



BEAR CREEK TOWNSHIP PARKS & RECREATION PLAN 2021-2025

Parks and Recreation
Committee Recommended:

October 5, 2020

Township Board Adopted:

October 7, 2020

Bear Creek Township Parks and Recreation Plan
2021-2025

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Adopted:
Bear Creek Township Board
October 2020

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INTRODUCTION

The Bear Creek Township Parks and Recreation Committee has prepared this Recreation Plan under the guidance of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources *Guidelines for the Development of Community Park and Recreation Plans*. The purpose of this 5-Year Recreation Plan is to provide Bear Creek Township with guidelines to evaluate and plan the recreation opportunities and needs of its community. This Recreation Plan is required by the DNR Grants Management Division to be eligible for grants. This is an update to the 2015-2019 Recreation Plan. The Plan has been divided into a series of six sections:

- Community Description
- Administrative Structure
- Recreation Inventory
- Planning Process
- Goals and Objectives
- Action Program

Due to the abundant natural resources available, Northern Michigan continues to be a highly desirable place to live and visit. Residents and visitors alike seek out the numerous recreation opportunities available both on land and water. Federal, state, local, and private groups maximize recreational potential by providing recreational facilities in the region. Bear Creek Township owns and manages both developed and undeveloped recreation areas that are vital to the community character.

The preparation of this plan was completed amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, a significant global public health crisis. The virus, which spread world-wide in a matter of months, causes respiratory illness and can be more detrimental for older adults and persons with underlying medical conditions. Therefore, stay-at-home and social distancing precautions were implemented. The public has been encouraged to maintain distance from other people and avoid indoor spaces. Thus, the importance of outdoor public spaces has garnered world-wide attention. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends visiting parks and recreational facilities in order to relieve stress, get fresh air, and stay active. The State of Michigan acknowledges the part parks have to play in keeping Michiganders healthy. Governor Gretchen Whitmer was quoted, "Over the past months as Michigan continues to combat COVID-19, we've seen just how important having access to public land, developed parks, trails and outdoor recreation is for all Michiganders." While outdoor recreation is at the heart of living in Northern Michigan, never before have parks, trails, and natural areas been as imperative to support public health and welfare.

TOWNSHIP PLANNING EFFORTS

The Township has a strong history of planning at all levels. The Planning Commission recently underwent a complete update of the Township's Master Plan in an effort to enhance and maintain the township's abundant amenities and quality lifestyle. Bear Creek Township residents were engaged throughout the process providing input for the creation of development policies that will carry the Township through the next ten years. In 2020, the Bear Creek Township Board of Trustees approved the update of the 2020 Master Plan.

In 2018 the Township and Emmet County completed an Access Management Plan for the public transportation system in Bear Creek Township. The Township's road system is comprised of interstate highways, state highways, county roads, and local roads. An access management plan is a process of providing and managing access to land development while preserving the regional flow of traffic in terms of safety, capacity, and speed.



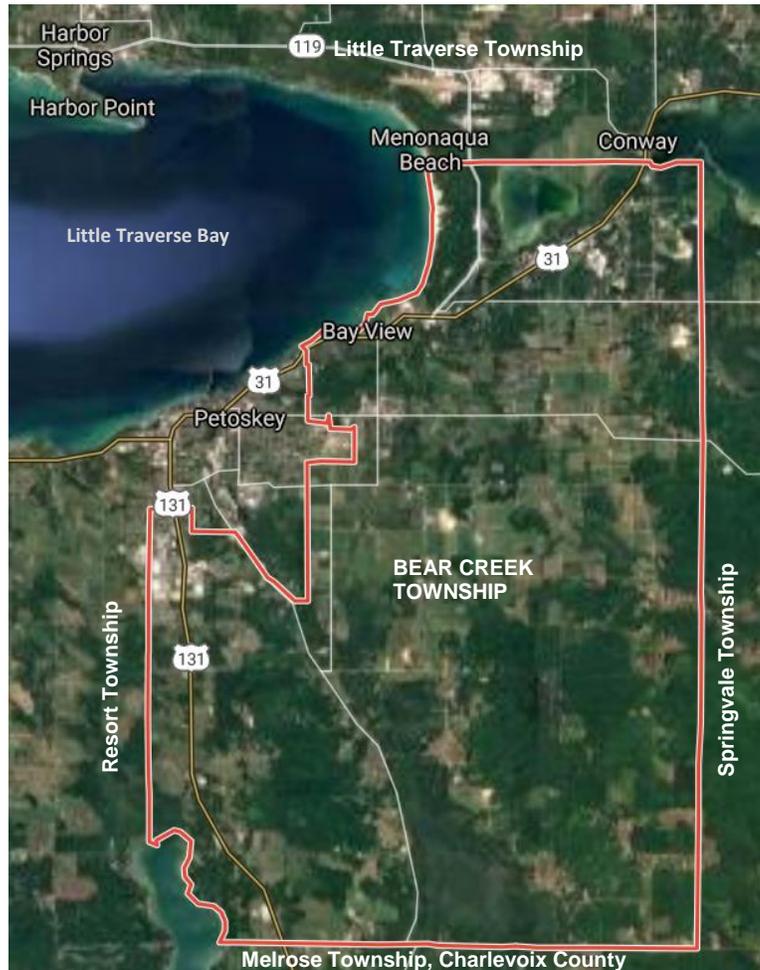
The 2015-2019 Recreation Plan was approved by the Parks and Recreation Committee and adopted by the Township Board of Trustees. This plan has guided the Township for both budgeting and park improvement decisions. The Committee seeks to update this plan in accordance with the MDNR's five year update requirements. The Plan compiles relevant community data, public and local leadership input, an inventory of the parks, and parks and recreation best practices to create a guide for decision-making over the next five years.

COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

LOCATION CONTEXT

Bear Creek Township is located in the southwest area of Emmet County in northwest Lower Peninsula. The Township is positioned between the City of Petoskey, Resort Township, Lake Michigan (Little Traverse Bay) on the west, Little Traverse Township on the north, Springvale Township on the east, and Charlevoix County on the south. The Township encompasses 45.69 square miles in which 39.57 square miles, or 87%, is land and 6.12 square miles is water. A variety of development patterns are represented including dense commercial and multiple family land uses adjacent to the City of Petoskey, the Little Traverse Bay, and along US Highways 131 and 31, while rural and agricultural areas are largely located in the south and east portions of the Township.

The Township is accessed by US-31 from the east, US-131 from the south, and M-119 from the north. Lake Michigan provides water access via Little Traverse Bay from the west. The majority of roads in the Township are rural two-lane primary and secondary roads. The Township transportation network includes a number of important non-motorized trails, including the Little Traverse Wheelway, which provides a 26 mile connection north-south from the City of Charlevoix through Petoskey to Harbor Springs. The Northwestern State Trail begins at Spring Lake Park (across M-119 from the Petoskey State Park) and is improved 7.5 miles north to Alanson and continues on for 23 miles to Mackinaw City with a packed crushed limestone surface.



BEAR CREEK TOWNSHIP AERIAL IMAGE
SOURCE: GOOGLE IMAGES

The following demographic data has been provided to give a baseline assessment of the population characteristics as well as inform the discussion of goals and objectives for recreation. In addition to data specific to Bear Creek Township, data is provided for surrounding communities as well as Emmet County and the State of Michigan to offer a broader picture of social characteristics. Information is collected from the United States Census Bureau using the 2000 and 2010 decennial census and the American Community Survey 5 Year Estimate (2014-2018). It should be noted that Census data does not reflect the actual number of persons residing or visiting the Township during the summer months (read more about this under the section titled 'Households').

POPULATION

In 2018 the population of Bear Creek Township was 6,277, as shown in Table 1. According to the U.S. Census, the Township is the most populous place in the county. The combined population of Bear Creek

Township, the City of Petoskey, and Resort Township make up 44% of the total county population. The Township averages approximately 158.6 persons per square mile for the Township’s 39.57 square miles of land area. Emmet County averages approximately 70.7 persons per square mile and the State of Michigan averages 176.1 persons per square mile.

