

# Ogemaw Outlook

2022-23 & 2024, looking ahead





# Message from the President

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**Phil Durst**  
**Michigan State University Extension**  
**Ogemaw County EDC Board**  
**President**

Business is the economic lifeblood of the area. Every time dollars change hands, every time purchases are made or services are paid for, people are helped, livelihoods are enhanced and government is supported. The Ogemaw EDC is about business – helping it, guiding it, growing it. Our slogan is “Collaborate, Innovate and Grow Ogemaw County”.

Growth in Ogemaw County is clearly evident. According to JobsEQ , employment in Ogemaw County is rising; up 274 jobs between 2023Q1 and 2022Q1 and up 461 jobs when 2023Q1 is compared to 2019Q4. These are encouraging figures for each new job affects families and communities.

New businesses and growing businesses don't just happen. They are the result of a lot of work, guidance and resources behind the scenes. Much of the work of the Ogemaw EDC is there, behind the scenes, talking with, meeting with, and working with businessmen and women to bring it to fruition. Without those efforts, often the ideas would simply vanish, go elsewhere or sprout, then wither away.



Business is personal, but the business world can be cold, hard and unfeeling. The Ogemaw EDC invites businessmen and women to a place that is warm and welcoming, where you can be fed with information and enjoy time with like-what's happening now, and to also look ahead. We invite you to interact with the EDC. Explore ways to secure growth and prosperity.



Questions about our services?  
Ready to get involved?  
Contact Penny Payea,  
[ppayea@michworks4u.org](mailto:ppayea@michworks4u.org),  
989.345.1090

*Like the EDC on Facebook! Link the website to your site. List the EDC social media on your social media.*

# Who are we?

## Our Board:

- Tiffany Schmieder-Kups, Human Services
- Theresa Erickson, Banking
- Ray Stover (Treasurer), Health
- Yvonne DeRoso, Real Estate
- Sue Delehanty, Land Bank
- Rich Castle (VP), Energy
- Heather Neuhaus, Chamber of Commerce
- Mike Ehinger, Education
- Elizabeth Grabow (Secretary), Business
- Denise Nault, Business
- Charles Wiltse, County Commissioner
- Phil Durst (President), Agriculture
- Penny Payea, Director



## Non-Board Committee Members:

- Jim Kloostra
- Jeremy Hickmott
- Michelle Forsyth
- Mary Bickel
- Melissa Maeder
- Jackie Morgan

## COMMITTEES:

Education  
Revolving loan fund  
Site Selection

Fundraising  
Child Care

Collaborate, Innovate and Grow Ogemaw County

The mission of the Ogemaw County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) is to support, promote, enhance and sustain economic development throughout the county.

## OUR ROLE

The Ogemaw Economic Development Corporation's (EDC) role is to support new and existing businesses, thus propagating economic growth in Ogemaw County.

## OUR FOCUS

The EDC stays relevant to issues that affect our businesses and residents. Business is best when it is win-win; for employees, communities, and the county as well as for the business owners. Meeting the needs of employees helps to meet the needs of the business. Therefore, the EDC is sensitive to barriers for employees such as childcare, housing and is working with partners to reduce these obstacles. These are discussed more in the following pages.

The EDC understands that knowledge is powerful in business, for things are not the same as they were yesterday, change is a constant and learning is important. The EDC conducts educational workshops targeted for business owners and also encourages the workforce to pursue formal education wholeheartedly.

Resources can be limiting for business start-up, expansion or change. The EDC works to reduce that barrier with business loans while requiring applicants to work with the Small Business Development Center to write a thorough business plan.

Ideas, questions, connections and linkages are the daily bread and butter of the Ogemaw EDC for the benefit of Ogemaw County residents from North to South, East to West.

our mission



# OUR CURRENT FOCUS



**BUSINESS EDUCATION  
& WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT**



**REVOLVING  
LOAN FUND**



**CHILDCARE**



**HOUSING**

*Invite someone from the EDC to speak to your group, board or organization!*

# PARTNERSHPS

The work of economic development is bigger than the Board and Director of the Ogemaw EDC. The first step to creating an effective impact is to create a stellar TEAM. The EDC is proud to collaborate with a broad range of institutions, businesses, organizations and individuals.

