

Five Year Community Recreation Plan

Village of Elk Rapids

Parks & Recreation Commission

DRAFT 11-9-17



The Community Recreation Plan guides the future development of recreational opportunities within the Village of Elk Rapids as well as the continuing enhancement of recreational amenities. It provides a concise description of the Village's plans and policies for current and future recreation.

This plan expires on December 31, 2022.

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(To be completed with final draft)

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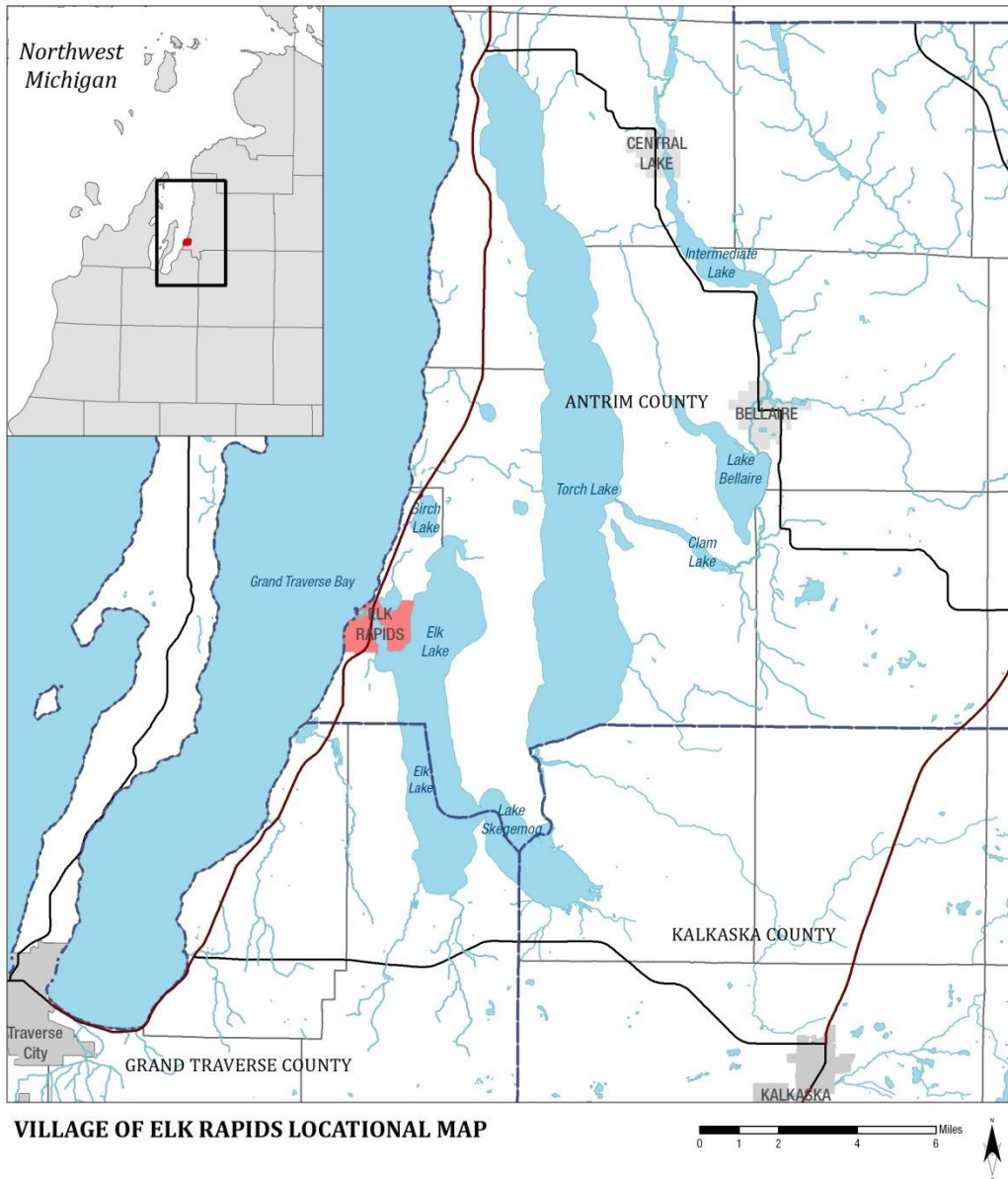
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2018 Community Recreation Plan

The Village of Elk Rapids, nestled in a 2.0 square mile area located Antrim County in the northwest region of Michigan's Lower Peninsula, values recreation as a key aspect of Village life and development. Boating, kayaking, swimming and fishing are just a few activities that Elk Rapids offers. Residents and visitors alike can also walk, run, bike or sunbathe on sandy beaches, picnic by Grand Traverse Bay or listen to music in the park.

The Community Recreation Plan guides the future development of recreational opportunities within the Village of Elk Rapids as well as the continuing enhancement of recreational amenities, and it provides a concise description of the Village's plans and policies for current and future recreation. The Plan has been developed with respect to the Coordinated Master Plan of the Village of Elk Rapids and Elk Rapids Township and will be incorporated into it.



Chapter 1: Community Description

Located in a 500 square mile watershed where the beautiful chain of inland lakes flows into Grand Traverse Bay, Elk Rapids is a charming place to live, work and also enjoy our bountiful, available recreation.

History of Elk Rapids

Native Americans have hunted and fished the Grand Traverse region for thousands of years, perhaps as many as 10,000, before white settlers appeared. The waters of Grand Traverse Bay, Elk River and the 14 lakes of the Antrim County Chain of Lakes had been the home of the Anishnaabek people as far back as 8,000 B.C. The sand dunes along the west shore of Bass Lake in Elk Rapids was home to the local Native Americans for decades. (Sources: Elk Rapids Sesquicentennial Scrapbook, 1998 and Elk Rapids – the first 100 Years by Glenn Ruggles with Glenn Neumann).

The Village of Elk Rapids had its beginnings in the 1840s when surveyor Abram S. Wadsworth built a cabin in the area and became the first permanent non-native settler. In the spring of 1852 he laid out the village of Stevens, which in 1858 became the town of Elk Rapids, the first in Antrim County.

Soon others followed and, in the 1860s, Moulton Crow constructed the first sawmill at the mouth of Elk River. Later, Wirt Dexter and Henry Noble bought the saw mill from Crow, and established the Dexter and Noble Company. The company's first order of business was lumbering, which flourished in the later part of the 1800s. Dexter and Noble also owned a flour mill, company store, chemical works, and the enormous Elk Rapids Iron Company that stood along the banks of the river. Dexter and Noble also built a huge dock extending into the Bay that was used by ships from all of the Great Lakes to deliver iron ore and supplies as well as ship out lumber and pig iron.

In 1866 a courthouse was built on Ottawa Street and Elk Rapids served as the county seat until moved to the more centrally located Bellaire in 1879.



Old Elk Rapids

Courtesy of Glenn Neumann

Hydropower has been an intrinsic part of the Village's economic life since the very beginning. The first water powered saw mill was installed in the early 1850s on the site of the current powerhouse's bypass spillway. By 1871, the Elk Rapids Iron Company had also constructed a water powered, four-story grist mill and wooden powerhouse at that site. The saw mill went through a number of rebuilds and upgrades before being relocated to the site of the current powerhouse. The mill, grist mill and wooden powerhouse were razed in 1915 as the supply of Northern Michigan White pine became exhausted and, in 1916, were replaced with the lower level of the present dam/ powerhouse structure. In 1929-1930, the current, more elaborate building was built. At the time, the turbines in the four bays provided a total of 1,845 horsepower.

However, by the time the County acquired the site from Consumers Power Company in 1967, the hydroelectric plant had been decommissioned and all generation equipment, save for the turbines, had been removed. When the oil shocks of the 1970s led the country to look for alternate sources of energy, Antrim County decided to put the powerhouse back on line. The current plant began generating electricity in 1984.



The dam plays an essential role in maintaining the natural features and recreational opportunities that make the Village of Elk Rapids so unique. The local tourism-based economy has, for all practical purposes, grown up around the dam and the water levels the dam has maintained for Elk and Skegemog Lakes since the mid-nineteenth century. If the dam were removed, the lakes' water levels would fall. Most riparian homes would suddenly be anywhere from 50 feet to hundreds of yards away from the lakeshore. The channels between all the lakes below the Bellaire Dam, which currently allow

navigation between the lakes, would become impassable rapids. None of the existing marinas would be able to operate in their current locations and boaters would be unable to reach any of the commercial districts around the lakes. To maintain any recreation on the lakes, a massive infrastructure investment would be required. By acting as a barrier to invasive species migrating from Lake Michigan into the Chain of Lakes, the dam also preserves the lakes' fisheries.

With the arrival of invasive species in the Great Lakes, this function has become even more indispensable. The Village was delighted when Antrim County restarted hydropower generation at the dam for it allows the facility to be partly self-sufficient, maintaining the foundations of the Village's economy and those of the surrounding communities at reduced cost. The County has demonstrated its commitment to relicense the dam and renovate it, making it a permanent presence in our Community. Antrim County has completed a \$250,000 restoration and repair project, using historic photos as a guide to restore the original appearance.

Once all the trees in the area were cut, the lumbering era began to fade and soon afterward Dexter and Noble closed the iron works. With its industrial base gone, Elk Rapids nearly became a ghost town during the first few decades of the 20th century. Tourism gradually became the major source of the village's

economy and continued to grow during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. The 1980s saw an increase in the permanent population as many people decided to move to the area and make it their home.

School enrollment grew during this period and an elementary school was constructed in nearby Williamsburg. In addition, existing elementary and middle schools were expanded to serve a growing enrollment. The high school was built in Elk Rapids in 1970 and an elementary school in Williamsburg in 1990.

The Edward C. Grace Memorial Harbor has been a Village project for over 50 years. It was expanded twice during the late 1980s. This modern facility is one of the largest and most popular on Grand Traverse Bay. In 2012, courtesy floating docks and 22 boat slips were added in the Upper Harbor.

