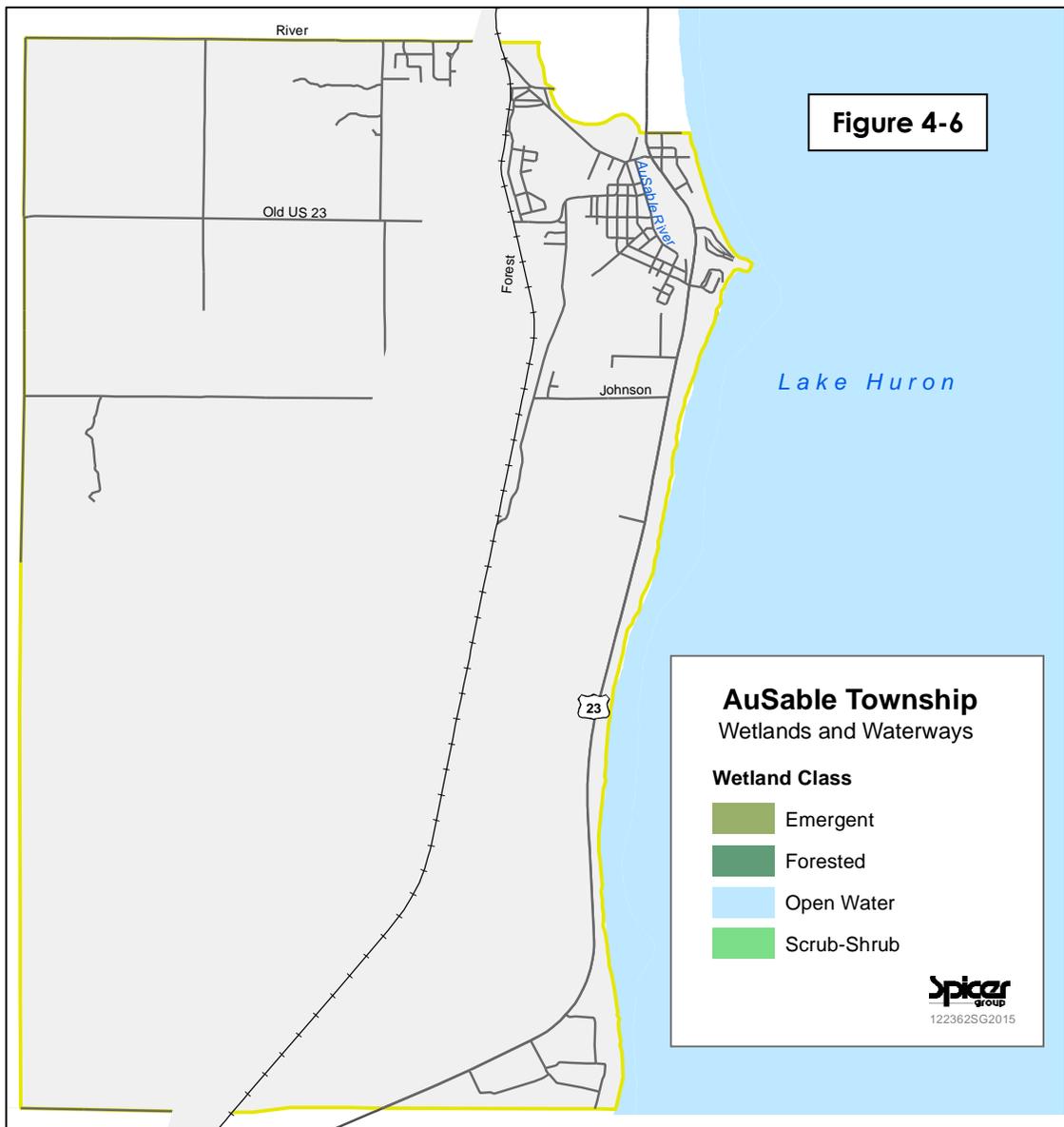
The vast majority of the land in the Charter Township of AuSable is woodlands since the township lies within the Huron National Forest (**Figure 6-1**). Approximately 3,000 acres are owned by the National Forest Service, with all but 200 acres located in the northern third of the township. The Forest Service lands are dominated by jack pine, red pine, oak and aspen forests.

South of the Forest Service lands and west of the Lake State Railway railroad corridor are large tracts of privately owned lands. The lowland forests (northern white cedar, black spruce, tamarack, white spruce, balsam poplar, and black ash species) and shrub-scrub wetlands, marshes, wet meadows and bogs are the predominate cover types in this portion of the township. Sandy ridges and low hills have oak, aspen and white pine forests.

The sandy, well drained ancient shorelines are dominated by red, white and jack pines, red oak, aspen, and red maple forests. Forest types in the wooded dune and swale complexes are variable and dependent upon soil type, depth to the water table and human activities. The sandy ridges are usually covered with oak, white pine, red maple and aspen forests. The linear wet depressions may support forests with northern white cedar, black spruce, white spruce, balsam fir, black ash and red maple forests, or non-forested wetlands with tag alders, red osier dogwoods, sedges, grasses and cattails.

The Charter Township of AuSable contains significant tracts of wetlands, particularly west of the railroad and south of Johnson Road. Wetlands provide wildlife habitat, erosion control, floodwater storage, groundwater recharge, and water purification. They are also used for recreation purposes, such as hiking, bird watching, photography, and hunting.

Poorly drained, lowland areas support northern white cedar, tamarack, balsam fir, black spruce, eastern hemlock, white pine, balsam poplar, trembling aspen, paper birch, black ash, speckled alder and shrub willows. Lowland forests located adjacent to water features function as water quality buffers. The networks of lowland forests also function as wildlife and regional ecological corridors. Wetlands are common within the coastal lake plain. Non-forested wetlands include lowland brush, marshes and bogs. **Figure 4-6** depicts emergent, forested and scrub-shrub wetland areas from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetlands Inventory.



## Environmental Permits and Concerns

### Surface Water Discharge Permits

The State of Michigan controls the discharge of pollutants from waste and wastewater into Michigan's surface waters through the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting process. This process imposes effluent limitations and other necessary conditions to protect the environment and meet State and Federal regulations. The township has two active NPDES permits:

- SPX Corporation, Hedblum Industries-SF Site located at 1000 AuSable Road
- Iosco County Road Commission, 35-Iosco County Exploration Trail Phase I located on East Mill Street

## Sites of Environmental Contamination

The Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended regulates facilities of environmental contamination in Michigan. The Remediation and Redevelopment Division of the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) works towards managing and revitalizing sites of environmental contamination to protect the environment. The division administers two programs: Environmental Remediation (release of hazardous substances from facilities) and Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (release of hazardous substances from underground storage tanks).

The facility inventory database has information for Sites of Environmental Contamination (Part 201), Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (Part 213), and Baseline Environmental Assessments (BEA). The Baseline Environmental Assessment documents the existing contamination and allows a facility to be acquired and/or operated without being held liable for the existing contamination. EGLE also has an online mapping application, *Environmental Mapper*, which allows users to view sites of environmental contamination, leaking underground storage tank sites, and any land use or resource use restrictions imposed on a property that has been provided to EGLE. Information about the sites of environmental contamination in the Charter Township of AuSable can be found in Table 4-1.

Facility Name	Address	Data Source
4775 North Sunset St.	4775 North Sunset St.	BEA
440 South State Street	440 South State Street	BEA
6-Acre Lease Parcel within a 40-acre	parent parcel, east side of Grass Lake R 1 1/4 miles s. of old US-23	BEA
Au Sable Township Dump	Old US 23 Between Kennedy & Grass Lake	Part 201
Ausable Huron Condo Campgrounds	491 State Street (US23)	Part 201
Industrial Row 4700 N., Oscoda	4700 North Industrial Row	Part 201
Oscoda Manufacturing Former	300 Old US 23	Part 201
Au Sable River DNR Boat Launch	US-23 and Smith Street	Part 201

Source: Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy

# Chapter 5

## Recreation Plan

### Extent of Plan Focus

This Recreation Plan addresses recreational facilities and plans within the boundaries of the Charter Township of AuSable. The plan will evaluate the surrounding recreational opportunities of the Township in order to determine recreational needs of the population and to plan for improvements which fit those needs.

### Regional Setting

The Charter Township of AuSable is located along six miles of shoreline on Lake Huron in northeast Iosco County and accounts for 3.7% of the land area in the county (one of 11 townships that make up Iosco County). It encompasses approximately 21 square miles (13,518 acres) and has a population of 2,047 people. The township is considered rural with a population density of 97 persons per square mile. The township is bordered by Oscoda Township to the north, Wilber Township to the west, Baldwin Township to the south, and Lake Huron to the east (Figure 5-1).

The township does not have any incorporated places; however, it does contain the unincorporated Village of AuSable. In the township, north-south traffic circulation occurs along U.S. 23, which bisects the township.



Figure 5-1: Charter Township of AuSable Location Map

## Water Resources

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The Township contains the last two miles of the National Scenic Au Sable River before it flows into Lake Huron. The Au Sable River runs approximately 138 miles through the northern Lower Peninsula, including the towns of Grayling and Mio, and enters Lake Huron at the Charter Township of AuSable. It is considered one of the best trout fisheries east of the Rockies and has been designated as a blue-ribbon trout stream by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. The Charter Township of AuSable is the site of the finish line for the annual Au Sable River Canoe Marathon, which attracts thousands of visitors to the region.

Nearly 1/3 (6 miles) of the Charter Township of AuSable's border is Lake Huron Shoreline, which is a key element in defining the character of the township. Lake Huron is the second largest of the Great Lakes (surface area is 23,000 square miles); has the longest shoreline (3,827 miles) and 30,000 islands (mostly concentrated in the Georgian Bay area).

## Forests

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The vast majority of the land in the Charter Township of AuSable is woodlands since the township lies within the Huron National Forest (**Figure 6-1**). Approximately 3,000 acres are owned by the National Forest Service, with all but 200 acres located in the northern third of the township. The Forest Service lands are dominated by jack pine, red pine, oak and aspen forests.

South of the Forest Service lands and west of the Lake State Railway railroad corridor are large tracts of privately owned lands. The lowland forests (northern white cedar, black spruce, tamarack, white spruce, balsam poplar, and black ash species) and shrub-scrub wetlands, marshes, wet meadows and bogs are the predominate cover types in this portion of the township. Sandy ridges and low hills have oak, aspen and white pine forests.

The sandy, well drained ancient shorelines are dominated by red, white and jack pines, red oak, aspen, and red maple forests. Forest types in the wooded dune and swale complexes are variable and dependent upon soil type, depth to the water table and human activities. The sandy ridges are usually covered with oak, white pine, red maple and aspen forests. The linear wet depressions may support forests with northern white cedar, black spruce, white spruce, balsam fir, black ash and red maple forests, or non-forested wetlands with tag alders, red osier dogwoods, sedges, grasses and cattails.

## Administrative Structure and Budgets

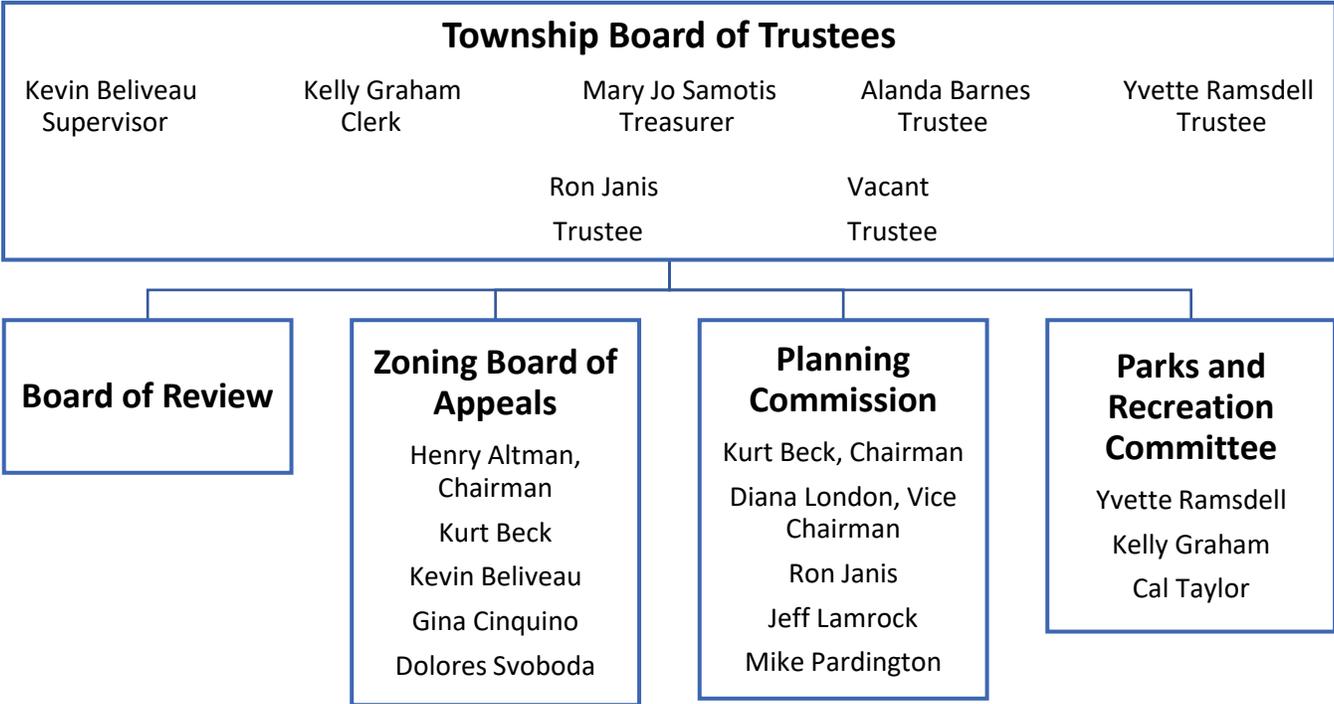
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The Township Board oversees the Parks and Recreation functions in the Charter Township of AuSable. The Board has the authority to commit funds for parks and recreation, accept grants and purchase land on behalf of the community. They are advised by an informal Parks and Recreation Committee that consists of the superintendent, the DPW manager, and one Board member. Sources of funds for the parks and recreation functions in the township include the township general fund, grants, and donations. **Table 5-1** shows the budget for Parks and Recreation in the Charter Township of AuSable.

**Table 5-1  
Charter Township of AuSable Parks & Recreation Budgets**

	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Operation & Maintenance	\$10,357	\$9,343	\$11,152	\$11,757
Capital Improvements	\$0	\$312,942	\$77,000	\$50,000
Programming	None	None	None	None

*Source: Charter Township of AuSable*



### Recreation Programs

The Charter Township of AuSable does not offer any recreation programs. A local men’s recreational softball league uses McCuaig Park for a softball league.

### Relationship with Other Public Agencies & Role of Volunteers

The Charter Township of AuSable is currently working with Iosco County, Oscoda Township, and the U.S. Forest Service on the development of the first phase of the Iosco Exploration Trail which will run from the Au Sable River westward to the Oscoda Schools Complex. The Iosco Exploration Trail is planned to run from Oscoda to Hale and is part of the statewide Iron-Belle Trail. The Charter Township of AuSable is also working with other agencies to create and develop the Sunrise Coastal Trail, which follows US-23 along the Lake Huron shoreline. Local volunteers assist with ball field maintenance during the softball league season.

# Recreation Inventory

The Charter Township of AuSable owns and operates six parks and recreation facilities. A seventh facility, the Harbor Street Handicap Fishing Access Site is owned by the Iosco County Road Commission and operated by the Charter Township of AuSable. Four of the parks provide water views or access and the other three are located inland (Figure 5-2).

## Accessibility

Creating a park system that is safe, accessible, and usable to all individuals, including those with disabilities, is essential. A grading system has been developed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to easily identify those parks and facilities which are most and least handicap accessible and usable, based on ADA guidelines. The accessibility grading system uses a five point system ranging from one (none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines) to five (the entire park was developed/renovated using the principals of universal design) (Table 5-2).

An Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance assessment of the Charter Township of AuSable parks was conducted during the summer of 2020. The assessment consisted of a visual inspection of each park in regard to access and circulation of the park facilities. As noted in the inventory listing below, some of the parks do not meet all criteria for handicap accessibility. The Charter Township of AuSable is dedicated to continuing its efforts towards improving accessibility at each of its parks when improvements are made. This includes accessible parking, paths, restrooms, activity areas, amenities, and signage.

**Table 5-2**  
**MDNR Accessibility Grading System for Parks and Recreational Facilities**

<b>Accessibility Grade</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>1</b>	None of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines.
<b>2</b>	Some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines.
<b>3</b>	Most of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines.
<b>4</b>	The entire park meets accessibility guidelines.
<b>5</b>	The entire park was developed/renovated using the principles of universal design.

## Inventory Procedures

The methods used by NEMCOG staff to compile this recreational inventory include verification and compilation of information from the previous Recreation Plan, site visits to each facility, and compilation of information provided by Township officials. Compiled information was compared to existing information to ensure consistency and/or accuracy.

## The Charter Township of AuSable Recreational Facilities

The Charter Township of AuSable owns and maintains seven recreational facilities: Children’s Park, Harbor Street Boat Ramp, Shoreline Park, Finish Line Park, McCuaig Park (formerly Billy McQuaig Park and Oscoda Park/Billy McQuaid Park), Old AuSable River Walk and Ski Path, and the Trailhead Marketplace (Figure 5-2).

### 1. Children’s Park

Size: 4 Acres

Location: Off of Harbor Street between O-Toole and Stockman Street

Service Area: Entire Region

General Purpose: Neighborhood Play Park

Accessibility: 3

Features: Basketball court, playground, pavilion, walking path, exercise stations



### 2. Harbor Street Boat Ramp

Size: 0.1 Acres

Location: 615 East Harbor Street

Service Area: Entire Region

General Purpose: Special Use Park

Accessibility: 2

Features: Boat launch providing public access to the Au Sable River. No maintenance or infrastructure schedules, events, marketing, or partnerships.