## **The EDC partners with local government.**

- EDC is proud to partner with the Ogemaw County Commissioners
- EDC is thankful for the support of many township and DDAs
- The EDC has a quarterly schedule of board meetings “on the road” in different townships

## **The EDC partners with agencies including:**

- Michigan Works! Region 7B
- Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)
- USDA Small Business Administration (SBA)
- USDA Rural Development
- Small Business Development Center (SBDC)
- Community Economic Development Association of Michigan (CEDAM)

## **The EDC partners with organizations.**

- Ogemaw EDC is an active member of the three Chambers of Commerce in the county - Rose City/Lupton, West Branch and Skidway Lake
- Ogemaw EDC partners with the Michigan Township Association

## **The EDC partners with businesses, including:**

- Consumers Energy
- MyMichigan Health
- Huntington Bank

AND SO MANY MORE

**Our collaboration door is always open for those who want to help advance the economy of Ogemaw County.**

LEARN MORE ON OUR WEBSITE:  
OGEMAWEDC.COM



SHARE  
BUSINESS  
HELP  
**PARTNERSHIP**  
TEAMWORK  
SUPPORT  
COOPERATE



## Economic Outlook

Annually the EDC hosts an event that brings business owners, municipalities and legislators together to share highlights from the year.

In 2022 Sarah Lucas, who held the very new position of Executive Director of Rural Development, was our keynote speaker. Sarah shared with us her vision of her new role and allowed for us to share our thoughts for Ogemaw County.

2023 has been very exciting so far and as we move forward and continue to build our future, the Ogemaw EDC will continue to be a partner.

# BUSINESS WORKSHOPS & EVENTS

Being in business is all about learning and growing. The EDC understands that and has hosted free workshops for anyone interested. In 2022 and 2023, these workshops were held:

- Taking the fear out of a business loan application
- Effective Use of Social Media Business
- Business Collaboration for Mutual Benefit

In these workshops, experienced people have shared their knowledge and recommendations.

***More workshops are planned for 2024.***



# FINANCING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

*Breakfast*



Join local funders and Ogemaw Economic Development Corporation to discuss our roles in business development and expansion in our county, including how the Revolving Loan Fund can be part of the solution.

**JAN**

**26<sup>th</sup>**

**2024**

2389 S M-76; West Branch, MI 48661

7:30 - 9 AM

RSVP to [ppayea@michworks4u.org](mailto:ppayea@michworks4u.org)

The Ogemaw County EDC is always working to identify ways to “promote, support and enhance” Ogemaw County and the businesses within. Part of that is how we can help you grow and expand, or perhaps you are just starting out and need a hand. How do we do that? We collaborate with our local, state and federal partners. The Financing Economic Development Breakfast is an event where we meet with the lenders in the area on how we can work together to support our businesses and municipalities.



