



THE PLEDGE

Engage communities and activate local solutions to sustain a healthy Lake Huron Forever.

Lake Huron Forever Pledge

The City of Au Gres knows that a healthy Lake Huron means a healthy, strong and vibrant future for our community. As a result, we are committed to keeping the protection of Lake Huron at the forefront of our planning, decision making and resource allocation.

Our community well-being and economic prosperity are tied to Lake Huron. We understand that access to healthy natural resources like fresh air, clean water and public land improve the health and wellness of our entire community.

We must work together to protect the forests, wetlands and waterways to address threats of pollution and flooding caused by stormwater, proactively plan for the impacts of a changing climate, support native plant restoration and provide corridors for wildlife.

We are committed to understanding the unique connections our residents and visitors have to Au Gres and to incorporating their priorities and concerns into our decision making as we continue to lead natural resources protection efforts in our region. We pledge to protect Lake Huron forever.

Our Lake Huron Forever Pledge

- We hereby pledge to create, implement and update a Lake Huron Forever Community Road Map.
- We promise to serve as an example of how to proactively protect Lake Huron by sharing our work with other Lake Huron communities.
- We will allocate resources (time, money, people) to understanding emerging needs and opportunities in order to protect Lake Huron forever.
- We will commit to and encourage all community organizations and residents to take their own actions to protect Lake Huron, forever.
- We will give back to Lake Huron by examining management practices across municipal departments to identify ways to improve efforts to protect land and water resources.
- We will share our pledge with neighboring community leaders, as well as state, provincial and federal representatives to generate more conversation and positive action for Lake Huron and Lake Huron communities.



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Our Lake Huron Forever Community Road Map

The City of Au Gres has identified several specific issues that are direct threats to the health of the Au Gres River and Lake Huron. With the support of the Lake Huron Forever network of partners, the City will work to address these issues with the following goals and action steps.

Issues and Goals

- **Stormwater:** In order to improve and protect water quality the City has prioritized reducing and improving the quality of stormwater runoff from within the city limits. The City aims to retrofit existing infrastructure to add nature-based solutions that reduce the strain on the existing storm sewer system and filter out common pollutants such as road salt, nutrients and sediment. The City also aims to incorporate nature-based solutions, when feasible, into future planning and construction projects.
- **Invasive Species:** Invasive plant species are gaining a foothold within and along local waterways that pose a threat to the integrity of those ecosystems and the local economy through reduced property values and damage to local tourism opportunities. Through actions on city properties and by supporting planning and treatment efforts by residents and neighboring townships, the City aims to prioritize this issue in the coming years.
- **Chemical Hazards:** Chemicals used in the maintenance of city properties can make their way into local waterways. The City aims to reduce the use of toxic or otherwise harmful chemicals throughout City departments including fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, cleaners and disinfectants. By transitioning to greener alternatives and training City staff on the proper use, application and disposal of necessary chemicals, the City aims to lead by example for others in the community.
- **Public Education and Engagement:** Increasing environmental education efforts targeted at the general public. Sharing information and stories with the Au Gres community is an essential aspect of this work.

Action Steps

1. The City of Au Gres, in partnership with Huron Pines and the Au Gres-Sims School District, will install rain gardens/bioswales along East Michigan Avenue in order to capture and treat stormwater before it enters the Au Gres River.
2. The City will support outreach efforts to local residents to inform them of the benefits of the bioswales including posting informative signage along Michigan Avenue, highlighting the project on the City's social media pages and having city representatives at in-person events.
3. The City and partners will develop and finalize maintenance plans for installed green infrastructure (e.g. rain gardens and bioswales). All relevant staff will receive an overview and training on these plans in order to maintain the aesthetics and functionality of the green infrastructure in the long term.



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4. The City will work with Huron Pines to finalize and tailor a messaging and communications guidance toolkit specific to Au Gres. The toolkit will include press release templates, social media posts, Lake Huron Forever messaging and logos and guidance for incorporating Lake Huron Forever messaging into public events. Appointed and elected officials will participate in a workshop for toolkit overview and understanding led by Huron Pines.
5. With assistance from Lake Huron Forever partners, the City will install visual representation(s) highlighting the pledge to become a Lake Huron Forever community. This could include a sign as you enter the City, storm drain stamps and/or business window decals.
6. The City will consider and discuss opportunities to raise or allocate funding for Lake Huron Forever programming and projects including considering these goals for grant fund applications and as line items during budgeting for the Tax Increment Financing Authority (TIFA), Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and/or other appropriate entities or programs.
7. The elected and appointed city leaders will explore opportunities to incorporate the Lake Huron Forever Pledge and nature-based solutions into future development opportunities and City plans (i.e. Master Plan or Parks and Recreation Plan).
8. The Au Gres City Council will review the Lake Huron Forever Road Map on a quarterly basis. The Road Map will be revised and added to on an annual basis.