

Arvon Township Land Use Plan



Arvon Township Hall (above); Arvon Township School (below)



Arvon Township Land Use Plan (DRAFT – November 23, 2010)

The Arvon Township Planning Commission:

Harold Ripple, Chairman
Bette Gabe, member
Lisa Marinich, member
Linnea Barron, Secretary
Jay Loman, member

Acknowledgements:

The 2010 Land Use Plan is the first land use plan in place for Arvon Township. The Planning Commission, with the assistance of Dennis G. Rich, P.E., created the land use plan starting in the spring of 2008 and finishing in the fall of 2010.

Recommended:

_____ Harold Ripple, Chair Arvon Township Planning Commission	_____ Date
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Accepted:

_____ Arvon Township Board Arvon Township, Michigan	_____ Date
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Arvon Township Land Use Plan (General Development Plan)

A Vision for Arvon Township

Arvon Township is a special place that is wedded to one of the most beautiful natural resources in the world (Lake Superior) and home to several small inland lakes and many streams and rivers. The township is a special place where beautiful waterfalls and scenic vistas combine with a four season climate and unique historical sites to create a high quality of life for its residents. The purpose of the Arvon Township Land Use Plan is to provide a general guideline for Arvon Township and its villages to use in decision making and coordination related to the future land use so that the qualities and visions of the township that make Arvon Township special are not lost or compromised for future generations.

The Arvon Township Planning Commission has as its responsibility, the establishment and implementation of guidelines and principles that will be used now and in the future to aid in the growth of the community while taking into account the natural and historical beauty of the township. This is a multifaceted endeavor and involves infrastructure, housing, natural resources, finances, public services and ultimately the preservation of the natural lifestyle.

The following statements are guiding principles for the Plan.

- A comprehensive Land Use Plan is necessary to guide the development of Arvon Township in a manner that enhances and promotes the health, safety and welfare of its residents.
- Promote economic well being while simultaneously protecting the quality of life.
- Development must be encouraged with absolute consideration to the many natural features within the Township. It must be the goal of the Land Use Plan to safeguard the natural beauty of the Township from inappropriate development as well as unwanted contamination.
- Community development is best sustained when natural resources, residents and wildlife health and welfare as well as key cultural assets are protected.
- A fundamental goal of the Plan should be flexibility of planning and allowances should be made for change that may occur as a result of human factors which include increasing/decreasing population, industrial growth, and changes to surrounding entities.
- The goals and values of our citizens must be the sustaining force behind the planning that guides development.

Introduction

The Arvon Township Planning Commission was given the responsibility in the spring of 2010 to create a general land use plan in accordance with the Michigan County Planning Act, M.C.L. 125.101 et. Seq. This plan was developed with the input from the Planning Commission, Township Board, and community meetings held in the summer of 2010 regarding the attitudes of the local residents.

This plan is a description of what the Township sees for its development over the next 10-20 years. The plan is general in tone and will form the broadest of templates upon which zoning ordinances within Arvon Township may rest.

It is a vision for the growth and development of this area and will help guide that development in a manner that will serve the interests of the local community while at the same time protecting and safeguarding the natural integrity and beauty of the local landscape.

The Plan begins with a discussion of Arvon Township's history as well as its current population, climate, geography, social structures and land use patterns.

The general plan will address township-wide concerns about growth, economics, historic preservation, community health, and public services within the community. These and other land use concerns resulted in eight basic overall themes.

1. Protection of Natural Resources
2. Identifying and setting growth priorities
3. Economic development
4. Protecting and enhancing historic character and identity
5. Identifying landmarks and public art
6. Defining residential development patterns
7. Defining commercial development patterns
8. Recreational activities – paths, trails, lake and river access, etc.

The description of future land use and the accompanying maps for Arvon Township were presented to the Arvon Township residents at public meetings during summer and early fall of 2010. With revisions incorporating public comments, this plan was adopted by the Arvon Township Planning Commission on _____ and accepted by the Arvon Township Board on _____.

This is a multi-year plan and is intended to be a general guideline for the residents of Arvon Township for the development of their township in the future. An on-going review and evaluation process, a minimum of every 5 years, is envisioned for this Plan that will include public meetings that will provide insight into the future updates of this Plan. The primary goal of this Plan is to provide a flexible instrument upon which the future development of the Township can be guided.

Arvon Township Plan

Arvon Township needs a land use plan to serve as a guide for present and future development. If the plan is to be effective, it must reflect the desires and ideals of the people of Arvon Township and be acceptable to the majority of those individuals. The following illustrates the principles under which this plan was developed.

The plan is flexible; it is not meant to be cast in stone or never adjusted or altered. The land use plan is a general guide by which the Township government can pull direction from for the future planning and growth of Arvon Township. The plan should be reviewed periodically and adjusted as general conditions in the community change and/or grow.

The Plan is NOT a zoning regulation; it reflects future land use arrangements in light of the development that exists, but does NOT depict a “new” zoning district map. Since the plan and zoning maps are intended to exist in reasonable harmony, it is likely that future zoning districts will take the shape of the Plan as rezoning requests are received and reviewed by the township.

The plan allows for orderly development; the land use allocations reflected on the plan map are based on the Township’s judgment for the future of Arvon Township, in conjunction with currently accepted planning standards and the State requirements. The Plan map realistically contains sufficient land area to meet anticipated needs and demands for most every residential and non-residential use.

The plan requires cooperation; Arvon Township is not an island. It coexists with many other units of government and various jurisdictions. Adjoining townships, Baraga County, as well as a small part of the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community affect and are affected by the land use plan for Arvon Township. Only by working together can the entire region enjoy the benefits of coordinated planning.

Time Frame

The Arvon Township Land Use Plan depicts land use and community development strategies over a long period of time. The land use schemes of the future land use map are not meant to be accomplished overnight but rather as a general guide to growth, providing direction for the day-to-day zoning and development decisions that will ultimately confront Arvon Township.

As a guide, the plan is not meant to be rigidly administered; changing conditions may affect the assumptions used when the plan was originally created. However, changing conditions do not necessarily mean that the plan must change. Instead, the Township must examine the changes and decide in the principles on which the Land Use Plan was based are still valid. If so, the plan should continue to be followed. If not, the plan must then be examined in order for compliance with the Townships ideals. It is anticipated that

the plan will be monitored continuously to determine progress towards objectives and in light of actual and anticipated changes in the community.

What is the difference between the land use plan and the zoning ordinance?

The relationship between the Land Use Plan and the Zoning Ordinance is often misunderstood. The Plan is a general GUIDE for land use in the future; the Zoning Ordinance REGULATES the use of land in the present. The Land Use Plan is NOT a binding legal regulation. The Zoning Ordinance is a LAW that must be followed by the township and its residents.

Implementation of the Land Use Plan is realized through the Zoning Ordinance. As growth continues, the Township will have to address complex zoning issues brought on by the speed and increasing sophistication of development projects. The need to provide flexibility, coupled with the Township's desire to maintain some degree of control will create the need for innovative solutions.

Local control of land use (with some exceptions, such as uses located on state and federal lands) is an accepted legal principle. Land use regulation is controlled through the separation of land into various use areas called zoning districts. The rules governing these districts are contained in the Zoning Ordinance.

How does the land use plan affect you as a resident or landowner?

It is important that you, as a resident and/or property owner in the Township, understand how the land use plan works and how it may affect you. It is also important that you as a land owner and/or resident participate in the creation of the land use plan so that everyone in the community has the opportunity to voice their opinion regarding the pending plan. For most, the Land Use Plan will not have an immediate impact. However, as someone who is concerned about the future development of the township, the plan should be of great interest.

If you are a property owner of either vacant or developed land, you may have several interests including not only your property but surrounding properties in the general area. The Plan's view of future development of these lands may affect the intensity and type of development which may be expected on your property and adjacent properties.

As a homeowner, you will be interested in the properties in your immediate neighborhood. You will want to know what uses are proposed for vacant land in your area.