### 3. Shoreline Park

Size: 6 Acres

Location: Corner of N Huron Road and Smith Street

Service Area: Entire Region

General Purpose: Community Park

Accessibility: 3

Features: Swimming beach, gazebo, picnic area



### 4. Finish Line Park

Size: 0.5 Acres

Location: 500 S State Street

Service Area: Entire Region

General Purpose: River Viewing Area

Accessibility: 3

Features: Open space viewing area of Au Sable River



## 5. McCuaig Park (formerly Billy McQuaig Park and Oscoda Park/Billy McQuaid Park)

Size: 49 Acres

Location: Off of Industrial Drive

Service Area: Charter Township of AuSable and Oscoda Township

General Purpose: Community Park

Accessibility: 3

Features: 3 ball diamonds, 2 basketball courts



## 6. Old AuSable River Walk & Ski Path

Size: 4 Acres

Location: Off of State Street SW

Service Area: Oscoda Township and the Charter Township of AuSable

General Purpose: Passive Local Park adjacent to Senior Center

Accessibility: 4

Features: 0.4 mile Walking Path



## 7. Trailhead Marketplace

Size: 1 acre

Location: Next to the Township Hall, South of Shoreline Park

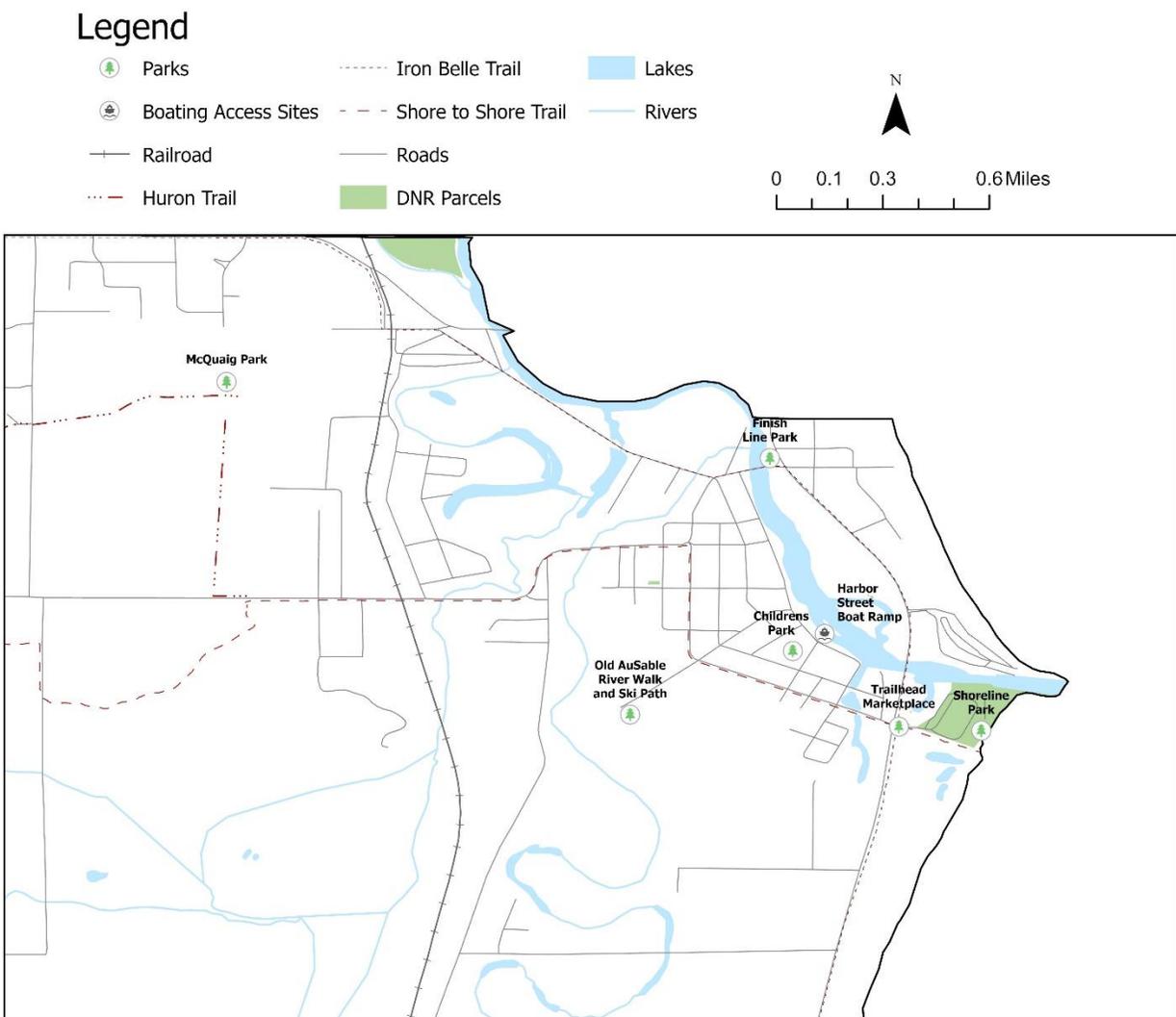
Service Area: Charter Township of AuSable

General Purpose: Trails

Accessibility: 3

Features: The trailhead marketplace provides a place for the Iron Belle, Shore to Shore Trail, and the Sunrise Coast Birding Trail in the Charter Township of AuSable to meet in one location.

## Charter Township of AuSable Recreation Sites



**Figure 5-2 Charter Township of AuSable Recreation Sites**

### Other Facilities within the Charter Township of AuSable

The MDNR Au Sable River Mouth Access Site is located directly north of AuSable Shoreline Park and features beach access and a large boat launch facility. The Oscoda Public School Complex includes outdoor ball fields, a football field, track, and playground. The Oscoda/Tawas KOA Holiday is a private campground. The Au Sable Huron Condominium Marina is a privately-owned marina with 104 boat slips, fish cleaning station, dockside power, water, Wi-Fi, and on-site winter storage. Lastly, there are approximately 3,000 acres of federally owned Huron National Forest Lands within the township.

### Recreation Opportunities Outside of the Township's Boundaries

Residents of the Charter Township of AuSable can also utilize recreational facilities outside of the township. Iosco County has 94 miles of snowmobile trails that run from South Branch to Oscoda, and from the Sand Lake area to the north side of the Au Sable River. The trails are groomed by the Iosco County Parks Commission. Listed below are the public and private recreational facilities in the vicinity of the Charter Township of AuSable.

City of Tawas	
Public	Private
Gateway Park and Boat Launch	Tawas Bay Condominium Marina
Town Square Park	Tawas Lanes
Shoreline Park	Family Theater
Union Square Park	Tawas Bay Players
Independence Park	Tawas Bay Ice Arena
Elms Neighborhood Park	Red Hawk Golf Club
Tawas City Sports Complex	Tawas Creek Golf Course
Sawyer Thornton Park	Tawas Tennis Association
Tawas City Nature Preserve	Shady Oaks Campground
City Hall Boardwalk/Veterans Park and Canoe/Kayak Launch	Tawas River Trailer Park
Tawas Bay Ice Arena	Tawas RV Park

City of East Tawas	
Public	Private
Bolen Park	Blues by the Bay
East Tawas Community Center, City Hall and East Tawas Library	Jerry's Marina
Dillion Park	Tawas Point Harbor
Durant Park	Tawas Bay Yacht Club
MDNR Tawas Lake Boat Launch	
MDNR Cooperative Boat Launch	
Harbor Park	
East Tawas City Park	
Huron Lakeshore Trail/Iron Belle Trail	
Tawas Bay Playhouse	

City of East Tawas	
Public	Private
Iosco County Historical Museum	
Tawas Point State Park/ Sandy Hook Nature Trail	

Oscoda Township	
Public	Private
Oscoda Area Schools	Goodwin Gersham Site
Van Etten Lake State Forest Campground	Lakewood Shores Golf Course
Oscoda Township Beach Park	YMCA Camp Nissokone
Piety Hill	Camp Cherith
Oscoda Huron Sunrise Park	The Landing
Oscoda Riverbank Park	AuSable River Queen
Furtaw Field	Boat Charter Services
Oscoda-Wurtsmith Airport	Farm Markets
Oscoda Community Center	Lake Theater
Sports Complex	Shoreline Players
Ken Ratliff Memorial Park	Northeast Michigan Marine
Warrior Pavilion	Riverview Marina
Old Orchard Park	
Foote Site Park	
Huron Manistee National Forest	
River Road: National Forest Scenic Byway	
Lumberman's Monument Visitor Center/Campground	
Canoe Memorial Scenic Overlook	
Kiwanis Monument	
Iargo Springs Interpretative Site	
Iron Belle Trail	
Shore to Shore Riding/Hiking Trail	
Eagle Run Cross-County Ski and Nature Trail	
High Banks Trail	
ORV Trails	
Snowmobile Trails	
Sunrise Coast Birding Trail	

<b>Wilber Township</b>	
<b>Public</b>	<b>Private</b>
Tuttle Marsh Wildlife Area	Red Hawk Golf Course
Corsair Ski Trails	

<b>Grant Township</b>	
<b>Public</b>	<b>Private</b>
Bike Path	Northern Bear Paw RV Park
Au Gress River Roadside Park	

<b>Plainfield Township</b>	
<b>Public</b>	<b>Private</b>
Round Lake Campground and Boat Launch	Wicker Hills Golf Course
Londo Lake East Park Boat Launch	Green Valley RV Campground
American Legion Park	
Rollways Park	
South Branch Trail Camp	
Hale School District	
Corsair Trail	
Iosco County Fairgrounds	
Huron National Forest	
Riding and hiking trail on the west side of the Au Sable River	
MDNR snowmobile trails	
Township Hall Park	
Londo Lake West Park	
Jose Lake Beach	
Chain Lake Beach	
Loon Lake Park	
Long Lake Park and Boat Launch	
Loon Lake	

<b>Alabaster Township</b>	
<b>Public</b>	<b>Private</b>
Alabaster Pathway and Arboretum/Iron Belle Trail	

<b>Tawas Township</b>	
<b>Public</b>	<b>Private</b>
Tawas Area Schools	Trails End Ranch Campground

## **Recreation Outside of Iosco County**

In addition to recreation in Iosco County, township residents have access to recreational opportunities in Alcona, Arenac, and Ogemaw Counties. Community-based recreation in Alcona County includes Greenbush Recreation Area, Ten Acres, Pine River National Forest Campground, and many public access sites, campgrounds, and community parks. Ogemaw County offers many recreational opportunities including camping, swimming, snowmobiling, and hiking at Rifle River Recreation Area, picnicking at Logan Township Park and Prescott Village Park, and participation in baseball, softball, soccer, and disc golf activities at the Ogemaw Hills Recreation Complex. Within Arenac County, recreation includes three Outdoor Adventure Resorts, Point AuGres Marina and Campground, Wigwam Bay Wildlife Area, Au Gres Delta Nature Preserve, and many golf courses, boat launches, and trails. It is important to note that while these regional recreational opportunities are available to township residents, many require fees, and all require travel in order to access them.

## **The Charter Township of AuSable Recreation Grant History**

Five grants were received for the following parks through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources recreation grants program (Appendix A). The Charter Township of AuSable received and successfully completed three grants for Children's Park and the Old AuSable River Trail. In 2012, McCuaig Park was transferred to the Charter Township of AuSable from Oscoda Township. Oscoda Township received and successfully completed the two grants for McCuaig Park (formerly Billy McQuaig Park and Oscoda Park/Billy McQuaid Park).

### **McCuaig Park (formerly Billy McQuaig Park and Oscoda Park/Billy McQuaid Park), 1972, Grant #: 26-00381**

Construct two ball diamonds, one restroom/concession building, a water system, an electrical system and parking.

### **McCuaig Park (formerly McQuaig Park and Oscoda Park/Billy McQuaid Park), 1975, Grant #: 26-00798**

Construct three tennis/basketball courts and a LWCF sign.

### **AuSable River Children's Park, 1989, Grant #: BF89-053**

Develop the picnic areas, playground area, and basketball court. Add grills, park benches, playground equipment, a pavilion, a basketball court, and landscaping.

### **AuSable River Children's Park, 2016, Grant #: RP16-0086**

Develop a new ten station fitness course within Children's Park.

### **Old AuSable River Trail, 1993, Grant #: 26-01537**

Develop a short trail for nature hikes or cross-country skiing. The project includes asphalt paths, a gazebo and benches, and a survey.

# Parks and Recreation Goals

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After reviewing input from the community and the Township’s demographic characteristics, the following goals and objectives were created to provide guidance in the development of recreational projects.

## Goal 1

***Create a recreational system that is visible, that is promoted, and is easily accessible to all users.***

- Objective 1.1      Improve universal accessibility across all parks in the township.
- Objective 1.2      Use signage and maps to connect the local trail system with established trail systems.
- Objective 1.3      Ensure recreation facilities are conveniently located in and near residential areas.
- Objective 1.4      Provide a balance of recreational amenities which are oriented to the aging population to increase the desirability of the community to retirees.
- Objective 1.5      Provide recreational amenities which are oriented toward the younger population and families in order to increase the livability of the community to attract young families to the area and retain older youth.
- Objective 1.6      Retain and sustainably manage public lands for future generations.
- Objective 1.7      Promote recreational facilities in the township.
- Objective 1.8      Pursue the acquisition of other recreational lands, if necessary and feasible, to expand the types of recreation available to residents and visitors.

## Goal 2

***Actively improve and maintain recreational resources in the Charter Township of AuSable.***

- Objective 2.1      Adopt a capital facilities program to prioritize and identify funding for expanding existing amenities that would serve the Township’s population and support the ongoing activities at those facilities.
- Objective 2.2      Prepare and implement a regular maintenance plan to keep the Township’s parks in good condition.
- Objective 2.3      Repair and replace worn out and damaged equipment.
- Objective 2.4      Improve and enhance access to the Au Sable River and Lake Huron.

Objective 2.5 Develop multi-use pathways for recreation and transportation uses and continue to work towards the completion of the Iron Belle Trail in Iosco County.

Objective 2.6 Establish a trailhead marketplace near where multiple established trails converge (Iron Belle Trail, Shore to Shore Trail, and Sunrise Coast Birding Trail) which can also house a regional farmer’s market.

### **Goal 3**

#### ***Ensure a thorough and regional Recreational Planning Process.***

Objective 3.1 Regularly update the 5-year Parks and Recreation Plan in order to ensure the recreation system reflects current needs of the community.

Objective 3.2 To develop and maintain strong local government involvement in recreational and tourism planning and projects.

Objective 3.3 Seek grant funding and other financial assistance to help acquire and develop recreational facilities and achieve the recreation goals of this Plan.

Objective 3.4 Support cooperative regional recreation planning and development with Iosco County, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and other surrounding communities.

Objective 3.5 Improve the quality of life for residents and bring visitors to the Charter Township of AuSable by maintaining, improving and expanding recreation within the township and surrounding areas by working cooperatively with local and State governmental agencies, community service agencies, and local businesses. Create recreational opportunities for people of all abilities and recreational needs.

### **Goal 4**

#### ***Provide opportunities for passive recreation, allowing residents and visitors to enjoy the natural beauty of the township.***

Objective 4.1 Pursue the acquisition of natural areas in the community and protect them for one of three purposes: “keep out” natural areas for strict preservation and restoration, “look only” natural areas (may include nature trails, sitting areas, and other passive recreation), and “look-and-touch” natural areas (nature education centers and natural resources gardens) at which people are allowed to touch nature, to hands-on grow nature, to hands-on sustain nature, and to practice sustainability using nature.

Objective 4.2 Promote the development of non-motorized trails in the Township’s preserved natural spaces.

# Parks and Recreation Action Plan

With the goals and objectives in place, the Charter Township of AuSable has developed a five-year action plan that will enable it to move toward accomplishing the goals and objectives. The action program details the direction the Township wishes to take over the next five years in order to maintain and improve the quality and diversity of its park and recreation opportunities.

**Table 5-3** shows the potential projects with each action item relating to one or more of the goals. The projects are prioritized as low, medium, or high. Furthermore, the projects are part of the Township’s overall capital improvements plan and have been established to provide a framework for decision makers and to enable the community to apply for grant funding for the proposed projects.

It should be noted the listed projects are not fixed elements nor are they exhaustive since future circumstances, especially availability of funding, may influence the order in which projects are completed. The project list reflects the results from public input, township officials and staff, and maintenance needs.

Table 5-3 Charter Township of AuSable Parks & Recreation Action Plan 2021 - 2025		
Improvement	Relates to Goal	Priority
<b>Trails</b>		
Partner with Iosco County to develop the Iosco Exploration Trail	1, 2, 3	High
Develop and install the Trailhead Marketplace	1, 2	High
<b>Children’s Park</b>		
Install mile markers on pathways	1, 2, 4	High
Update existing play equipment	2	Medium
<b>Old AuSable River Walk/Ski Path at the Senior Center</b>		
Install dog waste bag dispensers	2	High
Improve entrance to the facility	1, 2	Medium
Marketing campaign to promote facility	1	Medium
<b>McCuaig Park</b>		
Construct a dog park	1	Low
<b>General</b>		
Construct a campground near water (location to be determined)	1, 2	Low

## Basis for Action

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Recreation planning in the Charter Township of AuSable should consider its populations.

1. The township has a large mid-life population. The median age is 53.0 years old, which is older than the State of Michigan's median age of 39.7 years old. Individuals 45 to 64 years of age make up 31.3% of the population, while individuals aged 65 and older make up 27.9%. Therefore, this population should be given consideration when planning for recreational activities.
2. Young people, aged 19 and under, make up 17.8% of the Township's population, while individuals between the ages of 20 to 44 years represent 23.0% of the population. Given the population make up, the recreational facilities in the township need to appeal to diverse age groups.
3. The township's median household income is \$43,787 compared to the State's median income of \$54,938. About 53.2% of the households in the township receive social security income compared to 34.5% statewide. Additionally, 37% of the households receive retirement income compared to 22.5% statewide. The Township's unemployment rate is 6.0% compared to 4.1% statewide. Consideration should be given to whether or not residents can afford to incur the cost of recreational activities and the drive time and expenses associated with travelling to recreational facilities.

*Figures obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2014-2018 5-year estimates and the Michigan Labor Market Information.*

With the Township's population in mind, the following factors also influence recreational development in the Charter Township of AuSable:

1. All residents and visitors should have access to safe routes that connect recreational facilities, residential areas, and local attractions throughout the township. Consideration of public safety, accessibility and inclusivity will be taken into account when planning for recreational opportunities within the township.
2. The Charter Township of AuSable has an abundance of natural (the Au Sable River and Lake Huron) and recreational spaces with amenities that improve the quality of life in the township. Providing year-round recreational opportunities in these spaces will attract visitors and offer a means of enjoyment for residents. These spaces will also provide opportunities for social interaction.
3. All residents and visitors should be able to enjoy recreational opportunities in the township. When planning, consideration will be given to the type of parks, their location, their distribution, and the type of recreational activities that are offered.
4. The maintenance and operation of existing and new recreational facilities will balance the preservation of the natural environment and scenic areas with tourism potential.
5. All residents and visitors should be able to easily access information about the Township's recreational facilities and be able to find the facilities with wayfinding signage. When marketing the recreational system, the Township will consider working with area tourism groups and agencies.

