



NORTHWOODS PLANNING & ZONING

325 Northwoods Rd.
Marquette, Michigan 49855
Ph | 906.399.1808
northwoodspz@gmail.com

MEMORANDUM

TO: Arvon Township Planning Commission

FROM: Jason McCarthy – Northwoods Planning & Zoning Services, LLC

DATE: June 1, 2022

SUBJECT: Master Plan Update – Completed Draft & Tentative Adoption Timeline

Planning Commissioners, please see the attached final draft of the Arvon Township Master Plan – 2022-2026.

I have incorporated your suggested adjustments into the plan, added photos and incorporated additional hyperlinks to relevant, additional information of specific topics. In addition, I have completely revamped Section 2 – Social Characteristics and Section 3 – Economic Characteristics to better reflect *2020 US Decennial Census* and *2020 American Community 5-Year Survey* results. The graphics provided are much easier to understand and more relevant, in my opinion.

Finally, below is the tentative schedule for the plan's formal review and potential adoption, as provided by the Planning Commission.

- Planning Commission transmits final draft to Arvon Township Board 6/2/22.
- Present final draft to Arvon Township Board on 6/6/22.
- The 63-day review period begins on 6/7/22 after plan is distributed, as required.
- The 63-day review period ends on 8/10/22.
- Make any necessary edits to the plan after 8/9/22.
- Post draft plan needs on the Arvon Township website in early June 2022.
- A press release will be submitted on 6/7/22 to publicize the document and tell the public how and where it can be accessed.
- Conduct public hearing the week of 8/15/22.
- After the public hearing and all changes are made, the Planning Commission may adopt the plan in mid-August or early September 2022, by resolution.
- Once adopted by the Planning Commission, the plan will go to the Arvon Township Board for Resolution of Concurrence at their September 9/12/22 meeting.
- Once officially adopted, the plan will be published as final on the website and a few final copies printed for the Planning Commission members and others, as needed.

As requested, I will put together a proposal to provide technical assistance for the Recreation Plan update in June 2022.

If you have any further questions, please let me know.

JRM



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Encl.

Arvon

T O W N S H I P

MASTER PLAN | 2022



JEWEL OF THE U.P.

ADOPTED ON: _____, 2022

This Master Plan was prepared by the Arvon Township Planning Commission with technical assistance from,
Northwoods Planning & Zoning Services, LLC

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DRAFT

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TOWNSHIP BOARD

Jay Fish – Supervisor
Lisa Marinich – Clerk
Krystal Larson – Treasurer
Robert Janda – Trustee
Chris Wahmhoff – Trustee

PLANNING COMMISSION

Nancy Strohschein – Chairperson
Linnea Barron – Secretary
Robert Janda – Twp. Board Rep.
Jay Loman
Joseph Bollech
Robert Lindert

We would also like to acknowledge former Planning Commission members: Bette Gabe, Keith Erickson (Board Rep.), Dorothy Nankervis and Mary DeLine as well as, former Township Board Supervisor, James (Whitey) Soli.

The Arvon Township Master Plan – 2022-2026 is the second land use plan in place for Arvon Township. The first plan was created in 2010. The Planning Commission was assisted by Jason McCarthy, from Northwoods Planning & Zoning Services, LLC. The master plan update began in January of 2020, with adoption of the document occurring on _____, 2022.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Master Plan Document

The [Arvon Township](#) Master Plan details the vision for the community's future in the areas of future land use, economic trends, sustainability and resilience planning, community facilities and services, recreational assets, and transportation planning, through the establishment of quantifiable goals and objectives. This vision has been reached by acquiring input from the Arvon Township Planning Commission and the community, as well as from research of demographic data and economic trends.

The [Michigan Planning Enabling Act, P.A. 33 of 2008](#) (as amended), provides for all local government (township, village, city & county) land use planning in the state. It does not amend the zoning of property and it does not have the force of law. It is merely a set of policies, strategies and goals to enhance and improve the community over a projected period of time. The Master Plan update process also creates a framework for public participation and community involvement which promotes regional cooperation and contributes to the small-town quality-of-life found in Arvon Township.

The Michigan [Zoning Enabling Act 110 of 2006](#) (as amended) provides for all local government (township, village, city & county) zoning in the state. The act requires that the zoning ordinance be based on a Master Plan. Zoning promotes health, safety and general welfare and is the legal mechanism used to adjust the classification and regulation of land use.

The Master Plan is the community's vision, while zoning provisions provide a pathway to that vision. With an active Master Plan in place, zoning decisions consistent with the plan and zoning ordinance are presumed to be valid and defensible in the court of law.

1.2 The Master Plan Update Process

The sections presented in this document represent the conclusion of months of discussion and study by the Arvon Township Planning Commission, with technical assistance provided by Northwoods Planning & Zoning Services, LLC.

A Public Forum was held at the Arvon Township Hall on Thursday, July 15, 2021, where twenty-four (24) members of the community gathered to offer their input on the future of the community. A robust discussion was held and those conversations are documented in this Master Plan update.

The final draft plan was posted on the Arvon Township website on _____, 2022 and made available at the Arvon Township Hall. Residents also had the opportunity to provide comments at the Planning Commission's public hearing on _____, 2022.

This Plan was adopted by the Arvon Township Planning Commission on _____, 2022. Finally, a Resolution of Concurrence was adopted by the Arvon Township Board of Trustees on _____, 2022.

2.0 SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

2.1 Introduction

Social characteristics are an essential component of the Master Plan when forecasting the future needs of the community. They provide the foundation upon which a major portion of this plan is based. While an evaluation of a community's current characteristics provides insight into immediate needs and deficiencies, population trends provide a foundation for determining future land use requirements, public facility needs, and essential service delivery.

This section of the plan examines several elements which are central to understanding a community's overall population and household characteristics. These items include population trends, age distribution, race and ethnicity, household relationships, household size, marital status, household type and ownership status.

2.2 Population Trends

The population of Arvon Township has, and still does, center on the economics of its abundant natural resources. Population projections are useful for the Planning Commission and Township Board for forecasting future residential demands for public services, recreational needs and other capital improvements. These projections also rely heavily on the future economic trends of the township and the region as a whole.

The majority of Arvon Township's population is concentrated in two rural communities, Aura, and Skanee. According to the [2020 Decennial Census](#), Arvon Township has a population of 496, residing within 131 square miles, resulting in 3.76 people per square mile.

2.3 Age Distribution

On the whole, the aging population of the Township is following state and national trends, which result from a combination of factors. The primary causes of this aging are increased life expectancies, combined with the fact the largest segment of the population, the so-called "baby boomers," are aging. A trend toward smaller families, with many people choosing to delay childbearing or not to have children, also contributes toward this trend. Age distribution, sex and race and ethnicity within Arvon Township is denoted in the below graphics, as provided by the [2020 American Community 5-Year Survey](#):

Age

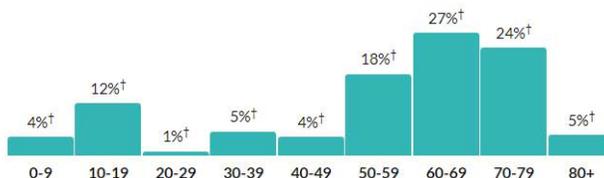
63.9

Median age

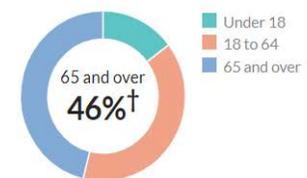
about 1.4 times the figure in Baraga County: 45.8

more than 1.5 times the figure in Michigan: 39.8

Population by age range



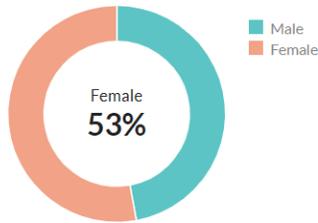
Population by age category



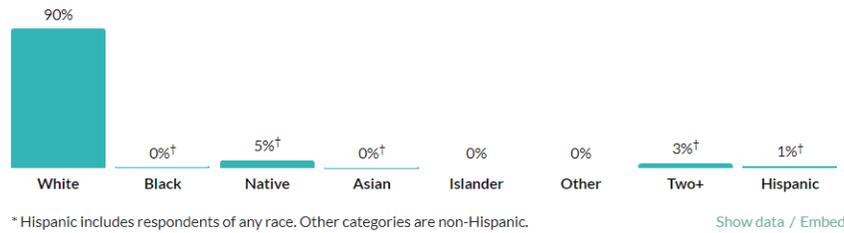
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Sex



Race & Ethnicity



† Margin of error is at least 10 percent of the total value.