As a Township resident you will be interested in the overall concepts of the Plan, as expressed by the goals and objectives included in the Plan. These statements will give you an indication of the Plan's intent for the Township now, and in the future.

How should each landowner use this plan?

How each land owner uses this plan will depend on your interest in the future of Arvon Township, but generally, here is the procedure you should follow.

What land use is proposed for your property, or the area surrounding your property?

You can find this information on the Future Land Use map. The map is divided into separate land use categories determined by the planning commission allowing for public comment. Find the category of land use in which your property or the property in question is located.

Determine the meaning of the land use designation for your property.

Find and examine the definition of the land use proposed for your property. This can be found within the land use plan. Depending on the nature of your interest in the land use plan, this may be all the information that you require. However, if you have a specific proposal for your property which does not fit the plan, you may need to inquire further into the specifics of the Plan.

Determine how the plan views development in your area.

The text of the Land Use Plan will describe the general direction of development within your area and it may be very specific or somewhat general.

Determine how the Land Use Plan and Zoning Ordinance affect your property.

The Future Land Use designation will indicate how your property is planned for use in the future. These designations will relate to specific Zoning Ordinance Districts. Once you are familiar with the Plan and how it affects your land, you will need to consult the Township Zoning ordinance to determine the specific uses and regulations that apply to your land. Generally, you need to meet certain minimum lot sizes, building setbacks, parking requirements, etc.; of these specific requirements can be found in the Zoning Ordinance.

Again, the primary difference between the Land Use Plan and the Zoning Ordinance is the consideration of timing. The Land Use Plan will have a Future Land Use map that shows the intended use of the land at the end of the planning period which can be as long as 20 years in the future, or at any time during that period. The Zoning Map/Ordinance shows the land as it is intended to be used TODAY. As one might expect, these two maps will not normally be identical in nature but will have the same overall themes and goals.

Conclusion

The Arvon Township Land Use Plan will not **directly** impact the future use of your property, regardless of whether you are a vacant land owner, business owner, or a homeowner. It will be used as a general guideline to assist township officials with the present and future plans for the community. However, township residents are encouraged to review and participate in the creation of the plan as provided by public meetings that are held. It should be strongly noted that this plan does not mean that you cannot continue to use your property as you do currently provided that the current use is LEGAL and meets the requirements set by existing and future zoning. The Plan, as noted previously, is just a basic principle to assist township officials with the future progression of Arvon Township.

Overview of Arvon Township

Arvon Township is located in the west central portion of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan in Baraga County along the south shore of Lake Superior. It is bordered northerly by Lake Superior, to the east by Marquette County and to the south and west by L'Anse Township. Arvon Township's name was derived from the Carnarvon District in Wales, which is famous for its slate industry because of the large slate deposits in the Township. A Swedish immigrant Captain Walfrid Been established the settlement of Skanee in 1866 expecting that it would become an important port city. The area was then particularly known for its apple orchards, the remnants of which still dot the land.

Arvon Township includes Point Abbaye Peninsula which projects into Lake Superior to form the Huron Bay. The bay is long and narrow so its waters are significantly more protected than those of the open lake. Much of the shoreline, particularly around Point Abbaye, is rocky though there are stretches of sandy beaches. Much of the land is forested with mixed deciduous and conifers and small areas of arborvitae swamps. In settled areas, there are many, now wild, apple trees which serve as a significant food source for the local deer population. What was once a significant part of the community (farming) is largely in the past, but changing economic times may alter that in the future. The township boasts many falls and numerous scenic areas and byways and because of these factors, much of the economic activities are related to logging and tourism particularly hunting and fishing.

Today, education, light industry, forest products and primarily tourism trade have replaced the failed quarry industry as the sources of employment. The township is a very popular place for retirees and summer cottages for the local "snow birds" that migrate south in the winter and north in the summer. The primary industry of tourism is built around the historical resources of the area as well as the beautiful geology and scenic landscapes which provide endless recreational opportunities. The township also boasts one of the longest Lake Superior shorelines of any township in the state which along with numerous inland lakes and rivers, abundant forests, various trail systems and an average annual snowfall of 200 inches make the township a destination for all season enthusiasts.

History of Arvon Township - Communities

Arvon began as a slate quarry village with its own post office intermittently from 1874 to 1893.

Aura is located at the base of Point Abbaye Peninsula on the northern side of Huron Bay.

Huron Bay is a "community" located on Huron Bay a few miles southwest of Skanee. There is a convenience store, tavern and beauty salon located in this community. Huron Bay was at one time the terminal of the Iron Range and Huron Bay Railroad built to carry

iron ore from Champion. A post office was in operation within this community from July 29, 1892 until January 31, 1894.

Skaneateles is located 15 miles northeast of L'Anse, MI. It is the site of the township hall, fire hall, school, church and post office. It was once the site of a hotel and telephone exchange. The Skaneateles zip code, 49962, as well as the L'Anse zip code, 49946 serve all of Arvon Township. Skaneateles was founded by Captain Walfred Been who came to the area seeking shelter from a storm. He named it after his home province of Skane in Sweden. The Been name is still seen and heard in the area along with other multigenerational identities.

Population and Demographics

At the time of the 2000 census, there were 482 people, 222 households and 150 families. There were 623 housing units at an average density of 5.0 per square mile. The racial makeup was:

- 93.3% White
- 3.11% Native American
- 0.41% Asian
- 3.11% Two or more races
- 17.8% Swedish
- 16.3% German
- 14.8% Finnish
- 7.80% French
- 7.50% Irish
- 6.60% Norwegian

This plan will be updated when further information is available from the 2010 census.

Of the 222 households, 20% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 60% were married couples living together, 5% had a female householder with no husband present and 32% were non-families, 29.3% of the households were individuals. The average household size was 2.17 and the average family size was 2.67.

Population age showed 19.5% under the age of 18 and at the other end 24.3% were 65 years of age or older. The median age is 51 years.

The median income for a household was \$31,705 and for a family \$39,545. Males have a median income of \$26,786 versus \$22,292 for females. Per capita income is \$19,800.

About 8% of the population was below the poverty line including 19% below 18 and 6.8% of those over 65. Many of the current residents of Arvon Township are "snowbirds" that only live in the township during the warmer months while spending the harsh winters in warmer states.

Geography and the Environment

The township is located in the west central portion of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan in Baraga. It has a total of 131.3 square miles of which 124.6 square miles are land and 6.7 square miles are water. The township is composed of two smaller rural communities, Aura and Skanee. The township is situated along the southern shore of Lake Superior and “raps” around Huron Bay near the Huron Mountains. In addition to the extensive Lake Superior shoreline the township boasts several scenic rivers known for their fishing. These include the Huron River, Ravine River, Slate and Silver River.

The township can also boast the highest point in Michigan, Mt. Arvon, which stands at 1,979.238 feet above sea level. It is located in the rugged backwoods of Arvon Township. Getting to Mt. Arvon is no easy feat if you don’t know your way around. Due to logging operations, the roads in the Mt. Arvon area frequently change. In the winter, the roads become impassable due to the heavy snow the area receives. During the rainy season, the roads become muddy and are often unfit for passenger cars. The peak is not prominent and it is located in a heavily wooded area but in recent years it has been cleared enough to provide a beautiful view of the surrounding area. For years, Mt. Curwood, located a few miles south of Mt. Arvon in Baraga County, was recognized as the highest point in Michigan. However, in 1982, the U.S. Department of Interior's Geological Survey team gathered new measurements and found Mt. Curwood to be slightly lower in elevation than Mt. Arvon measuring in at 1,978.24 feet above sea level. Although no panoramic views are offered from the summit of Mt. Arvon, visitors can enjoy the forested scenery. Currently, blue diamond shaped signs (about every mile) mark the route to Mt. Arvon.

