

AU GRES CITY NEWS LETTER

AU GRES DISC GOLF COURSE OPEN

Au Gres Disc Golf course has seen increased use during the past couple years. The disc golf course is located in the old Au Gres airport property. To access the course, park at the end of Industrial Park Drive. The course consists of 20 challenging holes, wooded and open and was designed by Ron Peludat. There will be a disc golf tournament this year scheduled for July 19, 2025. Contact Craig Prime for more info at 989-686-1375. Remember to bring your own discs (sold at sporting good stores) and to pick up after yourself to keep the course open and free to the public. Donations are always accepted.



ACE SUMMER MUSIC SCHEDULE CONCERTS IN THE PARK

Every Wednesday 6:30 -8:30 PM

Held Rain or Shine!

July 2: **Josh Ramses Band**
July 9: **One World**
July 16: **Flipside**
July 23: **Ernest Entertainment**
July 30: **Ceyx**
August 6: **23 North**
August 13: **The Gypsum Kings**

*All concerts held inside Au Gres City Campground
401 N Main Street by small pavilion in back.*

CITY HALL DRIVE-THRU HOURS & SERVICE

Au Gres City Staff wants to remind all customers that the drive-through window located on City Hall's west side is available. Please sound your horn and City staff will gladly take any water bill or tax payment. There is also a night deposit box located at the front of the building for payments after hours. Hours open are M-TH 8:00 AM-5:00 PM and Fridays 9:00 AM-3:00 PM.

MOSQUITO SPRAYING

The City renewed its contract with Advanced Pest Management for mosquito spraying through 2026. If you have an issue with spraying, please call them directly at 989-876-0374. If you would like to opt out completely for spraying or would like to give permission to APM for off road access, forms are available at City Hall.

CITY GRASS ORDINANCE

The City wants to remind all property owners that there is a grass ordinance in effect. This states that all property is to be cut by May 15 annually and there often not to exceed 6" on residential and 8" on non-residential lots. If there is property that is in violation of this, please call City Hall to report the address. Remember not to blow grass into roadway or curb while cutting your grass all summer long!

NEW DIGITAL SIGN FOR THE COMMUNITY

Please remember, if you have an event going on, please stop in or call City Hall to let us know. The sign is for public use only and not for profit. This includes school, library, park, Chamber of Commerce, churches and area organizations. We would be glad to post your event on our digital sign to let the whole community know.

COMMUNITY FISH CLEANING STATION

The city put in a new fish cleaning station at the old State Harbor of Refuge or now called "Riverside Park." It is located in the gray pole building closest to US-23. It will not be staffed but will have cameras installed and will be a community station left open for all to use. A fee box is set up and rates are currently \$1 per fish and open 24/7. City staff asks you clean-up after yourselves. The city will gauge by usage, cost to maintain and if any problems; the fee might have to be adjusted.

SPLASH PAD OPEN DAILY!

The Splash Pad will be open from Memorial Day thru Labor Day. Hours of operation are 10 AM – 8 PM. The big blue button needs to be pushed to activate water and water will only turn on during these hours. This button is heat activated and can only work with hand or bare-foot. Pavilion available for rental! See article below.

PAY WITH CREDIT/ DEBIT/ACH PAYMENTS

The city has been accepting credit or debit cards on water bills or taxes for a couple years now. You can go online to make payments or just call City Hall to pay over the phone. The city also accepts ACH payments. The city has form to set up ACH payments and they will be pulled automatically on the 15th of the month for water bills and 1st of the month for taxes.

CITY GARAGE SALE ORDINANCE IN EFFECT

Remember that Au Gres City Council recently adopted a garage sale ordinance for the city. You need to file a permit (0 fee) with City Hall and are allowed 3 sales per year at a maximum of 84 hours each sale.

NEW GOLF CART ORDINANCE IN EFFECT

City Council recently adopted a golf cart ordinance. The city now allows golf carts on local streets only (not US-23) as long as the golf cart is registered with City Hall and/or the Police Department and obtain a permit sticker to be displayed on the golf cart. Golf carts cannot be operated on streets during the time period from ½ hour before sunset to ½ hour after sunrise. Registration is free.

AUGRES CITY RECYCLING

LOCATION: CITY DPW GARAGE, 986 S COURT
ITEMS ALLOWED:

PAPER: mail, paper, phone books, magazines.

