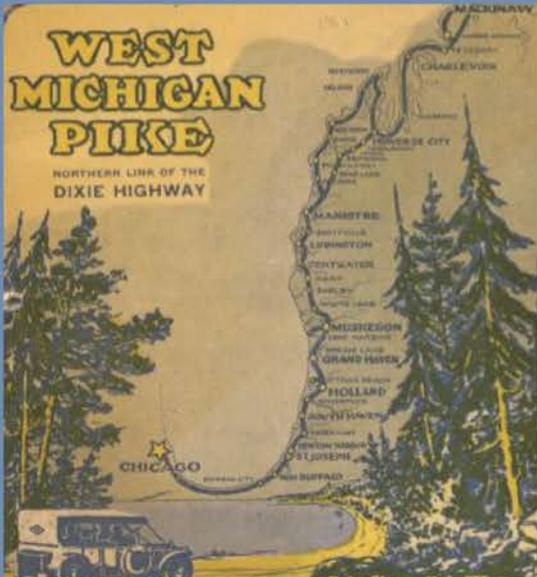




Ottawa County  
Where You Belong

# Planning & Performance Improvement

## Fiscal Year 2019 Annual Report





# Ottawa County

*Where You Belong<sup>®</sup>*

The activities and programs of this  
Department are brought to you by the  
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## DIRECTORS NOTE

With a plethora of projects to guide local units of government, citizens and visitors, it was another busy year fulfilling the Planning & Performance Improvement Department's mission. From landing a grant to expand a mobile hotspot lending program to all County libraries to creating a Groundwater Sustainability Initiative plan to protect our groundwater, staff has effected change and improved services for the public.

The Department was instrumental in creating a Brownfield Investment Program (BIP) to address brownfield needs in the county. This program helps provide incentives for Phase I and possibly Phase II site assessments for Ottawa County projects. A Farmland Preservation Survey created by the Department asked 1,600 landowners to offer their thoughts. With more than 400 contacts responding, the data showed a majority supported farmland preservation goals. The Farmland Preservation program netted two new properties in Blendon and Chester townships. Department planners worked diligently throughout the year to craft the Groundwater Sustainability Initiative plan and ordered promotional materials for outreach. This initiative will ensure the stressed aquifer is protected. The Performance Improvement division partnered with the Lakeshore Nonprofit Alliance (LNA) to collect and analyze data for LNA's Nonprofit Community Assessment. This in-depth survey was a first for the LNA. The continuous flow and variety of projects is a testament to the strength of our staff.

The Department welcomed three new staff members: A Research and Data Analyst; a Project Support Specialist; and a Land Use Planning Specialist.

We do serious work in this department, but it's not all serious: from enjoying a round of mini-golf at Captain Sundae in Holland Township to enjoying seasonal fare at Post Family Farm in Hudsonville, staff makes spending time outside the office a priority with monthly social gatherings at Ottawa County haunts. Teamwork is at the core of our success, and I'm grateful for the sharp and diligent minds we have collaborating in this office!

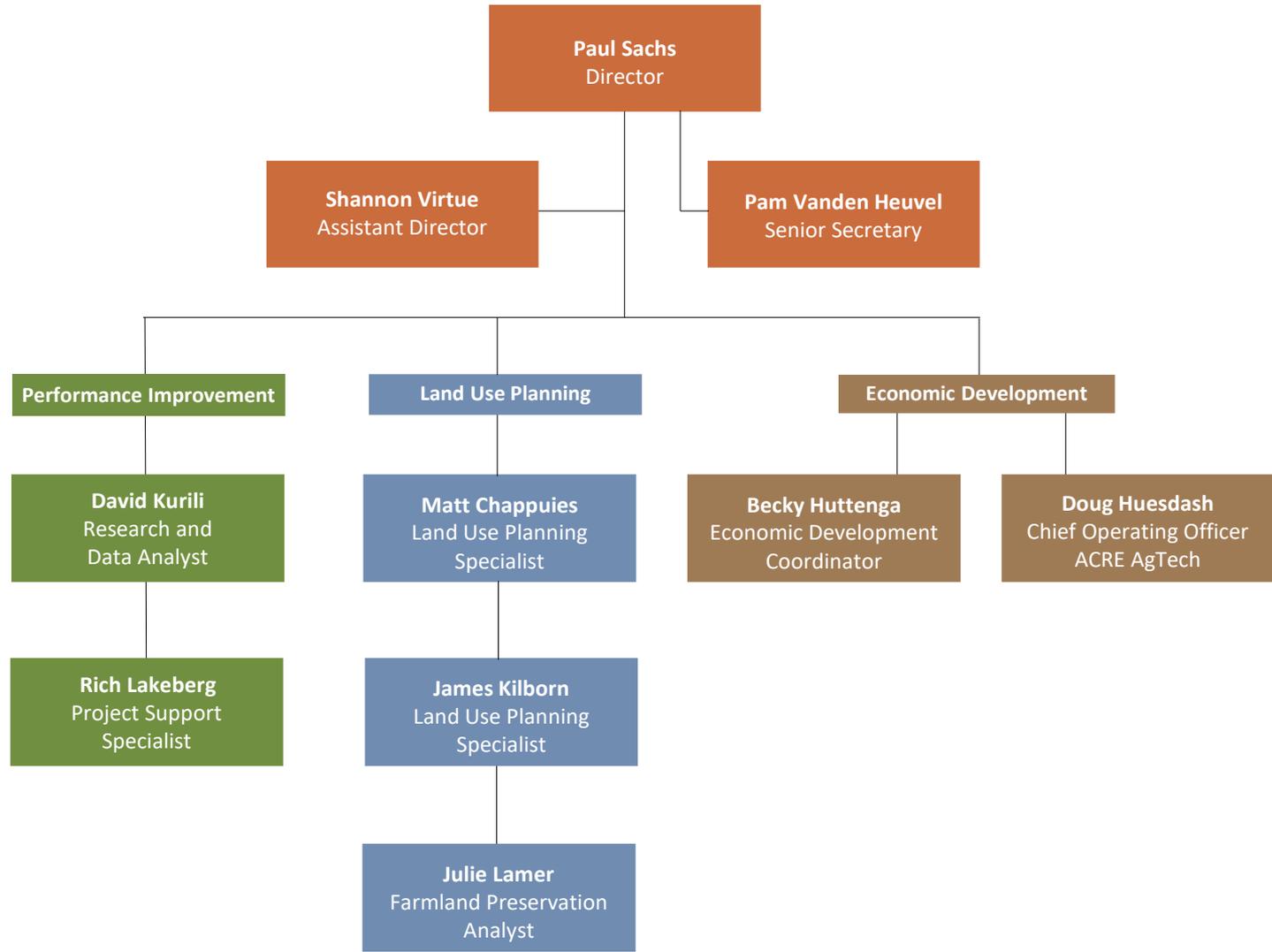


Top row (from left): Paul Sachs, Shannon Virtue, Becky Huttenga, Julie Lamer, Doug Huesdash  
Bottom row (from left): Pam Vanden Heuvel, Matt Chappuies, David Kurili, Rich Lakeberg, James Kilborn

# ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

## BOARDS/COMMISSIONS:

- Ottawa County Planning Commission
- Ottawa County Housing Commission
- ACRE AgTech Board of Directors
- Broadband Advisory Committee
- Brownfield Redevelopment Authority Board/Economic Development Corporation
- Groundwater Task Force/ Groundwater Executive Committee
- Remonumentation Committee/Peer Group
- Agricultural Preservation Board



# PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

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The Performance Improvement Division continues its effort to improve organizational performance and maximize the use of financial resources.