2.3 Household Characteristics

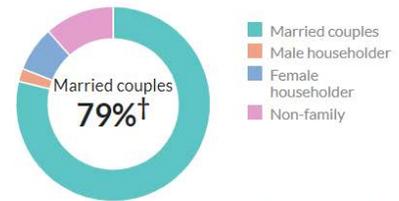
As of 2020, Arvon Township had 196 households, with 2.1 persons per household. 79% of the household were occupied by married couples. Marital status in Arvon Township was listed as 71% married. By sex, 11% of males and 5% of females were divorced.

Households

196
Number of households
Baraga County: 3,188
Michigan: 3,980,408

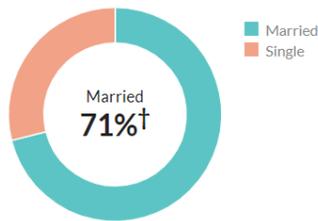
2.1
Persons per household
a little less than the figure in Baraga County: 2.3
about 90 percent of the figure in Michigan: 2.5

Population by household type



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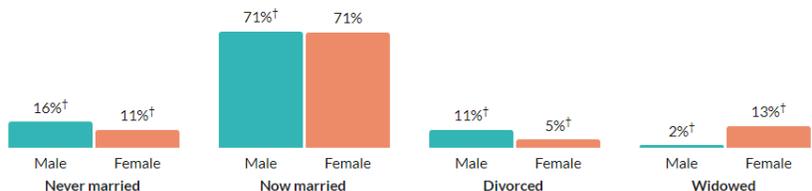
Marital status



* Universe: Population 15 years and over

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Marital status, by sex



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† Margin of error is at least 10 percent of the total value.

Of the 746 total housing units, 74% were listed as vacant indicating that Arvon Township has a considerable seasonal residency where, “snowbirds” reside in Arvon Township during the warmer months and spend the winter months in warmer climates. Regarding the ownership situation of occupied units, only 4% were listed as being rented, with 96% being owner-occupied.

Units & Occupancy

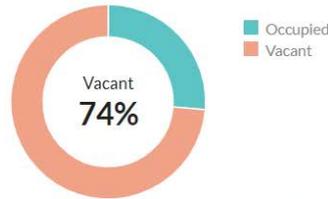
746

Number of housing units

Baraga County: 5,314

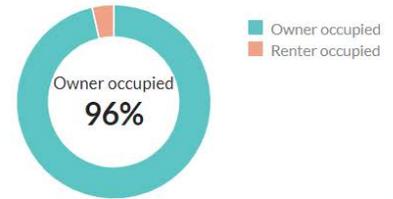
Michigan: 4,611,913

Occupied vs. Vacant



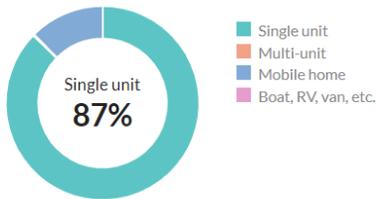
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Ownership of occupied units



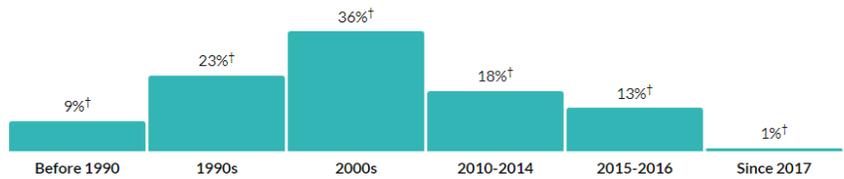
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Types of structure



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Year moved in, by percentage of population



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† Margin of error is at least 10 percent of the total value.

Arvon Township has more than 1.5 times more of its population identified as having veteran status and more than double the Michigan rate of 6.8%. Of the 54 total veterans 32 are listed as Vietnam-era. Three are listed as Korean War-era veterans.

Veteran status

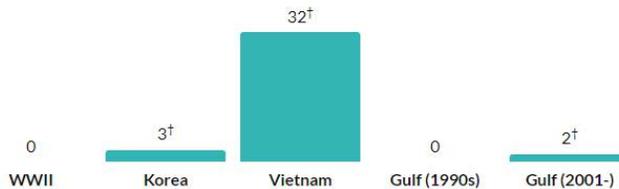
15.3%

Population with veteran status

more than 1.5 times the rate in Baraga County: 8.7% †

more than double the rate in Michigan: 6.8%

Veterans by wartime service



* Civilian veterans who served during wartime only

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54 Total veterans

52 Male

2 Female

† Margin of error is at least 10 percent of the total value.

3.0 ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

3.1 Introduction

Numerous factors contribute to the economic development of a community, many of which extend far beyond the community's boundaries into the region as whole. Understanding the history of economic development in the community is imperative to knowing the culture of its population. Current economic aspects such as income, workforce industry type, and educational attainment will also be detailed below. Finally, broad economic development goals and implementation tools designed to assist Arvon Township in achieving those goals, will be discussed in this chapter.

3.2 Historical Economic Factors

Like the rest of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, Arvon Township's economic history is closely related to its natural resources. Logging and earth product industries were mainstays of the local economy throughout the Township's early history. These industries have included commercial fishing, fur trading, mineral extraction, and timber harvesting. One of the factors involved in the decline of these industries includes government mandates, which affected the commercial fishing industry.

However, a more sustainable future is possible by capitalizing on some of the very natural resources that the community was founded on. This would include realizing those resources in a different way – through outdoor recreational opportunities, tourism, and historical interpretation, along with a blend of other traditional industries.

3.3 Current Economic Factors

Income levels and educational levels are important factors when considering future economic development planning. Shown below are average per capita income, median household income, poverty level and educational attainment are displayed graphically, according to the 2020 [American Community 5-Year Survey](#) results.

The average per capita income was listed as \$31,610, about 1.3 times higher than Baraga County and slightly less than the state average. Median household income was \$48,750 which was slightly higher than Baraga County as a whole and roughly 80% of the amount in Michigan. About 11.7% of the population was below the poverty line including 16.3% between the ages of 18-64 and 11.5% over the age of 65.