The Elk Rapids Township Hall, built in 1883, is undergoing a complete rehabilitation as it rapidly evolves into a thriving community center. The hall is one of only fourteen flat-floored opera houses remaining in the United States. Rare features found in this magnificent structure are its tin ceiling, raked stage and the historic stage curtain, now a digital replica of the original. The Historic Elk Rapids Town Hall Association is the managing agent for this ongoing rehabilitation.

Population and Age

Age	Number	% of population
Under 5 years	39	2.5%
5 to 9 years	69	4.5%
10 to 14 years	74	4.8%
15 to 19 years	70	4.5%
20 to 24 years	59	3.8%
25 to 34 years	112	7.3%
35 to 44 years	115	7.5%
45 to 54 years	168	10.9%
55 to 59 years	131	8.5%
60 to 64 years	144	9.3%
65 to 74 years	317	20.6%
75 to 84 years	169	11.0%
85 years and over	74	4.8%
Total population	1541	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

The estimated 2016 population in the Village of Elk Rapids is 1,614. (*U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, 2016 Annual Estimates of the Resident Population*). However, as a popular vacation destination with many amenities that make it a high-quality place to live, this number swells in the summer months with the influx of seasonal residents and tourists.

Prior to 2000, the Village and the surrounding region experienced significant growth. However, these growth rates were altered as the region contended with the challenges of the recession. Between 2000-2010, many communities in the state lost population. Northwest Michigan continued to grow, but at a much slower rate. While the population increased by 2% County-wide, the Village of Elk Rapids' population declined by 3.4%. Many residents and their families left the area to find employment opportunities elsewhere, reflected by a 38% decline in individuals aged 35-44 in the Village. Because this age group is most likely to be part of a

household with children at home, the Village also experienced a decline in all age groups under 19 years. During this same period, 2000-2010, all age cohorts over 55 years experienced significant growth. Although some of this growth reflects natural age increases as the Baby Boomers begin to reach retirement age, this growth can also be accounted for by new residents that moved to the area following retirement. (*U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Census*)

The median age in the Village jumped almost 10 years during this time, from 43.4 to 52.4 years in 2010. The currently median age is estimated at 58.1 years for the Village, which is above the County average of 54.8, and almost twenty years over the state average of 39.5. (*U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*)

In discussing the population for the Village of Elk Rapids, it is important to note that these numbers do not reflect the actual number of persons in the area during the summer months. This situation can be seen throughout much of northern Michigan. A 2014 Northwest Michigan Seasonal Population Analysis found that Antrim County's population grows by over 15,000 people during the summer months, which is the highest percentage of population that is seasonal in the 10-county region of Northwest Michigan. The large influx of seasonal residents has a tremendous impact on the area's economy, and also on its recreation needs and opportunities. Activity at and demand for recreation facilities climbs dramatically, necessitating added maintenance by the Village for trash removal, landscaping, and other activities.

Transportation

The Elk Rapids transportation network, as elsewhere in the state, is heavily focused on the automobile, but there are legacy and emerging alternatives.

Non-motorized Transportation

The Village of Elk Rapids serves as an ideal location to connect the existing trails that have been developed by the Top of Michigan Trails Council, which provides recreational trails through Charlevoix, Emmet and Cheboygan counties as well as Traverse Area Recreation Trail (TART) in the Grand Traverse region. These trails provide very important safe areas for many recreational activities such as jogging and walking, skateboarding, biking, and rollerblading.

Proposed Traverse City to Charlevoix Trail

The Traverse City to Charlevoix Trail (TVC-CHX Trail) has an ambitious goal to connect these two regional trail networks, and link the communities of Traverse City, Acme, Elk Rapids, Eastport, Norwood and Charlevoix. This requires piecing (combining) together what trail users want with suitable land and road rights of ways that can support a non-motorized recreation and transportation trail. The trail will pass through beautiful scenery and provide access to parks, beaches, natural areas, communities, and other destinations along the US-31 corridor. The project builds on the vision of more than a decade of community groups working to make trail connections.

Public Transit

The only public transportation system serving the Village of Elk Rapids is the Antrim County Transportation Agency (ACT), which provides dial-a-ride service to all residents of the County. There is a semi-scheduled morning bus run between Bellaire, the Antrim County seat, and Elk Rapids. Bus service is available in nearby Traverse City. Indian Trails Bus Company services include charters, tours, shuttles, airport transfers, casino runs as well as daily scheduled routes throughout Michigan and into neighboring states.

Air

The Traverse City Cherry Capital Airport, approximately 15 miles from Elk Rapids, provides primary air transportation for the region. Other options exist in Grand Rapids, Pellston, Manistee, MBS (Tri-cities), Lansing and Flint.

Rail

A railroad line used to terminate in Elk Rapids. However, the abandoned line is now privately owned.

Streets and Highways



Major arterials within the community include U.S. 31, River Street, Ames, Cairn Highway and North Bayshore Drive. Three bridges convey traffic over the Elk River and spillway.

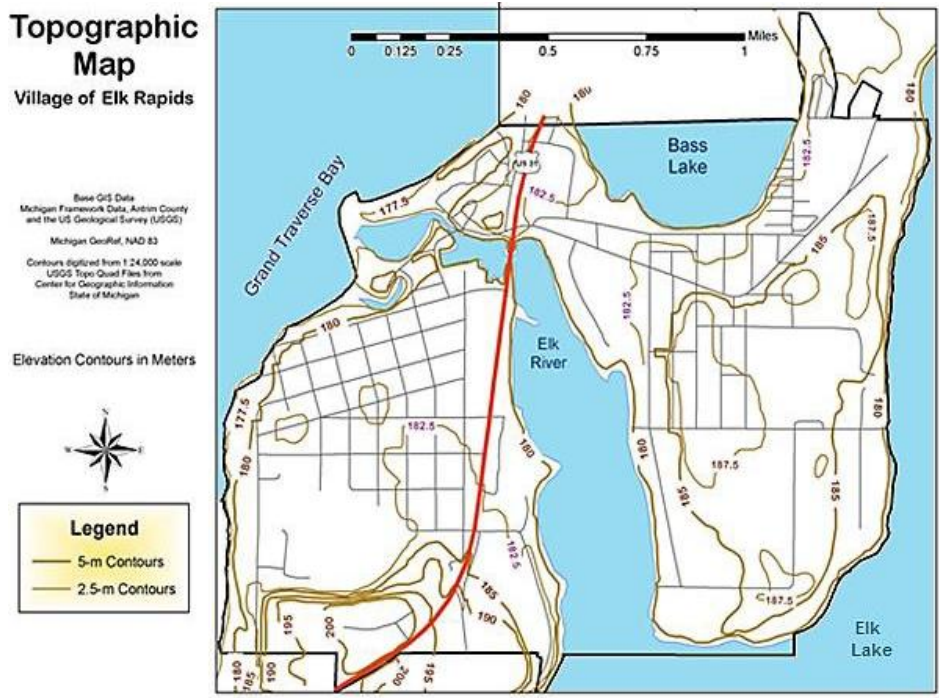
Shared-lane bicycle markers are used now on major roadways in anticipation of an extension of the existing TART non-motorized trail to, through and to the north of Elk Rapids.

Natural Resources

Once famous for its clay for brickmaking and limestone for smelting, Elk Rapids now especially values its waterways and agricultural land.

Topography

The bedrock in the Village consists of Berea Sandstone, Bedford Shale and Ellsworth Shale. The surface geology of the Village is dominated by medium-textured glacial till, composed of non-sorted glacial debris, loam and silt loam texture with variable amounts of cobbles and boulders.

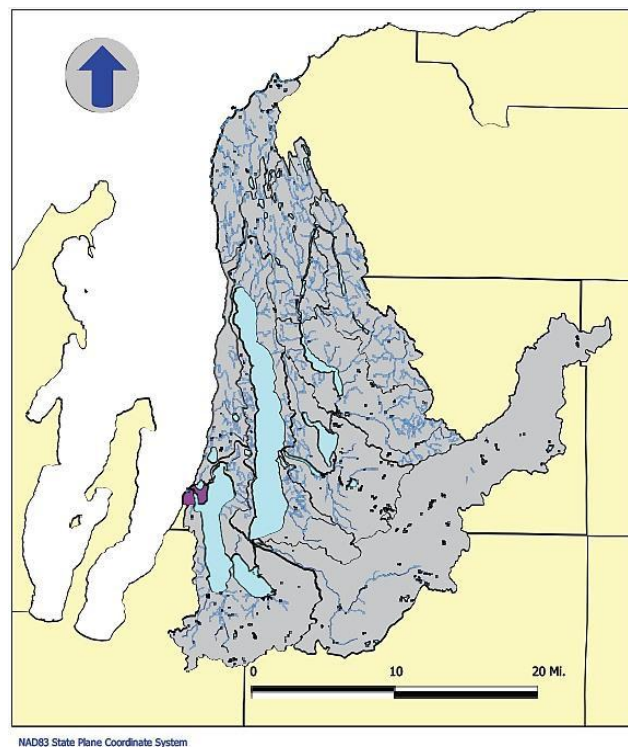


The surface geology of the Village was formed 10,000 to 12,000 years ago by glacial activity. Numerous advances and retreats by the glaciers resulted in the locally complex pattern of erosion and deposition. The drainage channels scoured by the glaciers resulted in depressions oriented linearly from the northwest to the southeast. Along the lakes the geological composition is primarily lacustrine sand and gravel. This type of sand and gravel typically occur as former beaches and near offshore deposits of the glacial Great Lakes.

The Village is located on two peninsulas bounded by Grand Traverse Bay, Elk River and Elk Lake. The topography of this area is flat to gently rolling and drains directly into Grand Traverse Bay, Elk Lake and Bass Lake, as shown in the Topographic Map that follows. The only major area of topographic relief is a slight escarpment where the topography elevates approximately 40 feet in the southern part of the west side of the Village. The contours on the topographic map were digitized from the USGS quadrangle sheets available in GIS format from the State of Michigan Center for Geographical Information.