# Charter Township of AuSable Planning Process

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## Public Input

Development of a community recreation plan must involve interaction and input from citizens and community groups. The Township Planning Commission was the lead entity in developing the Recreation Plan and opted to publish an online survey to gather comprehensive public opinion and ideas about the future of parks and recreation in the township to most effectively gather public input. The survey was available to both township and surrounding area residents. The Township received 107 survey responses, which is equal to approximately 5.8% of the Township's population. The survey results can be found at the following website:

[http://www.discovernortheastmichigan.org/downloads/ausabletwpmprp\\_survey\\_results\\_2020.pdf](http://www.discovernortheastmichigan.org/downloads/ausabletwpmprp_survey_results_2020.pdf).

This is an excellent response rate in such a small community, so the community was well represented in the process. In fact, many community members left individual comments within the survey. After all public input was gathered and recorded, the Planning Commission met to prioritize projects for the Action Plan and to develop a Capital Improvements Schedule. A timeline for the development of the recreation plan is included below the survey results.

## Survey Results

### Township Recreational Facilities and Activities

The majority of respondents enjoy bicycling, bird watching/wildlife and nature viewing, boating/sailing, camping, canoeing/kayaking, attending concerts and festivals, hiking/walking, swimming, going to theaters (live and cinema), and picnicking. Approximately 67.4% travel between 0 and 10 miles to use recreational facilities. Additionally, 69.6% of the respondents support the township in funding the promotion and expansion of the non-motorized trail network and its amenities.

Respondents leave the township for fishing/charter fishing, boating, ATV/ORV trails, swimming, ice skating, camping, hunting, softball/baseball fields, roller skating, basketball, golfing, concerts, museums, children's activities and lessons, amusement parks, theaters, and boardwalks. Other recreational facilities used in the area include the High Banks Trail, Tuttle Marsh, Lumberman's Monument/River Road area, Largo Springs, Oscoda area school facilities and parks, Eagle Run, Sawmill boat launch, access sites for Whirlpool and Dam Rivers, Corsair trails, Hubbard Lake or Van Etten Lake, Au Sable River pier, Oscoda and Tawas concerts, and area campgrounds and beaches.

### SHORELINE PARK

Approximately 46.0% of respondents use this park 2+ times per week, weekly, or monthly, while 46% occasionally use the park. The respondents utilize the park for the farmer's market, mini golf, swimming, nature viewing, picnicking, hiking/walking, and volunteering.

Recommended Improvements:

- Increase park maintenance efforts
- Implement strategies to address the rising water levels that flood the walking path and cause shoreline erosion (fill dirt, raised walkways, etc.)
- Construct bathroom facilities
- Construct a playground
- Expand the beach
- Replace the wooden planks on the walkway

- Construct a bigger pavilion
- Add picnic tables and install lights
- Develop and implement a no smoking policy for the entire park
- Install wayfinding signage
- Develop the entrance to attract people

### **CHILDREN'S PARK**

About 32.0% of respondents use this park 2+ times per week, weekly, or monthly, while 38% occasionally use the park. The majority of the respondents utilize the park for its playgrounds, basketball, picnicking, and baseball/softball fields.

#### Recommended Improvements:

- Increase park maintenance efforts
- Add sheltered seating, water fountains, and lights
- Construct a splash pad
- Update bathroom facilities
- Replace existing play equipment
- Add other recreational options for kids
- Provide instructions about how to use exercise equipment
- Install mile markers on pathways
- Add beaches
- Add another pavilion

### **HARBOR STREET BOAT RAMP**

About 87.8% of respondents occasionally or never use the ramp. Out of the respondents who use the ramp, they use it for boating and fishing.

#### Recommended Improvements:

- Make the ramp handicap accessible
- Add seating
- Replace ramps
- Lessen the severity of the grade to the water
- Add a larger dock/a dock on each side of the launch
- Address weeds/slimy water
- Update its appearance

### **FINISH LINE PARK**

Approximately 89.8% of respondents occasionally or never use the park. The respondents who use the park use it for fishing, special events/workshops, and volunteering.

#### Recommended Improvements:

- Increase park maintenance efforts (fertilize, weed control, and geese elimination)
- Add seating, garbage cans, and lights
- Add a seawall to fish from
- Expand the parking area
- Construct a boardwalk along the east side of the river's edge

### **OLD AUSABLE RIVER WALK/SKI PATH AT THE SENIOR CENTER**

About 86.0% of respondents occasionally or never use the park. Out of the respondents who used the park, they hike/walk and volunteer.

#### Recommended Improvements:

- Install wayfinding signage
- Develop the entrance to attract people
- Create a marketing campaign to promote the river walk and senior center
- Add lights for evening walkers, garbage cans and doggy bag stands

### **MCCUAIG PARK**

About 87.8% of respondents occasionally or never use the park. The respondents who use the park utilize the baseball/softball fields.

#### Recommended Improvements:

- Increase park maintenance efforts (mow grass, grade gravel, etc.)
- Install wayfinding signage
- Develop the entrance to attract people
- Develop a future vision for the park and implement strategies to meet the vision
- Resurrect ball leagues
- Add playground equipment
- Install a gravel bike path through McCuaig Park to Grass Lake Road
- Construct basketball courts and tennis courts
- Pave the parking lot for the soccer fields
- Construct a dog park
- Install an ice rink in the winter
- Open the gate to increase usage
- Install security cameras to prevent vandalism
- Hold more events at the park
- Close the park and use the land to expand the cemetery
- Transform the park into an ATV friendly camping area with lighting and water

#### **Recommendations for new or expanded recreational facilities and activities:**

- Sponsor fishing tournaments
- Promote, expand, and utilize ATV/ORV trails
- Install a kayak launch
- Elevate walking paths to prevent flooding issues
- Add a splash pad at Shoreline Park or Children's Park
- Expand the bike paths with bike stop facilities at Shoreline Park
- Extend the river walk
- Construct modern restrooms
- Construct an indoor sports complex
- Have later closing hours and weekend hours for the farmer's market
- Construct/provide a place to hold showers, weddings, receptions, and parties
- Provide more opportunities for bird watchers
- Construct a walking/running/bike trail

- Construct a community gathering/bandshell area for events and small local music venues
- Provide information about the township parks and events to residents, including detailed and easy to understand trail maps
- Host seasonal community gatherings (summer picnics, snowman contest, Christmas potluck, etc.)
- Provide more year-round outdoor activities
- Provide recreational opportunities/programs/classes for preschool aged children and teenagers (ballet, gymnastics, dance, sports, etc.)
- Construct a campground and picnic area near the water
- Complete the non-motorized path, including the rail trail
- Develop a program for concerts/street dances

## Schedule Timeline

<b>January 2020</b>	Township Officials contract with Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG) to assist in drafting a recreation plan/master plan for the Charter Township of AuSable.
<b>March 2020</b>	NEMCOG drafted an online survey with general and specific recreation questions using SurveyMonkey software. NEMCOG staff worked with township officials/planning commission to finalize the survey. Planning Commission approves final survey.
<b>March 2020</b>	Survey is released to the public. The survey was available on the township’s website and Facebook page. Additionally, paper copies of the survey were available at the Township Office.
<b>March – June 2020</b>	Northeast Michigan Council of Governments reviewed expired plan and made updates to the community description, administrative structure and recreation inventory.
<b>June 2020</b>	NEMCOG staff conducts on-site visits to each recreational facility in the township and conducts a barrier-free assessment.
<b>July 1, 2020</b>	The public input survey was closed and results were compiled.
<b>October 21, 2020</b>	NEMCOG staff met with the Planning Commission to discuss survey results and formulate goals, objectives and an action plan.
<b>November 25, 2020</b>	The Planning Commission voted to approve the final draft of the Recreation Plan and to put the plan out for the 30-day review period.
<b>December 9, 2020</b>	A public notice appeared in the <i>Oscoda Press</i> advertising the Recreation Plan was available for review and the date of the public hearing.
<b>January 13, 2021</b>	The Planning Commission held a public hearing on the Recreation Plan. No comments were received from the public through email, mail, or in-person. The Planning Commission passed a Resolution of Adoption.
<b>January 19, 2021</b>	The Township Board passed a Resolution of Adoption.

# Survey Publicity

RE: AuSable Master-Recreation Plan | Village of Lincoln Recreation Plan | village\_of\_lincoln\_recreation\_pla | AuSable Charter Township - Home

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**AuSable Charter Township**  
June 9

We are currently updating the Master Plan for AuSable Township. If you could spare 15 minutes to answer some questions to help us better plan for the future it would be greatly appreciated.  
If you have any questions, please call us at 739-9169  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AuSable>

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**AuSable Charter Township Master and Recreation Plan Public Input Survey**

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June 16

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If you have any questions, please call us at 739-9169  
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**AuSable Charter Township Master and Recreation Plan Public Input Survey**

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**AuSable Charter Township**  
June 23 · 🌐

We are currently updating the Master Plan for AuSable Township. If you could spare 15 minutes to answer some questions to help us better plan for the future it would be greatly appreciated.  
If you have any questions, please call us at 739-9169  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/fr/AuSable>



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**AuSable Charter Township**  
June 30 · 🌐

Final day to help by taking a short survey.  
We are currently updating the Master Plan for AuSable Township. If you could spare 15 minutes to answer some questions to help us better plan for the future it would be greatly appreciated.  
If you have any questions, please call us at 739-9169... See More



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**AuSable Charter Township Master and Recreation Plan Public Input Survey**

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Ice Cream Shop
- Oscoda Lions Club**  
Social Service
- Truly Yours Signs and Shirts**  
Clothing Store

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# Notice of Draft Plan's Availability for the 30 day Review Period and Public Hearing Notice

## Proof of Publication

STATE OF MICHIGAN }ss

\_\_\_\_\_ County of Iosco

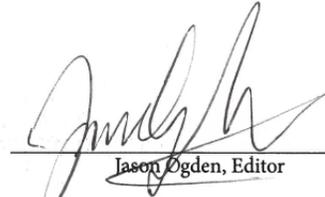
**Jason Ogden**

being duly sworn, deposes and says that he is the editor of the THE OSCODA PRESS, a newspaper published and circulating in the County of Iosco, in said State, that the annexed printed notice has been published on the following date, to wit:

December 9, 2020

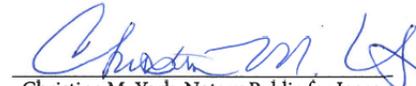
### **Notice of Availability of the Charter Township of AuSable Draft Recreation Plan and Public Hearing for Input on the Draft Recreation Plan**

The Charter Township of AuSable is making their draft recreation plan available for public review for a 30-day period of time. After the 30-day public review period, there will be a public hearing on January 13, 2021 at 6pm. The township website has meeting information (<http://ausabletownship.net/>). Public comments are requested either in person or by representative at the public hearing, submitted to Christina McEmber at [cmember@nemcog.org](mailto:cmember@nemcog.org), or mailed to PO Box 457, Gaylord, MI 49734. The draft plan is available at <http://ausabletownship.net/> or at the township hall. All necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services will be provided to individuals at the meeting upon 10 days notice to the township staff at 4420 N. US 23, AuSable, MI 48750.

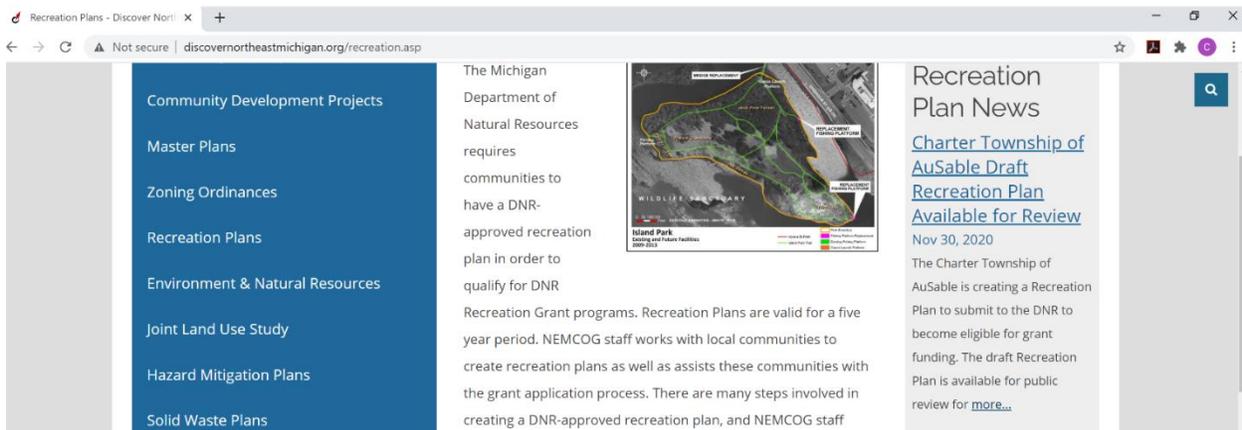


Jason Ogden, Editor

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 9th day of December A.D. 2020



Christine M. York, Notary Public for Iosco County, Acting in Iosco County, Michigan  
My Commission expires March 6, 2023



# Public Hearing and Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

## CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF AUSABLE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING Nov. 25, 2020 "approved"

### **CALL TO ORDER:**

Meeting was called to order by Kurt Beck, Chairman, at 6:00 pm

### **ROLL CALL:**

Present: Mike Pardington, Kurt Beck, Ron Janis, Jeff Lamrock

Absent: Diane London

Staff Present: Leisa Sutton, Superintendent, Susie Olpere, Recording Secretary,

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

### **APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA:**

Chairman Beck requested the addition of Item A – Recreation Plan under New Business. Lamrock made a motion to approve the amended agenda for Nov. 25, 2020. Second by Pardington

Unanimous – Voice Vote

Motion Carried

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES from (Oct. 21, 2020) :**

Janis made the motion to approve the minutes from Oct. 21, 2020. Second by Pardington

Unanimous – Voice Vote

Motion Carried

### **PUBLIC HEARING:**

Motion was made by Janis to close the regular meeting and open the Public Hearing. Second by Lamrock

Unanimous – Voice Vote

Motion Carried

Time: 6:03 pm

#### **A) Proposed Ordinance #114 Amendment -**

Mr. Robert Van Camp – address 1174 W. River Rd. was concerned about the change in the zoning of the district of his property. He maintained that this would cause his property to be split in two (from Mixed Use Waterfront to Residential or the new C-1). Superintendent Sutton reminded him of the meeting he had with the township assessor and herself regarding the correction that was made by Ms. Landry which left his property zoned as C-3. This correction was satisfactory to Mr. Van Camp.

Janis made the motion to close the Public Hearing and reconvene the regular meeting. Second by

Lamrock

Unanimous – Voice Vote

Motion Carried

Time: 6:06

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**A) Recreation Plan** – Chairman Beck summarized the information from the last meeting regarding suggestions and corrections that were made with Ms. Cline from NEMCOG. He asked the board if there was anything they would like to add or change. No further comments were made. Chairman Beck made the motion to post the latest draft of the Recreational Plan for 30 days. Second by Janis  
Unanimous – Roll Call Vote  
Motion Carried

**B) Commercial/Industrial Permit Application** – Mr. Terry Dutcher made a Special Land Use application for the purpose of raising, processing and selling quail from his facility in the Industrial District. Mr. Dutcher explained his plans for the business. Chairman Beck explained that it is located in an Industrial District and there is no language that pertains to this type of use. He continued that it was more of an agricultural activity there is no agricultural districts designated in AuSable Township. Janis made the motion to approve (Permit Application for Special Use #2020-S-SLU-04) by Mr. Terry Dutcher.  
Second by Lamrock  
Unanimous – Roll Call Vote  
NAYS – Beck, Janis, Lamrock, Pardington  
Permit Denied

**C) Proposed Ordinance #114 Amendment** - Superintendent Sutton defined the purpose of the amendment was to rezone a section on River Road to be compliant with the continual use of the area. We are incorporating single family residences to the C-1 District and updating the zoning maps to reflect the current mobile home park which has units on both sides of the street. Motion was made by Janis to approve the Ordinance #114 Amendment and have it presented to the board of trustees for their approval. Second by Lamrock  
Unanimous – Roll Call Vote  
Motion Carried

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None

**COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS:** Commissioner Lamrock asked if there was any possibility of Agriculture being added to the Zoning Districts. Superintendent Sutton replied there has been no interest indicated for an agricultural area and no room within AuSable Township for one to be designated.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion was made by Janis  
Second by Lamrock  
Unanimous – Voice Vote  
Motion Carried  
Time: 6:36 pm

Submitted by:  
Susie Olpere  
Recording Secretary

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kurt Beck, Chairman  
Planning Commission

Planning Commission Adoption Resolution

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF AUSABLE RECREATION  
PLAN**

**RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION**

**Charter Township of AuSable Planning Commission**

**WHEREAS,** The Charter Township of AuSable has undertaken a 5-Year Recreation Plan update which describes the physical features, existing recreation facilities and the desired actions to be taken to improve and maintain recreational facilities during the period of 2021 – 2025, and

**WHEREAS,** an online recreation survey was published on March 9, 2020 and remained open for public input until July 2, 2020, providing residents with an opportunity to comment and guide recreation in the Township, and

**WHEREAS,** a public notice was published in *Oscoda Press* on *December 9, 2020*, which began a 30-day public review period for the draft plan, and

**WHEREAS,** The Charter Township of AuSable has developed the plan for the benefit of the entire community to assist in meeting the recreation needs of the entire community.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,** that the Charter Township of AuSable Planning Commission hereby adopts the Recreation Plan and recommends to the Township Board adoption of the Charter Township of AuSable Recreation Plan as a guideline for improving recreation for the residents of the Charter Township of AuSable.

Yeas: 4

Nays: 0

Absent: 1

**I HEREBY CERTIFY** that the forgoing Resolution was adopted at a meeting of the Charter Township of AuSable Planning Commission held on January 13, 2021.