Income

\$31,610

Per capita income

about 1.3 times the amount in Baraga County: \$23,960

a little less than the amount in Michigan: \$32,854

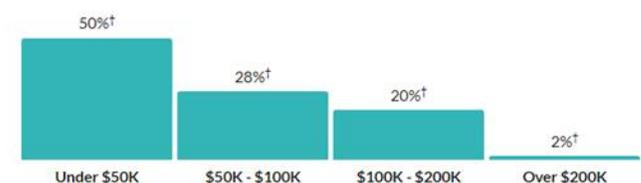
\$48,750

Median household income

a little higher than the amount in Baraga County: \$46,581

about 80 percent of the amount in Michigan: \$59,234

Household income



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9.9% of the population was below the poverty line including approximately 11% of seniors over the age of 65.

Poverty

9.9%

Persons below poverty line

about two-thirds of the rate in Baraga County: 14.2% †

about three-quarters of the rate in Michigan: 13.7%

Children (Under 18)



■ Poverty
■ Non-poverty

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Seniors (65 and over)



■ Poverty
■ Non-poverty

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† Margin of error is at least 10 percent of the total value.

As detailed below, Arvon Township features a relatively high-level of educational attainment when compared with the rest of Baraga County and the State of Michigan. Further, 35% reported some college-level education. 16% have obtained a Bachelor’s degree and approximately 9% hold a post-graduate degree.

Educational attainment

96.5%

High school grad or higher

about 10 percent higher than the rate in Baraga County: 89.9%

a little higher than the rate in Michigan: 91.3%

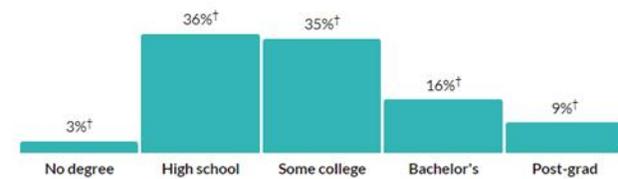
25.5%

Bachelor's degree or higher

more than 1.5 times the rate in Baraga County: 15.2% †

about 80 percent of the rate in Michigan: 30%

Population by highest level of education



* Universe: Population 25 years and over

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† Margin of error is at least 10 percent of the total value.

3.4 Economic Development Strategies

Arvon Township’s natural resources and aesthetic assets continue to provide tourism as a significant component of future economic development strategies. Area attractions include coastal areas, public forest lands, inland lakes and rivers, campgrounds, waterfalls, ORV trails, and a variety of parks. These resources attract outdoor enthusiasts from many recreational sectors.

Above all, Arvon Township should work to retain and encourage expansion of existing businesses and industries. Where and when feasible, attract new economic developments such as light manufacturing and research and development to help provide various levels of desired employment opportunities in Arvon Township.

Other, future economic development possibilities include recreation tourism, eco- friendly tourism, and cultural and/or historic tourism. Opportunities to market the community’s rich history by developing cultural-based interpretive tours do exist. Eco-tourism provides unique educational opportunities and experiences to those who value the area’s pristine and protected natural and cultural areas. This sector of tourism also typically provides financial benefits that support conservation and stewardship.

Other opportunities to enhance tourism such as additional ORV trails, sport fishing, camping, hiking, hunting and mountain biking, could also be developed with sound fiscal and long-range planning efforts.

3.5 Future Development Considerations

In order to understand the growth needs of Arvon Township, we need to understand the physical requirements of that growth. Aside from the economic conditions which exist, there are four primary principles which determine the type and pattern of growth that occur: available utility services, available road systems and conditions, the preservation and conservation of existing environmental features, zoning regulations and land use planning.

Utility Infrastructure

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.

Transportation Network

If the Township expects an increase in development, the demands of this development will depend on the extent and condition of the local road network. The isolation of the area may benefit the overall character of the community and be a draw to those that are looking for the rural setting; however, it does not provide ideal accessibility and traffic-based visibility that developers often seek to locate primary businesses. Arvon Township will continue to work with the road commission to address future transportation needs as they arise.

Environmental Considerations

Environmental features can certainly influence development in previously undeveloped areas, especially where floodplains, wetlands, and coastal areas exist. Policies continue to be implemented regarding the impact of growth on the environment, and developments have become more sustainable as a result. The goal of this Township is to work with all levels of government, as well as private property owners, to encourage sustainable development and to minimize any adverse impacts of development on the environment.

Existing Zoning & Land Use Planning

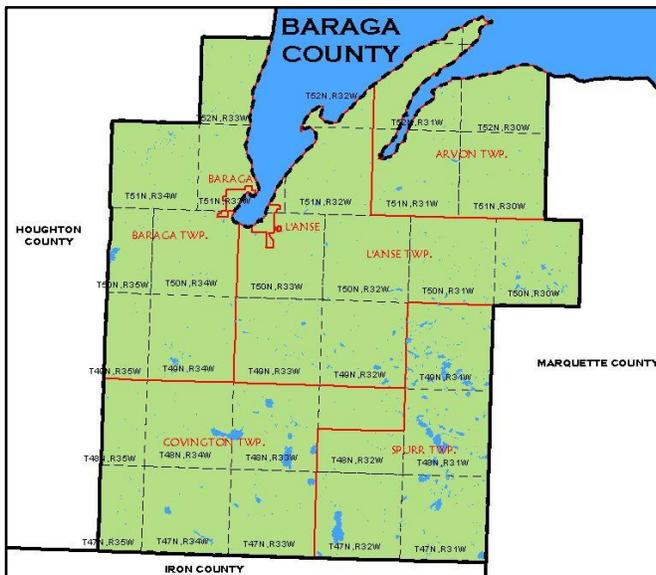
Policies regarding land use are typically expressed within a general plan called the Land Use Plan. As growth occurs, the plan must be reviewed to make sure that the new growth is consistent with what has been planned and anticipated. As new industries reveal themselves and evolve, it may be necessary to revisit and amend the plan to accommodate the new ideas. Since the plan is designed to be flexible, future generations can work with community officials to make changes, as needed.

Local land use regulation is a valuable and accepted legal principle. Land use is controlled through the separation of certain land use types into zoning districts. The rules governing these districts are contained in a zoning ordinance, created by the community, which contains provisions regulating the type, size and intensity of the development permissible. Zoning is designed to provide for the orderly development of land. From time to time, zoning regulations should also be reviewed to ensure that consideration is given to new or evolving industries that may be looking to locate in Arvon Township.

4.0 NATURAL RESOURCES

4.1 Introduction

Arvon Township is located in the west central portion of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan in [Baraga County](#). 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 “wraps” 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 and waterfalls. These include the Huron, Ravine, Slate and Silver Rivers.



Baraga County Map – Source: Michigan DNR



State of Michigan Map – Source: Wikipedia

Arvon Township can claim access to the highest point in Michigan, [Mt. Arvon](#), which stands at 1,979.238 feet above sea level and is actually located in the rugged backwoods of L'Anse Township. The road to Mt. Arvon is a seasonal road, however it is also accessible via snowmobile in the winter. 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. Although no panoramic views are offered from the summit of Mt. Arvon, visitors can enjoy the forested scenery. Blue diamond shaped signs (approximately every mile) mark the route to Mt. Arvon.

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.

4.2 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 northwesterly winds.