PASTIC: household plastics #1-#7

CARDBOARD: cardboard boxes, cereal boxes, paperboard

ALUMINUM: food & beverage aluminum & steel cans.

GLASS: glass bottles

Please note, this service is only for City of Au Gres non-commercial taxpayers. A \$7 fee will be placed on the winter 2025 taxes to help cover costs. This bin is dumped once per month.

PAPERLESS BILLING: If you would like to receive your water bill electronically, please email to cityofaugres@cityofaugresmi.com or call the office.

AUGRES INSTITUTES VETERAN BANNERS

The City of Au Gres has mirrored the City of Standish with their veteran banner program. You should have seen the new banners displayed for this Memorial Day holiday. If you are still interested in purchasing a banner, City Hall still has spots available for the 2026 year and the cost is \$200 for two-year display. This is great way to honor any veteran, living or deceased that resided in Arenac County. These banners will be sold throughout the year again and be installed by Memorial Day 2026. Any questions or further information, stop in to City Hall.

LIBRARY SUMMER PROGRAMS

- * July 7: "Library Lion" Read-aloud w/ craft 2 PM
- * July 11: "The Raft" Read-aloud w/ craft 2 PM
- * July 18: "The Raft" Read-aloud w/ craft 2 PM
- * July 22: "Picasso Magic" magic show 1 PM

*All programs are held at the Au Gres Library,
230 Mackinaw Street.*

Anyone can call in a street light outage. Call Consumer Energy at 1-800-477-5050 and report nearest address.

TRASH COLLECTION

Remember that City curbside trash collection (Tuesday pick up) is for residential customers only. This service also includes one bulky item pick-up per week.

Republic Services ask that you call in your large item ahead of time to 1-800-438-0966. If the City gets billed excessive pick-ups at your residence, the cost will be passed on to the homeowner. Trash collection will be delayed one day when the holiday falls on a weekday. For the remainder of the year, the only holiday affected is Labor Day and will be Wednesday, September 3, 2025.

ALL PROJECTS NEED ZONING APPROVAL

All projects that you are doing in your yard, house or business needs zoning approval. This includes decks, fencing, sheds, additions, garages, or signs. Please check with City Hall prior to and pull a permit.

JULY

- 4 Au Gres City Offices closed
- 5 Fireworks held at South/Court St in Au Gres @ Dusk
- 19 Old Airport Disc Golf Tournament
- 26 Au Gres Cruisers 13 Mile Cruise starting at 5:15 PM
- 27 Au Gres Car Show 9-3 PM @ City Pavilion

AUGUST

- 2 Parade of Boats @ Dusk
- 5 Au Gres City Offices closed- Election Day

SEPTEMBER

- 1 Au Gres City Hall closed for Labor Day
- 15 Summer Taxes Due

LEGACY/MEMORIAL BENCHES

The city currently is selling legacy/memorial benches to be replaced at various locations within the city. This is a great way to commemorate a special event, honor an agency or individual or memorialize a loved one. Order forms available at City Hall. The benches are 4-foot-long garden style benches and the city is using local Treasures Forever for all engraving and ordering. The top back-rail of the bench will be engraved with your choice of wording. See Treasures Forever for samples. Total cost of each bench is \$450 and includes the cost of bench, engraving and installation.

2025 FARM MARKET STARTED

The Au Gres Farm Market is being held again on Fridays and Saturdays this year during the months of June-August at the Au Gres Riverside Park from 9 AM-1 PM. The event is made successful by numerous vendors who participated each year. Products such as vegetables, fruits, flowers, eggs, honey, baked goods, and specialty products were available throughout the season. The farm market is now run by their vendors. Crafters are invited to participate at the farm market the following dates: July 4-5, July 25-26, August 8-9 and August 29-30. Call Tom Becker at 989-321-0297 to register.

AU GRES CITY CAPITAL PROJECT UPDATE

- The City of Au Gres completed two street improvement projects in May 2025 with a pavement overlay on Detroit Street & Au Gres River Drive and a mill & pavement overlay of N Court Street.
- The City of Au Gres DPW recently purchased a 2025 Chevrolet 3500HD Work truck. This truck will replace a 2012 Ford F-250 pick-up and 2000 Chevy dump truck. These items will be going up for bids this fall.
- The Riverfront Campground site expansion is scheduled to begin August 1st with the addition of 28 full hook-up campsites and two ADA compliant cabins. Completion is scheduled for Spring of 2026. This project will be partially funded from a \$400,000 Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund grant.
- Au Gres Area youth ballfields are in the process of being constructed near the current soccer field location on S Court Street. The fields will be ready for play in the Spring of 2026. This project is a combined effort with the City of Au Gres, Sims, Whitney, Au Gres, and Turner Townships along with many volunteers and in-kind donations, as well as grants from the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe and the Arenac Community Funds.
- The City of Au Gres will be building four new homes as part of the Michigan State Housing Development Authority MiNeighborhood grant program. A \$400,000 MSHDA grant will assist in keeping the costs of the homes affordable. The houses are scheduled to be built in the Southcourt Estates subdivision and will be available for sale to the public when completed.