## Lakeshore Nonprofit Alliance

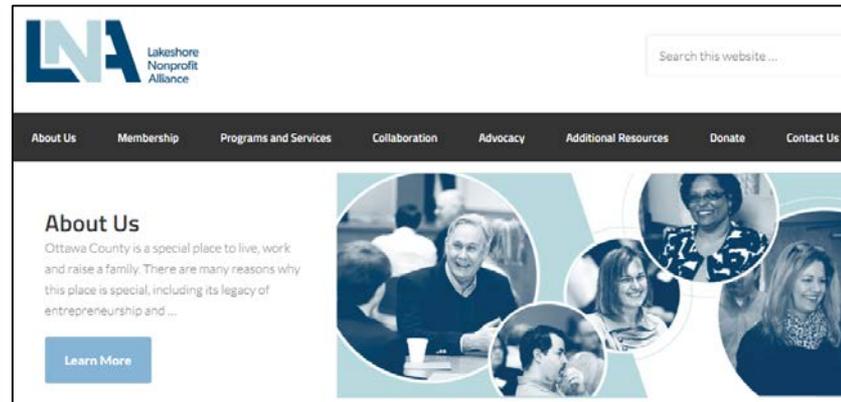
The Department spent a great deal of time this past year working on the LNA Nonprofit Community Assessment — a first-of-its-kind data collection project to help the LNA measure the overall health of the local nonprofit community.

The assessment tracks important outcomes for Ottawa County-area nonprofits including demographic data, retention and talent level of staff, board practices, compensation data, and the degree to which organizations are following best financial and operational practices.

The results of the assessment will help inform where strategic focus is needed to improve the overall effectiveness of local nonprofits.

The Department reviewed survey questions and provided feedback to LNA, collected survey responses, analyzed the survey data, and compiled the results in an aggregate format.

Three highly-visual reports were produced for the LNA — a Summary Report, a Main Report, and a Supplemental Report that featured crosstabulations of two or more survey questions. LNA will be paying the County for these services.





### Wear One

The Department continues to work with the Ottawa County Department of Public Health on a report of the Wear One program. The report will serve as a five-year progress report of Wear One — covering its history, program activities, and goals.

The report will also include the results of the first survey on sexual activity and sexual health of the Wear One program’s target population — individuals 18-24 years of age who reside in Ottawa and Allegan counties. The survey data was gathered to serve as a baseline measurement and to help inform the future direction of the Wear One program. The Department designed the survey, worked with the Department of Public Health to collect survey responses from the target population, analyzed the survey data, and created graphics and charts to explain the survey results.

### Suicide Prevention Coalition

The Department began working with the Ottawa County Suicide Prevention Coalition to help them create a strategic plan.

The Department led coalition members in a “post-up” activity to generate ideas about what they could do to make a positive impact in the community, collected anonymous survey data from coalition members, and compiled statistics to explain the history of suicide in Ottawa County.

Using this data, the Department drafted a strategic plan for the coalition. The plan will be finalized in the next of couple months.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING RESULTS

Members of the Ottawa County Suicide Prevention Coalition participated in a strategic planning session on June 11, 2019 that was facilitated by the Ottawa County Planning and Performance Improvement Department. The members were asked to consider the question:

***“What can/should the Suicide Prevention Coalition do to make a positive impact in the community?”***

The members brainstormed their ideas individually, then took turns presenting their ideas to the group. Members then worked together to group their responses into main categories.

Finally, members voted on the ideas — both the main categories as well as the individual ideas. The voting protocol is explained at right. The data collected during the strategic planning session is provided on the following pages.

Main categories	Individual ideas
<span style="color: purple;">●</span> = most important idea to implement in the community (2 votes per member)	<span style="color: yellow;">●</span> = most important to implement in the community (3 votes per member)
<span style="color: orange;">●</span> = most feasible for the Coalition to implement (2 votes per member)	<span style="color: red;">●</span> = most feasible for the Coalition to implement (3 votes per member)

## Ottawa Food

The Department completed a two-year evaluation of five Ottawa Food programs in January 2019. These programs address Ottawa Food’s three priority areas for Ottawa County — eliminate hunger; increase healthy eating habits; and increase the sourcing of local food.

After reviewing the results of the evaluation, Ottawa Food approached the Department for assistance in evaluating three of its programs during the 2019 farmers market season. The Department will be analyzing and evaluating the 2019 Ottawa Food programs over the next several months.

### Results for Target Measures (as defined in grant)\*

Target: 1 pantry will distribute 30 CSA half-shares with 30 participants in the program

Result: **1 pantry distributed 18-20 CSA half-shares to 18-20 households in 2018**



# EVALUATE

your township's programs and services

Chances are, you weren't a certified assessor when you ran for township office. Your only experience with tax collection was receiving your property tax bill in the mail. Ran a class election back in high school? It probably didn't involve special equipment or precincts.

Most township board members don't come to their elected position with extensive expertise in township services. It's not your job to know every detail—that's why the township has staff, consultants and others to help accomplish the township's programs and services. But as a board member, the buck ultimately stops with you. Your residents elected you to ensure that the township fulfills state statutes and meets residents' needs. They expect their elected officials to set standards and ensure accountability to meet those standards.

Some township officials may believe that without a large staff or department heads, the evaluation process does not apply to them. The reality is that responsibility is shared for members of all sizes. All townships have at least

This continuing education article and accompanying self-assessment are worth 2.0 education credits in MTA's Township Governance Academy. See page 27 for details.

**OBJECTIVE**

- To examine the roles and responsibilities of township officials in ensuring township programs and services best serve and meet the needs of residents.

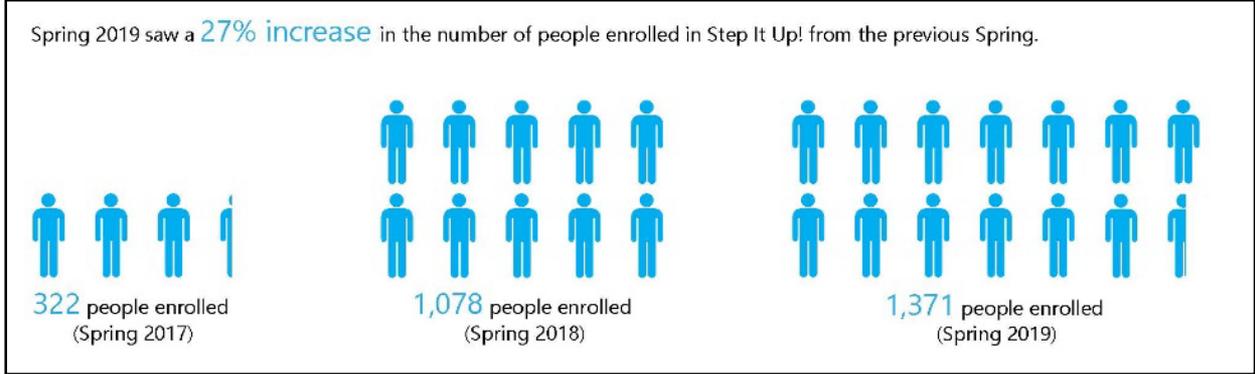
## Holland City

The Department began working with the City of Holland to help them evaluate their 30+ boards, commissions, and committees (BCC). As part of this pilot project, the Department designed an evaluation tool that allows each board to assess its performance on a variety of characteristics of effective board functioning, review the intent/purpose of the BCC, and identify progress made on achieving goals/priorities set the previous year.