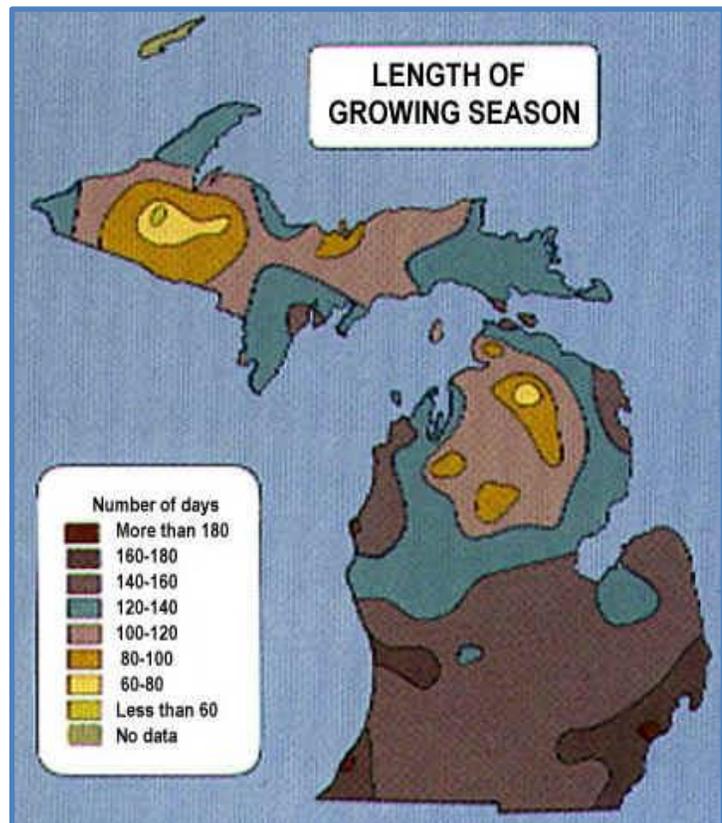
The moderating effect of the lake is experienced in spring and summer months when the cool water tends to level out temperature extremes and reduces the likelihood of frost. The areas adjacent to Lake Superior with good air drainage patterns experience the area's longest growing season and have a good 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 June through September (approximately 100-120 days), depending greatly on the effects of Lake Superior.

According to the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) (NOAA), 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 31 inches while the average snowfalls are 207 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.

4.3 Geology

The geology of Arvon Township is composed mainly of coarse textural glacial fill with sand areas and post glacial alluvium from the Cambrian and Precambrian Era.



Source: *Atlas of Michigan*, ed. Lawrence M. Sommers

The underlying bedrock of Michigan is mostly hidden from view by unconsolidated material deposited during continental glaciation. However, there are a number of places in the Lower Peninsula where the bedrock can be seen such as in rock quarries and in outcrops along rivers and lakes. In the western Upper Peninsula, a considerable amount of bedrock is visible.

Two major rock types are found in Michigan. The Lower Peninsula and the eastern parts of the Upper Peninsula are underlaid by a series of sedimentary rock layers: The Michigan Basin. These rock formations, consisting largely of shales, limestones, and sandstones, were deposited on the bottom of ancient seas that covered Michigan. The basin is estimated to be about 14,000 ft (4,267 m) thick, and

its rocks rest on the top of a very old Precambrian surface. The various layers of sedimentary rock are piled up on top of one another like a series of saucers.

The ancient igneous and metamorphic rocks that compose the Precambrian, or Canadian, Shield in the western part of the Upper Peninsula make up the second category of rocks. The igneous rocks are hard, crystalline, resistant to erosion, and are largely made up of granites and metamorphic rocks - rocks that have been changed through heat and pressure - composed mainly of gneisses and schists. The higher areas in the Upper Peninsula are the remnants of ancient peaks that have been worn down by the erosive action of wind, water, and moving ice. Thus, the Porcupine and Huron mountains in the western half of the Upper Peninsula have been greatly altered over their geologic history through uplift and erosion and are now only remnants of once-high mountains.

Both major types of rocks found in Michigan are important to humans. The igneous type contains valuable minerals such as iron ore and copper, and the sedimentary rocks contain petroleum, natural gas, salt, gypsum, and limestone.

4.4 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 detrimental 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.

In addition to their recreational value, other benefits of Arvon Township's 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 land, water, and vegetation are all linked to the ecology of the township. Once destroyed they usually cannot be replaced. In addition, the damage done 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 are an essential part of the Township's character. 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.

4.5 Environmental Sustainability

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, areas of steep topography, extensive shoreline and large tracts of woodlands.

4.6 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 conifers as well as various stands of apple trees scattered throughout the township, some of which were planted by early homesteaders.



ARVON TOWNSHIP | MASTER PLAN

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.

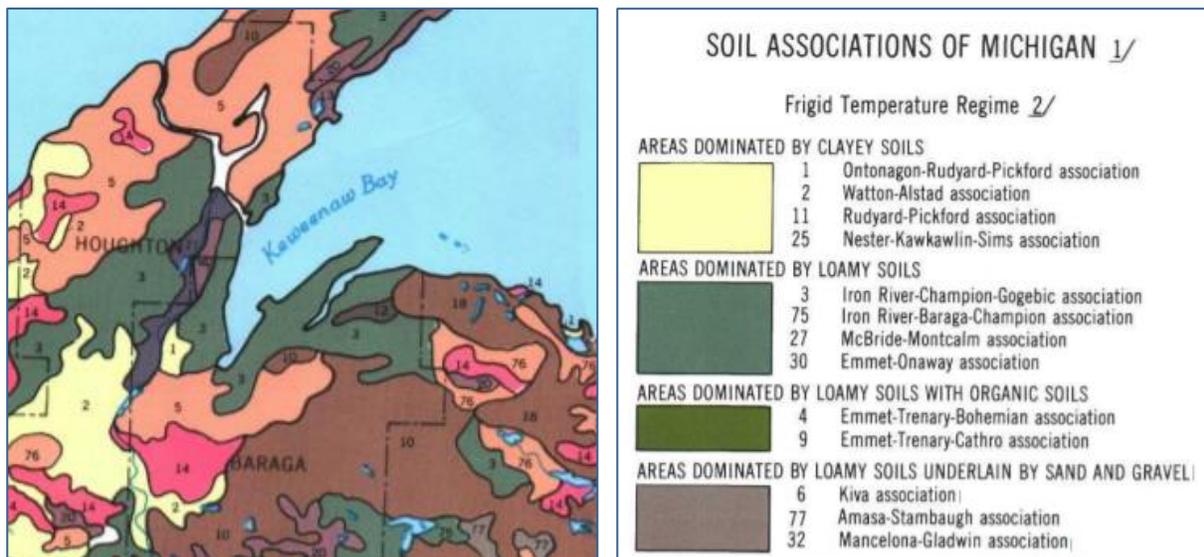
One of the major factors that make these lands available for such use is the public access provided by state lands and the many acres of [Commercial Forest](#) Act lands within the Township.

To maintain the forest base and to sustain the current forest activities, 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.

4.7 Soils

The majority of Arvon Township is composed mainly of Loamy Soils of the Iron River-Champion-Gogebic, Iron River-Baraga-Champion, McBride-Montcalm, and Emmet-Onaway associations. Additional soil types in the area are Loamy Soils underlain by sand and gravel from the Kiva, Amasa-Stambaugh, and Mancelona-Gladwin associations.



Source: Soil Association Map of Michigan – US Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service

4.8 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.

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.

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.

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 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.

4.9 Surface Water

Water features abound in Arvon Township. With approximately 37 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.

4.10 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 50% of the State's population and all of Arvon Township uses ground (well) water as the sole source of drinking water. Despite this obvious dependence on this resource, very little public understanding exists regarding 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.

5.0 EXISTING LAND USE

5.1 Introduction

Land use is impacted by the natural environment, economics, transportation patterns, conservation and preservation interests, land ownership, and the desires of the public. Policy at all levels (federal, state, county, and local) also plays an important role in land use through regulation and public investment. Public investment in schools, parks, roads and tourism, all provide opportunity for development and will often determine what type of development will occur.