Climate

Arvon Township lies within the Lake Superior Basin which has a typical continental climate characterized by cold dry winters and warm humid summers. However, the lake exerts a strong microclimate influence on the immediate shoreline, resulting in cooler summers and milder winters than those experienced a few miles inland. This is due to the moderating effect of Lake Superior on the air temperature and the prevailing westerly winds.

The moderating effect of the lake is experienced in spring and summer months when the cool water tends to level out temperature extremes and reduces the likelihood of frost. The areas adjacent to Lake Superior with good air drainage patterns experience the area’s longest growing season and have a good potential for the production of fruit crops.

A significant effect of Lake Superior is the formation of persistent snow fall when cold air passes over the lake in late fall and early winter. This causes early and heavy snow, referred to as “lake effect” snow. This “lake effect” snow diminishes as the distance from Lake Superior increases.

The growing season for Arvon Township is typically from May through September depending greatly on the effects of the great lake. Average temperatures in the winter are typically in the single digits for lows and low 20's for highs while the average temperatures in the summer are in the 50's for lows and mid-70's for highs. The average rainfall for the area is around 32 inches while the average snowfalls are 119 inches with 39 inches being the record for total snowfall on the ground at one time. The ground is generally covered with snow from mid-November to mid-April, thus snow covered ground is rarely frozen to any significant depth. The large amount of winter snowfall often results in heavy spring runoffs.

Geology

The geology of Arvon Township is composed mainly of coarse textural glacial fill with sand areas and post glacial alluvium.

Natural Features

The character of Arvon Township is reflected in its natural features; the Huron Bay, rolling hillsides, farmlands, woodlands, lakes, streams, rivers, and open spaces help define those traits that draw people to the area. Any major alteration or destruction of these natural features would produce far reaching impacts and destroy the pristine beauty of the area. The Township's residents are aware of the quality of their environment and support strong policies in favor of protecting the township's natural features.

Natural features provide an essential element for the quality of life in Arvon Township. In addition to their recreational value, other benefits of natural features include:

1. Clean water supplies for homes served by wells
2. Natural wildlife habitats
3. Ground water recharge and purification, flood control, pollution protection and the support of unique plant and animal life.
4. Productive agricultural land
5. Productive forest land
6. Aesthetics (views, serenity, rural nature, etc.)

The landscape is a complex and fragile resource. The land, water, and vegetation are all linked to the ecology of the township. Once destroyed they usually cannot be replaced. In addition, the damage visible on one site may actually affect other distant areas. Ground water pollution, for example, may be caused by an activity at one location, but affect ground water sources miles away.

There are two development approaches to natural features: preservation and integration. Preservation measures should be used when natural features are so sensitive or valued that any change would be unacceptable, both aesthetically and environmentally. In these areas, development should either be prohibited or restricted to those projects which do

not greatly affect the environment. Wetlands and flood prone areas are examples where preservation techniques should be used.

Natural features may be included in development where they are an essential part of the Township's character, but where minor changes would only have a slight impact.

Integration would allow for development as long as it fit in with the surrounding area by allowing natural features to remain as undisturbed as possible.

Environmental Constraints

Natural features can either improve or restrict development, depending on the type and extent of the feature. For example, the extensive shoreline overlooking Huron Bay may provide an attractive view but may create additional costs, both financial and environmental. Erosion control measures and tree clearing can increase development costs dramatically.

Several areas throughout the Township have environmental features that could impact the intensity of development. These lands include wetlands, certain soils, and areas of steep topography, extensive shoreline and large tracts of woodlands. The following is a brief description of the treatment of natural features will help establish protection measures for the preservation of the character of the natural resources.

Woodlands:

As buffers and moderators of flooding, erosion, and noise and air pollution, woodlands are important to the region's quality of life. Apart from the economic value of the timber industry, some of the values of woodlands include:

1. Providing a varied and rich environment for plants and animals. Forest layers, including canopy, branches, trunks, shrubs, and plants on the forest floor provide breeding, feeding, and refuge areas for many species of insects, birds, and various mammals.
2. Protecting watersheds and soils. Forest vegetation moderates the effects of winds and storms, stabilizes and enriches the soil as well as slowing runoffs which in turn allows the forest floor to filter ground water.
3. Serving as buffers to the sights, sounds, and odors of civilization. Forests can mute the noise from any industry and can help absorb air pollutants created by large and small scale manufacturing.
4. Moderating climate. The micro climate of a forest, created in part by the shade of the trees and the transpiration of water from the leaves, keeps surrounding air at an even temperature. Forest temperatures are generally cooler in the day and warmer at night than the more widely varying temperatures of non-forested areas, creating natural air conditioners.

Arvon Township is heavily forested with the majority of the township covered with some type of woodland. The largest portion of the forest is considered northern hardwood primarily consisting of sugar maple, red maple, yellow birch, oak and basswood. The large tracts of hardwood provide a vital resource for the area's major industry – forestry

and logging. A good portion of this land is on highly productive sites that can provide high quality products for the forest industry.

Another large woodland type is aspen/white birch. This area also is vital to the forest industry and plays a major role in the wildlife habitat of the Township. This cover type is most valuable for population of the more popular game species – deer and grouse.

Other tracts of woodlands include pine as well as various stands of apple trees scattered throughout the township.

All of these woodland types provide a very large land base for all types of outdoor recreational activities including hunting, cross country skiing, snowmobiling, off-road trails for ATV's, camping, and many other uses. This recreational activity is a vital factor to the local economy as well as the quality of life in the Township.

One of the major factors that make these lands available for such use is the public access provided by state lands and the many acres of Commercial Forest Act lands within the Township.

To maintain the forest base, to sustain the current forest activities for now and the future, planning needs to keep at a minimum the conversion of forest land to other uses. With the reduction of the forest base, the logging and recreational activities will become more concentrated on fewer acres, which could lead to more conflict.

How these particular lands are managed is dependent on ownership. Each owner has the freedom to manage their woodland as desired. However, to insure a continued and growing economic base for forestry and recreation, the practices that take place on these lands will have a very definite effect on the future use and opportunities. Proper long term management should be encouraged and emphasized at all opportunities. Personal use and treatment of the land does influence the Township dynamics of business and lifestyles.

Soils:

The majority of Arvon Township is composed mainly of coarse textural glacial fill with sand areas and post glacial alluvium.

Wetlands:

The Michigan Resource Information System (MIRIS), Division of Land Resources Programs, Department of Natural Resources designated wetlands within the township from the data compiled from 1978 aerial photography. Less than approximately 5% of Township acreage is defined as wetlands. The largest areas of wetlands lie in the Point Abbaye Peninsula.

“Wetland” is the collective term for marshes, swamps, bogs, and similar areas often found between open water and upland areas. In the past, people viewed wetlands as wastelands – sources of mosquitoes, flies, and unpleasant odors. They believed wetlands should be avoided and often felt that they should be eliminated.

This negative view, combined with the demand for more developable land, resulted in the destruction of large areas of State wetlands. Owners and developers drained their wetlands and converted them to farmland or filled them in for housing developments, etc. Of the estimated 11 million acres of wetlands that stood in Michigan 150 years ago, only 3 million acres remain. Only one-fourth of the original 400,000 acres of coastal wetlands now line the Michigan shores.

Attitudes towards wetlands have changed in the past 20 years. Scientists have discovered that wetlands are valuable natural resources that provide many important benefits to people and their natural environment. Wetlands help improve water quality and reduce flood and storm damage. They provide important fish and wildlife habitat and support hunting and fishing activities. Finally, they add interest to a landscape.

Because they occur where the dry land meets the water, wetlands play a critical role in managing the Township's water-based resources. Acre for acre, wetlands produce more wildlife and plants than any other Michigan resource. Michigan boasts about 2300 native plant species. Of that amount, 50 percent are wetland species; more than 25 percent of the wetland species are threatened or endangered.

More than 40 percent of the 575 vertebrate wildlife species in Michigan live in or use wetlands. This includes 10 to 15 of the 66 mammals, 180 of the 370 birds, 22 of 28 reptiles, and all 23 amphibians.