The Department collected confidential data from BCC members and staff liaisons and is currently in the process of analyzing that data. The goal of the study is to identify strengths as well as areas for improvement. This is the first **Local Unit Data and Evaluation Services** project of the Department, a new service option that was first presented at the 2018 Fall Local Unit meeting.

## Step It Up

The Department continues to participate in the Step It Up! program as an active member of the committee. During the spring of 2019, the Department analyzed participant survey and weekly activity data. The Department is also gathering and analyzing data from participants to help the committee plan for the 2020 Step It Up program.



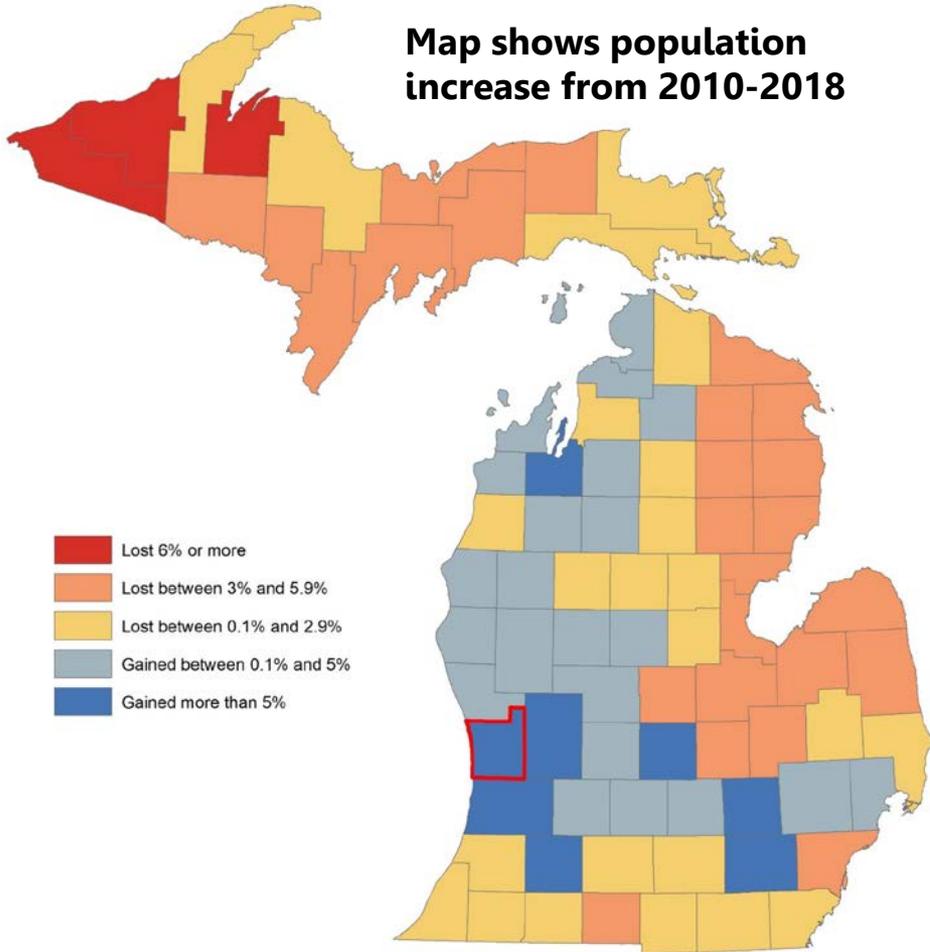
## Ottawa Walks

The Department joined the Ottawa Walks committee this year — a new committee that supports the year-round, volunteer-led, free, neighborhood walking groups program. Ottawa Walks was created in response to participants of Step It Up! requesting a year-round program. The Department created a participant tracking system as well as surveys to document the participant experience and measure the impact of the program on participant health.

## Demographic and Economic Data Compilation

The Department maintains an assortment of up-to-date demographic and economic statistics for Ottawa County and its local units of government on the County webpage. These include annual population estimates and projections, unemployment statistics, and residential/commercial construction activity data.

**Map shows population increase from 2010-2018**



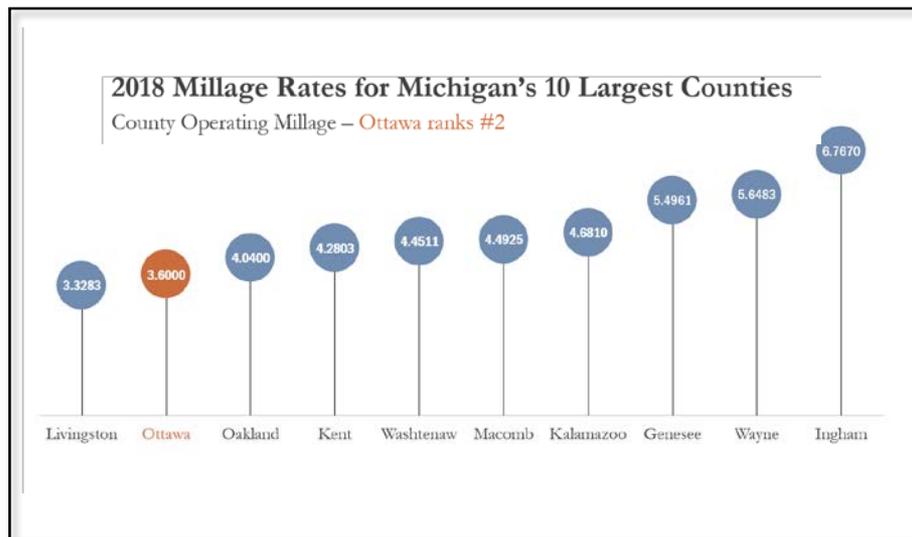
## County Department Performance Outlines

The Department is continuing to work with the Departments/Courts in the County to update all Performance Outlines to the new template. This involves working one-on-one with Department/Court leaders to refine their goals, objectives, and measures. During fiscal year 2019, five outlines were updated to the new format, bringing the total outlines updated to 42 of 43 outlines. Next year, the Department will work with the two newest County Departments to help them create an outline.

## Research and Data Assistance

The Department continues to assist County departments and local organizations with requests for County statistics and other data. Some of the assistance provided by the Department during the past year include:

- Assisted with grant applications and financial projections to help fund the Ottawa County Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion office.
- Created an organizational chart for the Family Justice Center building project to illustrate the committees responsible for project oversight.
- Crafted lollipop graphs to depict county millage rate data for a Fiscal Services' presentation (pictured below).
- Assisted Harbor Transit with locating Millennial-aged population data for use in marketing estimates.
- Provided Census tract population data to GIS for use in a Department of Public Health project.



## County Dashboards

The Department continues to maintain the County's web-based Performance Dashboard by updating 19 datasets annually. The County and State Government Dashboard includes Ottawa County and Michigan statistics in highly visual, interactive charts and graphs.

The State's data is lagging behind Ottawa County's data because the State has not updated its dashboard metrics since December 2018, prior to the change in administration. Plans for future updates from the new State administration have not been communicated yet.