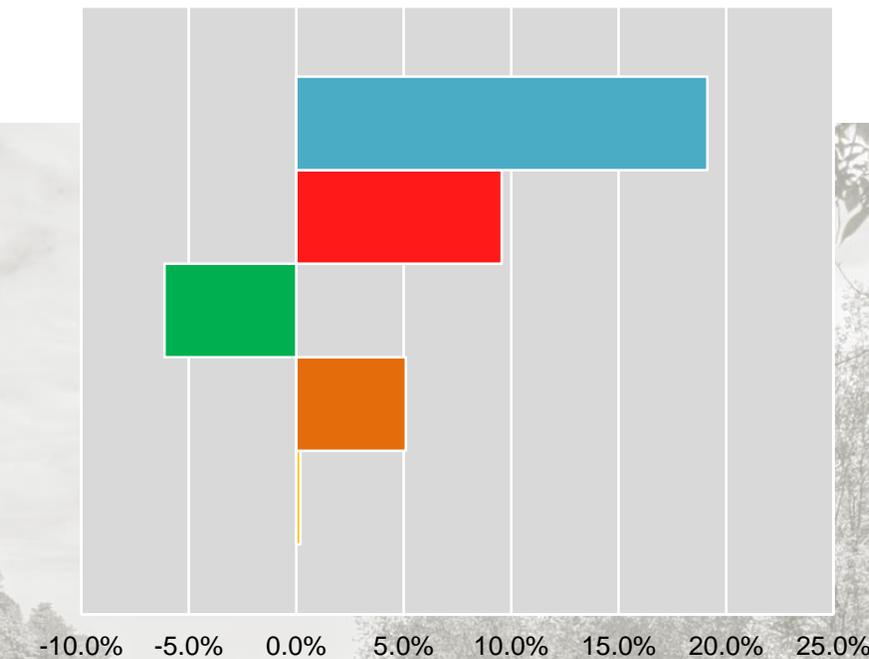
Figure 1 represents the population change in the given areas. Bear Creek Township had the largest population increase (19%) between 2000 and 2018. The City of Petoskey showed a slight decrease in population (-6%). Continued growth and development, including the creation of new housing units, indicates the Township’s population will continue to rise. The 2020 Master Plan projects the population to be 6,369 by 2030.

TABLE 1: POPULATION CHANGE

	Bear Creek Township	Resort Township	City of Petoskey	Emmet County	State of Michigan
2000	5,269	2,479	6,080	31,437	9,938,444
2010	6,201	2,697	5,670	32,694	9,883,640
2018	6,277	2,716	5,707	33,039	9,957,488
% Change (2000-2018)	19%	10%	-6%	5%	0%

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

FIGURE 1: POPULATION PERCENT CHANGE (2000-2018)



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

HOUSEHOLDS

This section provides an analysis of the number of households in Bear Creek Township and surrounding areas. According to the U.S. Census, a household includes all the persons who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence. Changes in the number of households in a community are an indication of changing demand for recreation amenities.

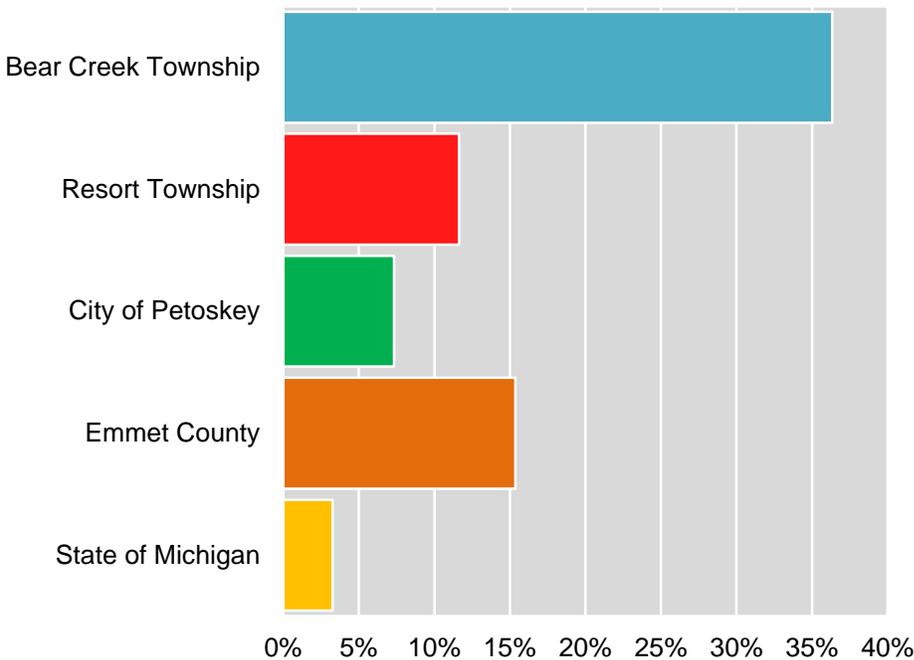
Table 2 shows the Township has a total of 2,728 households. Like the population change, the number of households has also grown (36%) since 2000. This was the largest increase of the communities surveyed (Figure 2).