1/13/2021  
Date

Kurt Beck  
Signature

Kurt Beck, Chairman  
Name, Title

# Township Board Meeting Minutes

## CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF AUSABLE

Regular Board Meeting

Jan. 19, 2021

"approved"

Virtual Meeting

### CALL TO ORDER:

Meeting was called to order by Supervisor Kevin Beliveau at 5:00 pm

### ROLL CALL:

Present: Yvette Ramsdell, Kelly Graham, Kevin Beliveau, Mary Jo Samotis, Alanda Barnes,  
Ron Janis

Staff Present: Leisa Sutton, Superintendent, Susie Olpere, Recording Secretary

Press Coverage: Patricia Alvord

Pledge of Allegiance recited

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Supervisor Beliveau made a correction to the date of the minutes under the Consent Agenda (should be Jan. 4, 2021) and Item E. Resolution 2021-3 under New Business (should have an effective date of Jan. 19, 2021). Another change to the agenda would be to take Mr. Moss and the RAB Update off the agenda. Superintendent Sutton will keep board briefed on anything new. Ramsdell made the motion to approve the amended agenda. Second by Barnes

Unanimous – Voice Vote

Motion Carried

### PUBLIC COMMENTS on Agenda Items: None

**Approval of Consent Agenda:** Motion by Janis to approve the consent agenda. Second by Barnes

Unanimous – Roll Call Vote

Motion Carried

### PRESENTATIONS:

- A) **Treasurer** –
- B) **Clerk** – Accounts Payable
- C) **Superintendent** – Superintendent's Report

### OLD BUSINESS:

- A) **Kelly Graham – Iron Belle Trail Update** -  
Clerk Graham is still working with NEMCOG and Spicer Group to gather information for the TAP Grant application.
- B) **Sewer Project** –
- C) **Water Project** -

### NEW BUSINESS:

A) **Letter of Interest** – Superintendent Sutton had received two letters of interest from Ms. Diana London and Mrs. Gina Cinquino for the vacancy on the Board of Trustees. Both candidates are currently serving the township, Ms. London is on the Planning Commission and Mrs. Cinquino is on the Zoning Board of Appeals. Supervisor Beliveau said the board appreciates their service to the township and their interest to be on the township board. Barnes made the motion to appoint Diana London to fill the vacancy on the board until the mid-term election. Second by Janis

Unanimous – Roll Call Vote

Motion Carried

**B) Consideration of Ordinance #121** - This ordinance is adopted for the purpose of complying with state and federal statutes, regulations, rules, and decisions by providing for and regulating access to and ongoing use of public rights-of-way for small cell wireless facilities. In doing so, the Charter Township of AuSable wishes to ensure the reasonable and fair control and management of public rights-of-way, support new technology, and avoid interference with right-of-way use. Janis made the motion to approve Ordinance #121. Second by Barnes

Unanimous – Roll Call Vote

Motion Carried

**C) Resolution 2021- 01** – This resolution pertains to an increase of \$5,470.00 over the approved budget due to an extra pay period in the year. Barnes made the motion to approve Resolution 2021-01. Second by Janis

Unanimous – Roll Call Vote

Motion carried

**D) Resolution 2021- 02** – This resolution fulfills requirements of the State Tax Commission to establish a policy regarding the accessibility of the Township Assessors office the township taxpayers. Barnes made the motion to approve Resolution 2021 – 02. Second by Samotis

Unanimous – Roll Call Vote

Motion Carried

**E) Resolution 2021-03** – This resolution is in regard to adopting the Recreation Plan which was recently updated and accepted by the Planning Commission. Motion was made by Barnes to adopt Resolution 2021-03. Second by Janis

Unanimous – Roll Call Vote

Motion Carried

**F) Consideration of amendment of Police Services Contract** – Superintendent Sutton provided a copy of the amended Police Contract from Oscoda Township for the board's review. Motion was made by Barnes to approve the Police Service Contract for 2021. Second by Ramsdell

Unanimous – Roll Call Vote

Motion Carried

**G) Consideration of amendment of the Fire Services Contract** – Also present was the Fire and Cemetery contract from Oscoda Township for 2021. Samotis made the motion to approve the addendum Of the contract between Oscoda and AuSable Townships regarding fire and cemetery services. Second by Barnes

Unanimous – Roll Call Vote

Motion Carried

**H) Consideration of Letter of Authorization** – Superintendent Sutton has received a request to provide an Acknowledgement and Authorization letter for the Oscoda Charter Township Pump Station Replacement project which will cross the AuSable River into AuSable Township. An example is included for the trustee's examination. Janis made the motion to approve the letter of Authorization. Second by Barnes

Unanimous – Roll Call Vote

Motion Carried

**BOARD COMMENTS:**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion to adjourn made by Barnes

Second by Janis

Unanimous – Voice Vote

Motion Carried.

Meeting adjourned at 5:26 pm

Submitted By:  
Susie Olpere  
Recording Secretary

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kevin Beliveau, Supervisor  
Charter Township of AuSable

# Township Board Adoption Resolution

**RECREATION PLAN  
RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION  
RESOLUTION NUMBER 2021-03  
IOSCO COUNTY  
AUSABLE, MICHIGAN 48750**

Adopted: January 19, 2021

**Charter Township of AuSable**

- WHEREAS,** The Charter Township of AuSable has undertaken a 5-Year Recreation Plan update which describes the physical features, existing recreation facilities and the desired actions to be taken to improve and maintain the recreational facilities during the period of 2021– 2025, and
- WHEREAS,** an online recreation survey was published on March 9, 2020 and remained open for public input until July 2, 2020, providing residents with an opportunity to comment and guide recreation in the Township, and
- WHEREAS,** a public notice was published in *Oscoda Press* December 9, 2020 which began a 30-day public review period for the draft plan, and
- WHEREAS,** The Charter Township of AuSable has developed the plan for the benefit of the entire community to assist in meeting the recreation needs of the entire community, and
- WHEREAS,** a public hearing was held on January 13, 2021 in conjunction with the Planning Commission Meeting to provide residents the opportunity to ask questions and express opinions on the Recreation Plan.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,** that the Charter Township of AuSable Board of Trustees hereby adopts the Recreation Plan Update as a guideline for improving recreation for the residents of the Township.

Yeas: 6 Nays: 0 Absent: 0

**I HEREBY CERTIFY,** that the forgoing Resolution was adopted at a regular meeting of the Charter Township of AuSable Board of Trustees held on January 19, 2021.

The foregoing resolution offered by Board Member: BARNES

Second offered by Board Member: JANIS

AYES: SAMOTIS, BARNES, JANIS, RAMSDELL, GRAHAM, BELIVEAU

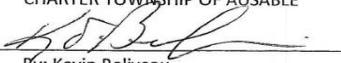
NAYES: NONE

**ABSENT:**

Passed and approved this 19th day of January 2021, by the Charter Township of AuSable Board.

Dated: January 19, 2021

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF AUSABLE

  
By: Kevin Beliveau  
Its: Supervisor

Dated: January 19, 2021

  
By: Kelly Graham  
Its: Clerk

## Iosco County Submittal Letter

January 20, 2021

Charter Township of AuSable  
4420 N. U.S. 23  
AuSable, MI 48750

Iosco County Planning Commission  
ATTN: James Szafran, Vice Chairman  
422 W. Lake Street  
Tawas City, MI 48763

Dear Mr. Szafran:

The AuSable Township Board adopted the 2021-2025 AuSable Charter Township Recreation Plan on January 19, 2021. Please find an enclosed copy of the plan.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 989-739-9169.

Sincerely,



Kevin Beliveau  
Supervisor, Charter Township of AuSable

## East Michigan Council of Governments Submittal Letter

January 20, 2021

Charter Township of AuSable  
4420 N. U.S. 23  
AuSable, MI 48750

East Michigan Council of Governments  
Attn: Sue Fortune  
3144 Davenport Avenue, Suite 200  
Saginaw, MI 48602

Dear Ms. Fortune:

The Charter Township of AuSable Board adopted the 2021-2025 Charter Township of AuSable Recreation Plan on January 19, 2021. Please find an enclosed copy of the plan.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 989-739-9169.

Sincerely,



Kevin Beliveau  
Supervisor, Charter Township of AuSable

# Community Park and Recreation Plan Checklist



Michigan Department of Natural Resources-Grants Management

## COMMUNITY PARK AND RECREATION PLAN

### CERTIFICATION CHECKLIST

By Authority of Parts 19, 703 and 716 of Act 451, P.A. 1994, as amended, submission of this information is required for eligibility to apply for grants

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Complete, obtain certification signatures and submit this checklist with a locally adopted recreation plan.

All recreation plans are required to meet the content and local approval standards listed in this checklist and as outlined in the *Guidelines for the Development of Community Park and Recreation Plans* provided by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Plans must be submitted to the DNR through MiRecGrants **with** a completed checklist that has been signed by an authorized official(s) of the local unit of government(s) submitting the plan. Plans may be submitted at any time of the year, but no later than February 1 of the year the local unit of government is applying for grants.

PLAN INFORMATION		
Name of Plan: AuSable Charter Township Master Plan and Recreation Plan		
List the community names (including school districts) that are covered under the plan and have passed a resolution adopting the plan.	County	Month and year plan adopted by the community's governing body
AuSable Charter Township	Iosco County	January 2021
PLAN CONTENT		
<b>INSTRUCTIONS:</b> Please check <u>each</u> box to certify that the listed information is included in the <u>final</u> plan.		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>1. COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>2. ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Roles of Commission(s) or Advisory Board(s) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Department, Authority and/or Staff Description and Organizational Chart <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Annual and Projected Budgets for Operations, Maintenance, Capital Improvements and Recreation Programming <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Current Funding Sources <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Role of Volunteers <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Relationship(s) with School Districts, Other Public Agencies or Private Organizations		
<b>Recreation Authorities or Trailway Commissions Only:</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Description of the Relationship between the Authority or Commission and the Recreation Departments of Participating Communities		
<input type="checkbox"/> Articles of Incorporation		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>3. RECREATION INVENTORY</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Description of Methods Used to Conduct the Inventory <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Inventory of all Community Owned Parks and Recreation Facilities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Location Maps (site development plans recommended but not required) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accessibility Assessment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Status Report for all Grant-Assisted Parks and Recreation Facilities <input type="checkbox"/> Waterways Inventory (if applicable)		
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>4. RESOURCE INVENTORY (OPTIONAL)</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>5. DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING PROCESS</b>		

**6. DESCRIPTION OF THE PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS**

Description of the Method(s) Used to Solicit Public Input Before or During Preparation of the Plan, including a Copy of the Survey or Meeting Agenda and a Summary of the Responses Received

Copy of the Notice of the Availability of the Draft Plan for Public Review and Comment

Date of the Notice December 9, 2020

Type of Notice Public Notice in The Oscoda Press

Plan Location Township website, township hall

Duration of Draft Plan Public Review Period (Must be at Least 30 Days) 35 days

Copy of the Notice for the Public Meeting Held after the One Month Public Review Period and Before the Plan's Adoption by the Governing Body(ies)

Date of Notice December 9, 2020

Name of Newspaper The Oscoda Press

Date of Meeting January 13, 2021

Copy of the Minutes from the Public Meeting

**7. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

**8. ACTION PROGRAM**

**9. POST-COMPLETION SELF-CERTIFICATION REPORT(S)**

**PLAN ADOPTION DOCUMENTATION**

**APPROVAL DOCUMENTATION:** For multi-jurisdictional plans, **each** local unit of government must pass a resolution adopting the plan. Prepare and attach a separate page for each unit of government included in the plan.

1. Official resolution of adoption by the governing body dated: January 19, 2021

2. Official resolution of the Planning Commission or Board, recommending adoption of the plan by the governing body, dated: January 13, 2021

3. Copy of letter transmitting adopted plan to County Planning Agency dated: January 20, 2021

4. Copy of letter transmitting adopted plan to Regional Planning Agency dated: January 20, 2021

**OVERALL CERTIFICATION**

**NOTE:** For multi-jurisdictional plans, Overall Certification must include the signature of each local unit of government. Prepare and attach a separate signature page for each unit of government included in the plan.

*I hereby certify that the recreation plan for*

AuSable Charter Township *includes the required content, as indicated*

(Local Unit of Government)

*above and as set forth by the DNR.*

  
Authorized Official for the Local Unit of Government

1-28-21  
Date

**This completed checklist must be uploaded in MiRecGrants.**

# Chapter 6

## Existing Land Use

Prior to determining future land uses, a community must have an accurate assessment of existing land uses. In many cases, the existing land uses have 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 map is designed to provide a snapshot in time of how land in the Township is actually being used. This chapter presents information on the types of land uses existing in the Charter Township of AuSable.

### General Land Division Patterns

---

As development occurs, larger tracts of land are subdivided into smaller parcels. Therefore, studying the existing pattern of land divisions is one way to analyze the status of land use and development. Smaller platted lots, less than 12,000 square feet are mainly found in the older neighborhoods of AuSable. Most of the small lots, two acres or less in size, are in the community of AuSable and along the Lake Huron Shoreline. West of the Lakes State Railway, the properties are 40 acres and larger, some have seasonal cabins, and there are few roads.

### Existing Land Use/Land Cover Characteristics

---

Existing Land Cover/Use for the 2021 Master Plan was developed by using 2018 digital aerial photos and parcel data. The Michigan Resource Information Systems (MIRIS) land cover/use classification system was used to map the following categories: Residential, Commercial, Waterfront Mixed Use, Industrial/Utility, Institutional/Recreational, Non-Forested Uplands, Upland Forests, Lowland Forests, Non-Forested Wetlands, and Beaches. Field verification and ancillary digital map data such as ownership information, USDA soils, Google Maps, and the National Wetlands Inventory, were used to complete the mapping and analysis.

A more detailed approach was used to identify and map natural resources on larger tracts of land. Therefore, larger parcels will show urban built-up areas and undeveloped forests, wetlands or upland openings. The Land Cover/Use Map is displayed as **Figure 6-1** on the following page. **Table 6-1** presents the existing land cover/use breakdown for the Charter Township of AuSable.

#### Residential

Single family residential development is found within and nearby the unincorporated community of AuSable, adjacent to major roads and along the Lake Huron Shoreline. Low density, often seasonal, residential development is found on large tracts of privately owned forests and wetlands. Several multi-family residential developments, such as apartments and condominiums, are included in this category. Residential land use covers 1,226 acres (9.1% of the township).

## **Commercial**

The commercial category includes retail sales of goods and services, restaurants, marinas, lodging, and health care providers. There are 130 acres of commercial uses in the Charter Township of AuSable (1.0% of the Township). The main business district is located along US-23 and on either side of the Au Sable River. A number of motels and resorts are found along the Lake Huron coastline, off of US-23, and south of the community center. Another concentration of commercial development is located in Section 4 along River Road. Commercial development along major streets is automobile-oriented with each establishment having its own required parking lot.

## **Waterfront Mixed Use**

The waterfront mixed use category coincides with the waterfront mixed use zoning district and includes properties along the AuSable River and Lake Huron Shoreline. A mix of commercial and residential land uses including short-term tourist lodging, marinas, and other land uses related to tourism and water activities. There are 89 acres of waterfront mixed use in the Charter Township of AuSable (0.7% of the Township).

## **Industrial/Utility**

Industrial land uses make up less than one percent of the township covering some 106 acres. Industrial areas are located in Sections 4 and 9.

## **Institutional/Recreational**

This classification includes land uses that are governmental, clinics, libraries, schools, churches, museums, campgrounds, watercraft launch facilities, cemeteries, and parks. These uses make up 1.8% of the Township (238 acres).

## **Non-Forested Uplands**

The non-forested uplands category accounts for 149 acres (1.1% of the township). Openings with herbaceous plants, grasses and shrubs are very limited. Large scale historic logging and subsequent forest fires created vast open areas with few trees. Since those days, forests have regrown leaving small open areas.

## **Upland Forests**

Upland forests cover 5,625 acres (41.9% of the township). Forest types include pine (jack, white and red pine), aspen-birch, and oak. Forests dominated by jack pine are considered high risk for wildfires. Large tracts of upland forests are found in the northern and eastern parts of the township.

## **Lowland Forests and Wetlands**

Wetlands are defined as land that has sufficient water at, or near, the surface to support wetland or aquatic vegetation. These areas are commonly referred to as swamps, marshes, and bogs. Two important functions of wetlands are water quality protection and ecological corridors. Non-forested wetland types include lowland brush, marshes, and bogs. According to the National Wetlands Inventory, 2,345 acres are identified as non-forested wetlands (17.4% of the Township).

Poorly drained, lowland areas support northern white cedar, tamarack, balsam fir, black spruce, eastern hemlock, white pine, balsam poplar, elm, paper birch, black ash, speckled alder and shrub willows. The lowland forests and wetlands are commonly found west of the Lake State Railway grade. Lowland forests account for 3,355 acres (24.9% of the township).

## Beaches

Sandy beaches along the Lake Huron Shoreline were mapped as part of this effort. The width of the beaches varies from decade to decade, depending upon the lake levels. A review of 2014 aerial photos found some beach stretches were 100 feet wider than on the 2018 aerial photos. The statistics in **Table 6-1** represent the beach area identified in the 2018 aerial photos. The Army Corps of Engineers data shows Lake Huron levels have continued to rise since 2018 and a field visit on June 5, 2020 found the beach widths have decreased. Therefore, the number of acres of beaches in the township are a snapshot in time. According to the National Wetlands Inventory, 68 acres are identified as beaches (0.5% of the township).

## Water

The Au Sable River, small open water sections of the Old Au Sable River and several small ponds are included in this category. Less than one percent (125 acres) were mapped as water.