# THE ADVANTAGES TO SHOPPING LOCALLY

IF YOU WERE TO REDIRECT  
**JUST 10 PERCENT**  
OF YOUR OUT-OF-STATE  
ECOMMERCE PURCHASES  
TO LOCAL BUSINESS,

**MICHIGAN WOULD SEE  
THESE BENEFITS**



RETAIL INDUSTRIES THAT WOULD  
SEE THE LARGEST  
EMPLOYMENT  
GAINS



NON-STORE  
5,368 NEW JOBS



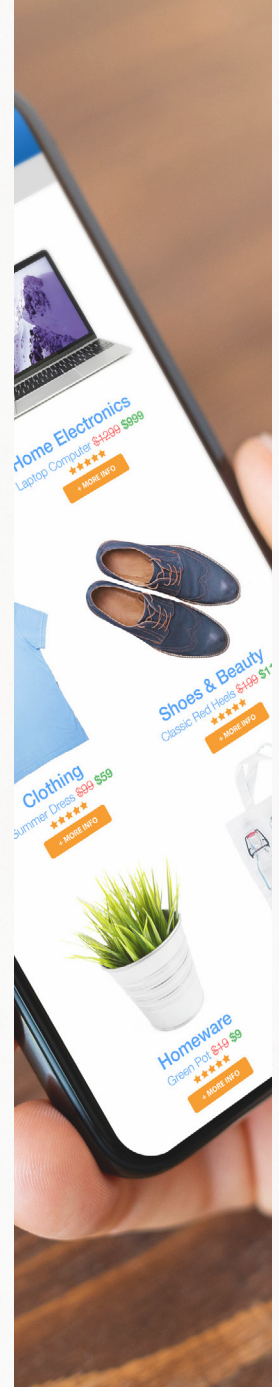
CLOTHING  
1,139 NEW JOBS



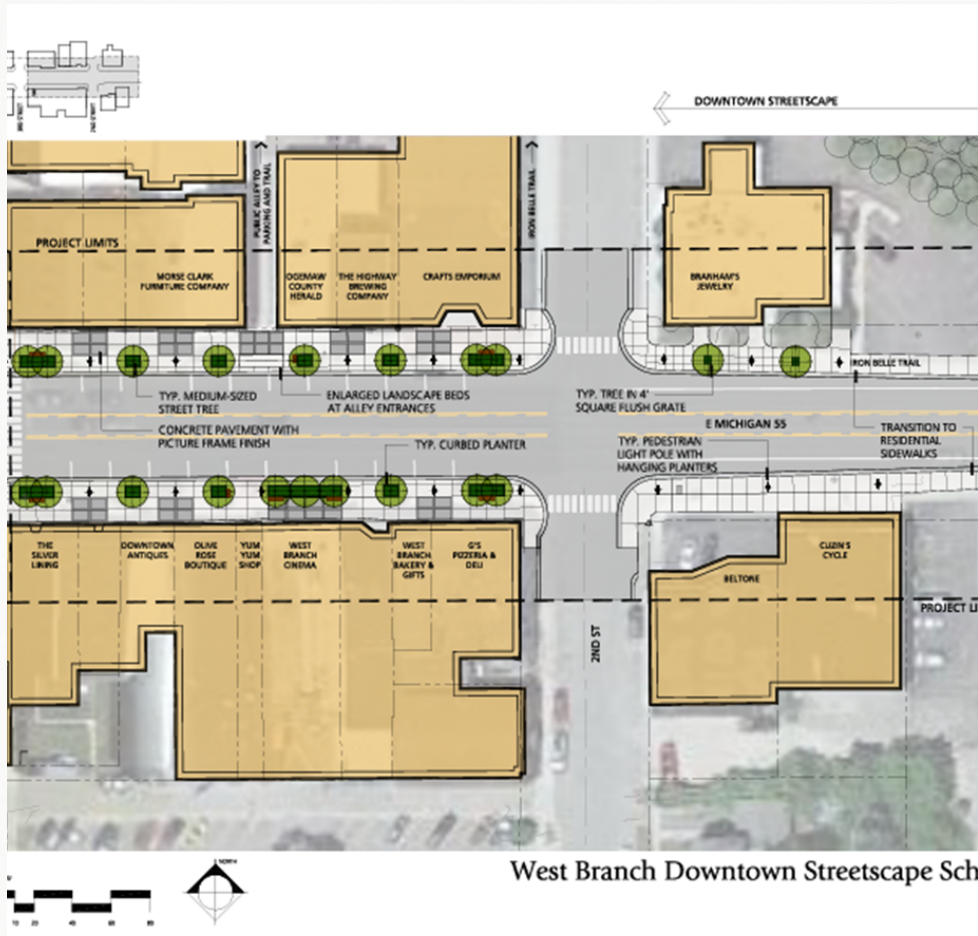
GENERAL MERCHANDISE  
1,421 NEW JOBS



ELECTRONICS  
749 NEW JOBS



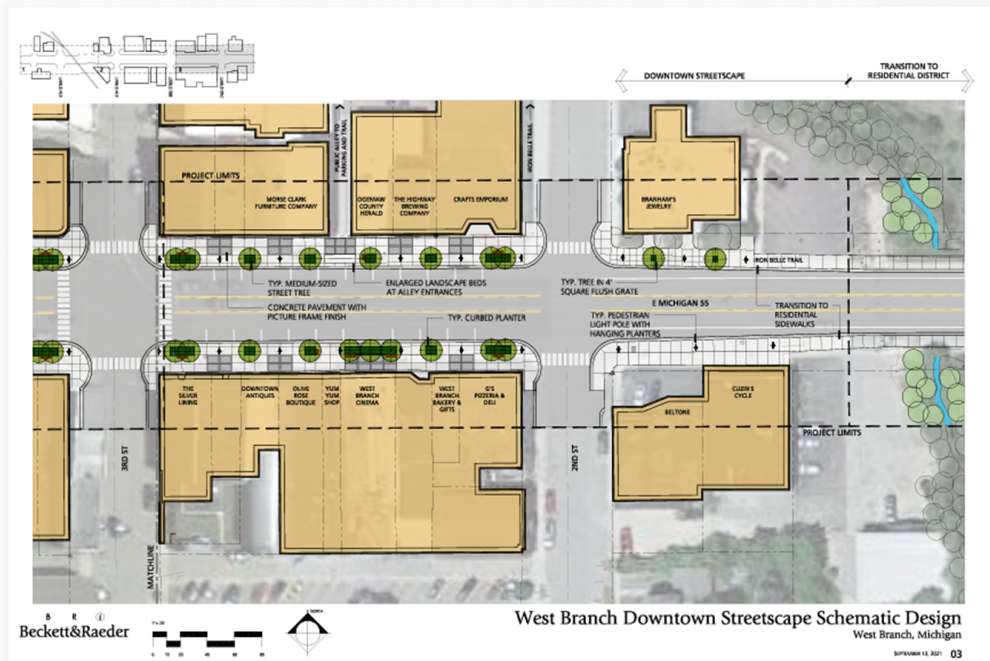




*There is no question that a downtown project will be disruptive to the businesses in town. The planned project is all about making it easier and better to do business downtown and/or to upgrade important infrastructure.*

# SURVIVING OUR DOWNTOWN PROJECT

*Short-term pain for long-term success. But what is a business owner to do during the short-term pain phase?*





**Start with attitude:**

- *Keep the end in mind and remind your staff and customers of the benefits of the final product of the construction.*
- *Be prepared to positively answer questions about the project and not complain.*
- *Acknowledge the hard work and support of all involved.*
- *Work with others; sharing your ideas and learning from theirs.*