Other benefits of wetlands include:

1. Reducing flooding by absorbing runoff from rain and melting snow and slowly releasing excess water into rivers and lakes.
2. Filtering pollutants from surface runoff, trapping fertilizers, pesticides, sediments and other potential contaminants and breaking them down into less harmful substances, improving water clarity and quality.
3. Contributing to natural nutrient and water cycles, and producing vital atmospheric gases including oxygen.
4. Providing commercial and recreational values to the economy, by producing plants, game birds and fur-bearing animals. Survival of certain kinds of fish directly depends on wetlands because of the shallow, still waters they provide.
5. Serving as nutrient traps, when wetlands occur next to the Great Lakes, inland lakes or streams.

Before any rezoning or future development, a qualified individual should determine if a regulated wetland exists on the site. The Michigan DNRE retains a list of qualified consultants to make wetland determinations.

In Michigan, the Goemaere-Andersen Wetland Protection Act (Public Act 203 of 1979) provides for statewide regulation of certain wetlands. The Act specifies that activities such as filling, dredging or draining require a permit from the DNRE. The Act also

provides for a plan for the preservation, management, protection and use of wetlands while providing for remedies and penalties.

The state wetland laws provide the basis of a wetland protection program. To be more effective, however, these regulations should be coordinated with preservation techniques.

Surface Waters:

Water features abound in Arvon Township. With over a hundred miles of Lake Superior shoreline, Arvon Township boasts some of the most beautiful and scenic areas in the State. These areas consist of sandy beaches and rocky shoreline and provide a significant scenic corridor and places for abundant recreational activities in summer and winter. The township also boasts several inland lakes, streams and rivers that provide ample hunting and fishing opportunities within the Township.

In addition to the aesthetic values, clean, protected surface waters are critical to human health and safety and provide added benefits such as potential municipal water supply source, irrigation supply, drainage and flood controls, water purifying and ground water recharge as well as provide wildlife habitat.

Protection measures for surface waters must extend beyond the development site to include the entire watershed.

Groundwater:

Michigan has long been known as the Great Lakes State and enjoys an abundance of surface water. The government has gone above and beyond in its efforts to protect this resource. However, including all of the available surface water, groundwater makes up 97% of the world's freshwater supply.

Almost ½ of the State's population and all of Arvon Township uses ground water as the sole source of drinking water. Despite this obvious dependence on this resource, very little public understanding exists of the nature and importance of groundwater. Like many other natural resources, ground water is more vulnerable in some areas than others, depending largely on quantity and quality.

Three primary factors determine ground water vulnerability: soils, depth to the aquifer and general aquifer condition and type. Sandy soils offer considerably less protection than heavier clay soils. Confined aquifers are safer than unconfined ones. Once these things are understood, more effective protection measures for ground water are possible.

Special considerations to the types and densities of permitted land uses should apply in areas that offer little natural protection to ground water. This should also apply where the protection level is unknown. Communities must consider ground water resources when they are considering the future planning of the township.

Present Land Use and Development

Very little residential development exists in Arvon Township with the primary residential communities being Skanee, Aura and Huron Bay. The remainder of the large township consists of low density homes, cabins, cottages, and camps that are scattered throughout the largely rural township. The extensive waterfront is dominated by residential developments as well as scenic shoreline and parks.

Business development tends to focus on the small communities with very little commercial development outside of the primary communities. Locally owned rental cabins and small lodges play the most significant role in local commerce as very little development exists within the township.

The township consists primarily of private commercial forest and state owned forest land. Several smaller county parks as well as Point Abbaye, a large county owned park at the tip of western Arvon Township, are incorporated within the township. The township also has several small state and county parks and campgrounds including Big Erik's State Campground, a small rustic state campground.

Land use and development is directed by zoning regulations in Arvon Township that were passed in the spring of 1995. The township board is currently in the process of reviewing and updating the zoning ordinance to bring it up to compliance with current conditions and goals.

Housing and Community Development

The majority of households in Arvon Township are single family, detached housing built mostly in the 20th century. Very little growth has occurred or is occurring in Arvon Township since about 75% of the population has generational roots in the community with the remainder being transplants over the past 30-40 years. Many of the transplants through the 70's and 80's came from more developed areas with the desire to live in a more natural, back to earth setting. The township is currently growing its largest group of residents which happens to be retirees. The housing as well as the residential population continues to age while there has been very little influx of youth to the area. Because of these statistics, the housing market has remained relatively static over the years. However, because of the increased value of lakefront property throughout the State, Arvon Township property values continue to increase due to the extremely large amount of shoreline within the community. The median housing value in Arvon Township is \$47,229 as reported in 2008 which is much less than the national average. Arvon Township has a very high home ownership rate (94% owner occupied, 6% rental).

Compared to Michigan as a whole (5.5 percent), Arvon Township has a large proportion of seasonal housing over 25 percent. This reflects the importance of the area as a vacation destination, seasonal summer homes, and retirement community.

The housing statistics for Arvon Township are as follows:
482 Housing Units (454 owner occupied; 28 renter occupied)
Median Value - \$47,229
Seasonal Units – up to 25%
Built before 1940 – less than 5%
Built in last 10 years – over 10%

Schools

The Skanee school is a K-6 facility with a long history of service to the community. The enrollment varies from year to year but has had an average enrollment of 12 students over the past four years. Middle and high school students are provided transportation by the local district to their choice of L'Anse or Baraga schools. About a half of a dozen elementary students attend L'Anse schools through schools of choice.

Historic Features

The Township is full of beautiful historic buildings and landmarks. These historic features include the Zion Lutheran Church (the oldest church of its denomination in the country), Arvon township school, Arvon township town hall, Arvon township historical society museum, and the Aura town hall. Some of the primary landmarks include Big Erik's bridge, Pt. Abbaye, Mount Arvon, Witz's Marina, the Huron Islands Lighthouse and multiple scenic water falls and rivers.



Zion Lutheran Church, Skanee

Customs and Traditions

In contrast to many Upper Peninsula communities, Swedish is the dominant ethnicity in Arvon Township rather than the more predominant Finnish heritage. However, the Finnish tradition of “sisu” – courage is something most would boast as their heritage in the community. Folk traditions from many cultures have traditionally been enjoyed through art and music. Although weekly folk dances fell by the wayside, the Aura Jamboree brings local and outside folk artists together for an annual summer music festival.

Local traditions include potluck, school programs, the fire hall Christmas party, Fourth of July Parade and potluck, Labor Day Bridge Walk, Hunter’s supper, and a Memorial Day luncheon program at the town hall in conjunction with cemetery services. Traditions through the church include annual music events, a pie social, and the hunter’s supper. Sportsmen’s traditions include annual bear and rabbit feeds, the steelhead run, and various fishing tournaments.

A great deal of property in the township is non-homestead recreational and vacation homes. The culture is saturated with hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, boating, four-wheeling and any other activity enjoyed on the water or in the woods. The common connection to the land and water as well as maintaining the environment is the central theme in the community.

Employment and Industry

Arvon Township does not have a major industry within the township borders and many of the residents are employed by outside sources. These sources include local hospitals, the local Indian casino, local schools and Michigan Technological University. In fact, Michigan Tech has a major influence on the overall regions economy, especially in Houghton and Hancock. It is the areas largest employer and it has been estimated that the university contributed approximately \$100 million locally in 2000-01 including employee compensation, the purchase of supplies and services, and dollars spent by students and visitors.

The primary chances for employment opportunities throughout the township include logging and tourism which also encompasses hunting and fishing. However, many of the local residents are older generation that come to the area are coming for retirement and simply the quiet and beauty of the area. The Plan must consider the current and future ideals of the local community and these ideals will be used to create the Future uses of the Township lands taking into consideration the types of employment and industry that the community would like to see in the future.