## Sheriff's Senior Volunteer Program



The Department continues to provide the Sheriff's Office with program statistics for its Senior Volunteer Program. The program statistics include the number of hours spent on each volunteer activity, the number of miles traveled to complete each activity, the number of hours of volunteer service provided by each Senior Volunteer, and other ancillary program statistics such as the number of handicapped parking violations discovered.

# LAND USE PLANNING PROJECTS

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The Land Use Planning Division continues its effort to protect and improve the quality of life in Ottawa County as well as provide administrative support to the Ottawa County Planning Commission (**Appendix A**) and the Ottawa County Housing Commission (**Appendix B**).

## Future Land Use Vision

Ottawa County is at the forefront of incredible efforts and initiatives to enhance and improve the quality of life for residents and visitors. Some of these include affordable housing ingenuities, water education and conservation efforts, agricultural preservation tools, non-motorized transportation connectivity and marketing plans, and much more.

In light of all of these, the Department has spearheaded an initiative to collaborate with planning staff across the County to update and reorganize the County Development Plan, which was last updated in 1992. This Plan update may take form as a "Countywide Growth/Land Use Framework" project to highlight all of the areas in which a coordinated Countywide future sustainability plan is needed.

To do this, the Department staff began organizing and hosting meetings with local unit planning staff to discuss the potential project components. In light of the County's groundwater challenges, as well as anticipated population growth of the County into the future, this effort remains a top priority for the Department.

Staff continues to seek input/feedback on the Countywide Growth/Land Use Framework from local planning practitioners, consultants, and community leaders. It is anticipated that formal commencement and announcement of the large-scale, important endeavor will occur in early 2020.



## Groundwater Sustainability Initiative

In 2018, a Michigan State University Institute of Water Research groundwater study and modeling showed that, without intervention, the quality and quantity of the County's bedrock groundwater aquifer system will continue to decline.

In response to this concerning data, the County began to develop the Groundwater Sustainability Initiative to help guide communities, residents and businesses in sustaining our groundwater. The focus this fiscal year has been on the creation of a Proactive Strategies Index, a guidebook highlighting steps that are and can be taken to alleviate the groundwater crisis. This index has been developed with the help of the Groundwater Executive Committee (**Appendix C1**), the Groundwater Task Force (**Appendix C2**), as well as a slew of other local scientists, policymakers and stakeholders. A press release announcing the creation of the index was released in December 2019. It's likely this plan will serve as a model for counties across Michigan.

In conjunction with the development of the Index, the department also has:

- Led a number of presentations on the subject to various local and regional units of government, libraries, businesses, politicians, associations, nonprofits, etc.
- Hosted meetings with environmental groups and visited schools.
- Developed educational and messaging materials for the public and select stakeholder groups; these include advertising campaigns, marketing materials and water-saving tools.

Outreach efforts continue as the department keeps its eye on Ottawa County's groundwater.

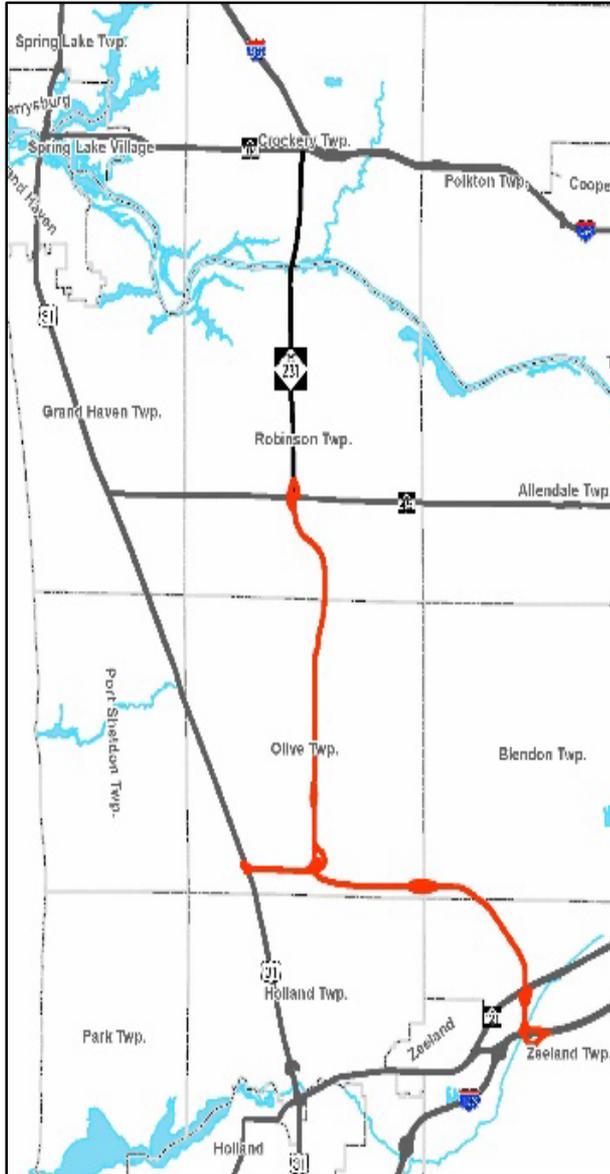


## M-231 Bypass

During the past year, the Department has been exploring options for purchasing a suitable property for an interchange with I-196.

A property has been selected and the County is in the process of closing on it. The Department has also been continuing discussions with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) regarding feasibility and next steps for Phase II of the M-231 Bypass.

In addition, the Department continues to stress the importance of corridor preservation with local jurisdictions and planning organizations.



A section of the Phase II Spoonville Trail path as seen from the Terre Verde Golf Course.

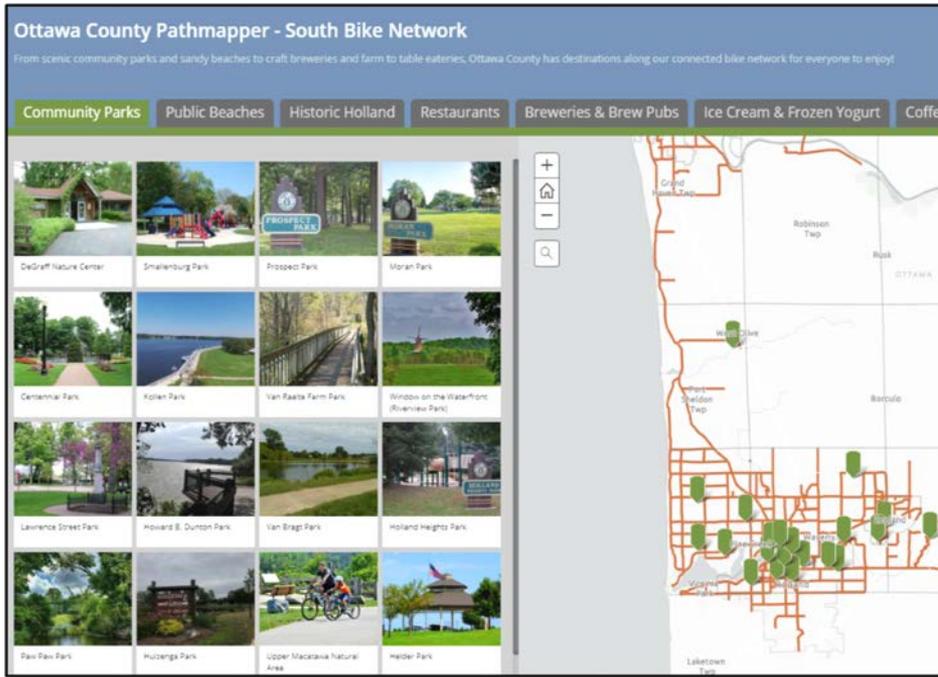
## Spoonville Trail

With Phase I of Spoonville Trail complete, the Department has been concentrating its efforts on the planning of Phase II, from 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Leonard Road to Nunica, winding through the picturesque ravines of the Terra Verde Golf Course.