ARENAC COUNTY MUSEUM PROGRAMS

Tuesday, July 8, 2025

"The Life & Times of Benjamin Franklin"

Thursday, August 14, 2025

"The Underground Railroad"

September 4, 2025

"Civil War Soldiers of Arenac County"

***All programs listed are 7 PM @ Museum
304 E Michigan Avenue Au Gres
Free & Open to the Public
Refreshments Served***

THANK YOU!! THANK YOU!! THANK YOU!!

Au Gres City Hall would like to extend several thank you's during the past fiscal year:

- Thank you to the Saginaw-Chippewa 2% Grant for \$10,000 to go towards our new city ballfields and \$8250 for a locator for our DPW staff to help locate and mark underground water and sewer lines.
- Thank you to Bay Area Community Fund grant for \$10,600 to go towards our new city ballfields.
- Thank you to all who participated in the Memorial Day Parade. It was great to see participation and attendance up!
- Thank you to ACE group for all their great events put on including concerts in the park, Christmas in the Park and the recent Taste of Au Gres!

2025 SUMMER TAX DEFERMENT

Eligible taxpayers can defer the payment of their summer taxes on their principal residence only until February 14, 2026 by completing an Application for Deferment and submitting it by September 15, 2025. Due to annual changes in income requirements, the deferment application form must be submitted each year. Forms can be picked up at City Hall.

CITY RESIDENTIAL COMPOST SITE

The city has a compost site available for residential customers only that accepts leaves, grass clipping and brush cut to uniform lengths. It is located on Proulx Road and during the summer months, it's open all day on Tuesdays. City residential customers pay \$7 annually on their taxes for this and the recycling service. If you cannot make Tuesday, to dispose of your compost, please call City Hall to make other arrangements.

CITY FACILITIES AVAILABLE FOR RENT

- ***Chapel in the Michigan Avenue Park:*** Reserve now for weddings, memorial serves, etc. Just received some TLC and has new redone wood flooring along with electrical upgrades and more improvements coming! Total fee is \$175.
- ***Splash Pad Pavilion:*** Works great for kids' birthday parties, family re-unions, etc. Rents out for \$50 for 3 hours, \$80 for 6 hours or all day for \$150. Pavilion has electric and picnic tables. Park closes at dusk and must be vacated by then.
- ***City Park Pavilion:*** Great for graduation parties, wedding receptions, family re-unions, etc. Rents out for \$200 city resident and \$300 for non-resident. All forms are available on our website at www.cityofaugresmi.com or can be picked up at City Hall. Chapel deposit is \$100 to reserve and pavilion(s) deposits are \$50.

***Have a safe &
enjoyable summer!***

**MAKE SURE YOU HAVE OUR CORRECT MAILING
ADDRESS: PO BOX 121, AU GRES, MI 48703!**

NEW WATER/SEWER RATES EFFECTIVE 7/1/25

Au Gres City Council passed new water and sewer rates with the City's new budget year. Rates have not been raised since 1/1/2021. For water, the new rates will be dropping the 2000 gallons minimum in the water ready-to-serve fee. This will be billed out at the rate of \$5 per 1000 gallons. The sewer cost per 1000 gallons will increase from \$5 to \$6 per 1000 gallons. You will see these new rates effective with the water bill that is due September 30, 2025.

SCHOOL ELECTION SET FOR AUGUST 5, 2025

A special election will be held on Tuesday, August 5, 2025 for the Au Gres-Sims School bond millage request. This election will be held at each of the 6 municipalities involved in the AGS School district. Absentee ballots are now in and can be picked up at your local clerk's office. All absentee ballots are due back to their clerk by 8 PM on election day for their ballot to count. Polls will be open from 7 AM – 8 PM. Any questions on the bond, call directly to the AGS School District at 989-876-7150.