**Consider changes and plan ahead to mitigate problems:**

*If you will be using an alternative entrance, prepare now to make it more visible, accessible, attractive and functional. That may mean:*

- *Better signage*
- *Sprucing up that entryway inside and outside*
- *Better door*
- *Setting up a checkout near that access point*
- *Rearranged displays*

**If you have more time on your hands because of less foot traffic:**

- *Work on your social media presence to promote (not to complain).*
- *Take time to think creatively about business and promotion.*
- *Talk more with your customers and learn how to be better for them and you.*

**Develop new customers:**

- *Market to construction crews, some of whom will be away from home during the week.*
- *Market to downtown workers who may not already be customers.*

**Consider alternative means:**

- *Expand or change business hours.*
- *Set up delivery options for businesses (group orders) or homes.*
- *Set up an auxiliary site for service or sales.*

**Partner with other downtown businesses:**

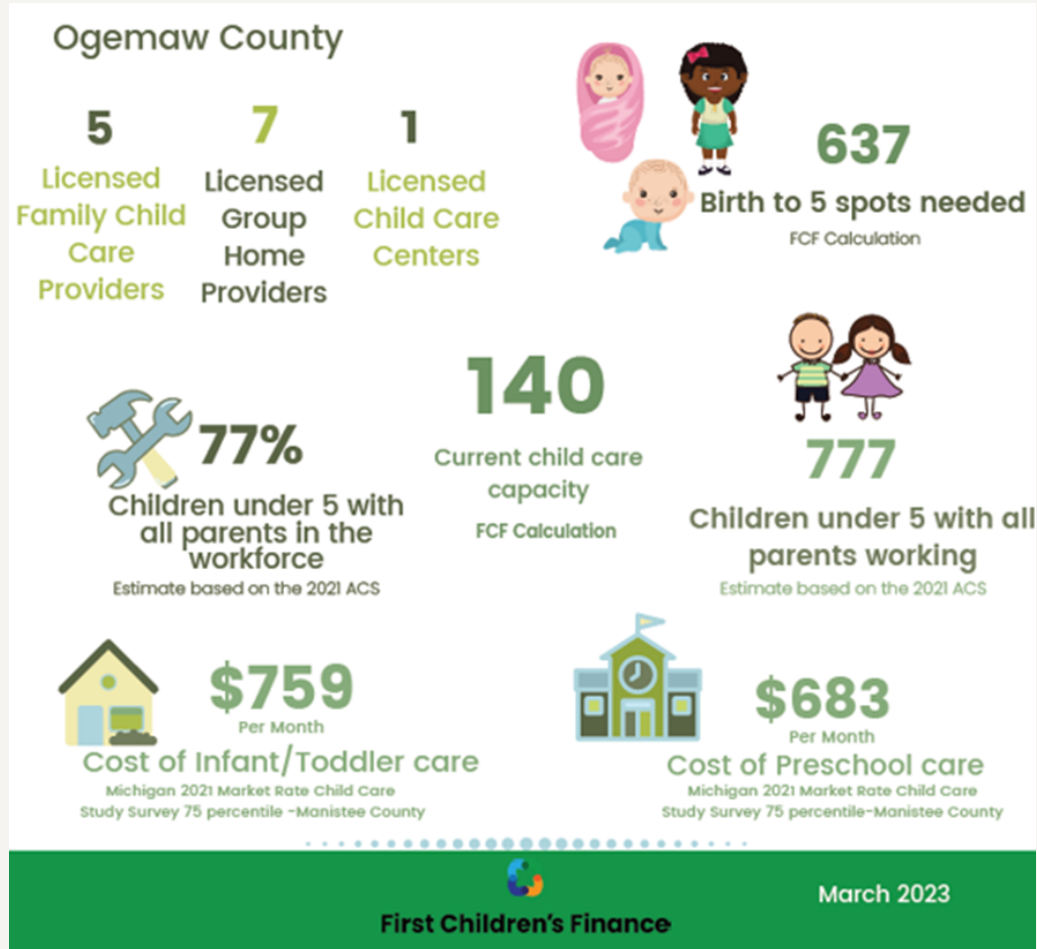
- *Collaborate to cross-promote businesses.*
- *Work with your Chamber of Commerce to develop construction stage celebrations.*