The natural environment impacts land development because of topography, soil conditions, drainage potential, and tract size. Conservation land placed into public ownership provides additional recreational opportunities. Local governments are endowed with the ultimate authority for controlling land use through zoning regulations and building and sanitation codes. These factors establish parameters within which development can occur. It is important that future land use decisions be tangible in light of the ability of local governments to provide public services in a fiscally-responsible manner. In order to achieve this goal, it is important to review the current land use inventory of the Township.

Arvon Township consists primarily of private commercial forest and state-owned forest land. Several smaller county parks as well as Pointe 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.

A great deal of property in the township is non-homestead recreational and vacation homes. The culture centers around 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.

5.2 Housing & Community Development

Residential development in Arvon Township is considered low-density, with the primary residential concentrations located in Skanee, Aura, and Huron Bay. Other areas within the township consist of widely-dispersed, single-family homes, cabins, cottages, and camps that are scattered throughout the rural township. Some higher-density residential development can be found along the scenic shoreline and near parks areas.

The majority of households in Arvon Township are single-family, detached housing built mostly in the 20th century. Although the overall residential population continues to age, in recent years, and an influx of younger residents has occurred. This demographic often has the ability to work remotely and may seek the solitude and remoteness of the area.

With the increasing value of lakefront property throughout the State, Arvon Township property values continue to increase due to the large amount of shoreline within the community. It should also be noted that Arvon Township also has a large proportion of seasonal housing. This reflects the importance of

the area as a vacation destination, seasonal summer homes, and retirement community.

5.2 Educational Facilities

The Arvon Township School is a K-8 facility with a long history of service to the community. The enrollment is about 12 students per year. Middle and high school students are provided transportation by the local district to their choice of L'Anse or Baraga schools. The Arvon Township School is a school of choice and draws students from around the area.

5.3 Historical Features

The Township is full of beautiful historic buildings and landmarks. These historic features include the Zion Lutheran Church (which is 130 years old as of 2021), Arvon Township School, Arvon Township Hall, and the Arvon Township Historical Society Museum. Some of the primary landmarks include Big Erik's Bridge, Pointe Abbaye, Mount Arvon, Witz's Marina, the Huron Islands Lighthouse, as well as multiple scenic waterfalls and rivers.



5.4 Employment & 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 Tribal casino, local schools, and Michigan Technological University. The primary chances for employment opportunities throughout the township include logging, tourism, and service-based industries which also encompasses

hunting and fishing. However, many of the local residents are of an older generation that come to the area for retirement to enjoy the natural beauty of the area.

The Master Plan must consider the current and future characteristics of the local community. These characteristics will be utilized to create the Future Land Use Map for the Township, while also taking into consideration the types of employment and industry that the community would like to see in the future.

5.5 Transportation & 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 personal vehicles for all forms of transportation throughout the township.

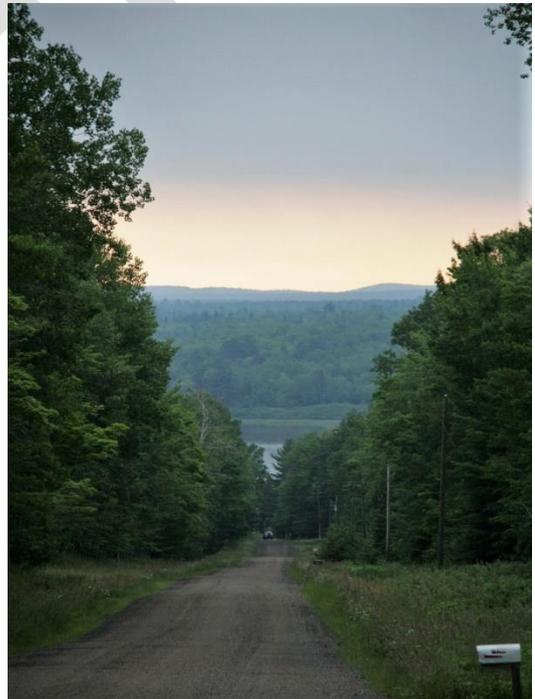
The township currently has a system of roads throughout the township and safe, well-maintained roads are vital to the community. They allow for safe movement of people and products (timber operations primarily) and are an integral part of the tourism industry.

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 roads to the many rural destination roads. At the present time, the paved roads in Arvon Township consist of the following:

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

Beesley and Karschney Roads are also partially paved.

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 condition of 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.



6.0 COMMUNITY SERVICES, RECREATION & CULTURE

6.1 Community Services

Arvon Township Hall & Office

Arvon Township administrative functions are conducted at the Township Hall located in Skanee. The hall is a historic building that serves the township with an office, restrooms, a large meeting hall and other spaces. The hall itself may be rented for wedding receptions, anniversaries, etc. It also serves as a community center for schools and community events. The building was constructed in 1915, has been kept in good repair, and should continue to serve the immediate needs of the community.



Museum

The Arvon Township Historical Society Museum is located approximately 16 miles from L'Anse on Skanee Road. The museum is locally funded and operated by the historical society. The museum is a former parsonage for the church and was built in 1909-1910. It is located across the road from the church. The historical society acquired it from Zion Lutheran Church for the exorbitant cost of \$1. The museum is open during the months of June through August on Saturdays from 1-4 p.m., and special requests. The museum is funded by donations and various fundraisers.



Parks & Recreation

Arvon Township provides its residents and visitors with several recreational opportunities. The Township maintains a ball field located near the Township Hall. Baraga County operates a park at Pointe Abbaye and State-owned campgrounds that provides visitors with rustic campgrounds and wonderful views of the pristine surroundings.



Water & Sewage

The Township water and sewage needs are serviced by only residential septic systems and independent private wells administered by [Western Upper Peninsula Health Department](#).

Police Service

Police and protection services are provided by the [Baraga County Sheriff's Department](#) and Michigan State Police and Tribal police departments. Mutual aid agreements are coordinated by the Baraga County Sheriff's Department. Any of these agencies, when available, will respond to an incident. 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 original Fire Hall is located next to the township hall. A new Fire Hall that houses the fire trucks was built in 2019. The newest fire truck, a tanker, was purchased in approximately 2013. The department features about a dozen volunteers. All equipment and apparatus are reported to be in good condition. This service is on a fully-volunteer basis.

EMT & Ambulance Service

Arvon Township is served by EMTs as first responders. [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 Bay Ambulance built its building in 1991. Services include: Emergency medical service and transportation of the sick and injured; public service and injury prevention; CPR and First Aid training; stop the bleed training; and child car seat education.

Hospitals

Hospital facilities are provided by:

- [Baraga County Memorial Hospital BCMH](#) in L’Anse is a level IV trauma center.
- [UP Health System](#) in Portage is a level III trauma center.
- [UP Health System Bell](#) in Ishpeming.
- [UP Health System](#) in Marquette is a level II trauma center.

UP Health System Bell in Ishpeming and UP Health System Marquette are both regional health care facilities.

6.2 Recreation

Recreational opportunities within a community often reflect the quality of life that is enjoyed by its residents, and allure by its visitors. When considering future land use issues and opportunities, recreation facilities and programs should be at the forefront of the discussion. Arvon Township is home to world-class, four-season recreation opportunities with its Lake Superior shoreline, rugged terrain and miles of trails. The natural resources are part of the community fabric. Recreational planning in Arvon Township aims to develop and promote recreational opportunities that meet the needs of the township’s residents, visitors and tourists — regardless of their abilities.