Hydrological Features

Elk Rapids has some of the finest water resources in the world, both on and below the ground. The 2013 Elk Rapids Collaborative Master Plan reflects the importance of water quality to area residents. The Plan's goals and objectives for the Village support the protection of both surface and groundwaters.



Watershed Map

Surface Water

One of the greatest attractions for the residents and visitors to Elk Rapids is the area's natural environment, most notably the surface water resources. The Elk River serves as the outlet for the Elk River Chain of Lakes Watershed, which covers approximately 503 square miles in the counties of Antrim,

Charlevoix, Grand Traverse and Kalkaska. Except for the dams at Elk Rapids and Lake Bellaire, the Chain of Lakes is navigable by small craft.

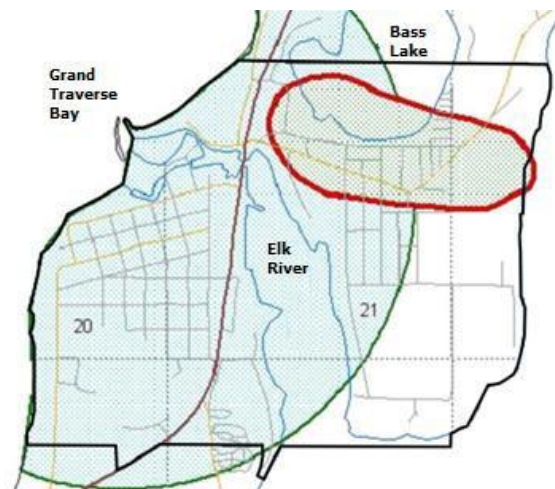
Within the Village there are 1.6 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline and nearly seven miles of frontage on inland lakes and rivers. These lakes, rivers and their associated streams and creeks offer scenic and recreational amenities to Village residents and visitors.

Elk Lake and Bass Lake are part of an ongoing comprehensive lake monitoring program being conducted by the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council. Visit <https://www.watershedcouncil.org/cwqm.html> for the results of the most recent data collection.

Groundwater

The entire Village relies on groundwater for drinking water, either from the municipal wells for those served by the municipal water system or from individual wells where municipal water is not available. The 'Aquifer Vulnerability to Surface Contamination in Michigan' map, prepared by the Center for Remote Sensing and Department of Geography at Michigan State University, reveals that the Village is located in an area where the vulnerability of drinking water aquifers to surface contamination is high. This is because of the presence of highly permeable soils over highly sensitive drift lithology (layers of clay and permeable sands and gravels). Due to this aquifer vulnerability, wellhead protection measures have been put in place for the municipal water wells.

Lakes, creeks and wetlands are important for surface drainage, groundwater recharge and wildlife habitat. The well recharge area for the two municipal wells in Elk Rapids is shown below. Note that the third municipal water well located near the Department of Public Works has a well-defined recharge area that is indicated by the oval-shaped segment, encompassing mainly the Ames Street commercial corridor, the residential area to the south of Bass Lake, the southern end of Bass Lake and extending across part of the Elk Rapids Golf Course to Elk Lake. By comparison, the municipal water well, located at the Veteran's Memorial Park in close proximity to the shoreline of Grand Traverse Bay, has a less-defined recharge area by a radius of approximately one mile encircling the well area. Alterations to the watershed features in these and other areas can contribute to flooding, poor water quality, and loss of valuable wildlife habitat.



Groundwater Recharge Area

Soils and Vegetation

The distribution of soil types throughout the Village, as compiled by the US Natural Resource Conservation Service in 1978 in the Soil Survey of Antrim County, Michigan is shown below. This soil map shows pre-development soil conditions. Since the map was developed, some of the areas with wetland soils have since been dredged, filled, and built upon. Deer Park Sand (DeC) is the most pervasive soil type in the Village. This soil type is well drained and typically located on gently sloping landforms. All soil associations found in the Village are described below. The general soil map for Antrim County shows twelve different associations found in the Village of Elk Rapids. While the soil association information presented here can be used as a general guide for management of large, undeveloped tracts of land, it should not be used for development of specific sites.



Soil Map Legend

The following legend describes the soil types shown above.

Be - **Beaches**: Nearly level and gently sloping consisting of loose sandy and stony lake beaches and strands of sand extending inland.

CbA - **Charlevoix Sandy Loam**: Nearly level and gentle slopes up to 4%, somewhat poorly drained soils in upland depressions.

CdA - **Crosswell Sand**: Nearly level to gently sloping, moderately well drained lowland soils.

DeC - **Deer Park Sand**: Gently sloping to moderately steep slopes (up to 20%), excessively drained soils on ridges adjacent to Lake Michigan.

DrC – Deer Park-Roscommon complex: Gently sloping to moderately steep (0 to 20 percent slopes), excessively drained Deer Park soils on ridges, and nearly level poorly drained and very poorly drained Roscommon soils in swales between the ridges on the plains adjacent to Lake Michigan.

EaB - East Lake Gravelly Loamy Sand: Nearly level to gently sloping up to 6%, somewhat excessively drained soils in the form of terraces or ridgelike topography adjacent to level areas.

EmB - Emmet -Moncalm Complex: Gentle to moderate slopes of 3 to 12%, well drained and moderately well drained soils, generally located on tops of hills or mounds.

IoA - Iosco Sand: Nearly level to gently sloping, up to 4%, somewhat poorly drained soil in upland depressions.

KaB - Kalkaska Sand: Nearly level to gently sloping, up to 6%, somewhat excessively drained soil located on upland plains.

KsA - Kawkawlin Silt Loam: Nearly level to gentle slope up to 3%, somewhat poorly drained soil located in upland depressions.

Ps - Pickford Silty Clay Loam: Nearly level poorly drained soil, located in depressions and along waterways, subject to frequent flooding. Limitations: This soil association is classified as a wetland soil with severe septic and construction limitations.

Ro – Roscommon Mucky Sand: Nearly level, poorly drained and very poorly drained soil in lowlands, in depressions and adjacent to bogs and waterways, subject to frequent flooding.

Ta - Tawas Muck: Nearly level, poorly drained organic soils located in lowlands and subject to flooding. Limitations: This soil association is classified as a wetland soil (unless previously drained), with severe septic and construction limitations.

Te - Tawas-Ensley Complex: Nearly level, poorly drained soils located in swamps and drainage ways and subject to flooding.

Some high water table conditions do exist, especially in the lower areas of the Village. A small percentage of the total Village area consists of hydric (wetland) soil (unless previously drained).

Vegetation in the Elk Rapids area includes mixed hardwoods and conifer forest. Wetland areas are home to lowland cedar swamps, and marshlands. Northern Michigan boasts excellent soil for fruit crops, which can be seen surrounding this area.

Fish and Wildlife



Walleye, trout, northern pike, perch, bass, black crappie, muskellunge, whitefish, northern pike, and bluegill are species found in Bass Lake, Elk Lake, and the Elk River. Sixty-nine different species of fish have been identified in the Chain-of-Lakes

Watershed by the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council. The Elk River Chain of Lakes fishery management strategy includes stocking and periodic surveying of fish populations. Brown trout, steelhead, and various species of salmon are found in Grand Traverse Bay. The Michigan Department of Resources has identified the Elk Rapids bay area as a key spawning ground for Cisco Whitefish. Many of the current recreational areas in the Village of Elk Rapids cater to recreational fishermen. Examples are the Dam Beach and Fishing Park as well as Kids Pond.

Habitat for populations of songbirds, waterfowl, shorebirds, muskrat, mink, and raccoon are provided by the wetlands and lakeshores within the Village. The predominant mammal species found in the Village of Elk Rapids are squirrel, fox, raccoon, mink, muskrat, skunk, rabbit, and deer.

Environmental Concerns

Environmental quality is of great concern for area residents. The *April 2005 Survey Summary Report*, approved in late 2005 and reviewed in 2012, by the Village Planning Commission, lists the following partial areas of strong consensus in environmental issues:

Areas of Consensus on Environmental Issues

- Protect lake water quality.
- Protect scenic views of the water.
- Protect groundwater quality to preserve the quality of well water.
- Protect air quality.
- Protect safe biking along streets.
- Very important that Elk Rapids work on new image policies to preserve the scenic view areas in the Village.
- Agreed or strongly agreed that Elk Rapids should work on new environmental/growth management policies to develop comprehensive protective measures for properties and waterways adjacent to construction sites during construction of any building.
- Protect the informal lifestyle and slow pace of life.
- Protect the island library and bridge.
- Protect strict traffic speed control on all streets in the Village.
- Protect groundwater quality.
- Protect locally owned family business.
- Protect recreational opportunities in Village harbors and parks, such as tennis courts, playgrounds, and so on.
- Protect tree-lined streets. Agreed or strongly agrees that Elk Rapids should develop additional combination bicycle paths and roller blade paths.
- Agreed or strongly agreed that Elk Rapids should work on new environmental/growth management policies to engage in joint efforts with surrounding counties and townships for developing zoning regulations that offer more protection to our shorelines.
- Protect noise control, especially in residential areas next to commercial areas.
- Agreed or strongly agreed that Elk Rapids should work on new image policies to require all new development to hook up to Village sewer and water systems.
- Protect wetlands and natural areas.
- Agreed or strongly agreed that Elk Rapids should work on new image policies to create a walking community by connecting and extending sidewalks throughout the east and west sides of the Village
- Agreed or strongly agreed that Elk Rapids should develop additional bicycle lanes on or adjacent to roads
- Agreed or strongly agreed that Elk Rapids should work on new environmental/growth policies to raise private funds to create bicycle and walking pathways around the Village (similar to Charlevoix/Petoskey area).
- Very important that the Village should work on new image policies to preserve historic buildings.

Any planning, zoning, or operational issues that the community faces now or in the future should take these areas into consideration, because each of them has very strong community support.

Climate

Elk Rapids is located just south of the 45th parallel, midway between the North Pole and the equator, so it has four distinct seasons.