TABLE 2: HOUSEHOLDS CHANGE

	Bear Creek Township	Resort Township	City of Petoskey	Emmet County	State of Michigan
2000	2,001	894	2,700	12,577	3,785,661
2010	2,569	1,023	2,538	13,601	3,872,508
2018	2,728	998	2,898	14,510	3,909,509
% Change (2000-2018)	36%	12%	7%	15%	3%

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

FIGURE 2: HOUSEHOLD PERCENT CHANGE (2000-2018)



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

AGE

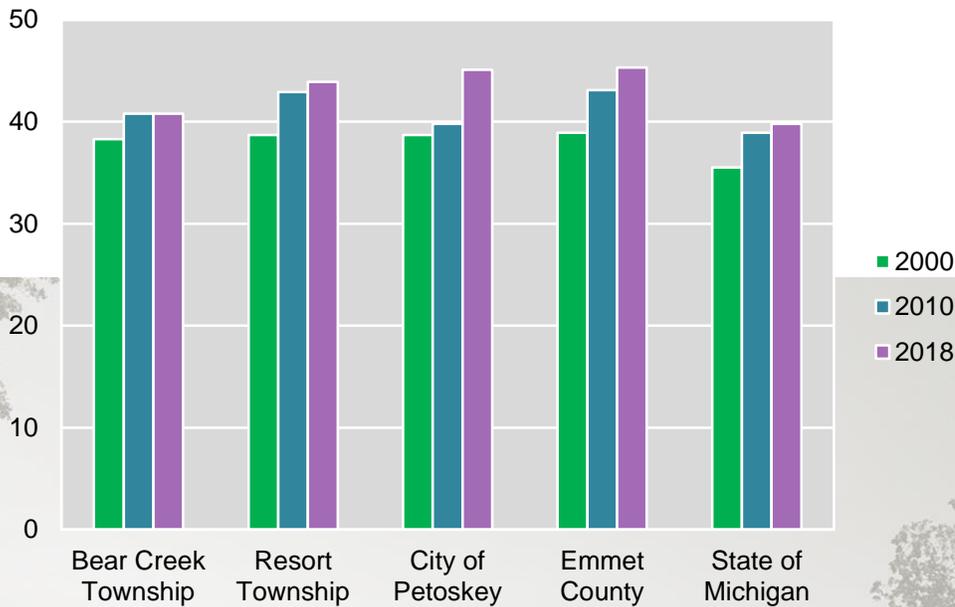
The median age for each community is provided in Table 3. The median age divides the age distribution into two equal parts; half of the cases fall below the median value and half are above the median value. Bear Creek Township has the second lowest median age (40.8) just behind the State of Michigan (39.8). This is compared to the national median age of 38.2. However, since 1970 the median age of the population of the United States has steadily increased from 28.1 years. Emmet County has the highest median age with 45.3 years suggesting areas within the county with older populations.

TABLE 3: MEDIAN AGE

Median Age	Bear Creek Township	Resort Township	City of Petoskey	Emmet County	State of Michigan
2000	38.3	38.7	38.7	38.9	35.5
2010	40.8	42.9	39.8	43.1	38.9
2018	40.8	43.9	45.1	45.3	39.8

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

FIGURE 3: AGE DISTRIBUTION



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

Figures 4-8 represent the age distribution for the five surveyed communities. The 2018 populations is broken down into the following age groups:

- Pre School Under 5
- School Aged 5 to 19
- Family-Forming 20 to 44
- Empty Nest 45 to 64
- Senior 65 to 74
- Elderly Over 75

Each figure has the value (number of persons within that age range) and associated percentage included within the respective data point. For example, Figure 4: Bear Creek Township, the largest population group is Family-Forming in which 2,003 persons, or 32%, are between the ages of 20 to 44. The data indicates this is similarly true for the City of Petoskey and the State of Michigan where the Family-Forming age group is the largest with Empty Nest close behind. Resort Township and Emmet County are reversed with Empty Nest slightly ahead of Family-Forming, but in all five communities the percentages are very close. Overall, Emmet County and the local communities are well aligned when compared to the state-wide age breakdown.