Transportation and Roads

Arvon Township currently has no form of public transportation (i.e. no public bussing, no rail service and no air service). There is a heavy reliance on private vehicles for all forms of transportation throughout the township.

The likelihood of some form of scheduled public transportation needs to be acknowledged and considered in future planning within the township. Growth, timing and, of course, funding will play a large role in the chances of public transportation taking hold in the township.

At the same time as public transportation must be considered in future planning, the township currently has a system of roads throughout the township and safe, well maintained roads are vital to the community. They allow for safe movement of people and products (timber operations primarily) and are an integral part of the tourism industry.

The roads in Arvon Township are part of a county wide network of rural roads that are maintained solely by the county without state or federal designation or direct funding for support. The primary county road in the township is Skanee Road followed by Townline Road. These two roads serve as the primary destination roads for the many rural destination roads. At the present time, the paved roads in Arvon Township are the following:

1. Skanee Road
2. Lower Skanee Road
3. Portice Road
4. Park Road
5. Townline Road
6. Bay View Road
7. Beesley Road
8. Karschney Road
9. Witz Road
10. Biltonen Road
11. Town Road

Along with these paved roads, there are many miles of graveled roads throughout the township. All of these roads are serviced and maintained by the Baraga County Road Commission. Issues regarding the roads in the township include dust control for existing gravel roads, maintenance and funding for existing paved roads, quality and safety of existing roads and what the future holds for the roads throughout the township. With the current economic conditions, there has been some consideration given to changing many of the existing paved roads back to gravel roads due to the financial considerations and the fact that some research shows that maintaining gravel roads is more cost effective than paved roads. This is an area that needs to be addressed in future planning.

Roads will continue to be an important part of the township health for now and in the future. It will be vital to prioritize road work that will reflect the best interest of the Township. Finally, since many residents take advantage of alternate forms of travel such as snowmobile in the winter and ATV's in the summer months, the township will need to consider these means of transportation in future planning. This may include providing safety zones for "slow" vehicles among other potential considerations.

Primary Goals and Objectives

Future Directions

As a community matures, a direction for future development is needed to ensure that its overall goals regarding growth and future development (or lack thereof) are considered and put into motion. The intent of this Land Use Plan is to provide the means by which Arvon Township may look forward into the next 20 years. In order to set a direction for this period, the Township must establish goals and objectives that cover the major elements discussed in the Land Use Plan. The Township has determined that the following goals and objectives will guide their decisions for this Land Use Plan.

Goal #1: Arvon Township will encourage development that seeks to preserve, protect and perpetuate the Township's fragile natural resources.

Objectives:

1. The Township will work to protect those natural resources that are considered sensitive and fragile such as flood plains, wetlands, scenic shorelines and corridors.
2. The Township will introduce appropriate regulations and guidelines for development in those fragile environmental areas.

Goal #2: Arvon Township will strive to improve and potentially enhance its physical appearance.

Objectives:

1. The Township will ideally institute reasonable regulations regarding blight.
2. The Township will continue to work with the County regarding enhancing the primary gateways into the community.

Goal #3: The Township will take proactive measures to protect and preserve its rural character.

Objectives:

1. The Township will actively promote actions which improve individual privacy, promote the preservation of open space and enhance the current tranquil lifestyle enjoyed by residents of the Township.
2. The natural assets of the Township, such as the quality of its surface waters and beautiful shoreline will be preserved and protected according to the appropriate regulations and guidelines set forth in the Plan.

Goal #4: The Township will encourage economic development that is environmentally sound and diverse that will be placed in suitable locations as recommended by the Plan. Economic Development will strive to create opportunities for stable employment to help

support the existing population as well as create business opportunities for the area residents. This development will follow the ideals and guidelines set forth in the Plan.

Objectives:

1. The Township will establish an Economic Development Strategy that follows the ideals set forth in the Plan and seeks to encourage existing business as well as strives to seek future development within the Township.
2. This Strategy will identify the area's economic resources as well as its physical, social and human assets.
3. The strategy will identify those uses which are most appropriate for Arvon Township such as those based on the areas renewable resources such as forestry and tourism. The Strategy will ultimately encourage businesses that have demonstrated responsibility towards the environment.
4. The Township will work with other agencies and groups to jointly encourage the types of new development that are set forth in the Plan.

Goal #5: The Township will actively seek answers to the transportation issues that it faces.

Objectives:

1. County roadways will continue to be maintained and future uses will be considered when decisions involving long term maintenance are considered.
2. The Township will continue to work with the Baraga County Road Commission to decide the best course of action for the local road system.
3. The Township will consider the adoption of some sort of public transportation for special needs groups such as senior citizens.
4. The Township will consider providing safe zones for the ever increasing small motorized vehicle (scooters, ATV's, snowmobiles, etc.) form of transportation.

Goal #6: Recreational opportunities for residents and visitors will be enhanced by improving the variety and amount of recreational resources without negatively impacting the natural environment.

Objectives:

1. Access to natural features for recreational purposes will be improved such as consideration towards improving ATV trails, non-motorized trails, etc.
2. The level of recreational activity will be appropriate for the resource, for example, the capacity of recreational resources to accommodate a given level of activity will not be exceeded.

3. New recreational activities will be sought that are year-round and family oriented.
4. The Township will complete a Township Recreation Plan which will open areas of State and Federal funding for the Township.
5. The recreational activities and resources will contribute to the economic development of the Township by creating attractions for visitors.

Goal #7: The Township will provide the services and facilities that are appropriate and necessary to serve the public health, safety and overall needs of the residents.

Objectives:

1. As the needs of the residents change, the Township will be prepared to respond with appropriate services and facilities while taking into account the limitations of the Township's financial and administrative resources.
2. The Township will continue to examine the potential of providing a recycling station within the Township.
3. The Township will work with public utilities to examine the expansion of natural gas service to the area.

Goal #8: The Township will encourage land use patterns that will preserve its rural character and provide adequate housing opportunities for its residents.

Objectives:

1. The Township will encourage new residential development that is modern and according to local building codes and standards.
2. Preservation of open space will continue to be encouraged with consideration given to future single family development.
3. The potential environmental impacts of new development must be considered carefully. These impacts may include factors such as noise, traffic, odors, drainage as well as effects on the water and air quality.

Goal #9: The Township will work with other local units of government, area agencies and groups to foster a spirit of cooperation and communication.

Objectives:

1. The Township will seek the input of area agencies, local groups, and other units of government on areas of common interest.
2. The Township will look to expand opportunities to work with other agencies, local units of government and/or local groups on joint projects that will improve the quality of life within the Township.

Goal #10: The Township will work to create a recycling plan that meets the current and future needs of its residents.

Objectives:

1. The Township will work with the community and local government officials to locate recycling bins or drop off facility that allow access for all residents.
2. The Township will look for financial assistance to assist with drop off facility and recycling bins.

Goal #11: The Township will work with local officials to require full disclosure of information for any potential future mining within the Township.

Objectives:

1. The Township will seek to require full disclosure of information and passing of information if there are any mining interests within the Township in the future.
2. The Township will follow up with any mining inquiries within the Township and provide all of the necessary information to the community.

Community Facilities and Services

Township Offices:

Arvon Township administrative functions are conducted at the Township Hall located in Skanee. The hall is a historic building that serves the current needs of the township officials with several offices, restroom, large meeting hall and other spaces. The building is an old building that has been kept in good repair and should serve the immediate needs of the community.

Museum:

The Arvon Township Historical Society Museum is located approximately 13 miles from L'Anse on Skanee Road. The museum is locally funded and operated by the historical society.

Parks and Recreation:

The Township provides the community and visitors with several options for recreation. The Township has a local ball field located near the Township Hall, the County operates a park at Pt. Abbaye and there are several state operated campgrounds that provide visitors with rustic campgrounds and wonderful views of the pristine surroundings.

Water and Sewage:

The Township water and sewage needs are serviced by only residential septic systems and independent private wells.