This section will be the final stretch of trail that will create a 50-mile loop of trail ways in Ottawa County. In the spring of 2019, the Federal Highway Administration approved the design for the final leg of the trail. Trees along the path were removed ahead of construction.

The project was put out for bids in July. Unfortunately the lowest bid came in 32% higher than the engineer's estimate. As a result, all bids were rejected.

The project engineer and MDOT officials subsequently reexamined the project engineering to determine what, if any, changes could be implemented to lower the project cost. The Department has also worked with MDOT Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) officials to increase the County's grant award for the project. At this time, the Department hopes to rebid the project in March 2020.



## Non-Motorized Pathway Plan

The Department is working to create accurate, GIS maps of all non-motorized pathways that currently exist in Ottawa County. Once a complete index is compiled, the Department will focus its efforts on determining how best to showcase the pathways to citizens and visitors.

Some ideas include GIS StoryMaps that combine non-motorized routes with local landmarks as well as a guidebook highlighting recommended regional pathway connections.



## Metropolitan Planning Organizations

Department staff have been working collaboratively with Directors of the three metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) in Ottawa County to develop a comprehensive report. The report will explain the work conducted by MPOs in Ottawa County, provide basic information on what MPOs are and how they coexist, and explain how long-term planning processes are conducted in the areas of the County that are not located within an MPO boundary. This report will be completed in fiscal year 2020.



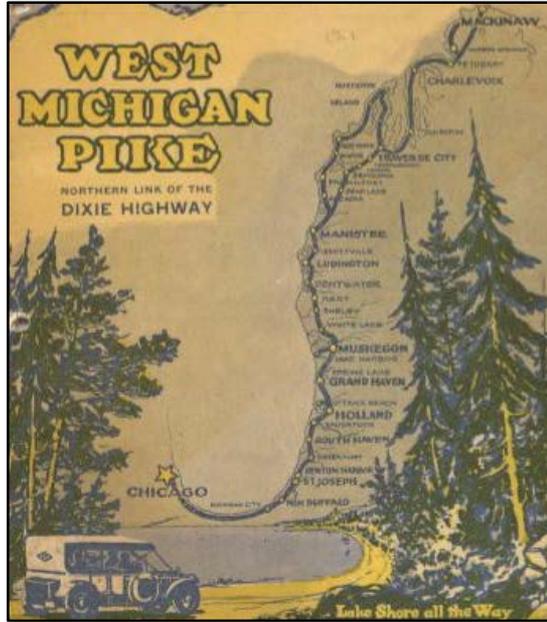
## Polkton Township Ordinance Assistance

Department staff were approached in May 2019 by Polkton Township to assist with the research and development of an “event venue” ordinance. Department staff served as chair of a special committee to steer meetings and provide advice and expertise from a land use planning perspective.

After four meetings, the special committee successfully created an ordinance that will soon be passed to the Township Planning Commission and then Township Board for approval and adoption.

## West Michigan Pike

The West Michigan Pike was once the premier way to travel along Michigan’s western shores. This highway running along Lake Michigan was conceived of and built during the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to accommodate the ‘horseless carriage,’ opening up the region to tourism and the development it would bring. This series of roads and state parks that stretched from Michigan City, Indiana, to Mackinac City was completed in 1922.



In 2018, two original stone West Michigan Pike road markers were discovered near Spring Lake and are currently being displayed in the Department’s lobby.

The Department is looking into grant funding options to be able to promote and preserve the route. Potential uses for funding include creating wayfinding signage to showcase the route, creating additional castings of the markers to put in prominent places, and having plaques made for some of the markers to provide historical context.



Members of the public attend Planning and Zoning Fundamentals.

## Planning & Zoning Fundamentals

Continuing its commitment to ensuring citizens and officials have the best resources available, the Ottawa County Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners sponsored the annual “Planning and Zoning Fundamentals” free training sessions. These events focus on how land use is regulated by local municipalities and the important role planning commissioners, ZBA members, planning officials, and interested citizens play in impacting the future of their communities.

Ron Bultje from Dickinson Wright led the discussion of two events — one focusing on planning commission responsibilities and another on the duties of ZBA members. An array of topics were covered such as conducting public hearings, PUDs, granting variances, rezoning, and more. Over 110 individuals attended the two events, illustrating the involvement of citizens and administrators in regards to land use within the County.

## Ottawa Area Planners Meeting

The Department has made it a priority to maintain working relationships and an open dialogue with the various planners across the County. To help facilitate this, a bi-annual forum is held at the Fillmore Complex, with all of the local planners invited.

The fall meeting was held on October 23, 2019, and featured a good representation of the County's local planners. At the meeting, the Department staff provided updates to the ongoing projects being worked on and John Said of Holland Charter Township gave a presentation about the proposed redevelopment of The Shops at Westshore. Additionally, several helpful discussions were had around the table regarding pertinent planning topics.



The Ottawa Area Planners discuss ongoing projects.



## Remonumentation

The Department continues to provide administrative oversight for the Survey and Remonumentation Grant Program, the Remonumentation Committee (**Appendix D1**) and the Remonumentation Peer Group (**Appendix D2**).

As one of two counties in Michigan that chose to expedite the program, Ottawa County receives an amount of \$175,000 from the state every year. By the close of fiscal year 2019, the Department has received \$874,000 in reimbursements, with \$866,000 remaining. Complete reimbursement of the \$1.74 million is expected in 2024. The County will continue to work with the State to ensure that these markers remain accurate and in good condition.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

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The Economic Development Division continues its effort to strengthen businesses and increase the number of jobs in Ottawa County.



## Brownfield Redevelopment Authority

**Birth of the BIP:** The Ottawa County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (OCBRA) (**Appendix E**) kicked off the fiscal year with a resolution to establish and pilot a BIP to address some of the County's brownfield needs. This program helps provide incentives for Phase I and possibly Phase II site assessments for Ottawa County projects. After interested parties apply for funding, each is scored by the OCBRA, which will determine the level of funding, if any, for each selected project. The funding for this incentive program comes from a combination of monies generated from the administration of brownfield and economic development projects and an interlocal agreement with the Ottawa County Land Bank Authority. Funds for the BIP were secured by early December 2018, and by July 2019, the BIP was in operation.



A rendering of the Epicurean Village Redevelopment Project.

**Approved Brownfields:** During spring 2019, a Brownfield Plan Application was received for the 28,000 square-foot Epicurean Village Redevelopment Project in Spring Lake Village. The Plan, encompassing the former site of the Phoenix Café along with two other blighted buildings, is to be six years long, create 15-30 new jobs, and includes deposits into local site revolving funds. The Board of Commissioners approved the plan on May 28, 2019.