Table 6-1 Charter Township of AuSable Existing Land Cover/Use Statistics		
Land Use Category	Number of Acres	Percent of Township
Residential	1,226	9.1%
Commercial	130	1.0%
Waterfront Mixed Use	89	0.7%
Industrial/Utility	106	0.8%
Institutional/Recreational	238	1.8%
Non-Forested Uplands	149	1.1%
Upland Forests	5,625	41.8%
Lowland Forests	3,355	24.9%
Non-Forested Wetlands	2,345	17.4%
Beaches	68	0.5%
Water	125	0.9%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13,456</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: NEMCOG – 2020 Existing Land Cover/Use Map

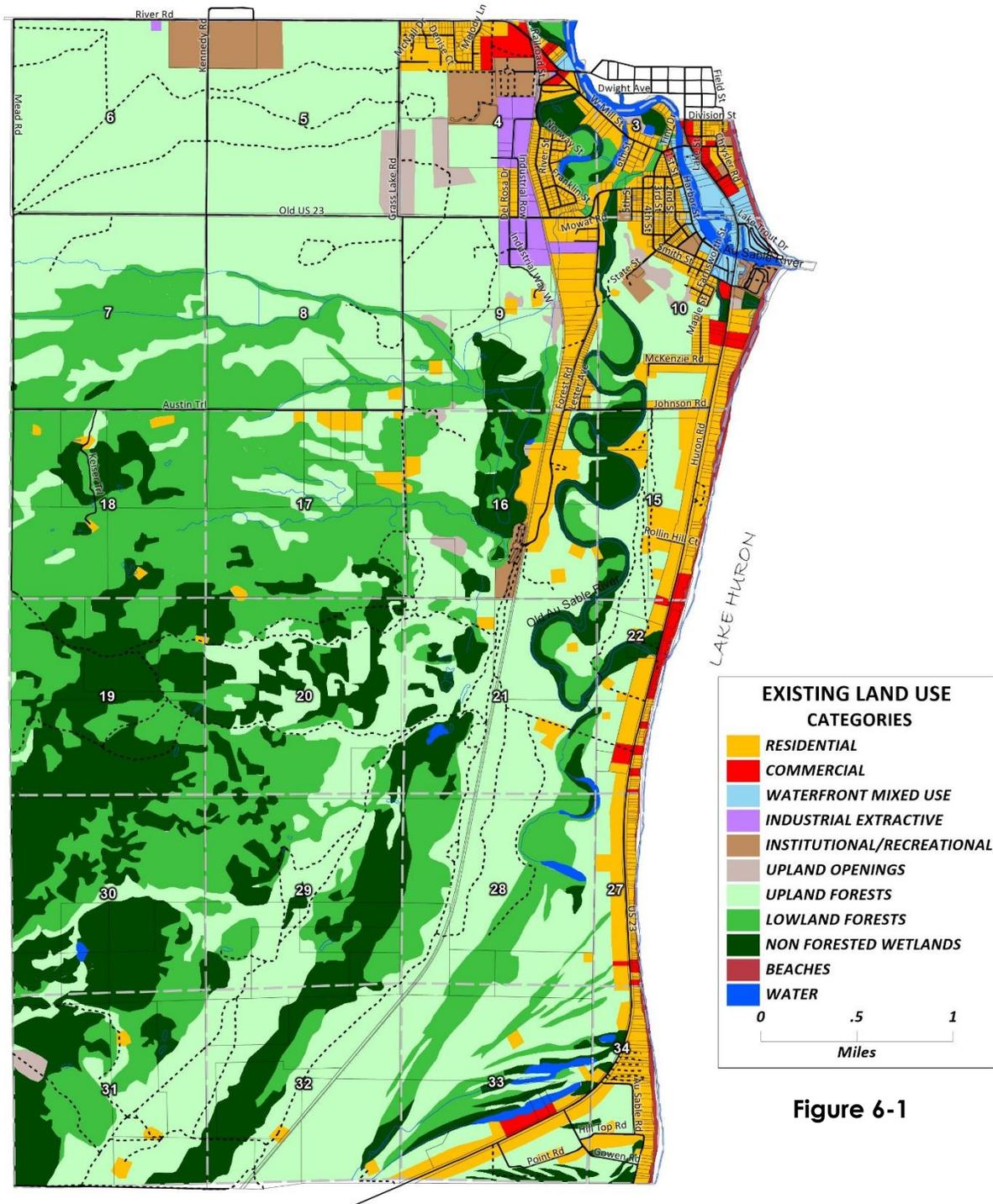
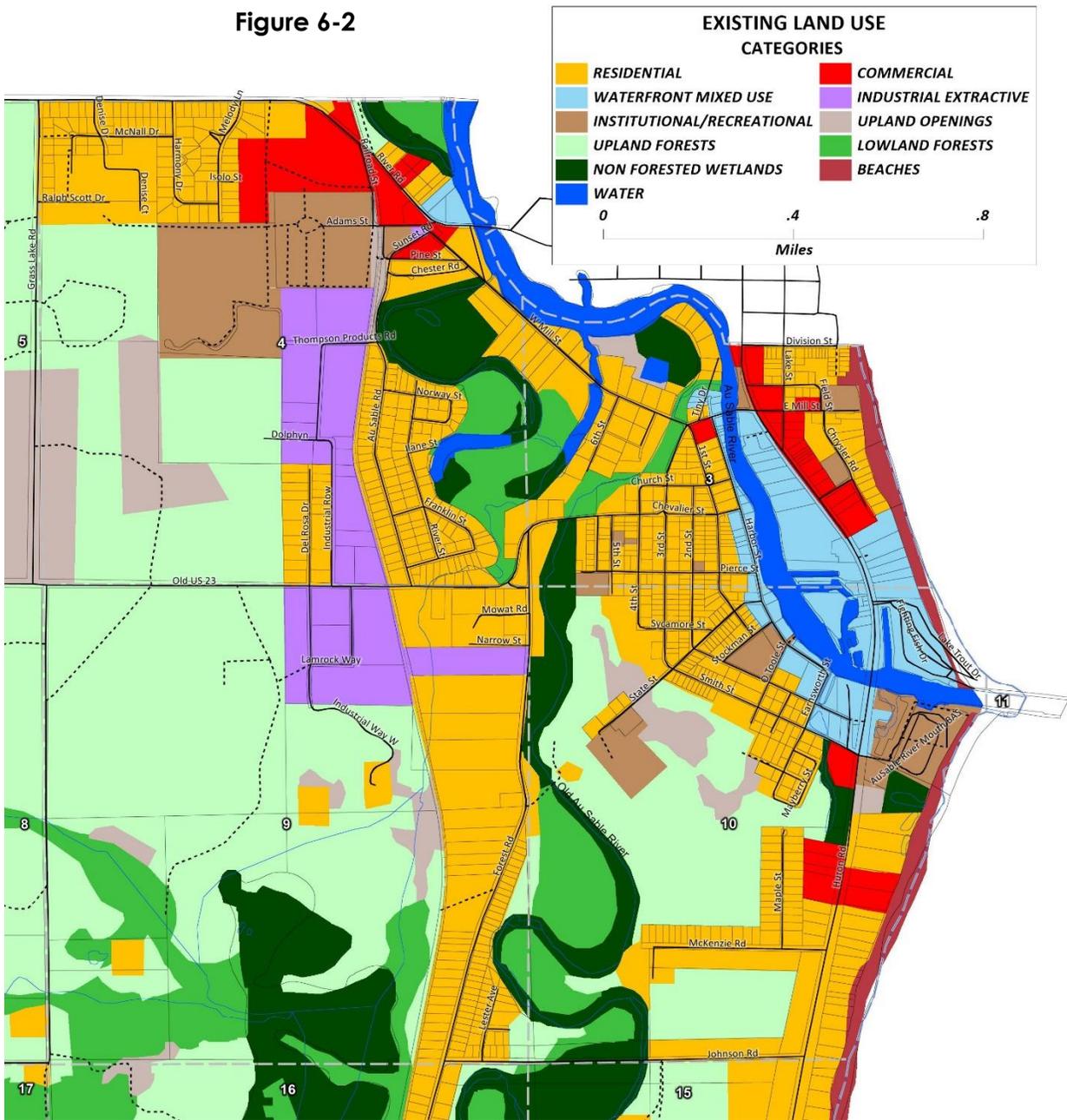


Figure 6-1

Figure 6-2



# Chapter 7

## Goals & Objectives

### Purpose

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The purpose of this chapter is to establish the goals, objectives and action steps that will guide future growth and development in a manner that will reflect the Charter Township of AuSable's unique character. In developing community goals and objectives, it is important to analyze demographics, housing, economic conditions, services and facilities, cultural and natural resources, and existing land use. Preceding chapters of this comprehensive plan have documented the above characteristics.

### Public Input

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The Planning Commission commissioned a township-wide survey that was available online to both township and surrounding area residents. The survey was posted on the township's website and Facebook page, and paper copies were available at the township office. The township received 107 completed surveys. Participants were asked a number of different questions, including the identification of assets and negative issues within the Charter Township of AuSable, and a number of different questions regarding government services, community facilities, recreation, natural resources, housing, economic development, transportation, and quality of life. Lastly, participants were asked to provide suggestions on improvements that could be undertaken by the Charter Township of AuSable in the future.

#### **Survey Summary**

- 107 Surveys Received

#### **Respondents**

- 85 Full-time Residents
- 8 Non-Residents
- 13 Seasonal Residents
- 74.8% of respondents own their own home in the township
- 29.9% of respondents have lived in the township 20+ years; 26.2% of respondents have lived in the township five years or less; 20.6% of respondents have lived in the township between 11 and 20 years
- 70.1% of respondents are age 50 and above
- 31.8% of respondents are retired; 22.4% occupy the professional/managerial category
- 40.9% of respondents work within the Charter Township of AuSable; 45.1% work within Iosco County

#### **Information Flow**

- 67.7% of respondents acquire information from social media (Facebook, Twitter)
- 61.8% of respondents get information from family and friends
- 55.9% of respondents stated they get information from the newspaper

### Township Assets

The residents of the Charter Township of AuSable value the quiet, small town community and accessibility to the area's water resources and forests. The low crime rate, ability to utilize the township's park and recreation facilities, the friendly people, the farmer's market, and the reasonable taxes were also listed as assets.

The following illustrate a number of positive issues about living in the Charter Township of AuSable that were identified by survey participants.

**SATISFACTION:** 88.1% of respondents are very satisfied or satisfied living in the Charter Township of AuSable with 50.8% satisfied with the township's general appearance and 62.5% satisfied with the general appearance of their neighborhood.

**TOWNSHIP APPEARANCE:** 50.8% of respondents are satisfied with the township's appearance. The respondents who were not satisfied noted the township needs more landscaping/beautification, a grander entrance, more branding, developed shops and dining areas, and light posts along the streets. Additionally, respondents noted the township has a lot of unsightly commercial and residential properties.

**SERVICE PROVISION:** Respondents (53.8%) felt the township's quality of services are good or excellent. Respondents recommended the township provide a more user-friendly online payment system and to waive service fees, reduce the cost of water and sewer for seasonal houses, direct people to other agencies (EGLE) for information, and install sewers. Additionally, respondents would like the township to spray for mosquitoes, advertise the senior center, and increase snow plowing and street cleaning services.

**TOURISM AND RECREATIONAL FACILITY DEVELOPMENT:** The majority of respondents (95.1%) support tourism and recreational facility development, noting vacant buildings need to be occupied, building facades need to be updated, and the township needs to invest in beautification efforts. About 42.4% of respondents felt the township needs additional wayfinding signage to promote local attractions and the location of parks/amenities, the senior center, and resorts. Over 80% of the respondents leave the township for shopping and entertainment opportunities (83.8% and 86.5% respectively).

**CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES:** The majority of respondents (94.6%) support protecting the cultural and historic resources.

### Township Issues

There was a wide range of concerns expressed by the respondents. The most noted concern was the depressed economy with respondents noting the lack of businesses and jobs, and the limited shopping and entertainment opportunities. Respondents also noted there was a lack of governmental transparency and opportunities for public feedback. Other major concerns included restrictive land uses per the zoning ordinance, blight/vacant buildings, lack of infrastructure (sewers, sidewalks, etc.), lack of park maintenance, lack of intergovernmental communication between AuSable and Oscoda, and the lack of law enforcement and medical facilities.

The following illustrates a number of potential issues about living in the Charter Township of AuSable that were identified by survey participants.

**COMMUNITY PROBLEMS:** Respondents noted the lack of quality medical services is a big problem in the township, while the lack of affordable housing and decreasing property values were seen as small problems. Respondents stated the road conditions and lack of employment were medium problems.

**BLIGHT:** 72.5% of respondents believe blight is a problem in the township. Many comments noted there is blight throughout the township, but there are specific areas of concern (e.g. empty buildings on Main Street, area along US-23 and Old 23, Smith Street, Mill Street, State Street, MacKenzie Road, area near America Inn, area near Children's Park, corner of O'Toole and Second Street, neighborhoods around Farnsworth, etc.). Respondents supported enforcement of regulations to address junk and blight and creating a program to assist people with clean up.

**SOLID WASTE:** Over 41% of respondents are satisfied with solid waste disposal methods in the township. Respondents who were not satisfied recommended having larger item pickups, increasing the number of special trash days, having a uniform garbage service with a congruent recycling program, and incorporating solid waste disposal costs into township taxes.

**RECYCLING:** About half of the respondents do not recycle because the service is not available in the township. Respondents supported the development of a recycling program and would like to see more recycling events and opportunities.

**PUBLIC SAFETY:** Satisfaction with law enforcement, fire protection, and emergency medical services was low (64.9%, 59.5%, and 45.7% respectively). Respondents who were not satisfied with law enforcement noted complaints are not followed up on and speed limits are not enforced. They recommended the township look into getting their own law enforcement and increasing road patrols. Additionally, respondents recommended the township look into getting their own fire services. Respondents also noted Iosco County needs to enhance the availability of the ambulance service to reduce response times.

**MEDICAL FACILITIES:** 47.2% of respondents are not satisfied with the medical facilities in the township citing there are none. About 69.5% of respondents leave the township for medical care either 1-2 times per month or 1-2 times per week (38.9% and 30.6% respectively). Respondents supported the development of nursing/assisted care facilities, medical facilities, and pharmaceutical establishments.

**BUSINESS ATTRACTION:** 41.7% of respondents would not locate or relocate a business to the township, citing the township is difficult to work with, there is a lack of potential employees in the area, there is a lack of quality buildings, the township is not visually appealing to attract customers, residents do not have expendable income, and foot traffic is unavailable and far from downtown Oscoda. About 58.3% of respondents would support a partial tax abatement to attract and retain new jobs and businesses. Concerns included the businesses would leave when the tax abatement is rescinded, the government would have less revenue to address the increased need for services, the difficulty level for small businesses to establish themselves in the community, and what type of businesses would be attracted.

**JOBS:** 70.3% of respondents do not believe there are adequate jobs opportunities in the township. Respondents noted the area has a lot of empty store fronts, a lack of wages offered above minimum wage, and a lack of qualified, reliable employees.

**COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT:** Respondents supported new commercial development that included retail businesses (90.5%), restaurants (83.3%), personal service establishments (64.3%), office establishments (42.9%), and theaters and assembly halls (42.9%). Respondents noted new development

should be clustered in one area, there are many vacant businesses in need of rehabilitation/renovation and façade updates, and there are home businesses without store fronts. About 39.0% of respondents supported neighborhood businesses locating within residential areas.

**INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT:** 65.0% of respondents support diverse industrial development, including aerospace, small manufacturing, light industrial, e-commerce, and warehouse and distribution facilities, as long as it does not negatively impact the environment. Respondents noted the development would bring jobs to the township and could be located in the industrial park and other industrial zones.

**RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT:** 41.5% of respondents felt the quality and range of housing was moderate, noting some landlords do not maintain rental properties, rents are high, and many houses need to be rehabilitated/renovated, which is expensive. Respondents support diverse housing, including single family homes on large residential lots, single family homes clustered together that leaves open space undeveloped, apartments, senior housing and apartments, duplexes, and townhouses, as long as it does not block views or access to the area's natural resources. Respondents supported more low-cost housing for seniors and the development of "tiny houses" as primary residences (60.0% and 53.7% respectively). About 48.8% of respondents supported more low-cost housing for low-income families. Respondents who did not support low-cost housing for low-income families felt the township had a high number of low-income families and should focus on attracting higher wage jobs and higher income families, not Section 8 housing or welfare. Respondents felt the current real estate market was stable.

**LAKE HURON SHORELINE DEVELOPMENT:** Respondents felt the township should preserve the views of the shoreline (48.7%). If development does occur, respondents supported a mix of townhouses, apartments, single-family houses, and small commercial cabins and motels (30.8%) that preserve the views and public access to the lake and river. Respondents did not support large hotels or condominiums. Respondents noted the township should locate developments out of the floodplain to prevent flooding from Lake Huron's rising water levels.

**TELECOMMUNICATIONS:** Approximately 48.6% of respondents do not think the high-speed internet service is adequate noting the service is expensive and low quality (spotty), and they would like to have other choices for service providers. Approximately 48.7% of respondents indicated the cellular service in the township is adequate but noted there is a lack of service in some areas.

**ROADS:** 54.1% of respondents were satisfied with road maintenance, construction, and conditions in the township. Respondents who were dissatisfied cited the streets were never cleaned and the gravel on the roads is dangerous for motorcyclists. Respondents recommended decreasing the speed limit coming into town at Johnson Road (dangerous to turn onto Route 23 from MacKenzie or Johnson), on W. Mill Street, between the Township Hall and 2500 N. US 23 and making it a no passing zone, and at the intersections where the bike path meets Adams and Mill Street, and Sunset/River Road. Other recommendations included addressing pothole issues, installing a light at the corner of Third Street and Pierce (vehicles are not stopping at the four-way stop), installing a crosswalk and traffic control light for the Mill Street Bridge Area (Finish Line Park), and fixing the corner of Smith Street and US-23 (difficult to find Smith Street when driving south on US-23 and difficult to turn left from Smith Street onto US-23). About 64.9% of respondents were satisfied with snow removal and recommended using salt, plowing closer to mailboxes, plowing secondary roads quicker, and having better snow removal from the US-23 bridge and sidewalks.

The most identified road segments needing improvements include:

- Old US-23
- Smith Street
- Harbor Street
- Cemetery Road
- Fourth Street
- Paving Mead Road

**SIDEWALK NETWORK:** Over 93% of respondents support the township in continuing to expand the sidewalk network, noting it will keep pedestrians safer, reduce driving, and encourage physical activity and socialization.

**Additional suggestions offered to the Township:**

- Attract restaurants, businesses, law enforcement, and medical facilities to provide shopping, entertainment, public safety, and healthcare services to residents and visitors.
- Attract tourists and higher income development to increase the amount of money being spent in the community and to increase the amount of tax revenue.
- Develop effective working relationships with Oscoda.
- Update the zoning ordinance.
- Include vehicle/RV storage in industrial zones, as permissible.
- Develop the community around its natural beauty and resources.
- Develop a tasteful, clean main street with businesses and restaurants in one place. Make the main street visually appealing through landscaping and the installation of lampposts along the street and Boardwalks along the river and lake (similar to Mackinaw, Frankenmuth, East Tawas, and Rochester).
- Avoid joining with Oscoda Township and remain a separate township.
- Develop a town branding campaign.