Police Service:

Although the Township is without its own police force, police protection is provided to its residents by the Baraga County Sheriff Department and Michigan State Police with assistance in emergencies from L'Anse Police Department. Due to State Budget cuts, after hours police dispatch is provided by the State Police Regional Barracks at Negaunee with an enhanced 911 system.

Fire Service:

Fire protection for the Township is provided by the local volunteer fire department. The Fire Hall is located next to the township hall.

Ambulance Service:

The Bay Ambulance serves the needs of the local Baraga County area residents including the residents of Arvon Township. The service has been shared by the local communities since the Bay Ambulance built its building in 1991.

Hospitals:

Hospital facilities are provided by:

- Baraga County Memorial Hospital in L'Anse
- Portage Health System in Hancock
- Bell Memorial Hospital in Ishpeming
- Marquette General Hospital in Marquette.

Bell Memorial Hospital and Marquette General Hospital are both regional health care facilities.

Economic Development

Challenges:

There are very few businesses or opportunity for businesses within the Township borders due to its isolated location. The limited job opportunities and the relatively high number of low to average income homes will continue to also limit the amount of growth within the Township. The Township, much of which is State and Federal land, will, however, continue to offer opportunities for recreational growth for its residents.

The ability of new, small business ventures to survive within the Township are complicated by the simple fact that the competition of large corporations with low cost goods, such as Wal-Mart and Shopko, are located less than 1 hour to the North.

A number of problems and concerns affect the economy of Arvon Township including the following:

- Lack of employment opportunities, Arvon Township and Baraga County currently are above the national average for unemployment.
- Lack of coordinated, long-range economic planning within the community.
- Lack of planning between the various governmental entities of neighboring Townships and Counties.
- Lack of public transportation for both workers and potential customers.
- Lack of consistency in the zoning practices (commonly referred to as spot zoning)
- Desire of the Township to monitor and/or restrict inappropriate development and commercialization along the shoreline.
- Changing consumer trends with less shopping on the local level.
- Lack of access to Township information. Currently the Township does not have a website nor have they computerized any of the township documents. This lack of availability creates a difficult environment for local officials to work with when attempting to look into the future planning of the community.
- Lack of any major roadways through the township. Highway access is limited to township and county roads, many of which are not paved.

Business Assets:

Arvon Township has a number of assets that would help address the challenges presented. These assets include the following:

- Recreational and scenic assets include:
 - Camping facilities at the State Forest Campground and other local camping areas.
 - Big Erik's Bridge

- Lake Superior Shoreline (Arvon Township boasts more Lake Superior Shoreline than any other Township in the Upper Peninsula.)
 - Miles of scenic rivers and waterfalls
 - Mount Arvon (highest elevation point in the State)
 - Pt. Abbaye
 - Multiple historic sites and buildings within the Township.
 - Miles of motorized and non-motorized trails within the Township.
 - Local shopping and restaurants.
 - Local waterways and marina
 - County and Township parks and scenic stops
- Existing major employers include:
 - The township has very little employment opportunity and most of the jobs that are existing within the township are small local businesses, the local K-6 school, and various local resorts and cabins.
 - The bulk of the employment opportunities lay outside the Township borders in neighboring L'Anse, Baraga and the local Keweenaw Bay Indian Community.
- Shopping/Business Districts:
 - The Township does not have a primary shopping or business district, so to speak, it consists primarily of small shops scattered throughout the community.
 - A couple of spot commercial zonings are scattered within the Township and these support a local sawmill, bar, trade store and beauty salon.

Economic Development Strategy

Growth determinants:

In order to understand the growth needs of Arvon Township it is helpful to understand the physical needs of that growth. Apart from the economic conditions which exist, there are four primary principles which determine the type and pattern of growth that occur: available utility service, available road systems, the preservation and conservation of existing environmental features and zoning and land use planning.

Utility Services:

The primary utilities needed for developments are electric, gas, water service and sanitary sewer. Gas and electric service are provided by utility companies and the demand for these services, along with the ability to afford their installation, drives their expansion. Water and sewer service can be provided in a number of different ways, from local independent wells and septic systems to public water and sewer systems. The main distraction from installing public water and sewer services typically are the high cost of

installation, the overall capacity of the system, the maintenance needs of the system and the ongoing fight to fund all of these efforts.

However, with the drastic improvement of individual package treatment systems, it is likely that the need for public utilities in the future will lessen. These smaller systems allow residents to provide their own private treatment systems for affordable prices, even if the locations continue to become more remote. These engineered systems may help resolve sewer problems that occur with the development of lakeshore regions and more remote locations within the township while still providing proper treatment of waste.

Road systems:

If the Township foresees any intensification of development, the demands of this development will be such that it will put new strains on the local roadways or lack of main highways. The isolation of no major highway may benefit the overall atmosphere of the community and be a draw to those that are looking for this rural setting, however, it generally does not provide the type of accessibility and visibility that investors seek when looking to locate primary businesses.

However, what many townships may view as an obstacle to future planning, Arvon Township should embrace the rural values of their community and continue to work towards planning efforts that enhance this natural aspect.

Environmental features:

Environmental features can and will influence the potential future development in most undeveloped areas, especially where development is strictly regulated such as within floodplains, designated wetlands and coastal wetlands. As consciousness is raised about the impact of growth on the environment, individual projects are now held to a much higher standard regarding regulations. Conservation of significant environmental resources has and continues to be a major step to overcome when looking at new development. Whether a tract of land is publicly or privately held it will be controlled by the particular restriction placed on that property to reduce the negative environmental impact. The goal of this Township is to work with all levels of government as well as private individuals in order to reduce the friction often caused by the environmental impacts of development. This community will strive to work together to reduce this friction.

Existing zoning and land use planning:

Policies regarding land use are typically expressed within a general plan called the Land Use Plan. As growth occurs, the Plan must be reviewed to make sure that the new growth is in spirit with what has been planned. As these events unfold, it will be necessary to review and most likely change the Plan to accommodate the new ideas. Since the Plan is designed to be flexible, future planners can work with the community to provide the necessary plans for the future.

Local control of the use of lands (with some exceptions such as state and federal land uses) is an accepted and legal principle. Land use is controlled through the separation of land into various use areas called zoning districts. The rules governing these districts are contained in a zoning ordinance created by the local government that contains provisions controlling the type, size and intensity of the development allowed.

Although Arvon Township is not currently wrestling with complex zoning issues, new development can often create new problems. There is a need for the local community to provide flexibility with its planning and zoning while still maintaining some degree of control.

Revenue Stream:

The tax structure of the State of Michigan, as with most states, has been developed around the taxation of jurisdictions, also known as property taxes. Each jurisdiction is tasked with the responsibility of providing certain services that range from road maintenance to building inspections. Taxes collected go toward the provision of these services. Since the tax burden is spread between all property owners, homeowners are rightfully expected to pay their fair share, along with the other non-residential entities within that community.

As costs for these services provided continue to rise, the tax revenues which are meant to offset the costs do not typically rise at the same rate. This, in turn, often causes a shortfall in income and therefore necessitates the raising of taxes. As shown with the lack of any current business revenue stream, property taxes are currently the primary revenue stream for the township.

The Next Step

Few communities can claim success in overcoming all of the economic development obstacles within their path. However, with a conscientious effort at future planning and a strong community presence, many of the “negative” obstacles that are now faced by Arvon Township can be turned into positives and lead to successful planning and development in the future.

Land Use Maps

Existing Land Use Map
Future Land Use Map

ARVON TOWNSHIP



EXISTING LAND USE

- Baraga County Land
- Recreational Residential (*Blue*)
- Tribal Land (KBIC) (*Brown*)
- Arvon Township Land
- Farm Forest (*Green*)
- General Residential (*Red*)
- Business (Commercial)
- Forest Reserve

Existing Land Use Map Classifications:

Agricultural – The act, science, or business of cultivating or using land and soil for the production of crops for the uses of animals or humans, and includes, but is not limited to, purposes related to agriculture, farming, dairying, pasturage, horticulture, floriculture, viticulture, and animal and poultry husbandry.