- Spring erupts in millions of cherry and apple blossoms.
- Summer has warm temperatures that are perfect for boating, swimming, golf and many other recreational activities.
- Autumn lingers as trees turn color and lose their leaves later than further inland.
- The average annual snowfall is 151.2 inches for Antrim County (*Source: Antrim County Road Commission*)

Average Temperatures

Average July temperatures:

Average High: 85 degrees F

Average Low: 65 degrees F

Average Median: 75 degrees F

Average January temperatures:

Average High: 34 degrees F

Average Low: 18 degrees F

Average Median: 25.99 degrees F

Source: Midwest Regional Climate Center

Climate Change

Although the causes of global warming are disputed, climate change in northwest lower Michigan is taking place nonetheless. Average temperatures are rising, the frequency of severe storms is increasing.

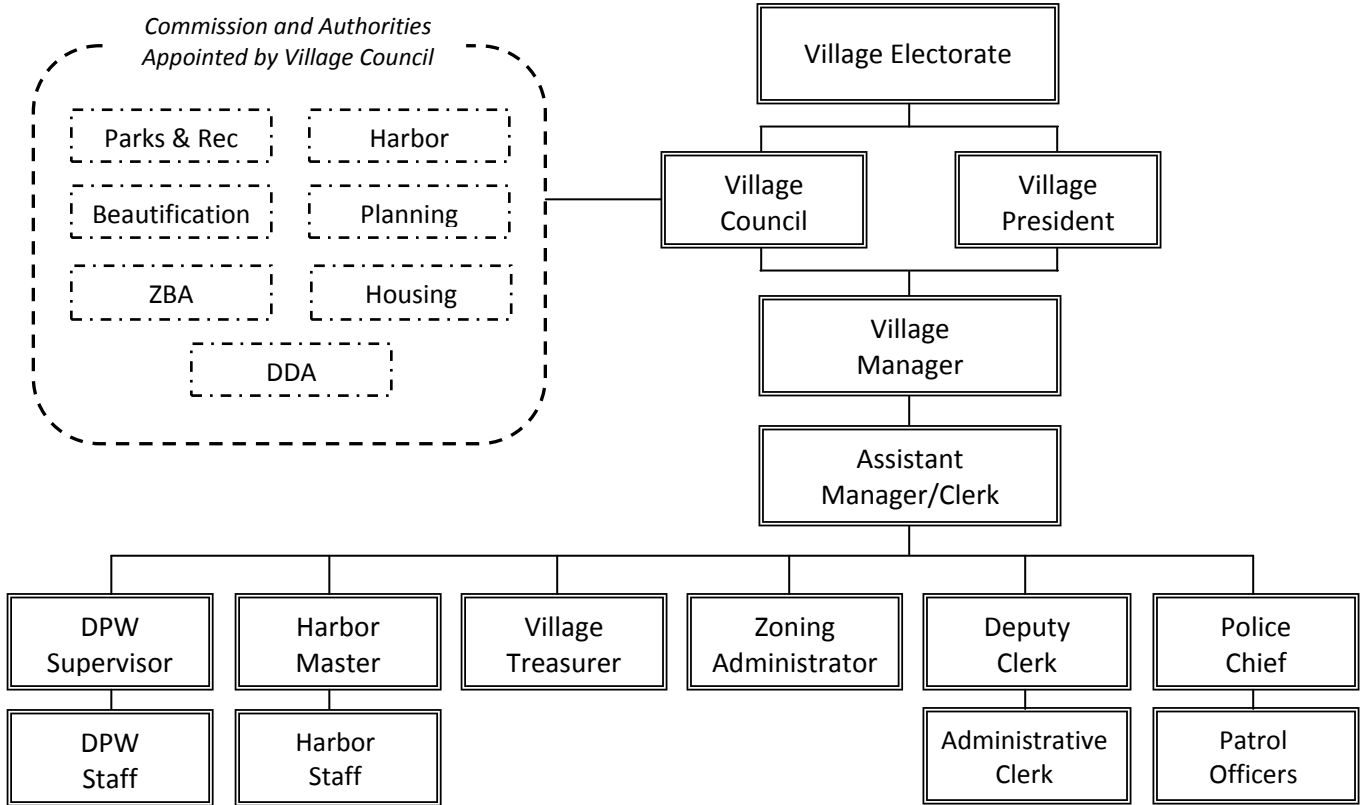
Zoning

The Village of Elk Rapids is a fully zoned community. The Planning Commission sets the zoning districts, and the Village Zoning Administrator administers and enforces the zoning districts. Appeals against the Zoning Administrator's determinations can be made to the Village Zoning Board of Appeals. Please refer to the Village Coordinated Master Plan or Village Web site for the latest zoning information.

Chapter 2: Administrative Structure

Village Organization

The Elk Rapids Village Council has ultimate authority over the development and management of recreational facilities within the Village. The organization of the Village is shown in below.



Appointed commissions and authorities related to parks and recreation include the Parks & Recreation Commission, Harbor Commission, Beautification Commission and Downtown Development Authority. The Planning Commission reviews all recreation development proposals. Village staff members, under the Village Manager’s overall direction, operate and maintain village recreational facilities. The following sections describe the roles of commissions, authorities and staff.

Village Commissions and Authorities

All Village Commissions and Authorities act as advisors to the Village Council, which approves or disapproves all recommendations. The commissions are described in brief and collaboration with the Parks & Recreation Commission, if any, is also explained. More information is available in the Village Code of Ordinances (visit the Village website or contact the Village for the Code of Ordinances).

Beautification

The Beautification Commission works to improve the appearance of the Village by planning and implementing projects that add to the beauty of the public areas and preserve the tranquility of natural areas. The Commission was established July 17, 1978 for the purpose of creating programs that care for passive recreational sites and beautification throughout the Village. The Commission promotes activities that will benefit and promote this program by encouraging participation by clubs, societies and other community groups. The eight members of the Commission meet regularly and report to the Village Council on their activities.

Downtown Development Authority

The Downtown Development Authority (DDA) engages in long-range planning in cooperation with the staff and other commissions, including Parks & Recreation, to envision future economic vibrancy of the downtown as well as prepares plans and undertakes economic improvement projects. The geographical boundaries of the current DDA include several parks in the Village. The DDA Plan lists Pedestrian Crossing and Trail systems; and other Walkable Community Improvements among the projects that might be funded. For more information, please reference the current DDA Plan.

Harbor

The Harbor Commission, under authority from the Village Council, plans, builds, operates, and maintains Edward C. Grace Memorial Harbor and the Elk River Upper Harbor. The Commission supervises the work of the Village Harbormaster who in turn supervises seasonal dockworkers at the public harbor facilities. It also reviews all village projects that may affect the streams, lakes, rivers, and shorelines within the village. The Harbor Commission makes recommendations to the Village Council regarding harbor operations and harbor projects. The Harbor Commission comprises seven members who meet monthly. The Village President appoints the members with the consent of the Village Council. One Village Council member is also appointed by the village president to sit on the Harbor Commission.

Housing

The Housing Commission is granted authority under Section 3 of the Public Act of 1933 as amended. The Commission has the following areas of interest: low-income housing; elimination of sub-standard housing; control and supervision of all parks and playgrounds forming a part of a housing development under its jurisdiction; and all other matters that involve housing, especially public or subsidized housing under its jurisdiction. One member of the commission shall be a resident of public or subsidized housing.

Parks & Recreation Commission

This Parks & Recreation Commission works in an advisory capacity regarding the development of parks and recreational programming within the Village of Elk Rapids. Its main concerns are parks, public access sites, seasonal recreational facilities and recreational activities and events. The Village President appoints the members on this commission with the consent of the Village Council. One of the members is a Village Council representative, who is also a voting member of the commission. At least four of the members of the commission shall reside within the boundaries of the Village. The Parks & Recreation Commission must meet at least six times a year and these meetings must be open to the public.

The Parks & Recreation Commission was established under Public Act 156 of 1917 in June of 1993 by Ordinance Number 223. The primary role of the commission is to make recommendations to the Village Council regarding the development and maintenance of parks. The Commission also serves as a liaison between the Village Council and community members and keeps an open line of communication with the

County and neighboring townships in order to be informed about possible shared recreational opportunities in the area. A yearly Parks & Recreation budget is also recommended to the Village Council by the Parks & Recreation Commission. The Village Council has final determination over the Parks & Recreation budget.

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission reviews all development activities in the Village of Elk Rapids, including any new recreation projects. Such projects are subject to the Village's Zoning Ordinances. The Planning Commission also updates the Village Master Plan every five years, and may opt to incorporate the Community Recreation Plan into the Master Plan by reference.

Staff & Volunteers

The Village has several staff members as well as numerous volunteers that help it thrive. The Village staff includes the following positions:

- Village Manager
- Assistant Village Manager/Clerk
- Chief of Police
- Department of Public Works Superintendent
- Planning & Zoning Administrator
- Planning Commission Chairperson
- Harbormaster
- Treasurer
- Deputy Clerk

Volunteers & Community

Unpaid volunteers play a key role in the planning and maintenance of Village recreational facilities and operations. The appointed Commissions described above (Parks & Recreation, Harbor, Beautification, and Planning) all have appointed volunteers who are not compensated for their work. Most of the gardens under the Beautification Commission are maintained by volunteers from the Elk Rapids Garden Club. The Parks & Recreation Commission has occasional activities, such as roadside and stream bank cleanups that are manned by volunteers from the Commission as well as the general public. The Village Ice Skating Rink is maintained mostly by volunteers. And numerous residents of all ages came to Dam Beach last year to plant protective dune grass.



Planting Dune Grass, Lisa Lirones

Volunteers play a very active role in most other aspects of Village community life, such as:

- Churches. There are several in the area.
- Schools, K-12
- Elk Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce
- Harbor Days Association that puts on our annual summer festival

- Art Rapids!
- Garden Club with more than 100 members.
- Friends of the Dam Beach
- Historic Elk Rapids Town Hall Association
- Green Elk Rapids Days – a multi-day town festival that celebrates our environment and features a super recycling day, sculptures made of trash, informative seminars and exotic field trips.
- Civic organizations such as Rotary, Lions, Masons, Boy/Girl Scouts and many more.