**Township Recreational Facilities and Activities**

The majority of respondents enjoy bicycling, bird watching/wildlife and nature viewing, boating/sailing, camping, canoeing/kayaking, attending concerts and festivals, hiking/walking, swimming, going to theaters (live and cinema), and picnicking. Approximately 67.4% travel between 0 and 10 miles to use recreational facilities. Additionally, 69.6% of the respondents support the township in funding the promotion and expansion of the non-motorized trail network and its amenities.

Respondents leave the township for fishing/charter fishing, boating, ATV/ORV trails, swimming, ice skating, camping, hunting, softball/baseball fields, roller skating, basketball, golfing, concerts, museums, children's activities and lessons, amusement parks, theaters, and Boardwalks. Other recreational facilities used in the area include the High Banks Trail, Tuttle Marsh, Lumberman's Monument/River Road area, Largo Springs, Oscoda area school facilities and parks, Eagle Run, Sawmill boat launch, access sites for Whirlpool and Dam Rivers, Corsair trails, Hubbard Lake or Van Etten Lake, Au Sable River pier, Oscoda and Tawas concerts, and area campgrounds and beaches.

### **SHORELINE PARK**

Approximately 46.0% of respondents use this park 2+ times per week, weekly, or monthly, while 46% occasionally use the park. The respondents utilize the park for the farmer's market, mini golf, swimming, nature viewing, picnicking, hiking/walking, and volunteering.

#### Recommended Improvements:

- Increase park maintenance efforts
- Implement strategies to address the rising water levels that flood the walking path and cause shoreline erosion (fill dirt, raised walkways, etc.)
- Construct bathroom facilities
- Construct a playground
- Expand the beach
- Replace the wooden planks on the walkway
- Construct a bigger pavilion
- Add picnic tables and install lights
- Develop and implement a no smoking policy for the entire park
- Install wayfinding signage
- Develop the entrance to attract people

### **CHILDREN'S PARK**

About 32.0% of respondents use this park 2+ times per week, weekly, or monthly, while 38% occasionally use the park. The majority of the respondents utilize the park for its playgrounds, basketball, picnicking, and baseball/softball fields.

#### Recommended Improvements:

- Increase park maintenance efforts
- Add sheltered seating, water fountains, and lights
- Construct a splash pad
- Update bathroom facilities
- Replace existing play equipment
- Add other recreational options for kids
- Provide instructions about how to use exercise equipment
- Install mile markers on pathways
- Add beaches
- Add another pavilion

### **HARBOR STREET BOAT RAMP**

About 87.8% of respondents occasionally or never use the ramp. Out of the respondents who use the ramp, they use it for boating and fishing.

#### Recommended Improvements:

- Make the ramp handicap accessible
- Add seating
- Replace ramps
- Lessen the severity of the grade to the water

- Add a larger dock/a dock on each side of the launch
- Address weeds/slimy water
- Update its appearance

### **FINISH LINE PARK**

Approximately 89.8% of respondents occasionally or never use the park. The respondents who use the park use it for fishing, special events/workshops, and volunteering.

Recommended Improvements:

- Increase park maintenance efforts (fertilize, weed control, and geese elimination)
- Add seating, garbage cans, and lights
- Add a seawall to fish from
- Expand the parking area
- Construct a Boardwalk along the east side of the river's edge

### **OLD AUSABLE RIVER WALK/SKI PATH AT THE SENIOR CENTER**

About 86.0% of respondents occasionally or never use the park. Out of the respondents who used the park, they hike/walk and volunteer.

Recommended Improvements:

- Install wayfinding signage
- Develop the entrance to attract people
- Create a marketing campaign to promote the river walk and senior center
- Add lights for evening walkers, garbage cans and doggy bag stands

### **MCCUAIG PARK**

About 87.8% of respondents occasionally or never use the park. The respondents who use the park utilize the baseball/softball fields.

Recommended Improvements:

- Increase park maintenance efforts (mow grass, grade gravel, etc.)
- Install wayfinding signage
- Develop the entrance to attract people
- Develop a future vision for the park and implement strategies to meet the vision
- Resurrect ball leagues
- Add playground equipment
- Install a gravel bike path through McCuaig Park to Grass Lake Road
- Construct basketball courts and tennis courts
- Pave the parking lot for the soccer fields
- Construct a dog park
- Install an ice rink in the winter
- Open the gate to increase usage
- Install security cameras to prevent vandalism
- Hold more events at the park
- Close the park and use the land to expand the cemetery
- Transform the park into an ATV friendly camping area with lighting and water

**Recommendations for new or expanded recreational facilities and activities:**

- Sponsor fishing tournaments
- Promote, expand, and utilize ATV/ORV trails
- Install a kayak launch
- Elevate walking paths to prevent flooding issues
- Add a splash pad at Shoreline Park or Children’s Park
- Expand the bike paths with bike stop facilities at Shoreline Park
- Extend the river walk
- Construct modern restrooms
- Construct an indoor sports complex
- Have later closing hours and weekend hours for the farmer’s market
- Construct/provide a place to hold showers, weddings, receptions, and parties
- Provide more opportunities for bird watchers
- Construct a walking/running/bike trail
- Construct a community gathering/bandshell area for events and small local music venues
- Provide information about the township parks and events to residents, including detailed and easy to understand trail maps
- Host seasonal community gatherings (summer picnics, snowman contest, Christmas potluck, etc.)
- Provide more year-round outdoor activities
- Provide recreational opportunities/programs/classes for preschool aged children and teenagers (ballet, gymnastics, dance, sports, etc.)
- Construct a campground and picnic area near the water
- Complete the non-motorized path, including the rail trail
- Develop a program for concerts/street dances

## Community Goals and Objectives

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The primary goal of this plan is to maintain and foster the growth and advancement of the Charter Township of AuSable as a quality place to live, work and visit. The Township Board and Planning Commission has sought to make this plan a reflection of the community’s belief, support, and actions for implementation of it. Plan implementation is often times ascribed as governmental responsibility and not part of the activity that can be embraced by the broader community. That is not the intent of this plan. In plan implementation, the responsible parties are identified, and the type of activity required is identified. Responsibility for implementing this plan will include governmental, private enterprise, community group activity, and individuals. It is hoped this plan will stimulate enthusiasm and interest in community development that can be self-sustaining.

The following table contains timelines and responsible parties for implementing the strategies for the objectives found in the five focus areas listed. It is important to note that while responsible parties are listed, the township will make every effort to collaborate with partner organizations, other local units of government, and members of the public in order to ensure the correct mix of stakeholders are involved in each item.

## Timeframes

**SHORT:** Low cost, easy implementation, directly addressing top priorities, or critical to the advancement of other strategies, and to be implemented within the next 1-5 years.

**MEDIUM:** Important actions that have some level of significant cost and can be implemented within the next 5-10 years.

**LONG:** Actions that often require significant amounts of funding that must be planned for over time or require other strategies to be completed prior to their implementation.

**ONGOING:** Actions that have no beginning and end period but are continuously ongoing in the township.

Board = Township Board  
PC = Planning Commission  
DPW = Department of Public Works  
Staff = Township Staff  
RC = Road Commission  
Chamber = Chamber of Commerce  
ZO = Zoning Officer  
MW=Michigan Works!

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

FOCUS AREA	OBJECTIVES AND ACTION ITEMS	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
<b>1</b> <b>Community                      Character &amp;                      Quality of Life</b>	<b>GOAL 1</b> Maintain and enhance the overall quality of life in the Charter Township of AuSable.		
	<b>OBJECTIVE A</b> Strive to balance future growth and development in the township while maintaining its small-town character.		
	(1) Encourage the development of goods, services, recreation, and employment opportunities needed to retain and attract residents.	Ongoing	Board, PC, ZO, Chamber
	(2) Review development proposals to ensure future development will be compatible with the community's character, master plan, and surrounding land uses. Consider traffic impacts and private and public parking.	Ongoing	PC, ZO
	(3) Encourage year-round community events.	Ongoing	Board, Chamber
	(4) Consider the Township's character and master plan when making decisions.	Ongoing	Board, PC
	<b>GOAL 2</b> Maintain and enhance the appearance and character of the Charter Township of AuSable.		
	<b>OBJECTIVE A</b> Enhance community gateways, parks, and streets.		
	(1) Enhance streetscapes to include pedestrian-friendly features such as trees, street furniture, trash receptacles, pedestrian-scaled lighting and public art.	Medium	Board, PC, ZO, DPW
	(2) Research and apply for grants to fund streetscape projects.	Ongoing	Board, Staff
	(3) Preserve healthy trees on public property or in the rights-of-way. Remove unhealthy and unsafe trees, and replace trees when needed.	Ongoing	Board, Staff, PC, DPW,
	(4) Encourage the use of native plant species in landscape designs to enhance the Township's existing character.	Ongoing	Board, Staff, PC, DPW,
	<b>OBJECTIVE B</b> Enforce the township's zoning ordinance.		

	(1) Enforce ordinances related to dumpsters, parking lots, and signs in the business district to enhance the visual appearance of existing businesses.	Ongoing	ZO, Staff
	(2) Enforce residential blight ordinances.	Ongoing	ZO, Staff
<b>1</b> <b>Community Character &amp; Quality of Life</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE C</b> Protect and preserve local history, including historic and cultural buildings, residential neighborhoods, and scenic features.		
	(1) Encourage private efforts to protect valuable historic resources.	Ongoing	PC, Staff
	(2) Provide historic preservation resource information to the public.	Short	Staff
	(3) Encourage new residential and commercial developments to include historically sensitive designs and styles.	Ongoing	Staff, PC
	(4) Incorporate features that reflect the Township's historic character and cultural heritage into signs and streetscape elements within the Township.	Ongoing	Staff, DPW

Redevelopment ready

FOCUS AREA	OBJECTIVES AND ACTION ITEMS	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
<b>2</b> <b>Planning, Zoning, and Community Development</b>	<b>GOAL 1</b> Explore ways to share governmental and community services with Oscoda Township, Iosco County, and other surrounding communities.		
	<b>GOAL 2</b> Guide development to meet the long-term needs of the community through the protection of existing development, preservation of community character, fostering of development, and the conservation of natural resources.		
	<b>OBJECTIVE A</b> Promote compact and mixed-use development, and walkable designs.		
	(1) Encourage mixed-use development options through zoning and design guidelines.	Ongoing	ZO, PC, Staff
	<b>OBJECTIVE B</b> Concentrate Development in the northeast quadrant of the township.		
	<b>OBJECTIVE C</b> Maintain and implement an updated Master Plan that is responsive to public needs.		

# 2

## Planning, Zoning, and Community Development

(1) Initiate and maintain proactive conversations with property owners regarding preferred future land uses.	Ongoing	Board, Staff, Chamber
(2) Review the Master Plan, including the goals and objectives, at five-year intervals per state law.	Ongoing	PC, Board, Staff
(3) Identify priority redevelopment areas in the Township.	Ongoing	Staff, PC, Board
(4) Develop and provide an annual progress report for the Master Plan to the Township Council.	Short	VM, Staff, PC
<b>OBJECTIVE D</b>		
Maintain the Zoning Ordinance to regulate development and land use in the village.		
(1) Review and amend the Zoning Ordinance, when necessary, including when the Master Plan is updated.	Short	PC, Board
(2) Amend the Zoning Ordinance to establish and enforce standards that require businesses to maintain an aesthetically desirable appearance through desired building materials, architectural elements, or façade improvements.	Short	PC, Board, Staff
(3) Amend the Zoning Ordinance to establish standards for green infrastructure (low impact development techniques, rainwater collection, green roofs, pervious pavement, steep slope protections, street tree planting standards, parking lot landscaping standards, and a list of native or low-maintenance plantings).	Short	PC, Board, Staff
(4) Encourage mixed use development in the downtown area and commercial corridor	Ongoing	PC, Staff
(5) Evaluate design standards in the Zoning Ordinance.	Ongoing	Staff, PC
(6) Consider amending the zoning ordinance for additional parking standards that include parking waivers, bicycle parking, payment in lieu of parking and reduction of required parking for complementary mixed-uses.	Short	PC, Board, Staff
<b>OBJECTIVE E</b>		
Improve communication with surrounding governments, regional organizations, businesses, organizations, agencies, and the public. Encourage feedback on the ongoing efforts to improve the Township.		
(1) Communicate with the county and adjacent townships about land use and site plan issues for properties near their boundaries.	Ongoing	Board, Staff, PC, Staff
(2) Maintain an open decision-making process and promote ongoing active citizen involvement.	Ongoing	Board, PC, Staff
(3) Sponsor community and neighborhood public forums to solicit public feedback from all demographic sections in the Township.	Ongoing	Board, Staff, PC

# 2

## Planning, Zoning, and Community Development

(4) Implement improved communication processes for public feedback and encourage the use of the Township’s website to disperse information, such as planning-related resources, news releases, newsletters, agendas, meeting minutes, the zoning ordinance, application forms, and Township plans.	Ongoing	Board, Staff
(5) Utilize a public participation plan that includes how to solicit public feedback on proposals early in the site plan review process and how the public can view the results from the public engagement process.	Short	Board, Staff, PC,
<b>GOAL 3</b> Maintain the infrastructure and provide essential services that meet the community’s needs while being fiscally responsible.		
<b>Objective A</b> Continue to provide water, sewer and other infrastructure.		
(1) Explore all opportunities to secure funding to support maintenance, upgrades and expansion of public water and sewer services.	Ongoing	Board, Staff, DPW,
(2) Evaluate existing sewer and storm water capacity capabilities.	Ongoing	Board, Staff, DPW,
(3) Inventory and computer map all utility infrastructure presently in place.	Ongoing	Board, Staff, DPW,
(4) Maintain and upgrade as needed, fire and safety equipment and facilities to meet the needs to township residents, businesses and visitors.	Ongoing	Board, Staff, DPW,
<b>OBJECTIVE B</b> Develop and adopt a Complete Streets policy to make the township’s transportation network safer for drivers, transit users, pedestrians, and bicyclists.		
(1) Ensure the Complete Streets concept is factored into roadway improvement projects, trail projects, and private development (through zoning requirements and site plan review standards).	Ongoing	ZO, PC, Staff, RC, DPW
<b>OBJECTIVE C</b> Ensure a responsible fiscal policy and budget process to finance the village government.		
(1) Maintain a six year capital improvement plan to address village projects, including but not limited to projects regarding the streets, sidewalks, curbs, storm drains, and water and sewer system.	Ongoing	PC, Board, Staff

# 3

## Natural, Cultural, and Recreation Resources

<b>GOAL 1</b>		
Conserve, protect and maintain the natural resources, including Lake Huron, the Au Sable River, and the Huron National Forest, for the enjoyment of current and future residents and visitors		
<b>OBJECTIVE A</b>		
Coordinate development intensity with the environmental integrity and land limitations.		
(1) Protect the peaceful, safe, and environmentally sustainable use of private and public waterfront property.	Ongoing	ZO, PC, Staff
(2) Direct development away from wetlands, environmentally sensitive areas and high risk erosion areas.	Ongoing	Board, PC
(3) Integrate wetlands, important ecological corridors, woodlands, meadows and critical wildlife habitat for resident and migratory wildlife species into site development as aesthetic and functional features.	Ongoing	ZO, PC, Staff
(4) Support efforts to preserve priority conservation areas through Voluntary Conservation, Conservation Easements, Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) and Fee Simple Purchase.	Ongoing	Board, PC
(5) In recognizing the importance of trees in the suburban environment, encourage the retention of existing native trees and the establishment of street and shade trees in residential neighborhoods and commercial developments.	Ongoing	ZO, PC, Staff
<b>OBJECTIVE B</b>		
Protect and improve the water resources (e.g. Au Sable River, Lake Huron, etc.), open-space areas, scenic vistas, wildlife habitat, and environmentally sensitive areas.		
(1) Regulate the density and type of development adjacent to lakes, ponds, streams, and wetlands.	Ongoing	Board, PC
(2) Evaluate water quality protection measures in the zoning ordinance such as greenbelt regulations, waterfront setbacks, lot sizes, and time of transfer septic system inspections for areas adjacent to lakes, ponds, streams, and wetlands.	Ongoing	Board, PC
<b>OBJECTIVE C</b>		
Actively improve and maintain recreational resources in the Charter Township of AuSable.		
(3) Implement the MDNR approved Township Recreation Plan	Ongoing	PC, Board, Staff

	(4) Iron Belle Trail: Develop multi-use pathways for recreation and transportation uses and continue to work towards the completion of the Iron Belle Trail in Iosco County. Work in conjunction with local units of government, state and federal agencies, and organizations to secure funding and develop the trail.	Short	Board, Staff, RC
	(5) Trailhead Market Place: Establish a trailhead marketplace near where multiple established trails converge (Iron Belle Trail, Shore to Shore Trail, and Sunrise Coast Birding Trail) which can also house a regional farmer's market. Seek grants to develop the Market Place.	Short	Board, Staff, RC

FOCUS AREA	OBJECTIVES AND ACTION ITEMS	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
<h1>4</h1> <h2>Housing</h2>	<b>GOAL 1</b> Allow suitable housing opportunities for all income levels, age groups, household types, and resident type (year-round and seasonal).		
	<b>OBJECTIVE A</b> Encourage the development of a mixture of quality housing within the township.		
	(1) Encourage the development of affordable single-family housing, multiple family rental units, age-progressive senior, and assisted living housing, and provide for opportunities to age in place.	Ongoing	ZO, PC, Board
	(2) Allow townhomes, granny flats, and mixed-use developments.	Ongoing	ZO, PC, Board
	<b>OBJECTIVE B</b> Protect the neighborhood character of residential areas.		
	(1) Require buffers or transition areas between residential and non-residential uses to maintain property values and aesthetics.	Ongoing	ZO, Board, PC
	(2) Encourage clustering residential development in areas where services and utilities are available to preserve open spaces.	Ongoing	ZO, Board, PC
	(3) Discourage the infringement of commercial and industrial uses near residential neighborhoods, while allowing for the continuation of existing neighborhood small businesses.	Ongoing	ZO, Board, PC
	(4) Encourage in-fill development on empty lots in established neighborhoods to avoid sprawling into the township's outlying open space.	Ongoing	ZO, PC, Staff

FOCUS AREA	OBJECTIVES AND ACTION ITEMS	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>5</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Economic Development</b></p>	<p><b>GOAL 1</b> Provide opportunities to retain existing businesses, establish new commercial uses and redevelop vacant commercial buildings, which meet the demonstrated market needs of area residents.</p>		
	<p><b>OBJECTIVE A</b> Develop a more cohesive, vital business district.</p>		
	<p>(1) Encourage commercial development or redevelopment (retail, personal services, office and professional services) in the business district with a focus on the river.</p>	Ongoing	ZO, Board, PC
	<p>(2) Enhance pedestrian and bicycle connections from the business district to nearby neighborhoods.</p>	Medium	ZO, Board, PC, DPW
	<p>(3) Create a sense of place for the business district through the standardization of street signs, entry signs, and informational and directional signs.</p>	Ongoing	Chamber
	<p>(4) Encourage compatible façade, storefront, and sign improvements to increase the visual appeal of the district.</p>	Medium	Chamber, ZO
<p>(5) Develop a sub-area plan to study land use in the downtown AuSable area that capitalizes on the Au Sable River and Lake Huron shoreline.</p>	Short	PC, ZO, Chamber	

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>5</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Economic Development</b></p>	<b>OBJECTIVE B</b>		
	Support business development and attraction efforts.		
	(1) Collaborate with other municipalities, Iosco County, and other Lake Huron coastal communities to develop a Regional Economic Development Consortium.	Ongoing	Chamber, MW
	(2) Focus job procurement efforts on year-round assembly, fabrication, and light manufacturing industries.	Ongoing	Chamber, MW
	(3) Focus on tourism (especially winter-related tourism) to balance the high unemployment trend during the winter months.	Ongoing	Chamber, MW
	<b>GOAL 2</b>		
	Market the Charter Township of AuSable as a tourism destination.		
	<b>OBJECTIVE A</b>		
	Participate in regional tourism marketing efforts.		
(1) Participate in the US-23 Heritage Route program	Ongoing	Board, Chamber	
(2) Collaborate with communities, chambers and tourism organizations in Iosco County and adjacent counties.	Ongoing	Board, Chamber	

# Chapter 8

## Future Land Use

### Introduction

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This section of the master plan describes the types and intensity of development that may occur over the next twenty years. The master plan presents a future land use plan that illustrates the general land use arrangement in the Charter Township of AuSable (Figure 7-1). The plan assists the township in ensuring the existing land uses, such as residential, parks, commercial, and industrial, can continue, and that irreplaceable resources, such as water, wetlands, and forestlands will be protected, and that reasonable growth can be accommodated with minimal land use conflicts or negative environmental impacts. It should be noted the desired future land use plan may be adjusted in the future based on changing conditions within the community, while maintaining compatibility with the goals and objectives of the master plan.