Commercial or Business District – designed to give the Township a General Business District, to provide for the establishment of shopping areas, personal services, and professional offices, and other retail stores and service facilities.

FF Farm Forest – designed to promote the use of wooded and rural areas of the Township in a manner that will retain the basic attractiveness of natural resources, and provide enjoyment for both visitors, and the community at large. The maintenance of productive agricultural land should be encouraged and the fragmentation of productive agricultural land discouraged.

Forest Resource District – designed to protect and encourage the reservation of productive forest land resources for forest management, including tree production, harvesting, and reforestation. By intent, small lots and permanent residential occupancy is discouraged.

Private Forest – forest land currently designated as private land as shown on the Township map. This land is for private use only and any other use must have written permission of the land owner.

Public Forest – includes State Forests, State Parks and all other land that is open to the public.

Commercial Forest Land - The Commercial Forest program provides a property tax reduction to private landowners as an incentive to retain and manage forestland for long-term timber production. Landowners participating in this program pay a reduced property tax. Additionally, the State of Michigan pays \$1.20 per acre annually to each county where land is listed in the program. Landowners in this program agree to develop, maintain and manage the land as commercial forest through planting, natural reproduction, or other silvicultural practices. Lands listed in this program are open to the public for hunting, trapping and fishing. **The CF lands are not public lands. These lands are private lands under the control of private owners**, who through CF allow the public the privilege of hunting, trapping and fishing. The CF lands are not posted or signed as Commercial Forests and may be fenced and/or gated. While permission to hunt, trap or fish on CF lands is not required, the State of Michigan recommends you notify the landowner of your intention to do so. Although the general public has a right to hunt, trap and fish on these lands, the property is privately owned and subject to normal private

property rights. Unless you have permission of the property owner, the right to hunt, trap or fish on the land does not extend to associated activities such as the following:

- Littering
- Camping
- The cutting of shooting lanes, or the cutting or destruction of brush, trees or other plants for any purpose.
- The use of nails, bolts, wire, tree steps or other materials or activities which harm, lessen or destroy the value of trees.
- The construction of blinds or the construction or placement of other structures, except for the gathering of dead materials found on the ground.
- Target-shooting or sighting-in firearms.
- The use of ORV's or other vehicles on private property when prohibited by fencing or posting. If vehicles are allowed, care should be taken to avoid blocking access to roads or parking areas.

Industrial – designed to accommodate wholesale activities, warehouses, major repair operations, manufacturing and other industrial operations, subject to certain performance requirements relative to their impact on the community and adjacent nonindustrial districts. Principle uses include: manufacturing, processing, research and experimental laboratories, wholesale storage facilities, contractor yards, equipment storage and material handling operations, repair and maintenance activities for any type of vehicles, gravel extraction, mining, quarrying as well as any planned industrial park.

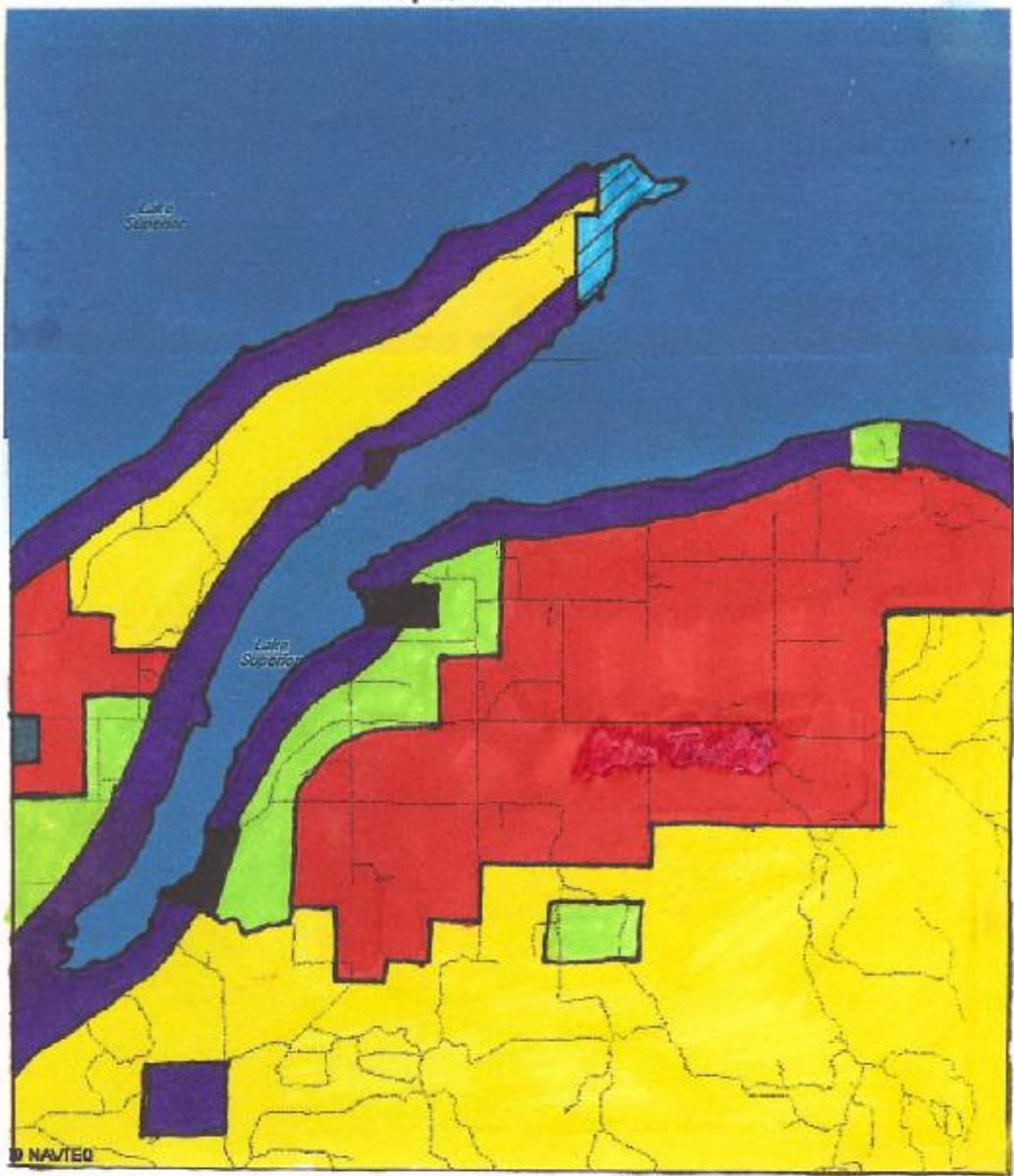
Public, Institutions (Tribal) – land designated tribal or public as defined by the Township and/or State of Michigan. Please see State of Michigan website for designated tribal lands.

Residential; Rural Residential – designed to provide for one-family dwelling sites and the residentially related uses. The uses permitted by right and on special approval are intended to promote a compatible arrangement of land uses for home, keeping neighborhood relatively quiet and free of unrelated traffic influences. Also, this definition is designed to provide for one or two family dwelling sites and uses that serve residential areas in keeping with character of residential areas in the Township. Higher density residential may be allowed upon special approval. Finally, it is designed to provide residential areas that include a broader range and more intensive use of land than in the other residential districts. Local business and personal service uses are included on a special approval basis.

Recreational residential – designed to accommodate cottage and seasonal home developments in suitable land areas. It is intended that the seasonal home areas discourage the mixing of recreation home areas with commercial resorts, business services and major institutional or community services.

Scenic Resource District – designed to apply to stream and river corridors, lake shores, impoundment waters, scenic highways and other natural and scenic resources that should be protected and conserved to promote environmental quality and community character.