To that end, below is a listing of the recreational facilities in Arvon Township:

Township Hall Park

Arvon Township owns approximately 15 acres at the intersection of Town Road and Park Road. While it is not a particularly large parcel, it serves the function of a Community Park. It is the site of the Township Hall which serves as the community’s indoor recreation needs. In addition to the seat of township government, the structure features a kitchen and is rented to the community for gatherings and township events. The upstairs provides an auditorium. A ramp provides access to the meeting rooms. The grounds immediately surrounding the township hall are park like and provide a nice informal space for small public events. On the west end of this parcel and accessed from Park Road is the townships active recreation facility. The facility includes baseball fields and is also available for other activities requiring a large grassy playfield.

Arvon Township Park

This site is located west of the Township Hall Park on Park Road. It is principally used as a boating access to Huron Bay. The park also includes a basketball court, parking, picnic sites, and restrooms. There are two skid piers which are maintained by the township. The launching of small fishing boats is possible; however, the launching of larger boats is difficult due to limited water depth. Recent low



lake levels have contributed to this problem along with the accumulation of sand in the near shore area. Ice fishing tournaments are also held here in the winter months.



Township Cemeteies

The Skanee Cemetery occupies part of a 40-acre parcel near Lightfoot Bay. While the parcel is managed as a public cemetery, it is also an interest to tourists due the site's long history. As such, it receives a certain amount of tourist traffic and with sensitive trail improvements could contribute significantly to the community's hiking opportunities. There are also several small, pond and wetland habitats on the parcel that offer ideal wildlife viewing opportunities. Other than the cemetery proper and associated trails, and does not meet accessibility guidelines.

The Ravine River Cemetery is located on the Lundberg Homestead on Sicotte Road. Though not owned by the township, the history of this location is known and treasured by local residents.

Roland Lake

Roland Lake is a beautiful 40-acre lake 4 miles southeast of Skanee. It is spring-fed and stocked with brook trout, with a maximum depth of 22 feet. The boat launch is suitable for small to medium sized boats and accessible from a gravel road. Toilet facilities are available at the boat launch.

Arvon Township Waterfront Parcels

- Arvon Township owns 34 acres of undeveloped Lake Superior frontage near the eastern township boundary. The site is near a popular site for wind surfing and kayaking but has no formal access or development at this time. As an undeveloped site, accessibility is limited. The site is entirely forested and features a mostly rocky shoreline. There is narrow sand beach near the east edge of the parcel that is utilized for beach goers.

- Arvon Township owns an approximate 38-acre parcel that neighbors Vicks Point. The parcel currently has no road access and is surrounded by private holdings. No immediate plans to develop the parcel exist at the time of this report.
- Commercial marina and camping opportunities are also available immediately north of Skanee at Witz's Marina. Large fishing boats can be launched from this site. The nearest alternate public boat launch is located in the Village of L'Anse.



- There are trails and rustic camping sites at Baraga County facilities at Point Abbaye.
- There is also a unique natural area managed by the Keweenaw Land Trust at Lightfoot Bay.
- Arvon Township also owns a 100-foot strip of property at Witz Marina right on the lake, that has not been developed or planned for development at the time of this report.

Huron River

Rustic camping is available at the Big Erick's Bridge State Forest Campground. The mouth of the Huron River is also a very popular camping and fishing site and receives a great deal of use. However, this site is completely unmanaged with no facilities.

The entire township, especially with so much land enrolled in the Commercial Forest Act, is a paradise for hunting and fishing. The Huron River and its environs are well known as is the Huron Bay for their excellent fisheries.

6.3 Culture

In contrast to many Upper Peninsula communities, Swedish is the dominant historic ethnicity in Arvon Township, rather than the more predominant Finnish heritage. However, the Finnish tradition of "sisu" or "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 school programs, the Christmas party, the Fourth of July Parade and potluck, Labor Day Bridge Walk, and a Memorial Day luncheon program at the town hall in conjunction with cemetery services. Traditions through the church include annual music events, and a pie social that is in conjunction with the bi-annual quilt show at the historical museum. Sportsmen's traditions include the

steelhead run and various fishing tournaments. Men's and women's softball games and tournaments are also played throughout the summer months.



7.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

7.1 Introduction

The success of any planning process is dependent upon resident and stakeholder involvement. This Master Land Use Plan update will be more successful if the local residents and stakeholders help to establish, and support the plan's goals and objectives. The Planning Commission and Township Board should always make attempts to involve the local residents through the availability of information, regardless of whether a plan update is being discussed or not. This information can be made available for the public through the Arvon Township website, email correspondence, public meetings, local publications, and area news media. By allowing open access to important community development information, the Township will allow the public to acquire the necessary background to help communicate their desires for the present and future of the Township.

7.2 Public Input

To that end, Arvon Township officials solicited community involvement to maximize the effectiveness of the Master Plan update process by hosting a public forum/open house at the Arvon Township Hall on Thursday, July 15, 2021. Twenty-four (24) members of the community gathered to offer their input on the future of the community. A robust discussion was held and those conversations are documented in the goals and objectives of this plan. As stated in an earlier section of this plan, the sections presented in this document represent the conclusion of months of discussion and study by the Arvon Township Planning Commission, along with technical assistance provided by Northwoods Planning & Zoning Services, LLC. Appendix A includes a summary of ideas and comments provided by attendees of the public forum/open house in July of 2021.



The final draft plan was posted on the Arvon Township website on _____, 2022 and made available at the Arvon Township Hall. Residents also had the opportunity to provide additional comments at the Planning Commission's public hearing on _____, 2022. This Plan was adopted by the Arvon Township Planning Commission on _____, 2022. Finally, a Resolution of Concurrence was adopted by the Arvon Township Board of Trustees on _____, 2022.

8.0 GOALS & OBJECTIVES

8.1 Introduction

This chapter of the Arvon Township Master Plan outlines a course for action for achieving the community's goals. These goals and objectives are the "To Do List" for township officials and relay to prospective new stakeholders and residents what is expected, desired, and supported by Arvon Township.

Goals reflect the needs, values, and desires of the community, and they cover a wide range of topics. They answer the question, "What do we want the future of our community to look like?" They also represent a desired future condition, or an end to which efforts are directed.

Objectives are statements of a position, or course of action, which provide a means of obtaining a stated goal. Objectives are also more specific and measurable tasks that may be long-term, mid-term, or short-term, but need to occur in order to accomplish the below goals.

8.2 Primary Goals & Objectives

The Township has determined that the following goals and objectives will guide their decisions for this Master Plan update in 2022.

Goal 1: Natural Resources and Character

Arvon Township will encourage development that seeks to preserve, protect and perpetuate the Township's natural resources. The township will take proactive measures to protect and preserve its rural character.

Objectives:

1. Protect natural resources that are considered sensitive, such as flood plains, wetlands, scenic shorelines and corridors, by updating and enforcing zoning ordinances that protect these areas.
2. Continuously review the zoning ordinance to ensure that there are provisions addressing sensitive environmental areas that cross parcel boundaries such as bluffs, erosion zones, floodplains, caving areas, shorelines, wetlands, swamps and marshes.
3. Introduce appropriate regulations and guidelines for development in sensitive environmental areas.
4. Identify land uses which are most appropriate for the Township especially those based on renewable resources, such as forestry and tourism.
5. Encourage businesses that have demonstrated responsibility toward the environment.
6. Provide encouragement to residents for keeping their property in character with the natural resources. The Township values neatness and absence of clutter that can be a detractor to an otherwise pleasant area, fitting in nicely with the natural environment and maintaining/enhancing property values.
7. Study the possible need for additional signage at entrances to the Township and to areas of interest to enhance tourism.