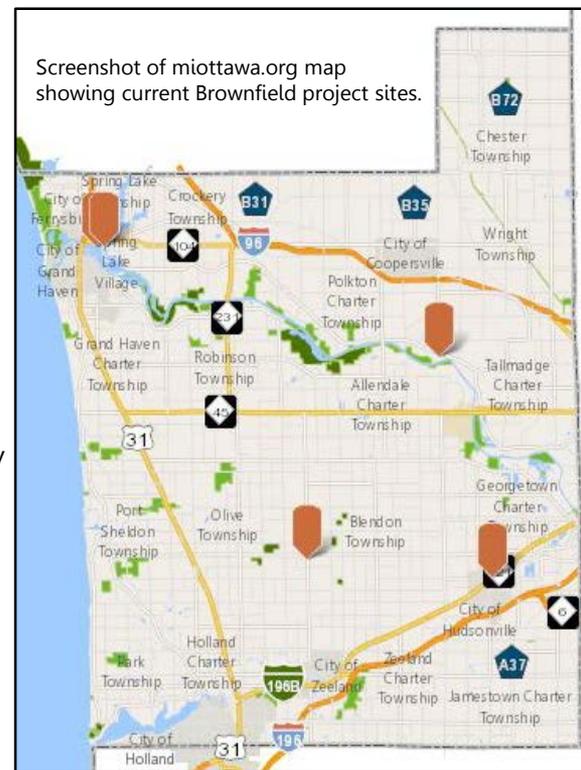
The BIP approved support for two projects this fiscal year. The first project, approved on July 29, 2019, is in Holland Township and will be redeveloped into a marine warehouse and sales operation, creating 2-3 jobs. The second project, approved on September 12, 2019, is in Grand Haven City. The incentive will catalyze the revitalization of a high priority redevelopment site and address existing contamination issues. The existing structure will be used to house a new restaurant that will create up to 30 full- and part-time jobs.

## Countywide Brownfield Redevelopment Plan:

In May, the Board of Commissioners approved a Countywide Brownfield Redevelopment Plan. This document will serve as a comprehensive planning tool, under which all approved Brownfield Plans will be placed as amendments.

As the number of brownfield plans under the purview of the OCBRA continues to increase, this Plan will simplify the management of those plans and dovetail with the proposed Countywide Growth/Land Use Framework.

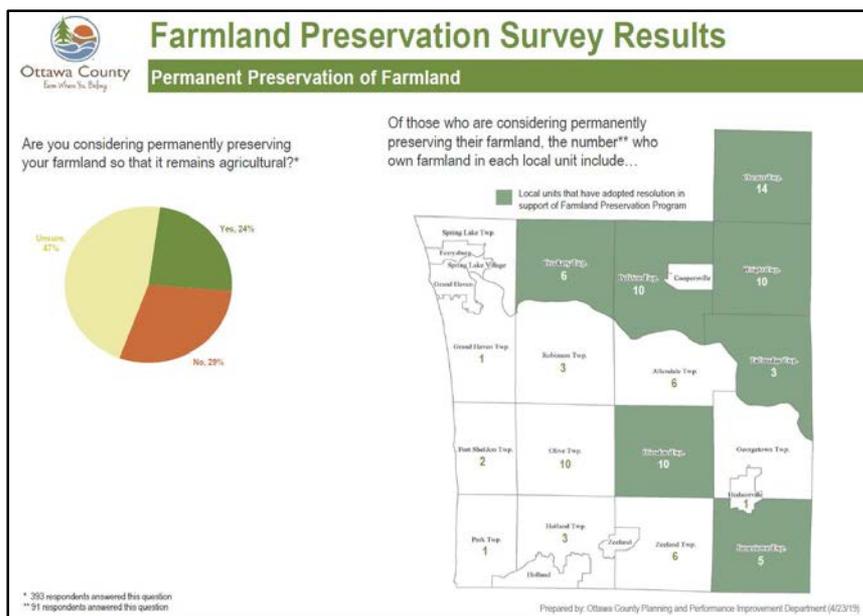
An interactive map of current project sites is located at [miottawa.org/brownfields](http://miottawa.org/brownfields). Priority sites for redevelopment will be added to this map in fiscal year 2020.



## Farmland Preservation

**Farmland Preservation Survey:** To gauge landowners' understanding and views on farmland preservation strategies, the Ottawa County Farm Bureau collaborated with the Department to craft and mail a 14-question Farmland Preservation survey to 1,636 landowners with at least 5 acres or more of agriculturally zoned property. The survey also included a link to a Pre-Application for landowners interested in participating in the County's existing Purchase of Development Rights Program (PDR). The Department received more than 400 responses. A majority of respondents supported program goals: 82% think farmland loss is now or could be a problem, and 82% think it's important to preserve farmland in Ottawa County.

Department staff assembled an implementation strategy based on the survey results, input gleaned from stakeholders, as well as ag census and locally sourced data. The result is a more comprehensive, multi-faceted approach to farmland preservation that will not only address the land itself, but also some of the barriers to economic viability in farming operations.



## Farmland Preservation News roundup

- The Department hosted a Farmland Preservation Open House in early May — more than 30 people attended. This event sought to provide outreach and answer questions about the Farmland Preservation Program.
- A number of applications for the PDR program were received prior to the May 31 application deadline. Staff scored applications and provided results to the Agricultural Preservation Board (**Appendix F**) for review.
- Two properties were selected in Blendon and Chester townships. Grant funding from both the Michigan Agricultural Preservation Fund and the USDA's Agricultural Conservation Easement Program are being pursued.



- The preservation process for the Kruthoff property (pictured above), selected in spring 2018, continues, with a closing to take place in fiscal year 2020.
- During fiscal year 2019, Olive, Robinson and Zeeland townships all approved resolutions in support of the PDR program. This brings the total number of participating townships to 10. Conversations continue with remaining townships, and cities, to garner more support for use of this particular tool.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS



**Farms Are The Tapas:** On September 26, the Agricultural Preservation Board and Department staff welcomed over 100 attendees to Terra Square in Hudsonville for the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Farms Are The Tapas fundraiser.

Local composer, music producer and owner of DP Creative Audio David Purnell provided sonic flavor to set the tone for the evening. Four chefs competed in our master chef cooking competition. Professionals representing Butch's Dry Dock, Farmhouse Deli & Pantry, Sonder Eatery, as well as independent personal chef and dietician Chef Jen Plaggemars, shared their fare with attendees. Chef Jen ultimately walked away Harvest Knife Champion.

A silent auction featuring agricultural-themed items proved popular, helping to push total funds raised to \$18,525 — double what was raised at the inaugural event in 2017.

A Giving Bee donations box sweetened the deal for attendees — those who gave received honey made from beehives on Herman Millers' main campus in Zeeland.

Keynote speakers were Cliff Meeuwse, president of Zeeland Farm Services; and Amy Sherman, MLive Michigan's Best reporter, host of Behind the Mitten and chef.



Clockwise, from top: Chef Christine Powers of Farmhouse Deli & Pantry talks with an attendee during the event. Local music producer and composer David Purnell performs. Master Chef cooking competition winner Chef Jen Plaggemars (right) poses with Farmland Preservation Analyst Julie Lamer.