Tom Vranich

Inter-Agency Relations

A liaison between the Parks & Recreation Commission and the Village Council is maintained by the appointment by the Village President of one of the Council members. This is the standard procedure for all of the appointed commissions. The Parks & Recreation Commission interacts with other commissions as needed and establishes contacts with other park-related public entities around Antrim County as needed for specific purposes. Parks & Recreation consults as needed with community-based organizations such as the Elk Rapids School Board, the Chamber of Commerce, the Rotary Club, and the Lions Club to coordinate activities and exchange information. The Rotary and Lions Clubs are frequent contributors to recreational facility upgrading and construction in the Village. Parks & Recreation collaborates with Elk Rapids Schools when prudent. For example, surveys were distributed via email to gather input for this recreation plan. Other collaborations include Dam Beach cleanup, dune grass planting and education on water issues. Also, Parks & Recreation wants to consider working with the schools on a summer tennis program.

The Village, Harbor Commission and the Harbormaster work with regulatory agencies including the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), Army Corps of Engineers, and Antrim County Soil Erosion to obtain the necessary permits for future construction and maintenance at waterfront facilities in the Village.

The Antrim County Operator of Dams is interested in working with Parks & Recreation to integrate the dam into the Village park system. Note that the dam is strategically located on Dexter Street between the Lower Harbor/Dam Beach and Fishing Park on one side and Upper Harbor Open Space on the other.

Operation of Village Recreational Facilities

The Elk Rapids Department of Public Works (DPW) currently maintains all park facilities while employees of the school district maintain school recreation sites. As such, the operational budget for the Village park facilities is part of the overall DPW budget.

The Village Council has full authority over the affairs of the harbor facilities. Edward C. Grace Memorial Harbor has 213 slips, and a launch ramp. The revenue generated from the Harbor slips and launch ramp is used for operations, maintenance, future improvements, and projects associated with waterfront properties owned by the Village.

Rules and Regulations: Use of Village Recreational Facilities

Rules and regulations concerning the use of the various recreational facilities in the Village of Elk Rapids are governed by Village Ordinances.

The Village of Elk Rapids has an existing agreement with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The Harbor Commission follows all State rules and regulations governing harbor and waterfront operations. The Village Council, the Harbor Commission, and the Harbormaster are responsible for enforcing them. Rules and regulations not set by the DNR are recommended by the Harbor Commission to the Village Council. The Village Council makes the final decision

Recreational Programming

The Village helps conduct an annual Fishing Derby at Kids Pond for area children. In addition, money has been budgeted to begin offering other recreational programming in the future.

Recreation Funding & Budgeting

The 2017 and projected 2018 operational budgets for parks and recreational facilities in the Village of Elk Rapids are provided below.

2017 Village Budget, Parks & Recreation

Item	Budget
Parks Maintenance (DPW)	\$79,400
Parks & Recreation Commission	\$6,550
Harbor Operation & Maintenance Enterprise	\$1,229,874
Harbor Capital	\$564,500
Harbor Construction	\$455,000
Harbor Bond	\$244,579

2018 Village Budget, Parks & Recreation

Item	Budget
Parks Maintenance (DPW)	\$81,782
Parks & Recreation Commission	\$6,747
Harbor Operation & Maintenance Enterprise	\$1,135,000
Harbor Capital	\$67,000
Harbor Construction	\$455,000
Harbor Bond	\$250,000

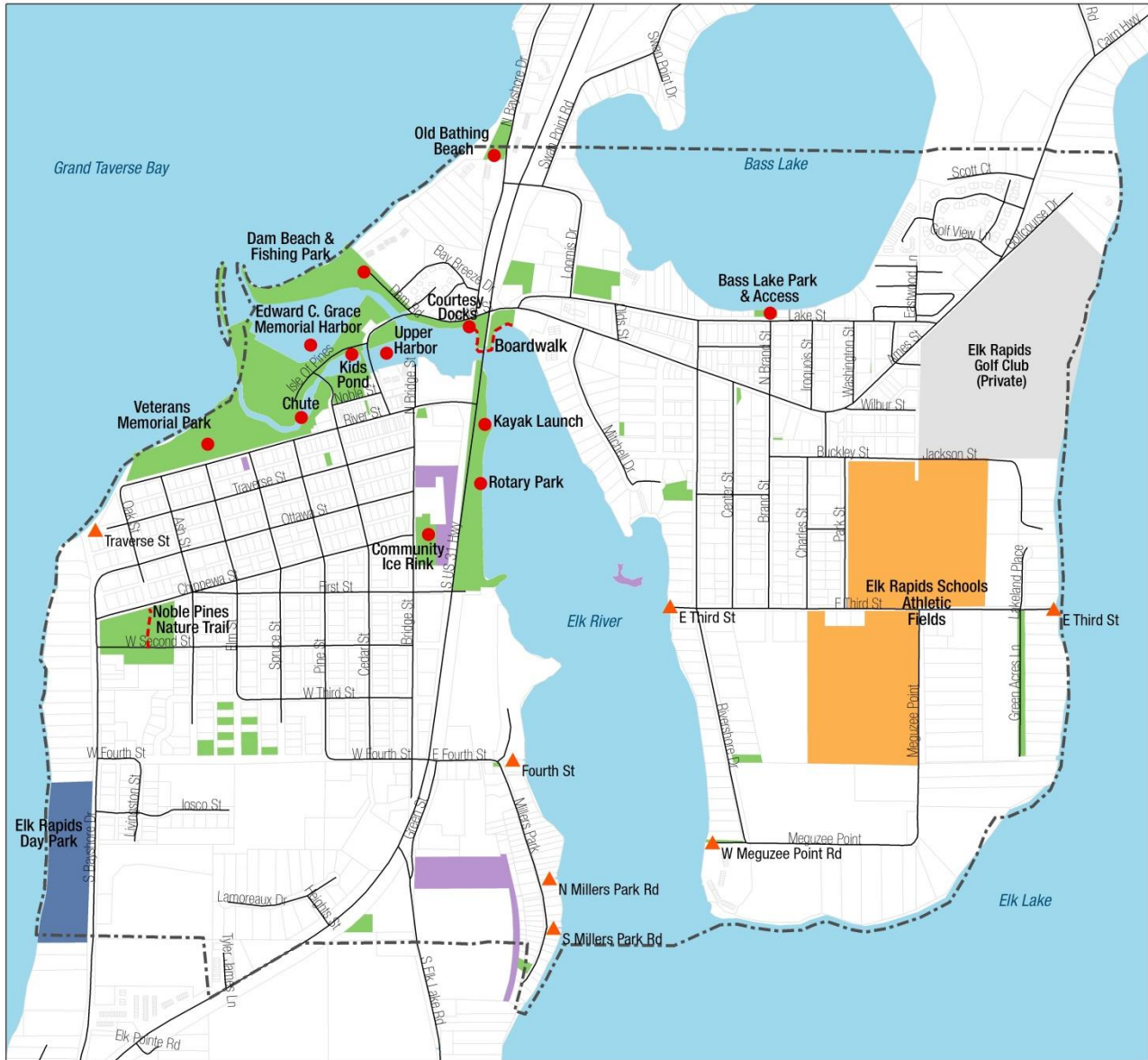
Funding Sources

Currently, most of the funds for recreational activities under the purview of the Parks & Recreation Commission come from the Village general fund, made up of revenues from various taxes, licenses, fees for service, state revenue sharing and private donations. Occasional special donations from civic groups and private individuals for specific purposes are received and applied.

Operational funds for the Grace Memorial Harbor are generated by revenues from the rental of boat slips as well as the sale of related goods and services. The Harbor operates as an Enterprise Fund (standalone business).

Chapter 3: Recreation Inventory

This chapter provides an inventory of recreational facilities within the Village of Elk Rapids, followed by facilities owned by other agencies in and around the Village. Individual public water access sites have been included and mapped. An Accessibility Assessment is included following the inventory of recreation facilities.



Legend

Village of Elk Rapids	Village Boundary
Elk Rapids Township	Parcels
Antrim County	Road End Access
Elk Rapids Schools	Village Recreational Assets
Private Rec Facility	Trail/Boardwalk

0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles

N

Networks Northwest

Data | MI Geographic Data Library, Antrim County, Networks Northwest | Map Scale | 1:15,010 | Date | 11/3/2017

Village Parks

Elk Rapids is blessed with numerous waterfront parks.

Veterans Memorial Park

Veterans Memorial Park is located on East Grand Traverse Bay and features an expansive beach, playground, beach volleyball, three tennis courts including one dual-use pickleball court, two basketball courts, hard surface children game areas, picnic tables, grills, public restroom facilities, green open space, and a veteran's memorial. A paved pathway runs from the island footbridge at River St. and Pine through the length of the park to River St. and Ash. Parking is available along River Street for the entire length of the park. This popular community park is just over 8 acres.

The site has great potential for people using the proposed Traverse City to Charlevoix Trail.

Veterans Memorial Park had the highest reported usage among survey respondents. Significant improvements have been made to the park's facilities over the years, and the Village continues to make improvements to facilities as needed.



Rotary Park & Kayak Launch

Rotary Park is located on Elk River next to the Chamber of Commerce. The community park features a pavilion with covered picnic tables, grills, a large fireplace, and three storyboards mounted on the inside wall of the picnic pavilion. These storyboards have a modern design and feature historical photos and descriptions of the greater Elk Rapids area. The park and two water access sites here are located on an 8-acre Village parcel along with the Elk Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce. The Farmers Market is held at the Chamber through the summer months.

A dock that extends out into Elk Lake from the pavilion at Rotary Park is one of two access sites here. Kayak access from this site needs improvement. To the north of the pavilion is the "Kayak Launch." This site features a small boat ramp, a dirt/gravel turn-around, and trash receptacles. Parking at this site is limited and boaters often park their vehicles and trailers in the Rotary Park or Chamber parking areas. The access is used by both Village residents and paddlers from the surrounding region. Survey responses indicate an interest in improving access at the Kayak Launch.