### Future Land Use Categories

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The Charter Township of AuSable has identified 11 future land use categories that are listed below and depicted in Figure 7-1. The future land use categories correspond to the zoning districts in the Charter Township of AuSable Zoning Ordinance.

#### Residential Land Use

Residential land uses occupy the largest land use category in the township and provide an opportunity for the township to offer affordable housing for all income levels through the encouragement of a variety of housing stock.

#### Residential Natural Resource

The Residential Natural Resource category is the largest future land use category in the township and intends to limit land uses that will undermine the intent, quantity, quality, and value of the natural resources. Its primary use is for forestry, hunting, and recreation. This category covers the township's woodlands, wetlands, and flood prone areas as well as encompassing most of the land west of the railroad tracks. Most of the land is comprised of public holdings that are part of the Huron National Forest. Along with the non-urbanized areas in this district, the natural resources provide wildlife habitat, water and air purification, flood control, recreation opportunities, and economically viable timber production opportunities. There are few roads, which is a natural limiting factor in residential development and any housing developed will be on very large lots.

#### Residential Resource Sensitive

This land use category is intended for thoughtfully planned and environmentally sound residential development within the area known locally as the Dead AuSable River Corridor. The land within this district consists of lowland and upland wetland ecosystems. Residential development is intended to provide property owners with the ability to concentrate residential development in buildable areas, while preserving critical wetland and wildlife habitat. Residential lot sizes are relatively large but are smaller

than the lots in the Residential Natural Resource future land use category. There are provisions for smaller lot sizes if a specified portion of the development remains permanently undeveloped.

### **Medium Density Residential**

This future land use category provides opportunities for single-family residential neighborhoods at greater densities than those permitted in the Residential Resource Sensitive category, but do not have as high of densities as in the High Density Residential category. This category is characterized by existing residential neighborhoods and vacant land that can accommodate additional residential development of similar character, while preserving the residential character of the nearby existing residential areas.

### **High Density Residential**

The intent of this category is to provide opportunities for primarily single-family residential development on small lots. This district includes existing neighborhood areas associated with the unincorporated AuSable village area in addition to nearby areas of vacant land that is suitable for accommodating similar village residential developments where adequate public facilities are provided. This area is intended to accommodate new residential development, while preserving the residential character of the existing neighborhoods.

### **Residential Resort**

The Residential Resort category is located in the area abutting the west side of U.S. 23, in a small area near the shore in the northeast portion of the township, and south of the AuSable downtown area along the Lake Huron shoreline. It primarily provides opportunities for single-family residential development near lakeshore areas where residential developments can be adequately accommodated, while providing opportunities for land uses that cater to the needs of tourists and seasonal visitors. This area is characterized by existing single-family residential lakeshore developments and tourist-oriented residential land uses, such as motels. Development needs to be adequately sited and designed to avoid negatively impacting adjacent land uses, and all development needs to respect the fragility of the township's lakeshore environments and the development constraints these conditions present.

### **Residential Multi-Family**

The Residential Multi-Family category is located in a small area east of Chrysler Street in the northeast portion of the township. It is intended for duplex and multiple family dwellings where adequate public services and facilities are available to meet the demands of such high density uses and where such uses will not undermine the stability and character of nearby residential areas.

### **Mobile Home Park**

This category is intended for mobile home and manufactured housing that is developed in a group setting. It is intended to meet the varied housing needs of township residents. This area is located in a small area on First Street between Chevalier and Pierce in the AuSable village area.

## **Commercial Land Use**

### **Downtown Business**

The Downtown Business category is located in two small areas in the township. The first is approximately one square block bordered by Division, Lake, and Huron Streets, and Lake Huron. The second area is east of River Road between Railroad and Adams. This category is intended for a more pedestrian-oriented commercial area since there are no front yard setbacks and continuous retail frontage.

### **General Business**

The General Business category is intended to accommodate retail and service needs of the local, regional, and tourist populations. The businesses in this category are typically large in building area and oriented toward vehicular traffic and on-site parking. This district is scattered on the outskirts of the AuSable village area, in the AuSable downtown area, and on the south end of the township. Currently, there are two areas zoned industrial that are proposed to be commercial in the future: an area along River Road in the northeast section of the township and an area south of AuSable Road and west of the railroad tracks. Neither of these areas have realized their full potential with industrial uses. The township plans to expand its commercial and business uses, and these areas have adequate utilities for expansion.

### **Mixed Land Use**

#### **Waterfront Mixed Use**

The Waterfront Mixed Use category is intended to accommodate commercial and residential land uses, which uniquely benefit from being situated along Lake Huron or the AuSable River due to the principal character or purpose of such uses that include short-term tourist lodging, marinas, and other land uses. This category encourages a healthy tourist economy and creates an all-season pedestrian-oriented commercial district along the AuSable River. The goal is to provide flexibility in uses that will assist in developing a unique walkable area in which to live and shop.

### **Industrial Land Use**

#### **Industrial**

The Industrial future land use category is located in areas west of the railroad tracks and north of AuSable Road. This category has both developed and vacant land, which allows for expansion of industrial land uses.

### **Special Issue Planning Area**

AuSable Downtown District extends along US-23 from Cameron Drive northwards to Division Street. The north ends blends into Oscoda Township's downtown area. The area identified as the AuSable Downtown spans three Future Land Use Areas, which include the Downtown Business District, General Business and Waterfront Mixed Use. Presently, there is a mix of shopping, restaurants, service establishments, and cultural and government buildings. The community intends to identify this area as its downtown district; work towards developing design guidelines to encourage creative designs and planning techniques; and evaluate use of a downtown overlay zoning district to work towards a more traditional downtown development patterns. The intention is to enhance the downtown appearance and character. The community supports a "pedestrian friendly" downtown with street trees where appropriate, benches, wayfinding signage, and well-maintained sidewalks and paths.

Figure 8-1 Charter Township of AuSable Future Land Use Map

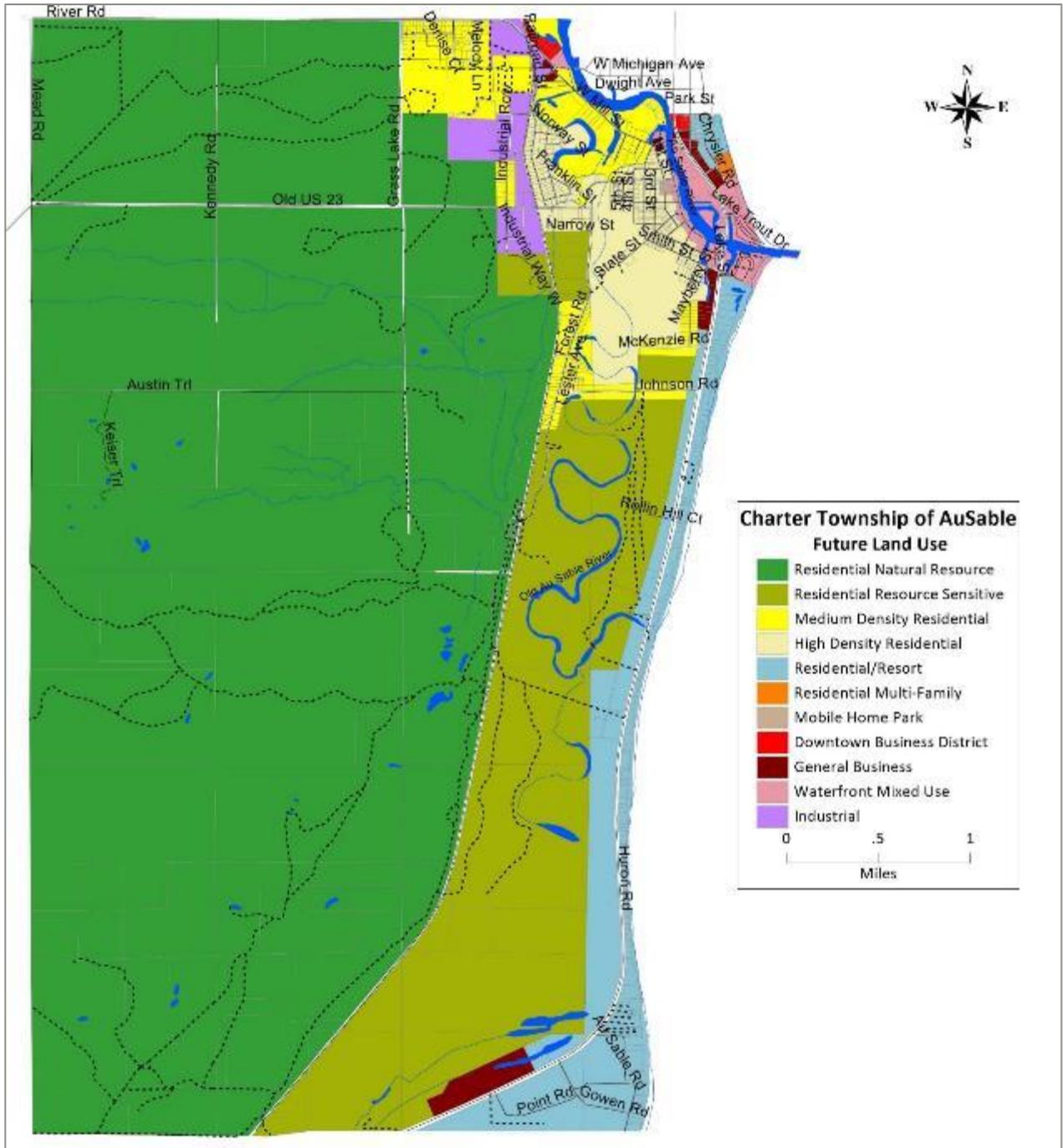


Figure 8-2 Charter Township of AuSable Future Land Use Map

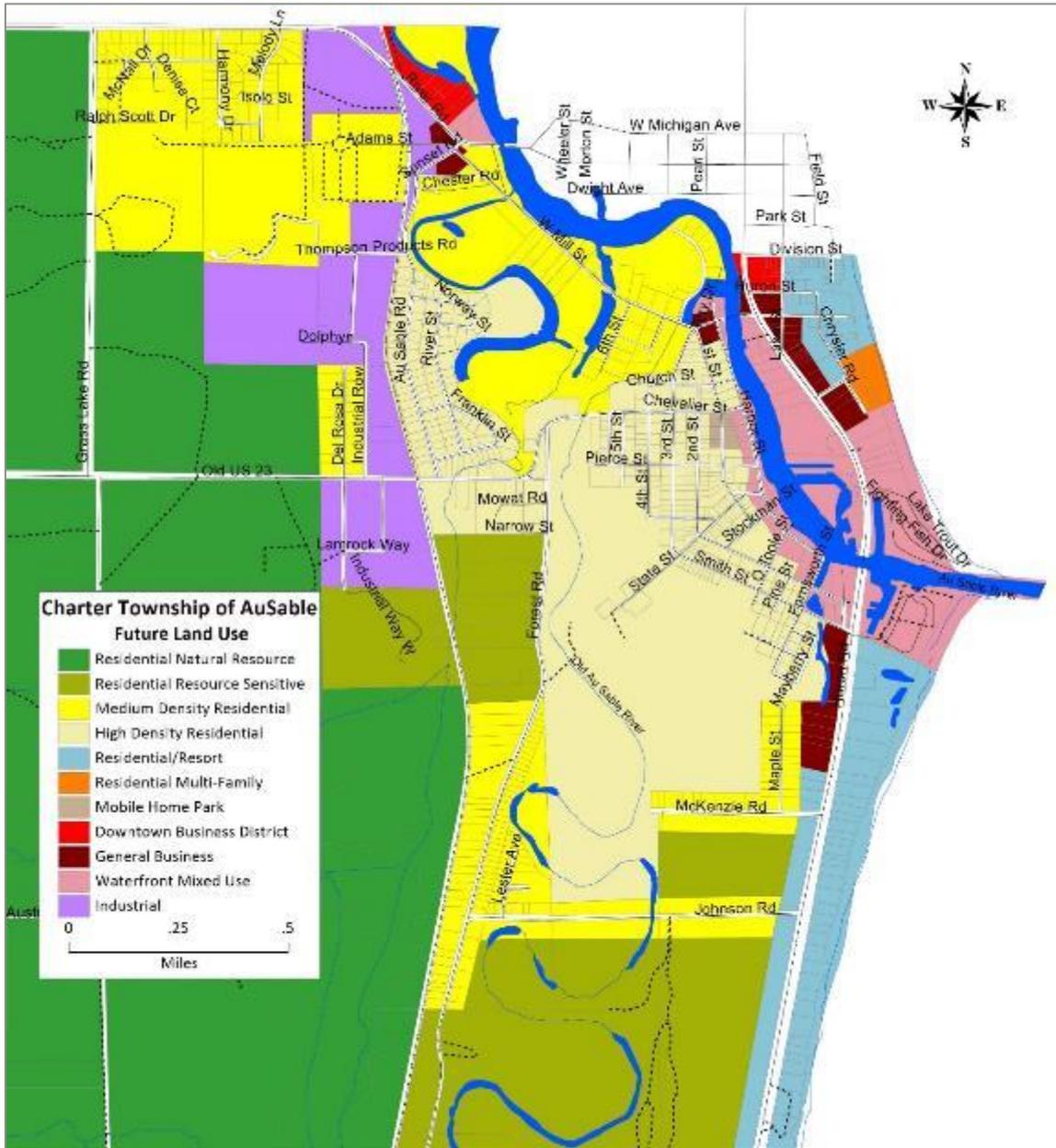
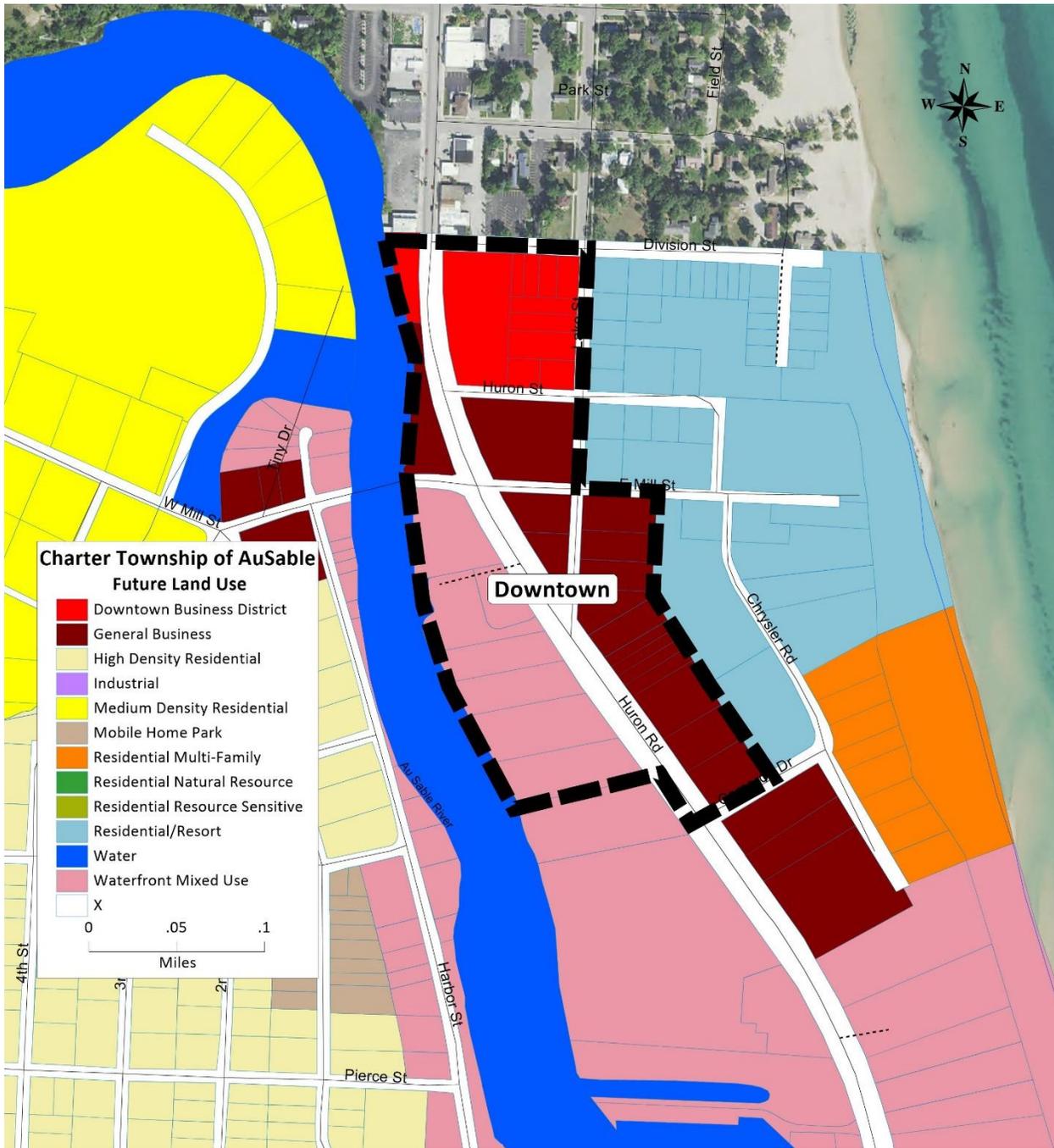


Figure 8-3 AuSable Downtown Area Map



# Zoning Plan

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The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008) requires the Master Plan contain a zoning plan which includes an explanation about how the future land use categories on the Future Land Use Map relate to the zoning districts. The Township has chosen to utilize future land use categories that correlate to their zoning districts, but will consider Zoning Ordinance amendments to allow for growth and development without negatively impacting the Township’s quality of life (Table 7-1).