CURB APPEAL...IT BENEFITS ALL OF US

After a long winter, spring is the season of rejuvenation. This is a great time to venture back out in the yard and dispose of unwanted items. Some of these items are a violation of City ordinances. Getting rid of yard clutter will quickly increase the curb appeal of your home, possibly making better neighbor relations and will certainly benefit the character of liability of our city.

REQUEST OF WATER TURN ON OR OFF

When requesting a water turn-on or off, please contact City Hall at 989-876-8811 to schedule an appointment and provide at least 24-hour notice. There is a \$35 fee for each time the water is turned on or off, which will be applied to your water bill. Someone must be present at the home for the water to be turned on. After business hours turn on/off requests have a \$55 fee.

STORM WATER ILLEGAL TO PUT DOWN SANITARY SEWER

Just as a courtesy reminder to all residents, new and old, that it is illegal to dump or pump storm water down the city sanitary sewer. This was called to our attention back with the flooding and high-water levels of the Au Gres River that we noticed this problem with several homes along the river. This is tampering with City utilities and is illegal and can be charged criminally. City's infrastructure and pumps were not designed for this amount of water and if they cannot keep up with the demand, it will cause sewer back-up in homes and businesses. Please be conscious about this and double check and make sure that any sump pump drains into ditches or the river and not down sanitary sewer lines.

GET INVOLVED: VOLUNTEER!

There are many ways to get involved in "YOUR" community. Volunteers are always needed to help with seasonal events and ongoing events in our area. Music in the Park, City of Au Gres Christmas Celebration, Fireworks, Halloween in the Park, Au Gres Cruisers Car show, fishing tournament and more happen because volunteer groups host these events. If you would like to help out at any capacity to keep these projects going contact the Au Gres Area Chamber of Commerce at 989-876-6688. The city is always looking for new members with fresh ideas to sit on various boards, call City Hall if interested at 989-876-8811.

PROPERTY TRANSFER

Please remember, if you have recently bought or sold a house, vacant lot, or boat slip in the city, please stop in and see what paperwork is required. A PTA form needs to be filed within 45 days or a \$200 penalty charge.

FLUSHABLE PRODUCTS NOT ALLOWED

City staff has been dealing with plugged pumps lately. They have realized the newer products marked 'FLUSHABLE' might be fine for a well and septic system but have been wreaking havoc on city sanitary sewer systems. These products are getting bound up in pumps and causing pumps to quit working or break. Please do not flush baby wipes, depends, tampons, diapers or any other feminine products down the toilet. If City pumps fail to operate due to a pump that is plugged up, it could cause backed-up sewer in your home or business. The City has learned that this is not the responsibility of the City but will fall on each individual home owner to carry additional coverage of 'backed up sewer' on your home owner's insurance. Please be aware of this.

ASSESSING SERVICES

The Assessing Department is responsible for establishing property appraisals, state equalized value and taxable values of all properties located within the City of Au Gres. The Assessing Department is constantly reviewing and updating records to reflect changes that occur to the individual properties and will inspect 20% of all property each year. Our Assessor will leave a business card if he was doing field work at your home/business. He does not need to enter any home or building.

Have you moved recently? Has your primary residence changed? Be sure to file the Principal Residence Exemption form with the Assessor by November 1, 2025 to qualify for exemption on the winter 2025 taxes. If you're not sure if you have filed the form or if any questions, please call City Hall at 989-876-8811.

AU GRES CITY MANAGER COMMENTS

Every community needs a great school system, and every school system needs a great community.” This is a statement that we all can agree on no matter your stance on the upcoming election. The Au Gres-Sims School and communities are there for now...., but no one can predict the future. The reason I mention this is that there is an important Au Gres-Sims School District millage issue facing our residents on an August 5th ballot. The school board is asking voters to pass a \$11,995,000 bond to make \$2,300,000 in critical improvements to the Au Gres-Sims school, and the remaining balance of \$9,500,000 to erect a 130,000 square foot inflatable sports air dome, which is being promoted as a “community center”. During the May 6th Au Gres City Council meeting, the board passed a resolution to oppose this proposal as submitted based on the following points:

- 1) ***The proposed bond issue would result in a significant increase in property taxes for the property owners of the Au Gres-Sims School District, many of whom cannot vote due to residency requirements.*** Over 60% of the property owners cannot vote because they are not registered voters within the City of Au Gres. The Au Gres City Council members agreed that they are elected “To do what is in the best interest of the City, its residents, and its property owners”.
- 2) ***The Board of Education has failed to demonstrate a clear need for all the projects proposed on the bond issue, justify the costs associated with them, have not demonstrated a definitive plan to sustain the estimated cost of operation and maintenance of the community center, and have not been forthcoming on the true millage.*** The amenities of the inflatable “community center” dome has been questioned as not all the features discussed will fit inside. There is not a reasonable plan to cover the additional estimated expense of \$400,000 - \$600,000 dollars per year to operate and maintain the dome. Per the AGS School Superintendent the costs will be covered by public membership fees of \$66,000, corporate sponsorship (Ford, Meijer, Walmart, etc.) of \$240,500 and rental fees of \$272,850. None of these revenue streams have commitments. And, that a NO vote will reduce the current school millage due to an expiring bond from the Arenac Eastern school consolidation.
- 3) ***The location of the proposed project is within the jurisdiction of the City of Au Gres, and has concern regarding the short-term and long-term impact on the city and its taxpayers.*** To date neither the school district nor representatives have approached the city regarding a site plan, infrastructure review, water and sewer connections, or any safety/traffic concerns that may occur.
- 4) ***Other funding sources, such as state and federal grants, or school district budget allocations, could be utilized for the projects.*** Has the school district explored other options besides placing this dome on the shoulders of taxpayers? The committee to build and operate the proposed “community dome” did not include any civic leaders, elected officials, or at-large public members that could be identified. A proposal of this magnitude to the community should have had an impact study, feasibility study, or survey before the bond proposal election. The School Superintendent denied a Freedom of Information Act request from community members seeking answers to the school board plan regarding the dome.

- 5) ***The proposed bond issue would create an additional financial burden on taxpayers, who are already struggling with everyday necessities such as housing, utility, and food expenses.*** Even with the pristine shoreline and riverfront properties within our area, the Au Gres School District is a low-income area for many permanent residents. This project will add unwanted expenses to those everyday financial challenges.

The City of Au Gres City Council passed this resolution after listening to the residents of Au Gres, property owners who cannot vote but have a voice, many of the area business owners and members of the farming community who are not in favor of this project. Most of the meeting attendees were in favor of essential improvements to the school but were concerned about the long-term risks of an inflatable structure and the unknown financial impact to the property owners and residents of this community. In 2018 a school bond millage for 8.1 million dollars to make school improvements passed 2-1 with full support from the city council and residents. One of the concerns is that the 2018 millage still has a debt obligation of approximately \$11,000,000, coupled with the proposed \$11,995,000 millage and interest (total estimated debt obligation of \$18,500,000), and \$400,000-\$600,000 per year operations and maintenance cost the school district will be responsible for over \$35,000,000 in repayment and expenses over the next 20 years.

A **YES** vote on the bond proposal will allow for the funding of the \$2.3 million in needed school improvements and an at risk \$9.5 million inflatable sports dome.

A **NO** vote on the bond proposal will allow the school board to retreat, regroup, and resubmit a reasonable millage proposal that give our school the \$2.3 million in funding or the needed improvements.

We have a great school system that has produced many successful students. Many Au Gres-Sims alumni are very active in the area today. They are seen in many of the local businesses as owners, managers, and employees. Quite a few of these former AGS students are involved in the day-to-day operations of new establishments along with being 2nd, 3rd, and 4th generation owners. The same can be said for area farmers, factory workers, tradesman, school staff, government employees and elected officials. The City of Au Gres has four full time employees, all graduates of Au Gres-Sims High School. Our volunteer groups including youth coaches, community events staff, and local government boards are primarily former graduates of our school district. Au Gres-Sims Schools has implemented many cutting-edge programs; dual enrollment to help kids reduce college tuition, a green program with solar panels, electric buses, and a stellar environmental science program. AGS also boasts one of the best continuous band programs in the State, and the fielding of competitive sports teams such as the championship 8-man football squads.

The City of Au Gres, our area Townships, the Au Gres-Sims School district, and our residents have worked hard to get where our community is today. This does not mean that all our goals have been met, but it does mean we have to be careful in continuing in an upward direction. We live in a democracy where we can vote for what is vital. Please look at both sides of the August 5th ballot issue and exercise your rights to vote. Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any comments, questions, or concerns. Have a great summer!

Dale Wiltse, City Manager