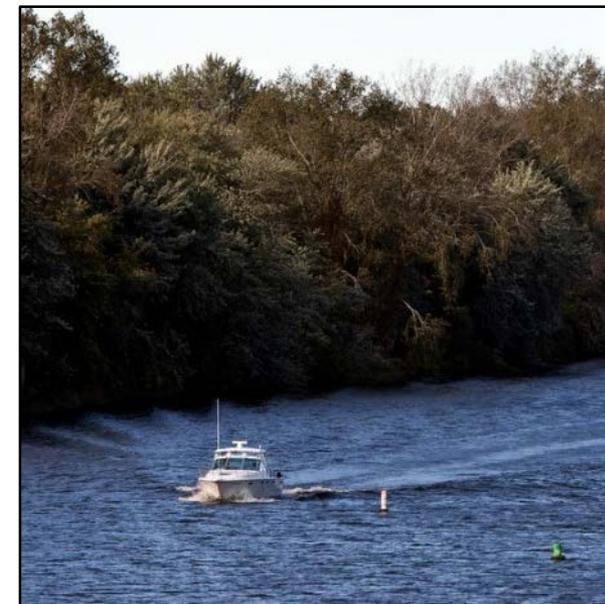


Above: Department Director Paul Sachs introduces the Agricultural Preservation Board and thanks sponsors during the event. Below: Dr. Paul Isely, Grand Valley State Associate Dean of the Seidman College of Business, speaks during the event.

**Redefining Farmland Preservation:** On November 8, Redefining Farmland Preservation distilled data into actionable analysis at Spring Meadow Nursery in Grand Haven. The event kicked off with a brunch of traditional morning fare provided by Beechwood Catering of Holland Township, fueling the more than 100 farmers, leaders and other stakeholders in attendance.

Dr. Paul Isely, Associate Dean of Grand Valley State University's Seidman College of Business, offered a down-to-earth yet thorough snapshot of West Michigan's economic standing and how that relates to Ottawa agriculture. Pivoting to farming data, Regional Director of the USDA-NASS Marlo Johnson shared telling statistics from the 2017 Agriculture Census, and the department's own Paul Sachs followed up with an analysis of the department's 2019 Landowner Survey. Closing the event, American Farmland Trust Senior Policy Analyst Cris Coffin discussed the projections, challenges and tools needed to keep agriculture strong and viable into the future.

Post-event, Spring Meadow Nursery owners led attendees on a tour of their innovative facility. Other sponsors included McShane & Bowie, P.L.C., and the Ottawa County Farm Bureau.



A watercraft navigates a stretch of the Grand River near Nunica.

## Opposing the Grand River Waterway

In December 2018, the Michigan Legislature allocated funds to the Grand River Waterway Project, which would dredge a 50-foot-wide pathway along a 22.5 mile stretch of the river, allowing large watercraft to travel from Grand Rapids to Lake Michigan. This plan concerned the Department.

With the Department's support, the Ottawa County Planning Commission, Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission, and the Ottawa Board of Commissioners all passed resolutions opposing the proposed dredging. Many other area municipalities followed suit. The Department will continue to monitor the situation and update the Planning Commission as new information becomes available.

## Countywide Broadband Initiative

The Department continued its push to expand and promote high-speed broadband internet access throughout the county.

**Broadband Website:** In the spring of 2019, the Department officially launched a broadband page, [miottawa.org/broadband](http://miottawa.org/broadband). The webpage provides information on projects going on in the County to increase access to broadband, includes resources on finding affordable broadband services, and gives residents an opportunity to inform Ottawa County if they do not currently have access to high speed internet at their homes.



**Mobile Hotspot Device Lending Initiative:** In 2019, Department staff successfully assisted area libraries with landing a Library of Michigan Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant to expand a pilot program to all nine libraries within the county's borders. This grant, administered at the federal level by the Institute of Museum and Library Sciences, totaled \$81,450. 100 T-Mobile hotspots were acquired and distributed, making the devices available for loan to the county's more than 283,000 residents through their local libraries.



Mobile hotspots for loan come in a convenient, hard plastic case.

## ACRE AGTECH

In the fall of 2018, the ACRE AgTech Board of Directors (**Appendix G**) approved the addition of a business accelerator component. Doug Huesdash, previously ACRE’s Senior Business Development Manager, took on the role of Chief Operating Officer to move the accelerator component forward. To ensure success, Huesdash attended a Global Accelerator Networks (GAN) workshop to learn best practices in developing the accelerator.

The AgTech Accelerator eventually formed into a 12-week program for startups chosen from an application process. ACRE admitted four startups to the program. The innovations of these four companies include using a scientific sound technology to keep wildlife away from crops; enabling owners of farm and construction equipment to loan idle equipment; utilizing software and artificial intelligence coupled with a modular growing platform to facilitate raising more than 200 crops indoors; and a service to aggregate farm biowaste for sale and delivery to biowaste power plants, generating revenue and reducing waste.

The Accelerator will culminate in a pitch competition at DeVos Place during the Great Lakes Fruit and Vegetable Expo in December 2019. There are expected to be potential investors, area business leaders and agriculture industry experts listening to pitches and seeking ag tech deals to add to their portfolios.

During fiscal year 2019, ACRE slowly moved its base of operations away from the Fillmore Street Complex to BizStream in Allendale. ACRE thanks the County for its support in creating this business incubator and accelerator program.



AgTech Accelerator participants visit the Long Lake Culinary Campus, a group of local and regional food enterprises and niche agri-business interests, in Traverse City, Mich. From left: host Brig Ricks, Andrew Joiner, Chip Hoagland, Frank Woodward, ACRE Chief Operating Officer Doug Huesdash, and Dennis Arouca.

# THE LIGHTER SIDE

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## 2019 Chili Cookoff

Employees from across the Fillmore Street campus gathered on November 26, 2019, for some spicy competition and camaraderie at the Department's fourth-annual Chili Cook-Off and fundraiser/food drive for Feeding America West Michigan. Nine cooks, five of whom are from different departments, went head-to-head for the coveted Chili for Charity trophy.

It was a packed office – more than 60 County employees tasted and voted for their favorite chili. With a variety of styles offered, competition was fierce; the final tally showed several offerings were within a point of each other. In the end, the Equalization Department's Thad Pepper garnered the most votes, 11, with Pepper's Precarious Pepper Turkey Chili. "(My last name) has to count for something," quipped Pepper after learning of his win. With 10 votes, the Department's own Julie Lamer came in second with her Hot Chix chili.

Hosted by the Department since 2016, the event is a great way to kick off the holiday season and raise funds for a worthy cause. Attendees are asked to donate cash or non-perishable goods. Money collected at this year's event totaled \$235, bringing the total funds raised since 2016 to \$1,388.40. That equals approximately 5,553 meals for needy West Michigan families.



Above: Chili Cook-off winner Thad Pepper of the Equalization Department shakes hands with Department Director Paul Sachs. Below: attendees enjoy chili.



## 231 River Run

On October 26, 2019, four Department staff members joined more than 400 participants in the 231 River Run at Connor River Bayou. The purpose of this race is to raise funds for and promote Ottawa County paved trails, advocate for wellness and showcase West Michigan as an active and thriving region.

It was a chilly yet beautiful fall morning! Two staffers ran the 4-mile race, each finishing in 1<sup>st</sup> place in their age groups. Two other staffers and a previous staffer volunteered their time by assisting with packet pick-up and getting the food set up for the post-race festivities.

The event raised \$11,989 to go toward construction and improvements along the Spoonville and Idema Explorers trails.

This race continues to grow every year, and we're proud to have active members of our department involved in this cause.



From left: Runner and Farmland Preservation Analyst Julie Lamer; volunteer and former Land Use Planner Danielle Bouchard; volunteer and Senior Secretary Pam Vanden Heuvel; volunteer and Economic Development Coordinator Becky Huttenga; and runner and Assistant Director Shannon Virtue. Below: The Department troupe enjoys some much-needed refreshments following the race.