Rotary Park is a key water access site along the Paddle Antrim Chain of Lake Water Trail. The 2017 Chain of Lakes Water Trail Plan identifies a number of improvements for water access specifically at Rotary Park pavilion site. The Village is interested in improving water access here, and will be evaluating opportunities for doing so.



Dam Beach and Fishing Park

The Dam Beach and Fishing Park is located on the bay side of the power dam, and encompasses 8.3 acres of land and around 3,500 feet of waterfront on Grand Traverse Bay, Elk River, and the Harbor. The Village of Elk Rapids leases the park property from Antrim County. The community park is popular among residents for both its swimming beach and year-round fishing opportunities. Its amenities include three accessible fishing piers, a rustic beach volleyball area, picnic table, bike racks, fire pit, and parking. Porta Johns are maintained at the site. An eight-foot wide sidewalk connects Dexter Street to the beach and fishing parking area for improved safety and ease of access from town. A paved side walk runs the length of the west shore of the property. The site has great potential for people using the proposed Traverse City to Charlevoix Trail.

Survey results indicate a desire for improved bathrooms. The Village is currently seeking funds for the development of restroom facilities.

For information on conservation and management of this park, please refer to the Village’s Dam Beach & Fishing Park Management Plan.



Old Bathing Beach

Located on North Bayshore Drive, this community beach is primarily undeveloped and used by residents. The park area is just over one acre in size and includes a nice beach, picnic tables, an interpretive sign, and parking area.



Kids Pond

On the downtown portion of Elk River, between the spillway and the Cedar Street Bridge is Kids Pond. Over 500 feet of boardwalk meanders along the north bank of the river, and people of all ages come to fish. Kids Fishing Day is held annually at the pond.



Bass Lake Park & Access

This mini-park and water access site is located on the south shore of Bass Lake. The site is less than one acre in size, and includes a picnic table, grill, parking/turn-around space, and dirt/gravel launch to the lake.

Discussion during the planning process indicates an interest in promoting use of this local park and water access site.



Community Ice Rink

The rink is located on Bridge Street, between the Police Station and the Community Garden. The ice rink is open to the public, and has been a part of Elk Rapids for more than 30 years (located at its current location since 2006). Survey results indicate an interest in improving the conditions of the rink during the winter months.

Edward C. Grace Memorial Harbor



Surrounded by beaches and located just steps away from downtown Elk Rapids, many boaters frequent Edward C. Grace Memorial Harbor. Located on both Grand Traverse Bay (Lower Harbor) and Elk River (Upper Harbor), the facilities are some of the finest in Michigan, featuring 213 slips in the Lower Harbor and 50 in the Upper Harbor as well as a pavilion, bathhouse, launch ramp, gas pump, Wi-Fi and other amenities. See additional Harbor information in *Chapter 5: Goals, Objectives, and Action Plan*.

Courtesy Docks

The Harbor facilities include courtesy docks in both the Lower and Upper Harbor (Upper pictured here). The slips are available for 1-3 hour docking for residents and visitors to enjoy shopping or dining in the Village.



The Chute – Lower Spillway

The Chute has become one of Elk Rapids' most unique recreation landmarks. The site is the third and smallest of three spillways in the Elk River, and is popular for fishermen and swimmers.

Road Ends

Road-ends provide water access at several locations on Elk Lake and Elk River. While these are not developed parks, they provide an important public access to water in Elk Rapids. Road-end access is primarily used by neighborhoods and residents of the area. In some cases, improvements such as benches, picnic tables, and parking are provided. Road-end public access points are located at the following streets and water bodies:

- Elk Lake Access – E. Third Street , East
- Elk Lake Access – E. Third Street , West
- Elk River Access – E. Third Street
- Elk River Access – E. Fourth Street
- Elk River Access – Millers Park Road, North
- Elk River Access – Millers Park Road, South
- Grand Traverse Bay - Traverse St.

Non-motorized Trails

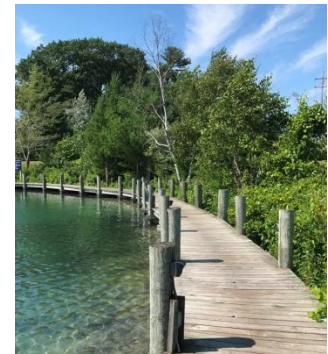
Trails are pathways that are used recreationally or for transportation by a variety of users. Trail facilities enhance recreation opportunities, and provide a unique opportunity to combine physical activity with transportation, linking destinations while providing alternatives to motorized transportation. Trail development and connections between existing trails are increasingly recognized as important economic strategies, generating tourism and visitor spending, and even drawing new residents.

Planning is underway for a non motorized trail that would connect the northeast end of the existing TART trail to Elk Rapids, and continue north, connecting with the Little Traverse Wheelway in the City of Charlevoix. This would make the Village a compelling bicycle destination. For more information about the proposed trail and a copy of the Traverse City to Charlevoix Trail Concept Plan and Development Guide completed in 2015, visit www.traverscitytocharlevoixtrail.org.

Input received during the planning process indicates a strong interest in trail development among residents. Many survey responses specifically indicated support for the development of a non-motorized trail that would connect Elk Rapids with Traverse City and Charlevoix.

Boardwalk & Park

As part of an existing non-motorized transportation system, Elk Rapids has two sections of boardwalk that integrate with Village sidewalks. One is located along the north side of Kids Pond (Elk River) and is used for walking and fishing. The other, located near the U.S. 31 bridge provides excellent non- motorized connectivity between east and west Elk Rapids, without having to cross the busy road. At the west end of the boardwalk, a sidewalk continues through the park along the river. There is public land located along the north side of the Elk River between the Dexter Street bridge and the boardwalk that runs under the US 31 bridge.



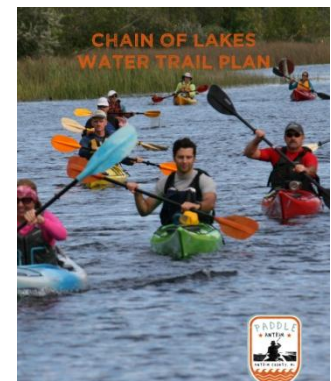
Noble Pines Nature Trail

A rustic wood-chip nature trail was added in 2010 to the undeveloped parkland adjacent to the Noble Pines senior apartments. The entrance is off of Second and Chippewa Streets, winding through woodland and is less than ¼ mile long. Construction was done by volunteers from the local Boy Scouts, Sunrise Academy and others.



Chain of Lakes Water Trail

A water trail is a designated route along a river, lake, canal or bay designed for people using small, non-motorized watercraft like kayaks and canoes. Paddle Antrim, a regional non-profit corporation, is leading and facilitating the development and stewardship of the Chain of Lakes Water Trail, and the Village of Elk Rapids is located at the end of the proposed Trail. Please refer to the 2017 Chain of Lakes Water Trail Plan for more information about the trail planning and development.



Other Local Assets

Several other local recreational and cultural assets are available within the Village, including:

Community Garden

A community garden was established in 2009 on the east side of Bridge Street and to the south of the police station. This land provides the opportunity for local residence to have a small vegetable or flower garden near their homes.

Village Beautification Gardens

The Elk Rapids Garden Club maintains more than a dozen beautiful gardens in Elk Rapids. All can be easily accessed by walking around the Village. (<http://elkrapidsgardenclub.com>)

Elk Rapids Area District Library

The Elk Rapids District Library is located in the historic Island House, on the Isle of Pines, next to the harbor on beautiful Grand Traverse Bay. In addition to books, it has audiobooks, DVDs, CDs, public computers, free Wi-Fi and outstanding programs for adults and children.

The library district includes the following members and contract areas: Elk Rapids Village, Elk Rapids Township, Milton Township, and Torch Lake Township. Patrons outside the district can use the materials in the library and have access to computers and the wireless Internet.



Elk Rapids Day Park

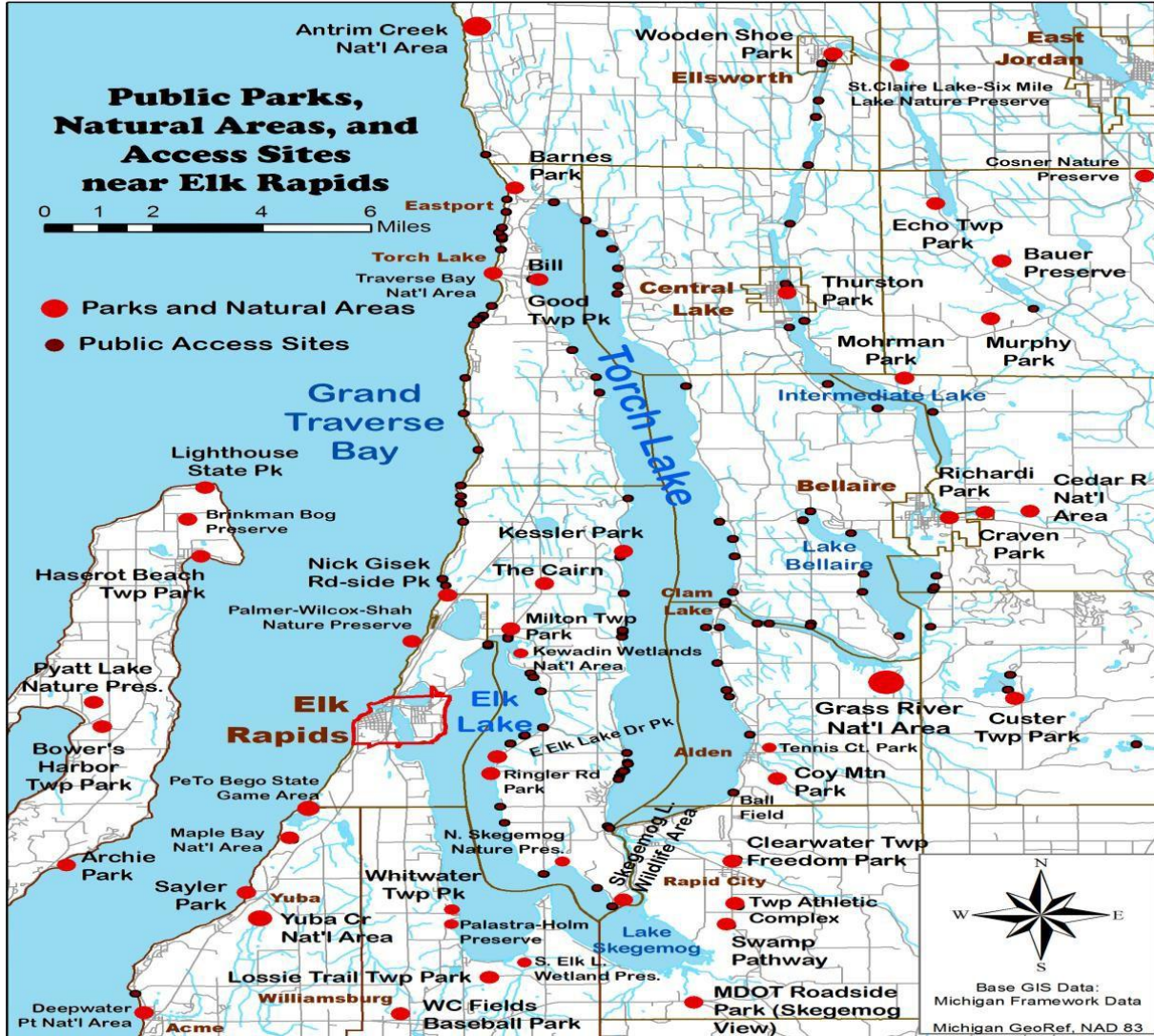
This county park is located between South Bayshore Drive and East Grand Traverse Bay. It has a beach, playground, bathhouse and several nature trails. It also features the “Walk of Art,” an outdoor sculpture park developed in cooperation with Art Rapids! There is interest in starting a discussion between Antrim County and Elk Rapids about future uses for this park.