8. Study the possibility of bringing Dark Skies designation to the Township and, if appropriate, revise the lighting zoning ordinance to support such a designation.
9. Establish guidelines to keep as much Township land as possible accessible to all residents and visitors.

Goal 2: Transportation

The Township will continue to work with Baraga County and within the township to enhance the travel patterns and accessibility of all users throughout the township.

Objectives:

1. Continue to work with the Baraga County Road Commission to decide the best course of action for the local road system.
2. Consider future land uses when making decisions involving long term maintenance of roads.
3. Provide additional support for motorized and non-motorized access and trail connectivity in the area, where and when feasible.
4. Study and consider transportation resources for special groups such as senior citizens with the goal of providing transportation to appointments, shopping and entertainment.
5. Determine how to provide an equitable means of dust control to residents. Actively study this possibility and create an action plan by January, 2024.

Goal 3: Recreation

Recreational opportunities for residents and visitors will be enhanced by improving the variety and number of recreational resources without negatively impacting the natural environment.

Objectives:

1. Improve access to natural features where applicable. For example, improve access to Township-owned properties for the best public use.
2. Continue support of existing year-round, family oriented recreational activities such as fishing tournaments, the use of the baseball/softball park and bridge walk.
3. Consider creation of new community recreational activities that can be sponsored by the Township.
4. Complete the study of Dark Skies designation and, if appropriate, bring to the Township Board for approval by January, 2023. Coordinate with lighting ordinance to support the designation.
5. Consider the feasibility of a kayak park on the Township property near Witz Marina. Determine feasibility in 2022, make implementation plans by Summer 2023 and complete the project, if approved, by Summer 2024.
6. Consider improving access to the Township owned boat launch. Determine what improvements should and can be made, along with funding sources, by Summer, 2023.
7. Update the Township Recreation Plan in 2022 to direct recreational initiatives and allow access to State and Federal grant funds.

8. Support recreational activities and resources that contribute to the economic development of the Township by creating attractions for visitors.

Goal 4: Housing

The Township will encourage a land use pattern that will preserve its rural character and provide adequate housing opportunities.

Objectives:

1. Encourage all housing in the Township to be maintained in a decent, safe, and sanitary condition. Ensure enforcement of the Township and County Building Codes and the Township Zoning Ordinance.
2. Encourage the rehabilitation and maintenance of existing housing stock to provide safe living conditions and prevent deterioration and blight.
3. Determine the feasibility of elder living facilities. Seek public input by Winter 2023 and determine feasibility by Winter 2024.
4. Encourage and provide guidance for the construction of conventionally-built single-family homes and cottages.
5. Welcome and guide the placement of temporary dwellings and campers or trailers.
6. Consider the growing interest in tiny homes and shipping containers when updating ordinances.

Goal 5: Public Service, Government and Infrastructure

Provide essential public facilities and services to support the needs of residents, businesses and visitors.

Objectives:

1. Address the special needs of the disabled and elderly when considering community development projects.
2. Actively seek the input of area agencies, groups and other units of government on subjects of common interest.
3. Seek to expand opportunities to work with other area agencies, groups and units of government on joint projects of common interest.
4. Provide opportunities and encouragement for community volunteers to work together across generational lines to accomplish activities and events.
5. Seek ways to reach out and welcome new residents, landowners and businesses in the community.
6. Support and encourage private civic groups which provide educational and social programs of importance to local residents.
7. Recognizing the importance of information and communication, seek ways to improve cell service in the community. Work with Baraga Telephone Company to complete the high-speed internet service to all of the Township.
8. Evaluate and update the Township website to increase accessibility of information that is needed by residents and others outside the community.

9. Continue to support the operation and enhancement of the Township EMS and Fire Department. Encourage new volunteers for the Fire Department and new Emergency Medical Technicians.
10. Continue cooperation with the Baraga County Sherriff Department for law enforcement.
11. Educate residents about recycling and trash programs available in Baraga County.
12. Determine a plan to adequately maintain the Township buildings, such as the Town Hall. Plans could include getting grants for maintenance or allocating Township funds for updates.
13. Look for grant opportunities that can help the Township reach the goals.
14. Evaluate the possibility of small business and/or light manufacturing in the Township.
15. Protect the tax base to ensure that essential health, safety and public services can be maintained. This is especially important when properties are sold to tax-exempt organizations.

Goal 6: Environment

Protect our environment by requiring full disclosure of commercial or industrial development that will impact our area.

Objectives:

1. The Township requires full disclosure from any commercial, industrial business or non-profit organization that wishes to locate in our area. Full disclosure of information includes, but is not limited to the following:
 - Business plan
 - Type of operation
 - Environmental impact (to be done by an entity chosen by the Township Board)
 - Size of the area impacted as primary or secondary impact
 - Length of land use
 - Plan for remediation after useful life
 - Transportation and road plan
 - Financial responsibility for accidents or cleanup
2. The Environmental Impact Study will be done by an entity chosen by the Township Board.
3. The company/organization will hold public forums where the community can ask questions and receive information.
4. The process will be followed for any development that may impact our environment or community, even if the land use area is small.
5. Encourage landowners, mineral rights owners and developers to comply with State regulations and relevant local ordinances in the production and abandonment of mines, towers, wells, production facilities and associated infrastructure, and site restoration.

6. While the Township seeks to protect our natural resources, we will encourage economic development when the business is well-suited to our area and has proven responsibility for protecting the environment.

DRAFT

9.0 FUTURE LAND USE & ZONING PLAN

9.1 Introduction

A future land use plan is representative of the preferred future and how the community would like to develop over time. Future Land Use planning sets the desired locations of land uses including: residential, commercial, industrial, public facilities, open space, agricultural, forest, recreational areas and any potential changes to traffic circulation throughout the Township.

Local governments are endowed with the ultimate authority for controlling land use through zoning laws and building and sanitation codes. These various regulations establish parameters within which development can occur. Zoning regulations must be based on a plan developed with public input. It is important that future land use decisions be realistic in light of the ability of local governments to provide essential public services in a fiscally-responsible manner.

9.2 Future Land Use Descriptions & Map

In an effort to simplify land use categories, the Arvon Township Planning Commission optioned to utilize land use classifications that reflect current zoning district characteristics. The following future land use classifications and map compliment current zoning districts on the Arvon Township Zoning Map. The future land use classifications include:

Agricultural/Residential – (Associated Zoning District: General Residential/Farm & Forest)

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 – (Associated Zoning District: Farm & Forest/Government)

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 – (Associated Zoning District: General Residential/Recreation Residential/Scenic Resource)

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 – (Associated Zoning District: General Residential/Recreation Residential/Farm & Forest)

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 in contrast with urban or platted property.

Residential/Single-family – (Associated Zoning District: General Residential/Recreation Residential)

This classification is reserved for single-family residential uses, along with compatible non-residential uses such as churches, schools and home occupations.

Residential/Multiple-Family – (Associated Zoning District: General Residential/Recreation Residential)

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 (Associated Zoning District: Business District)

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. 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 located on the following page.