### From library to 'Liberatorie'

The department requisitioned funds to remodel its underutilized library space, which housed planning-related books. The books were sorted, and the ones that were relevant for current planning techniques, or that held historical or local significance were kept, and are still available.

With the funds, the Department turned the space into a multi-functioning "huddle" space for staff. With a whiteboard and large TV monitor, it can be used for brainstorming sessions, small meetings, or even teleconference events.

Comfortable seating and flexible lighting options provide a space that can be customized to fit any work or meeting need.



The underutilized library has transformed into a 'huddle space' for staff.

### Food Trucks

Doug Huesdash, ACRE AgTech Chief Operating Officer, was surprised to discover the Fillmore Street Campus had no food service for the more than 500 people working here daily.

Being involved in Kingdom Minded Ministries, a culinary employment training program for ex-offenders, teens-at-risk and single parents, Huesdash saw an opportunity to merge needs.

After speaking with several food truck owners, there was an agreement to come to the Ottawa County campus bringing a variety of lunch choices. The food trucks agreed to provide a portion of their proceeds to support the training curriculum for Kingdom Minded Ministries.

Besides bringing great food to the Fillmore Street campus, connections made resulted in the Ottawa County Girls Juvenile Lighthouse program enrolling students into the culinary training program.

We're grateful Huesdash was able to bring these entrepreneurs out here to sell their culinary creations.



ACRE AgTech COO Doug Huesdash shakes the hand of a food vendor in summer 2019.

# APPENDIX

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<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Representing</u></b>	<b><u>Term Expires</u></b>
Matthew Fenske (Chair)	County Commissioner	12/31/2019
Francisco Garcia (Vice Chair)	County Commissioner	12/31/2019
Timothy Grifhorst	Road Commissioner	12/31/2019
Nathan Pyle	Agriculture	12/31/2020
Terry Hossink	Business/Industry	12/31/2020
Jason Pasatta	Education/School District	12/31/2019
Ric Gajewski	Information Technology	12/31/2019
Kirk Perschbacher	Natural Resources	12/31/2019
David Kraker	Public Health	12/31/2020

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Affiliation</u></b>	<b><u>Term Expires</u></b>
Doug Zylstra	County Commissioner	12/31/2023
Virginia Beard	Hope College	12/31/2019
Holly Cole	Grand Haven Area Community Foundation	12/31/2020
Thomas Reinsma	Scholten Fant	12/31/2022
Michelle Fare	City of Hudsonville	12/31/2021

**Name**

**Representing**

Alan Vanderberg

Ottawa County Administration

Paul Sachs

Ottawa County Planning & Performance Improvement

Dr. Alan Steinman

Grand Valley State University

John Yellich

Michigan Geological Survey

Pat Staskiewicz

Ottawa County Road Commission – Public Utilities

Adeline Hambley

Ottawa County Environmental Health

Matt Allen

Ottawa County Environmental Health

*This Board will become the Groundwater Technical Advisory Committee during FY2020.*

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Representing</u></b>
Phil Kuyers (Chair)	County Commissioner
Greg DeJong (Vice Chair)	County Commissioner
David Kraker	Ottawa County Planning Commission
Joe Bush	Ottawa County Water Resource Commission
Adam Elenbaas	Township Government
Bill Vandenberg	Township Government
Jim Bakker	Agriculture
Merle Langeland	Agriculture
Steve Hecksel	Well Driller
Eric Neubecker	Well Driller
Dale Zahn	Realtors/Homebuilders
Barbara Marczak	Engineering Firms/Environmental
Dr. Alan Steinman	Education/Environmental

*This Board will become the Ottawa County Groundwater Commission during FY2020.*

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Representing</u></b>	<b><u>Term Expires</u></b>
James Holtvluwer	County Commissioner	12/31/2019
Justin Roebuck	County Clerk/Register	12/31/2020
Ryan Galligan	Supervisors/Assessors	12/31/2020
Josh Westgate	Supervisors/Assessors	12/31/2019
Randall S. Schipper	Real Estate Attorneys	12/31/2020
R. Dale Sall	Realtors	12/31/2019
Brett Laughlin, P.E.	Road Commission	12/31/2019
Cameron Lear, P.S.	Surveyors	12/31/2020
Douglas Lansky, P.S.	Surveyors	12/31/2020
Matt Nederveld, P.S.	Surveyors	12/31/2019
Randall Feenstra, P.S.	County Representative	12/31/2019

**Name**

Donald Schiele, P.S.

Cameron Lear

Randy Feenstra (County Representative)

Steve Lampen

Matt Nederveld

Jack Bueche

Maurice Rosema

Steve Vallier

Jim Leitch

**Representing**

Donald Schiele, P.S.

Exxel Engineering

Feenstra & Associates

Holland Engineering

Nederveld Associates

Pathfinder Engineering

Tru-Line Surveying

Westshore Consulting

Williams & Works

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Affiliation</u></b>	<b><u>Term Expires</u></b>
Al Vanderberg (Chair)	County Administrator	12/31/2021
Laurie Larsen (Vice Chair/Secretary)	Retired Consumers Energy and Grand Haven Township	12/31/2019
Amanda Price (Treasurer)	County Treasurer	(Exempt per Bylaws)
Rick Chapla	The Right Place	12/31/2022
Philip Kuyers	County Commissioner	12/31/2019
Kirk Perschbacher	Lakeshore Environmental	12/31/2019
Lynn Kotecki	ODC Network	12/31/2021
Janessa Smit	Allendale Chamber of Commerce	12/31/2021
Dana Kollewehr	Michigan Economic Development Corporation	12/31/2022
(Recording Secretary)	County Clerk	(Non-voting)

*These Board Members serve as Directors on both the Ottawa County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority Board and the Ottawa County Economic Development Corporation.*

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Representing</u></b>	<b><u>Term Expires</u></b>
Clifford Meeuwssen (Chair)	Agriculture	12/31/2019
Matthew Fenske (Vice Chair)	County Commissioner	12/31/2019
Josh Hucul (Secretary)	Real Estate/Land Development	12/31/2019
Michael Bronkema	Agriculture	12/31/2021
Nathan Pyle	Agriculture	12/31/2020
David Nyitray	Land Conservation	12/31/2021
Vacant	Township Government	12/31/2019
Myra Koomen	Youth (AdHoc)	12/31/2019

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Representing</u></b>	<b><u>Term Expires</u></b>
Tim Parker (Chair)	Ottawa County Economic Development	12/31/2020
Michael Campbell (Vice Chair)	Business Professional At-Large	12/31/2021
Loren Koeman (Treasurer)	Financial At-Large	12/31/2021
Mark Schmidt (Secretary)	Ottawa County Non Agri-Business	12/31/2020
Cary Grover	Agri-Business At-Large	12/31/2019
Ian McGonigal	Business Professional At-Large	12/31/2020
Kurt Brauer	Legal At-Large	12/31/2021
Vacant	Michigan Agri-Business Association	12/31/2021
Clifford Meeuwssen	Ottawa County Agri-Business	12/31/2020
Philip Kuyers	Ottawa County Commissioner	12/31/2019
Paul Windemuller	Ottawa County Farm Bureau	12/31/2020
Paul Sachs	ACRE AgTech (Executive Director)	Non-Voting Member
Peter Anastor	MDARD (AdHoc)	Non-Voting Member



County of Ottawa — Planning & Performance Improvement

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