Elk Rapids Schools

Our public schools have a variety of indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, including a gymnasium, tennis courts, soccer and football fields and a track. The schools and Village often collaborate regarding mutual use of such facilities.

Regional Recreation Assets

Elk Rapids has many opportunities for recreation. The inventory below highlights sites from the surrounding region (and map below) that are used by Village residents for recreation.



Wilcox-Palmer-Shah Nature Preserve

This 41 acre preserve, owned by the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, is located approximately two miles north of Elk Rapids. There is a very short trail and boardwalk from the parking area to the expansive beach.

Milton Township Parks

The Cairn/Indian Road complex is located in Kewadin, four miles northeast of Elk Rapids. It has facilities for volleyball, soccer, track & field, baseball, basketball, and tennis. Other facilities include a playground, grill, pavilions and picnic area. The East Elk Lake Park, approximately seven miles from Elk Rapids, has lake access, pavilion and a picnic area.

Petobego Natural Area

The Petobego Natural Area is at the northwest corner of Whitewater Township, and is about five miles south of Elk Rapids. The dominant natural feature of the property is the 7,500 feet of Tobeco Creek that flows through the middle of the Natural Area and associated riparian wetlands, then empties into East Grand Traverse Bay.

Maple Bay Park and Natural Area

Maple Bay Natural Area is a 450-acre property that straddles both sides of North U.S. 31. It is located about five miles south of Elk Rapids in Grand Traverse County, has farm land and buildings as well as a wooded trail that leads to a beach on East Grand Traverse Bay.

TART Trail

The 32 mile long TART Trail is a paved urban, non-motorized transportation corridor with an eastern end point at M-72 (Bates Road) in Acme Township, about 10 miles south of Elk Rapids, and a western end point at the M-22/M-72 intersection in Traverse City. The eastern trail section from M-72 to Lautner Road is two miles long, and then the trail leapfrogs to Bunker Hill Road and continues for 8.4 miles into Traverse City. At its western end the TART trail connects to the Leelanau Trail, which runs north to Suttons Bay.

Accessibility Assessment

The accessibility evaluations for the Village of Elk Rapids parks and recreational facilities have been conducted by the Village Parks and Recreation Commission as part of the inventory process. The evaluations were based on the United States Access Board’s *Section 15 – Recreation Facilities, the Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities, Americans with Disabilities Act*, and used the ranking criteria suggested by MDNR’s *Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans* (2016). These criteria are based on the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design. The criteria are as follows:

ADA Ranking System

Rank	Interpretation
1	None of the facilities meet accessibility guidelines.
2	Some of the facilities/parks meet accessibility guidelines.
3	Most of the facilities/parks meet accessibility guidelines.
4	All the facilities/park meets accessibility guidelines.
5	The entire park was developed/renovated using the principals of universal design.

Village Assessment

Public Facility	Asset Type	Rank
Bass Lake Park & Access	Access Site	1
Community Ice Rink	Park	1
Dam Beach and Fishing Park	Park	2
Edward Grace Memorial Harbor	Harbor	4
Kayak Launch	Access Site	1
Kids Pond	Park	3
Noble Pines Nature Trail	Trail	1
Old Bathing Beach	Park	1
Rotary Park	Park	2
Veterans Memorial Park	Park	4

Prior Grants from DNR

The Village of Elk Rapids has received two grants from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR), one in 1985 and the other in 1993. The 1985 grant funded improvements, including walkway, bollards, drainage, paved parking and landscaping for River Street Park (now Veterans Memorial Park). These improvements were completed, and the park continues to be the well-maintained centerpiece of the Elk Rapids community. The 1993 grant also funded Memorial Park improvements and included repairing two tennis courts.

A copy of the DNR Grant History, which includes additional details on each, is included along with the required Post Completion Self Inspection Reports in **Appendix ___**.

Chapter 4: Recreation Goals, Objectives, & Action Plan

The goals, objectives, and action strategies are intended to guide future decisions about recreation in a manner that reflects the community's values and priorities. The goals were developed based on review of existing facilities and public input as well as other local and regional plans and strategies. The order in which these goals, objectives, and actions appear does not represent a ranking of their importance or priority.

The Village Parks & Recreation Commission has developed the following broad goals:

Goals

1. Maintain and improve parks, facilities and equipment in an efficient and safe manner to provide continuous operation with minimal interruption of patrons, ensuring safe, clean and beautiful recreational areas.
2. Meet the ever-changing needs and abilities of all residents and visitors by providing comprehensive, quality recreational activities.
3. Promote and, where appropriate, preserve natural areas within the Village of Elk Rapids to enhance the region's environmental, aesthetic, and recreational qualities.
4. Provide trails that link to existing state, county, and municipal open spaces, other trail networks (existing and planned), and nearby communities to provide a variety of recreation and transportation opportunities.
5. Support and enhance public water access.

Recreation Goals, Objectives, & Action Plan

The following objectives provide a means of achieving the stated goals, and the actions provide the specifics necessary to accomplish these objectives.

GOAL 1: Maintain and improve parks, facilities and equipment in an efficient and safe manner to provide continuous operation with minimal interruption of patrons, ensuring safe, clean and beautiful recreational areas.

Objective 1: Maintain a Recreation Plan that protects and recognizes historical as well as natural resources, protects existing recreational opportunities, enhances and encourages the development of new recreational opportunities, and establishes a recreational standard that revitalizes and reinforces the qualities of Village recreation.

Actions:

- Implement Recreation Plan goals, objectives, and action items
- Encourage continuing cooperation between neighboring governmental entities, school districts and community groups
- Support the Harbor Commission goals and objectives for the Elk Rapids harbors

Objective 2: Maintain and improve existing parks and recreation facilities as needed

Actions:

- Advise DPW on maintenance required for the parks
- Work with DPW to establish maintenance plans for individual Village parks

- Establish a maintenance fund with Village Council
- Pursue funding opportunities as appropriate to support development and/or improvement of parks and recreation infrastructure and amenities
- Evaluate opportunities to improve and promote use of:
 - Community Ice Rink
 - Bass Lake Park
 - Bathing Beach
 - Noble Pines Nature Trail
- Pursue opportunities to improve water access at Rotary Park
- Refer to the Dam Beach Management Plan for guidance in maintaining and improving this area

GOAL 2: Meet the ever-changing needs and abilities of all residents and visitors by providing comprehensive, quality recreational opportunities.

Objective 1: Provide comprehensive, quality recreational activities and programming

Actions:

- Explore recreation programming opportunities for the Village, such as a Family Festival, Senior Olympics, International Festival, Summer Youth Program, and adult and youth sports leagues
- Explore opportunities to partner with and support organizations to facilitate recreation programming for all population groups
- Encourage the development of winter sports activities.

Objective 2: Ensure parks and recreation facilities are accessible to all users

Actions:

- Where possible, provide universal access at Village parks and recreational facilities
- Provide people of all ages and physical abilities access to recreational opportunities that support active living and healthy lifestyles.
- Study the feasibility of installing a universal kayak launch

Objective 3: Encourage the enhancement or redevelopment of existing recreational facilities and the development of new facilities that are not available in the area

Actions:

- Evaluate opportunities to improve existing facilities to meet existing and future needs
- Explore opportunities for the acquisition and development of additional facilities to meet existing and future needs
- Identify opportunities for trail access and connections
- Evaluate opportunities to enhance water access

Objective 4: Develop and support diverse recreational activities in the Village

Actions:

- Increase diverse recreational usage in both high and low density areas of the Village park sites.
- Increase health awareness of benefits of physical activity.
- Work with community organizations and volunteers to provide diverse recreation activities
- Encourage cooperation and coordination between neighboring governmental entities and school districts to support diverse recreational activities

GOAL 3: Promote and, where appropriate, preserve natural areas within the Village of Elk Rapids to enhance the region’s environmental, aesthetic, and recreational qualities.