9.3 Climate Resiliency & Future Land Use Planning

Climate resiliency is defined as the capacity for a socio-ecological system to absorb stresses and maintain function in the face of external stresses presented by extreme weather. Well planned communities can adapt, reorganize and change in the face of these events and make sure the community is prepared for such unexpected event. Climate resiliency planning focuses on all aspects of community, ensuring the economy, the environment, and social/living conditions are vibrant and upheld through adversity. As these resiliency planning concepts and solutions continue to develop, Arvon Township may desire to utilize them where and when feasible, within the realm of Future Land Use Planning.

Air Quality

In order to reduce the impacts of air pollutants it is necessary to maintain a high percentage of township land as farm and forest, and forest resource zoning districts. These categories assist in the absorption of local air pollutants.

Emergency Response & Extreme Events

Extreme weather events and wildfires coupled with insufficient infrastructure, challenging transportation networks, isolated residents, and other challenges can lead to increased health dangers in the community, such as injury, respiratory illnesses, cold-related illness, and mental health consequences.

Remote areas in the outer reaches of Arvon Township are vulnerable to the impacts of reduced emergency response. As such, it is necessary to limit residential land uses that promote high-intensity development in these areas.

Water-Related Concerns

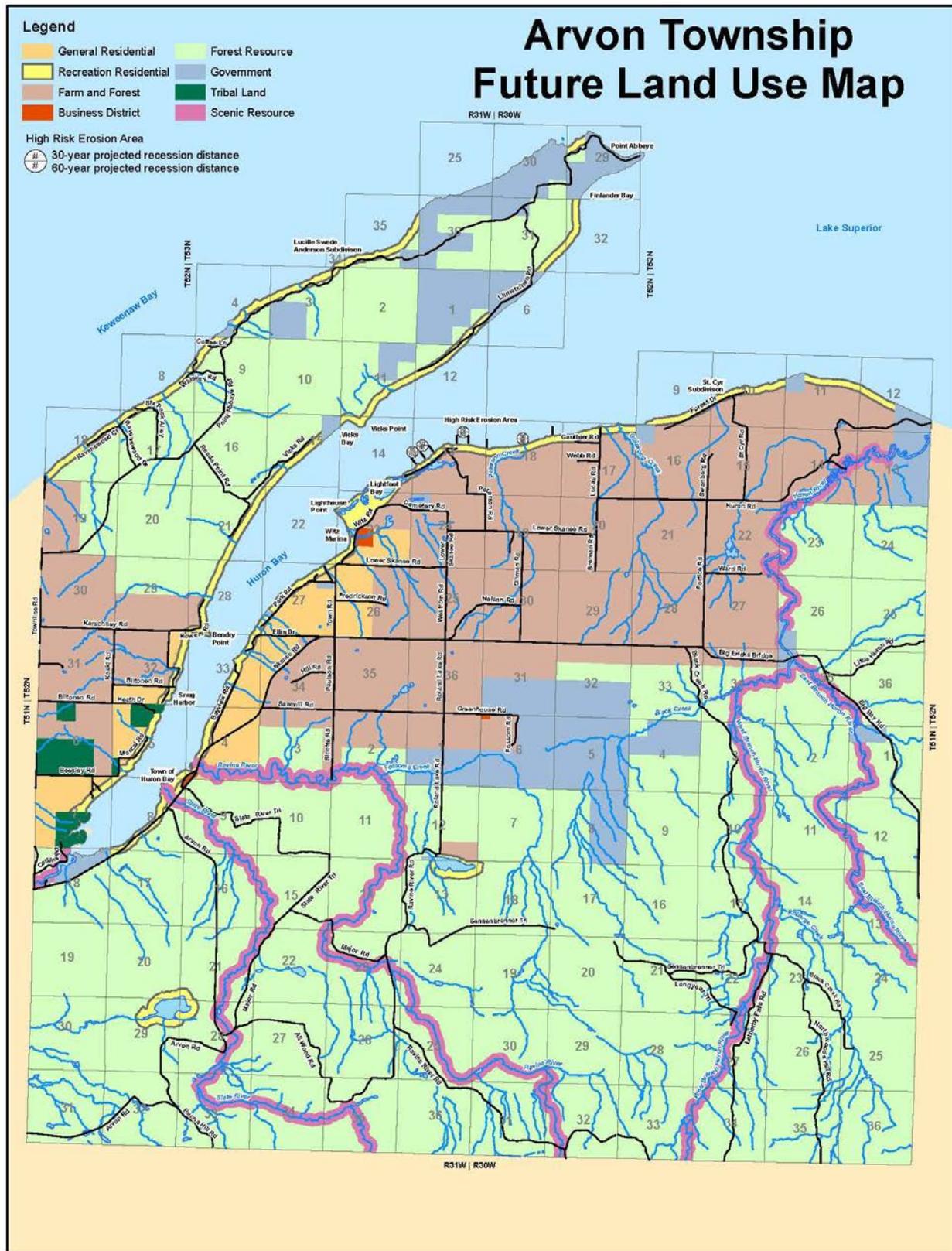
Sudden spring snow melt and heavy rain events, can lead to intensified flooding, road closures, mold, and contaminated water. For example, Arvon Township shoreline residences are especially susceptible to flooding and the erosion as a result of wave action from Lake Superior. Maintaining low-density residential Land Uses along Lake Superior mitigates residential vulnerability.

9.4 Relationship Between Zoning & Future Land Use

The Land Use Map is a graphic representation of how land in the Township is planned to be used. The future land use map is a general description of where and what intent the zoning should have in the future. The below map and the above land use classifications make up the Future Land Use Plan for Arvon Township. This Future Land Use Plan will serve as a guide for making decisions on the rezoning of land, moving forward.

9.5 Zoning Districts & Zoning Plan

Arvon Township is currently divided into eight zoning districts. The intent and purpose of each district is discussed in *Article III – Districts & Maps* of the *Arvon Township Zoning Ordinance*. A schedule of districts along with their permitted and conditional land uses is also denoted in *Article III*. As this is a Master Plan update only, no changes to the current zoning map are being considered at this time.



10.0 PLAN IMPLEMENTATION & ADOPTION

10.1 Introduction

Arvon Township plans to carry out the goals and objectives of this Master Plan. The Township Board and Planning Commission will continue to monitor the outcomes of the plan and will propose changes as they are needed and/or warranted.

This Master Plan is not a permanent document. It can be amended over time. Because Arvon Township is a constantly evolving community, it may be necessary to revise and/or update the Master Plan more regularly than every five (5) years. In order for the Master Plan to be relevant to the community, it must remain current and relevant to issues and opportunities that exist in the community.

10.2 Plan Review

As required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, P.A. 33 of 2008, the draft plan was distributed to neighboring communities, county and utilities on _____, 2022, with instructions for review and comment. A list of the entities receiving the draft plan is located below.

10.3 Public Hearing & Plan Adoption

The Public Hearing notice for adoption was published in the [L'Anse Sentinel](#) on _____, 2022. The Township Planning Commission held a duly called Public Hearing on _____, 2022. Following the Public Hearing, the Planning Commission adopted the Arvon Township Master Plan – 2022-2026 by resolution on _____, 2022. The Arvon Township Board of Trustees passed a Resolution of Concurrence at their regular meeting on _____, 2022; a copy of those resolutions can be found further into this section.

10.4 Distribution of the Plan

After adoption and for the required 63-day review period, the final plan was distributed to neighboring communities, counties, and utility companies. A list of those receiving the final plan is below.

- Powell Township
- Western Upper Peninsula Planning & Development Regional (WUPPDR) Agency
- L'Anse Township
- Marquette County Planning Commission
- Baraga County Road Commission
- Baraga County Planning Commission
- Ontonagon REA
- Baraga Telephone Company