ARVON TOWNSHIP



FUTURE LAND USE

-  > Recreational
-  > Residential
-  > Farm Forest (Agricultural)
-  > Forest Resource (CFR)
-  > Commercial
-  > Baraga County

Future Land Use Plan Classifications:

Agricultural/Residential – this category is intended for agricultural lands, but allows residential development on lots with sufficient size to allow for on-site water and sewer facilities. This method of development for residential lots should have some requirements of lot size to be maintained. This will allow for future development of individual homes along roads yet preserve the land to the rear for agricultural production consistent with food and fiber production.

Forest – Commercial Forest Reserve (CFR) – this classification includes CFR lands located throughout the Township. These lands are reserved for commercial forestry operations, including harvesting and reforestation. Laws governing the CFR require that public access be maintained for recreational purposes.

Residential/Recreational – this classification applies to those properties located along the Lake Superior Shoreline, along major rivers and inland lakes, including seasonal homes, campgrounds, and permanent homes located along the waterfront.

Rural residential - Rural residential property, according to real estate professionals, is a piece of land zoned for residential use that is located in a less densely populated area than cities. This can include agricultural or farming areas. In many senses, it is the direct opposite of city or urban property.

Residential/Single Family – this classification are reserved for single family residential uses, along with compatible non-residential uses such as churches, schools and home occupations.

Residential/Multiple Family – this category is similar to Residential/Single Family classification except that it also includes multiple family developments. Currently, there are no properties with this designation and future plans for this type of development should consider the availability of public utilities and access to at least one major roadway within the Township.

Commercial – this classification includes all types of commercial development such as shopping, professional offices and service buildings. Only general locations for Commercial uses are shown on the map with specific locations to be determined by the Township in the future on a case-by-case basis. This map and the locations of the commercial designation are general in basis and not all small areas can be shown. It is not the intent of the Land Use Plan to eliminate any existing areas but any future commercial development should be located within the locations designated on the Future Land Use Map.

Implementation

This plan can be a successful guide for the future development of Arvon Township only if it continually is used to support the decision making process of the Township. The Arvon Township Planning Commission has the responsibility placed on its shoulders by the citizens of the township to make decisions that are consistent with the Land Use Plan and to keep the Plan current. The Township Board has the power to implement the Plan through the passage of ordinances and the expenditure of public funds.

Primary Pieces to Implementation

There are five key components necessary to implement the Land Use Plan:

1. Land use controls
2. Financial Assistance
3. Governmental programs
4. Cooperation of local and surrounding government agencies
5. Participation of township residents

In addition to these elements, several specific needs were identified through the planning process. These needs relate directly to various elements within the Plan including:

1. Environmental protection and restrictions
2. Existing and future land use
3. State of transportation within the Township
4. Existing or lack of public facilities and services

Land Use Controls

The Plan should be implemented through the use of local zoning regulations. The adoption and continual review and updating of Zoning Ordinances is crucial. Without effective zoning there is little protection for the property owners from new development and very little, if any, guidance for developers and builders looking to locate within the Township.

Financial Assistance

The Township can participate in federal grant programs which can assist and enhance the expenditure of funds for public improvements as well as encourage certain types of development within the Township. The Township may be able to implement the Plan with assistance from local programs such as the Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

Governmental Programs

One government program that may be used is the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) which is a capital budget extending for usually 6 years ahead. Based upon the Plan, the Township Board can attempt to predict the need for improvements in certain areas or can encourage development through the expenditure of local funds. Another important aspect of local government programs is the ongoing local planning program. The Plan must be constantly used in making decisions, must be re-evaluated over time and be kept up to date using the most current information available.

Government Cooperation

The Township must recognize its role in the region, County and surrounding units of government and continue to cooperate with them in conducting programs affecting Township residents. With this in mind, these governments and agencies should be given copies of the Plan and consulted during its creation and implementation.

Participation of local residents

The Plan will only be successful if the local residents support its goals and policies. The Zoning Board and Township Board must make attempts to involve the local residents through the availability of information. This information can be made ready for the public through public meetings, local publications and news media. By allowing full access to the necessary information, the Township will allow the public to acquire the necessary background information to help communicate their desires for the present and future planning of the Township.

Implementation Actions

The Arvon Township Land Use Plan has established the direction the present and future planning needs of the community. In order to begin the task of implementation, specific actions must be taken. These actions should follow the planning goals and objectives set forth by the Plan. These actions are summarized below.

Environmental Protections and Restrictions

- Sensitive areas of the Township should remain undeveloped such as protected wetlands and marshes. The Township will investigate incentives for residents and property owners to maintain these lands in their natural state.
- Efforts will continue to be made to highlight efforts to show citizens the costly effects of groundwater contamination and stress the techniques to prevent such damage.
- The township will continue to evaluate potential developments to provide adequate protection for restricted environmental features.

- Natural features that are an integral part of the community's character shall be integrated to ensure these natural features are preserved and remain undisturbed. Woodlands, open spaces, wetlands, vistas and unique agricultural lands will be evaluated to ensure that the integrity of natural systems is maintained.

Existing and Future Land Use

- Current areas will be established to allow future expansion of commercial development within a designated zoned area. This area will be located centrally within the community and should take into account the current location of the Township buildings and the surrounding facilities.
- Zoning patterns will establish smooth transitions between different zoning areas throughout the community.
- Much of the Township will have limitations to development due to the lack of public utilities, adequate roadways, varying soils and in some cases varying topography. Zoning in these areas should be limited to very low density residential uses.

Existing State of Transportation

- The Township will undertake efforts to educate local residents regarding the care of local roadways.
- The Township will undertake efforts to educate residents and other local units of government as to the value of access management and attempt to show them implementation techniques.
- The Township will work with the Baraga County Road Commission to potentially begin developing a Street Improvement Plan. The Plan will take into account to potential for future growth within the Township and look to create a plan that uses the existing street system as well as planned expansion routes and street improvements.
- The Township will investigate the need for a Non-Motorized Trail Plan that will increase the convenience and safety of pedestrians and bicyclists along roadways.
- The Township will investigate the need for a Motorized Trail Plan that will increase the convenience and safety of ATV's, snowmobiles, etc. throughout the Township.
- The Township will continue to work with the Baraga County Road Commission and other units of government and agencies to ensure that road improvements, repairs and access management efforts are coordinated.

Public Facilities

- Continuous efforts will be made to educate local residents in fire prevention and fire safety techniques. The local school, church and public organizations will be targeted in this effort.

- Township procedures will continue to include the coordination of project reviews to ensure that adequate law enforcement and fire protection is available to service new development.
- The Township will continue to work with the local school to inform them of new development proposals and participate in future school planning.
- A Capital Improvement Program will be considered to assist the Township in planning its financial future.
 - The Capital Project List will contain a list of potential capital projects projected for the years 2011 through 2016. Unlike the full CIP that will be prepared in 2011, the Capital Project List will not attempt to rank or prioritize the suggested capital projects, or identify funding sources. Instead, it will simply be a snapshot picture of potential capital projects and their cost. It is the hope that by preparing this list, it will help to familiarize and prepare Department Heads, Committee Chairs, and others towards the CIP process in 2011.
 - § Firehall improvements
 - § Park Improvements, recreation
 - § Professional building
 - § Townhall upgrades (ie, windows, insulation, etc.)
- The Township Hall will continue to be made available for use by Township residents for local activities and groups.
- The Township will continue to work with the local volunteer fire department to support its progress, training and growth of volunteers.

References

Arvon Township, 1871-1971, Skanee, Michigan, “The First One Hundred Years”

Arvon Township Assessor, Ken Andersen.

Arvon Township Planning Commission, current members (2010).

Houghton County Land Use Plan, January 4, 2004.

Baraga Township Land Use Plan, 2007 draft.

Baraga County Historical Book – Published 1969.

History of Baraga Telephone Company, Baraga County – William Stark

State of Michigan Website, Michigan DNRE

Public Review, Participation and Comments