Objective 1: Preserve and maintain the scenic and natural areas within the Village

Actions:

- Provide open space lands that link to existing state, county, and municipal open spaces
- Manage Village recreation areas to protect and enhance natural resources, environmentally sensitive features, and scenic areas
- Maintain and pursue partnerships to help protect and enhance natural resources, environmentally sensitive features, and scenic areas on Village-owned land (such as with the Beautification Committee and Green ER)
- Maintain Dam Beach and Fishing Park as a natural conservation area for the term of the Antrim County lease for the benefit of the general public (see Dam Beach and Fishing Park Plan)
- Increase public awareness of need to promote protection of water quality, clean beaches, shoreline maintenance, and preservation of trees/vegetation.
- Maintain wooded area adjacent to Veteran’s Memorial Park.

GOAL 4: Provide trails that link to existing state, county, and municipal open spaces, other trail networks (existing and planned), and nearby communities to provide a variety of recreation and transportation opportunities.

Objective 1: Support the planning and development of a non-motorized trail from Traverse City to Charlevoix

Actions:

- Work with TART, Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, State of Michigan (MDOT and MDNR), Antrim County, and other local units of government to assist in the establishment of a non-motorized trail that connects Elk Rapids with the TART system to the south at M-72.
- Engage in planning to establish a trail route through the Village of Elk Rapids (see next objective).
- Work with TART, Top of Michigan Trails Council, Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, State of Michigan (MDOT and MDNR), Antrim County, and other local units of government to assist in the establishment of a non-motorized trail that connects Elk Rapids with Charlevoix’s Little Traverse Wheelway and the rest of the Northern Lower Peninsula Trail network.
- Maintain a Parks & Recreation Commission representative as a liaison to the TART system, Land Conservancy and surrounding townships.
- Keep the public informed on progress.
- Work with stakeholders to seek funding through grants and donations, including the Antrim County Operator of Dams.
- Work with entities along the trail to create a total biking experience.

Objective 2: Establish non-motorized trails in and through the Village of Elk Rapids

Actions:

- Engage in planning and development of the Traverse City to Charlevoix Trail to establish a trail route through the Village of Elk Rapids
- Place US Route 35 signs and scenic alternative signs at appropriate Village locations.
- Work with the DDA and other organizations, as appropriate, to design and place wayfinding kiosks

at designated locations.

- Encourage the Village to maintain the street surface markings and other trail-related signage
- Explore opportunities to create trail connectors to parks, schools, neighborhoods, and other community resources
- Explore partnerships and grant opportunities to support trail development
- Provide amenities for trail users (parking, restroom, etc.) by linking to existing facilities and/or developing new facilities
- Coordinate trail planning efforts with neighboring communities and stakeholders

GOAL 5: Support and enhance public water access.

Objective 1: Maintain and improve water access for all

Actions:

- Pursue the development of a universally accessible kayak launch
- Preserve water access through road-ends
- Coordinate with Paddle Antrim to develop and promote the Chain of Lakes Water Trail

Harbor Commission Goals & Objectives

The Harbor Commission has these goals and objectives:

1. Maintain and improve existing facilities and infrastructure

Objective

- Identify and complete projects to ensure the harbor maintains its standard of excellence

2. Protect the Lower Harbor

Objective

- Consider public input, conduct environmental impact studies and obtain approval from all local, state and federal permitting agencies, in considering options to increase safety of harbor entrance and reduction of dredging costs

3. Improve the Elk River Landing to strengthen access to the downtown and surrounding areas

Objective

- Explore options to improve the Elk River Landing by utilizing the space as unloading area

4. Support the goals of the Parks and Recreation Plan, specifically those that support the Harbor

5. Provide community and boater events

Objective

- Promote harbor
- Develop outdoor recreation educational courses
- Provide concerts and other events open to the community

6. Provide adequate parking

Objective

- Inventory available parking and assess need

Harbor Action Items

1. Maintain and improve existing facilities and infrastructure.
2. Continue to apply for development grants.
3. Seek partnerships to provide events that are open to all and promote the harbor.
4. Solicit community input on the development of the Elk River Landing.
5. Develop a process to determine feasibility of the expansion of the Lower Harbor.

Additional Harbor Facility Information

The following information on the Village's Harbor facilities is for the DNR:

Five Year Harbor Capital Improvement Plan

2018

Deck Board Replacement Estimated Cost	\$50,000
Picnic Table Replacement Estimated Cost	\$20,000
Reset Pavers on Lower Harbor Shoreline Estimated Cost	\$20,000
Security Camera Upgrades	\$15,000

2019

Dredging Estimated Cost	\$70,000
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2020

Elk River Landing Open Space Improvements Estimated Cost	\$300,000
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2021

Dredging Estimated Cost	\$75,000
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2022

Upper Harbor I Wall/Dock Improvements	\$300,000
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Size of Facility

Seasonal Dockage – There are 205 seasonal slips. Any vacancies are filled from waiting lists. There are five separate waiting list applications available. When a slip becomes available, staff notify the first person on the relevant waiting list.

Transient Dockage - There are approximately 55 slips of various lengths designated for Transient use. Reservations open at 8 AM on May 15 every year, and are available until October. There is a 14-day stay limit during peak season (waived if there are open slips). As Elk Rapids is a State of Michigan sponsored Harbor of Refuge, staff do not turn boaters away in emergency situations.

Shopping Dockage – Staff use any vacant transient slips as short term dockage so boaters can enjoy shopping, dining, or any of the amenities in the Village.

The Fuel Dock - The Harbor offers Premium Diesel Fuel w/ Valvtect & Ethanol Free Premium Gasoline w/Valvtect. Tanks are tested annually and are proven free of excess water and biological contamination. Pump-out facilities are also available on the fuel dock.

Edward C. Grace Memorial Harbor currently doesn't meet the demand of both transient and seasonal boats. The harbor has developed goals and objectives to investigate feasibility of expansion of the Lower Harbor.

Number of boats turned away during 2017:

July:

Up to 30ft	37
30ft to 38ft	40
Over 38ft	65

August:

Up to 30ft	10
30ft to 38ft	40
Over 38ft	35

Total 227 boats

2017 Seasonal Waiting List:

Up to 30ft	69
30 ft to 38ft	134
Over 38ft	118
Elk River I	82
Elk River II	35
Total	438

Marketing Plan

Print Media	Online Media	Programs	Press Releases	Staff
Advertisements	Facebook	Discounted slip fees	Pure Michigan Ad	Dock Attendant Training
Brochure	Website	Valvetech Fuel	Promote fishing	Promote amenities
Harbor Photo Session	Active Captain Harbor Photo Session	Clean Marina Pavilion Rentals Concert Series Boater Bags Offer Merchandise Vehicle Stickers		Sell ER businesses

Events Plan

Current Events

Outdoor concert series in July
 Boyne Thunder Poker Run
 GT Power Squadron Cruise
 ERYC/BCYC Dinghy Poker Run
 Harbor Days
 Great Lakes Cruising Club Gathering
 Pavilion Rentals

Proposed Future Events

In-water boat show
 DNR Recreation 101 Events
 Boating Safety Course
 Water Color Tour
 Boating Themed Events for Area Youth
 Fishing Tournaments
 Boating Race to Elk Rapids
 GT Bay Watershed Center Events (Baykeeper)

Partnering Plan

Current Partners

MDNR Parks and Recreation Division
 MDNR Fisheries Division
 MDNR Law Division
 United States Coast Guard
 Antrim County Marine Patrol
 Michigan Municipal Marinas
 Boyne City DDA
 Elk Rapids Yacht Club

Great Lakes Cruising Club
 Grand Traverse Power Squadron
 Harbor Days Association
 Inland Seas Education Association
 Michigan Boating Industries Association
 Michigan SeaGrant
 Elk Rapids Chamber of Commerce
 Boyne City Yacht Club
 Elk Rapids Village Council & Commissions

Proposed Future Partners

Boat Dealers/Manufacturers
 Area Schools/Youth
 Grand Traverse Bay Watershed Center

Annual Maintenance Schedule

Repairs and Maintenance

- Start up in spring
- Bathhouse maintenance
- Pavilion maintenance
- Office/Electrical building
- Docks/Piers maintenance
- Painting
- Irrigation maintenance
- Sewer maintenance
- Sidewalks
- Outdoor equipment
- Gardens

- Vehicle maintenance
- Winterizing

Harbor Supplies

- Tools
- Hardware
- Office supplies
- Cleaning products
- Restroom & Facility supplies

Lumber Replacement

Garbage Removal

Dredging

Aquatic Weed Control

Small Equipment Replacement

Utilities

Miscellaneous

Dredging Cycles

Edward C. Grace Memorial Harbor requires annual maintenance dredging to remove drift sand that moves into our channel entrance. Approximately 1,000 CY is pumped hydraulically to adjacent beach for dewatering and the sand is hauled away by contractor.

Chapter 5: Planning Process

Both planning and public input have been essential parts of updating goals and deriving an action plan.

The Recreation Plan was developed by the Parks and Recreation Commission and Harbor Commission. Networks Northwest assisted with the public input survey; public notices; mapping; photos; reporting to the Commissions; and preparing the plan update. The plan was developed according to MDNR guidelines.

Public Input

As part of the 2018 Village recreation plan update, the Village of Elk Rapids released a Recreation Survey in July 2017. The survey was made available online and in hard copy format. 438 surveys were received; 433 were submitted online, and five hard copies were submitted to the Village offices. A report summarizing the results and feedback received from respondents is included in Appendix A of this plan. The Parks and Recreation Commission and Harbor Commission reviewed and discussed the results in order to better understand the community's preferences around parks and recreation.

Recreation Plan Review

The Village of Elk Rapids Parks and Recreation Commission reviewed the draft plan at their _____ meeting, and agreed to release the draft plan for public review. Notice was posted in the Elk Rapids News indicating that copies of the draft plan were available online at the Village and Networks Northwest websites, as well as at the Village offices. Copies were also made available at other public offices in the Village. Comments were received from _____ to _____.

Public Hearing & Adoption

Following the 30-day public review period, the Village Council held a public hearing on _____ to obtain additional public input and to review and discuss comments received during the 30 day review period. The Council approved/did not approve the plan for submission to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources at their _____ regular meeting. See Appendix _ for the approval documents.