**Communicate, communicate, communicate:**

- *With employees about attitude as well as changes. Seek their input and ideas.*
- *With customers to keep them coming and learn about their interests.*
- *With suppliers who may not know how best to deliver.*
- *With other business owners on what works for you and for them.*

*The Ogemaw County EDC wants to work with you through this or other challenges that you face as a business. We understand that the temporary condition will be tough, but the EDC can help you look and plan ahead so that your business is better positioned for the future.*

# DID YOU KNOW?



*50% of parents surveyed said that they had declined employment or withdrawn from the workforce due to child care issues!*

OGEMAW EDC HAS SEVERAL ACTIVE GRANTS WORKING TO ALLEVIATE THE CURRENT SHORTAGE.

child care



# REVOLVING LOAN FUND

*The EDC Revolving Loan Fund is set up to help businesses start, change, or expand. Primarily using funds from USDA Rural Development, the EDC makes loans typically for \$5000 – 40,000 for 3-7 years at competitive rates.*

*The funded project should result in jobs gained or retained. The project should result in increased income so that the loan may be paid back on schedule.*

*Maybe a business needs to upgrade technology, improve the storefront, expand into a new area, purchase a “tool” that opens new possibilities, equips the business for a new venture, or adds in some other ways to business here in Ogemaw County. Contact the EDC to learn more.*

*The EDC does require all applicants to work with the Small Business Development Center to develop a viable business plan. We want to help each applicant get set-up for success. Loans must be secured with assets for as borrowers pay back their loans, that money is revolved in the community by lending it out to others.*

*We invest in you as you invest in business in Ogemaw County.*





# HOUSING

*Ogemaw County, along with almost ALL other counties in Michigan, faces a housing shortage. This issue is a strong deterrent for new business, expansion projects and any other potential move to the area. Think about a business that wants to bring 50-100 jobs to the county, but there is nowhere for people to move into. This affects every income level.*

*Ogemaw EDC has joined the conversation at the regional level to try to bring state resources to the area and the county. As a part of this regional group, we are tasked to be part of priority committees:*

- Housing Ecosystem*
- Housing Stock*
- Rental Housing*
- Communication & Education*

*Ogemaw County housing info from Rocket Homes.com*

*Ogemaw County is a seller's housing market which means that prices tend to be higher and homes sell faster.*

*Homes in Ogemaw County sold for 26.4% more than they did a year ago.*

*That increase in median price far exceeds the same measure in Alcona, Iosco, Oscoda, and Arenac Counties.*

*The number of homes for sale in September 2023 vs. the previous month was up only 0.8%.*



# 2022-23

## OGEMAW COUNTY HIGHLIGHTS

**SINCE JANUARY 2022...**

*Ogemaw County has received 7 Going Pro Talent Fund training grants totalling \$139,026. These grants allowed local businesses to upskill their staff to benefit their businesses.*

*Over 114 business have been assisted by the edc in one way or another.*

*Over 500 new jobs were created in Ogemaw county.*

**THIS IS WHAT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
LOOKED LIKE IN 2022-23.**





2022-23

**Consumers Energy**

FOUNDATION

**meijer**

MICHIGAN  
**WORKS!**  
REGION 7B



The Ogemaw County  
**HERALD**

Ogemaw County  
**VOICE**

 **Huntington**

  
**West Branch**  
AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Thank you to Ogemaw  
County for their  
support and dedication  
to economic  
development