After adoption of the Master Plan, the Township should review the Zoning Ordinance for compatibility with the Master Plan’s goals, objectives, and future land uses. The Township should review all current zoning districts to ensure a full range of compatible and desired uses are provided for in each district. The Zoning Ordinance should also be reviewed for specific development standards for each district (including architectural and buffering standards), approval procedures, review standards, and general provisions. In general, the Zoning Ordinance should provide enough flexibility to allow the desired development pattern to occur

The Future Land Use Map differs from both the Zoning Map and the Existing Land Use Map. Whereas the Zoning Map regulates activities within zoning districts, the Future Land Use Map does not (Figures 7-1 to 7-2). The Future Land Use Map translates future land use categories into specific zoning districts to provide a framework for future land use or zoning decisions (Table 7-1). For example, the Future Land Use Map may indicate a residential area, but the area may not be zoned as residential until the property owner requests the zoning change, and the township adopts the rezoning request. Additionally, the Future Land Use Map depicts the types and intensity of development the township would like to see in the future, while the Existing Land Use Map depicts the township’s current land use arrangement.

<b>Zoning District</b>	<b>Future Land Use Category</b>
Residential- Natural Resource	Residential Natural Resource
Residential- Resource Sensitive	Residential Resource Sensitive
Medium Density Residential	Medium Density Residential
High Density Residential	High Density Residential
Tourist Residential	Residential Resort
Multiple Family Residential	Residential Multi-Family
Mobile Home Park	Mobile Home Park
Central Business	Downtown Business
General Business	General Business
Waterfront Mixed Use	Waterfront Mixed Use
Industrial	Industrial

## Priority Redevelopment Areas

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The Charter Township of AuSable has incorporated master plan components required by the MEDC Redevelopment Ready Communities Program. As part of this program, the Township will identify and prioritize redevelopment sites. For the purposes of this plan, the Township is designating general areas of desired redevelopment. These areas and the priority sites, once specific sites are designated and prioritized, will be reviewed annually and may change throughout the year as circumstances in the community change and as new information becomes available. The inclusion of these general areas of redevelopment in this Master Plan is not meant to preclude alternate areas of redevelopment in the Township if the opportunity for redevelopment becomes available. The following areas are possible redevelopment sites and are shown on Figure 7-3).

1. Owner: Calvin McLaren  
Property Address: 970 S. State Street

Description: The property is located in the Waterfront Mixed Use District. The property is privately owned. The parcel is approximately 2.3 acres and has 1 residential building and 3 commercial/Industrial buildings as well as a parking lot.

*The Waterfront Business District is intended to accommodate commercial and residential land uses, which uniquely benefit from being situated along Lake Huron or the AuSable River due to the principal character or purpose of such uses, including short-term tourist lodging, marinas and other land uses, which encourage a healthy tourist economy, and create an all-season pedestrian-oriented commercial district along the AuSable River.*



2. Owner: Pier 17 Marina  
Property Address: 413 Second Street

Description: The property is located in the Waterfront Mixed Use District. The property is privately owned. The parcel is approximately 1.2 acres and has a structure.



*The Waterfront Business District is intended to accommodate commercial and residential land uses, which uniquely benefit from being situated along Lake Huron or the AuSable River.*

3. Owner: Merlin Griggs  
Property Address: 761 S. State Street

Description: The property is located in the General Business District on Hwy US 23. The property is privately owned. The parcel is approximately 30,000 sq. ft., and has a structure and parking lot.

*The General Business District is intended to accommodate commercial land uses, which address retail and service needs of local, regional, and tourist populations and which typically are comparatively large in building area, encourage comparatively high levels of vehicular traffic or otherwise benefit from high levels of vehicular traffic and on-site parking, and/or do not significantly benefit from being located within a comparatively high level pedestrian traffic area or retail center. This District is intended to accommodate retail and service activities, which are not generally compatible with the intended character of the Central Business District. The General Business District is intended to implement the Highway Commercial Area Component of the Charter Township of AuSable Future Land Use Plan.*



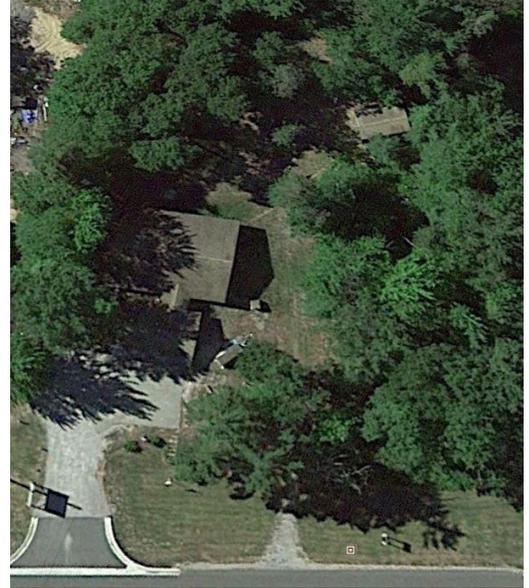
4. Owner: Mark Toppi  
Property Address: 111 S Lake Street

Description: The property is located in the General Business District. The property is privately owned. The parcel is approximately 15,500 sq. ft. and has a structure and parking lot. The General Business District is intended to accommodate commercial land uses, which address retail and service needs of local, regional, and tourist populations.



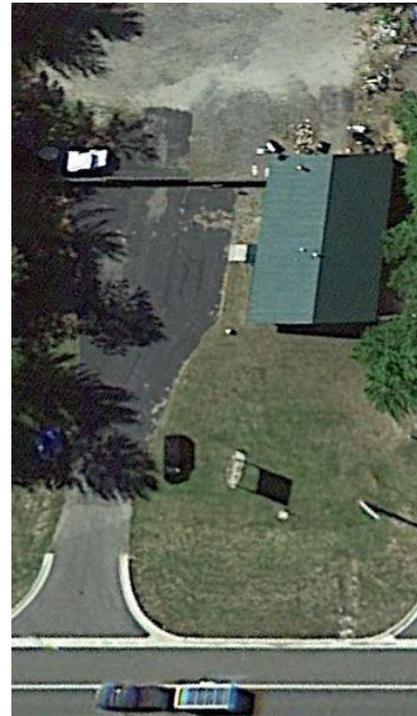
5. Owner: Dale & Anne Turner Trust  
Property Address: 2083 US 23

Description: The property is located in the General Business District. The property is privately owned. The parcel is approximately 38,160 sq. ft. and has one agricultural building, two commercial buildings and a parking lot.



6. Owner: Wayne Szikszay  
Property Address: 2073 US 23

Description: The property is located in the General Business District. The property is privately owned. The parcel is approximately 62,460 sq. ft., has 1 commercial building and parking lot



7. Owner: Orefice Trust

Property Address: 4614 Industrial Row

Description: The property is located in the Industrial District. The property is privately owned. The parcel is approximately 88,000 sq. ft. and has a structure and parking lot.

*It is the intent of the industrial District to provide for a variety of manufacturing and other industrial uses that can be generally characterized as being of low intensity, including the absence of objectionable external affects such as noise and fumes. This district is also intended to accommodate commercial establishments not engaging primarily in retail sales. Such industrial areas should be free of incompatible uses, and designed to avoid negatively impacting adjacent conforming uses. The Industrial District is intended to implement the Industrial Area component of the Charter Township of AuSable Land Use Plan.*



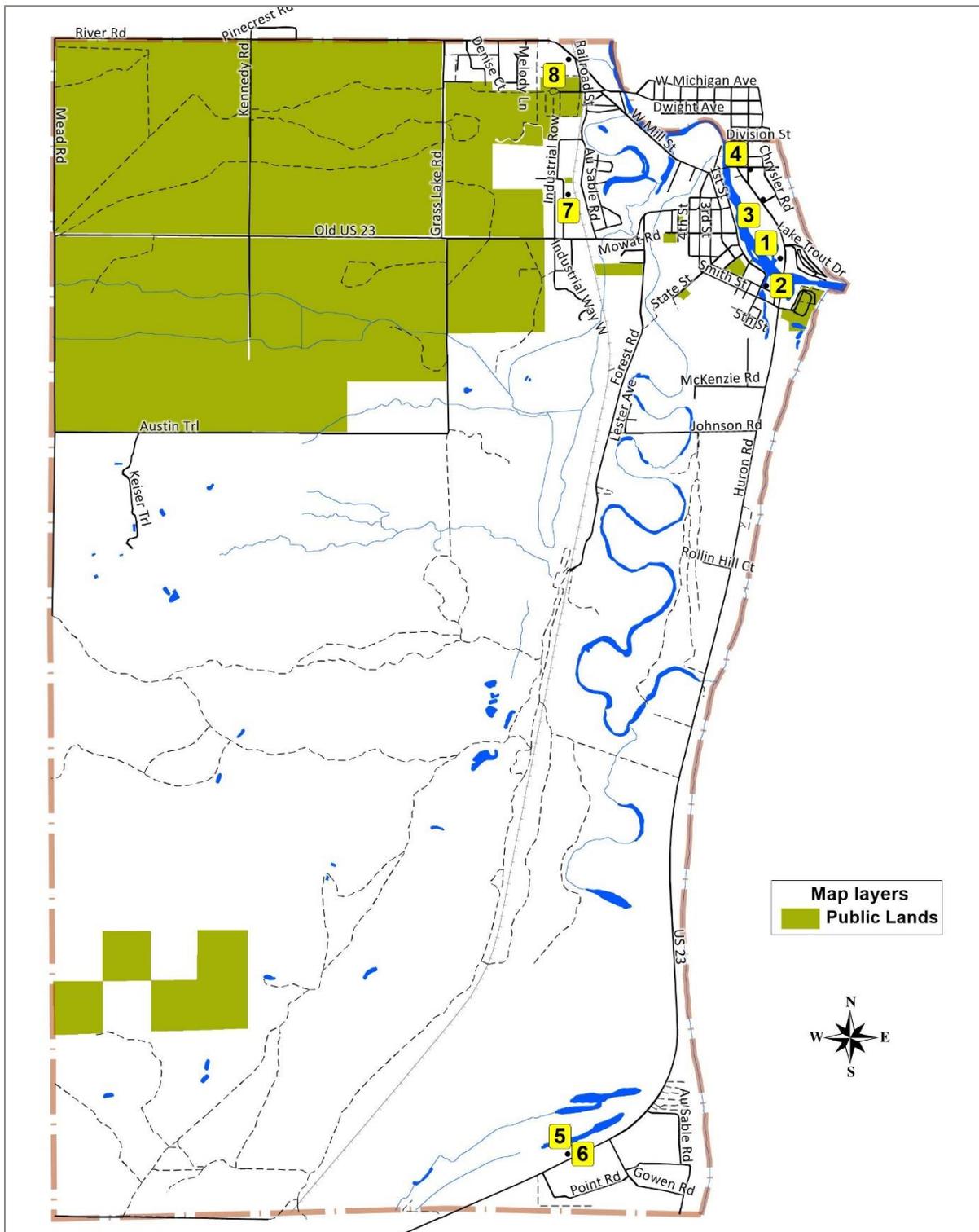
8. Owner: Terry & Robert Michaelis

Property Address: 4356 River Road

Description: The property is located in the Industrial District. The property is privately owned. The parcel is approximately 3.17 acres, and has one agricultural building.



Figure 8-3 Priority Redevelopment Sites Map



# Chapter 9

## Adoption and Implementation

### Plan Coordination and Review

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The Charter Township of AuSable began the process to update its Master and Recreation Plan in 2020 with assistance from the Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG). As required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008), as amended, notification of intent to develop the Charter Township of AuSable Master Plan was sent to all adjacent communities and other relevant entities to request cooperation and comment.

After the draft plan was completed by the Planning Commission, a draft was transmitted to the Township Board for approval to distribute the plan for review and comment. The draft plan was transmitted to the entities notified at the initiation of the plan update. The Township held a public hearing on October 20, 2021 to provide an additional opportunity for comment on the plan. After the plan was adopted by the Planning Commission and Township Board, it was distributed to the entities notified at the initiation of the plan update. A copy of all relevant information can be found in Appendix B.

### Public Hearing

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A public hearing on the proposed Master Plan for the Charter Township of AuSable, as required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008) as amended, was held on October 20, 2021. The purpose of the public hearing was to present the proposed master plan and to accept comments from the public. Due to approval deadlines set by the Michigan DNR, the public hearing for the proposed Recreation Plan portion of this document was held on January 13, 2021.

Section 43(1) of the Act requires a 15 day notice of the public hearing be given in a publication of general circulation in the municipality. A notice of the public hearing for the Master and Recreation Plan was published in the *Iosco County News-Herald/Oscoda Press* on September 22, 2021. During the review period, the draft plan was available for review on the Township's website or by contacting the Township office for a paper copy. A notice of public hearing for the Recreation Plan portion of this document was published in the *Oscoda Press* on December 9, 2020.

### Plan Adoption

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After the public hearing, the Planning Commission adopted the Master and Recreation Plan on October 20, 2021. The Township Board passed a Resolution for Final Approval and adopted the Master and Recreation Plan on November 1, 2021 (Appendix B).

The Planning Commission adopted the Recreation Plan portion of the Master and Recreation Plan on January 13, 2021 and the Board adopted the Recreation Plan portion on January 19, 2021. The DNR approved the Recreation Plan portion of this document in March 2021.

## Plan Implementation

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The Master Plan was developed to provide a vision of the community's future. It will serve as a tool for decision making on future development proposals and should be available to township staff, elected and appointed officials, business owners, developers, and stakeholders. The plan will also act as a guide for future public investment and service decisions, such as the local budget, grant applications, road maintenance and development, community group activities, tax incentive decisions, and administration of utilities and services. The successful implementation of this plan depends greatly on Township officials, businesses, and the public being aware of the plan, knowing its purpose, and working together to implement it.

Due to continual changes within the community, the master plan needs to be reviewed every five years and updated, if necessary. The Michigan DNR requires the recreation plan to be updated and re-submitted for approval every five years. An annual review of the Master and Recreation Plan by the Planning Commission and Board of Trustees will create an opportunity to continually implement the plan and keep it relevant.

### **Zoning Plan**

Section 33 of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, as amended, calls for a plan to include a zoning plan for the control of height, area, bulk, location and use of buildings and premises in the township. The zoning plan identifies the current zoning districts and their purposes, as well as how the land use categories on the future land use map relate to the districts on the zoning map. The Zoning Ordinance is the authority to implement the master plan and regulate the private use of land. Zoning decisions that are consistent with the Master Plan are more likely to be presumed valid if challenged in the courts. The zoning plan for the township is incorporated into Chapter 8: Future Land Use.

According to the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, Public Act 110 of 2006, as amended, comprehensive planning is the foundation of a zoning ordinance. Section 203 (1) of the Act states:

*"The Zoning Ordinance shall be based upon a plan designed to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare, to encourage the use of lands in accordance with their character and adaptability, to limit the improper use of land, to conserve natural resources and energy, to meet the needs of the state's residents for food, fiber, and other natural resources, places of residence, recreation, industry, trade, service, and other uses of land, to insure that uses of land shall be situated in appropriate locations and relationships to avoid the overcrowding of population, to provide adequate light and air, to lessen congestion on the public roads and streets, to reduce hazards to life and property, to facilitate adequate provision for a system of transportation, sewage disposal, safe and adequate water supply, education, recreation, and other public requirements, and to conserve the expenditure of funds for public improvements and services to conform with the most advantageous uses of land, resources, and properties. The zoning ordinance shall be made with reasonable consideration to the character of each district, its peculiar suitability for particular uses, the conservation of property values and natural resources, and the general and appropriate trend and character of land, building, and population development."*

### **Grants and Capital Improvement Plan**

The Master and Recreation Plan will be used as a guide for future public investment and service decisions, such as the local budget, grant applications, and administration of utilities and services. Many communities prioritize and budget for capital improvement projects (infrastructure improvements, recreation-related improvements, etc.). A Capital Improvements Program (CIP) typically looks six years into the future to establish a schedule for all anticipated capital improvement projects in the community.

A CIP includes cost estimates and sources for financing each project. It can therefore serve as a budgetary and policy document to aid in the implementation of the Charter Township of AuSable's Master and Recreation Plan.

**Regional Cooperation**

The township has an opportunity to pursue cooperative and mutually beneficial relationships with its surrounding communities and Iosco County to experience the full benefits from new or expanding developments as well as having the opportunity to combine resources and skills to address challenges. The township should actively participate in the review of neighboring communities' planning and zoning related documents as well as inviting neighboring communities to comment on the township's developments and planning and zoning related documents.