FIGURES 4-8: AGE DISTRIBUTION

FIGURE 4: BEAR CREEK TOWNSHIP

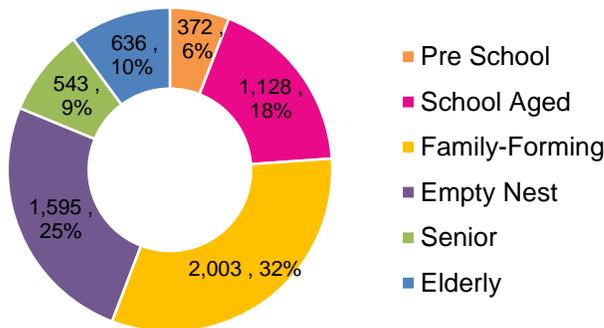


FIGURE 5: RESORT TOWNSHIP

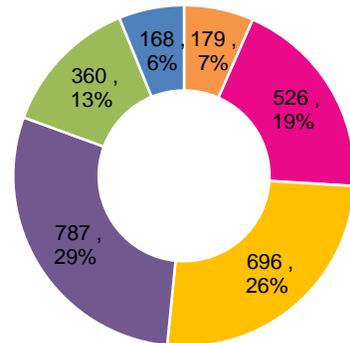


FIGURE 6: CITY OF PETOSKEY

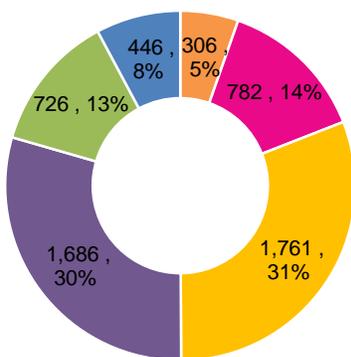


FIGURE 7: EMMET COUNTY

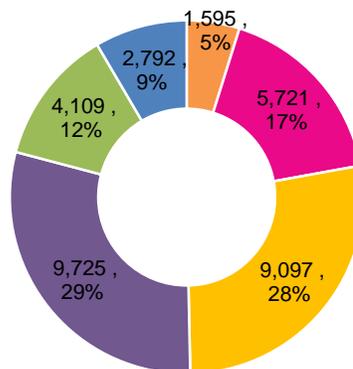
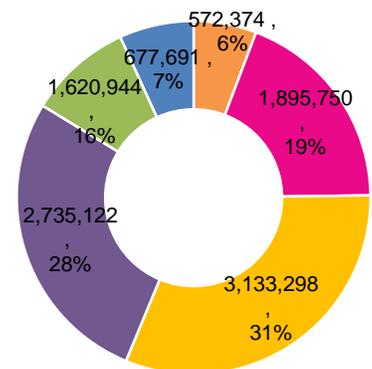


FIGURE 8: STATE OF MICHIGAN



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

RACE

The racial composition in the local communities, County, and State is majority white. Minorities represent 5.8% of the population in Bear Creek Township. American Indian and multi-racial people are the most populous throughout the County. An understanding of the communities' racial makeup can affect the types of recreation amenities that are culturally significant to different population groups.

TABLE 4: RACIAL COMPOSITION

Race	Bear Creek Township		Resort Township		City of Petoskey		Emmet County		State of Michigan	
White	5,912	94.2%	2,566	94.5%	5,295	92.8%	30,478	92.2%	7,818,588	78.5%
Black or African American	56	0.9%	11	0.4%	33	0.6%	229	0.7%	1,375,424	13.8%
American Indian and Alaskan Native	92	1.5%	35	1.3%	156	2.7%	958	2.9%	53,235	0.5%
Asian	22	0.4%	40	1.5%	12	0.2%	185	0.6%	304,403	3.1%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	8	0.1%	-	0.0%	19	0.3%	30	0.1%	2,979	0.0%
Some Other Race	42	0.7%	-	0.0%	10	0.2%	112	0.3%	119,141	1.2%
Two or More Races	145	2.3%	64	2.4%	182	3.2%	1,047	3.2%	283,718	2.8%
Hispanic Origin	143	2.3%	-	0.0%	119	2.1%	532	1.6%	497,897	5.0%
TOTAL	6,277	100%	2,716	100%	5,707	100%	33,039	100%	9,957,488	100%

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU



BEAR RIVER AT RIVER ROAD PROPERTY

DISABILITY STATUS

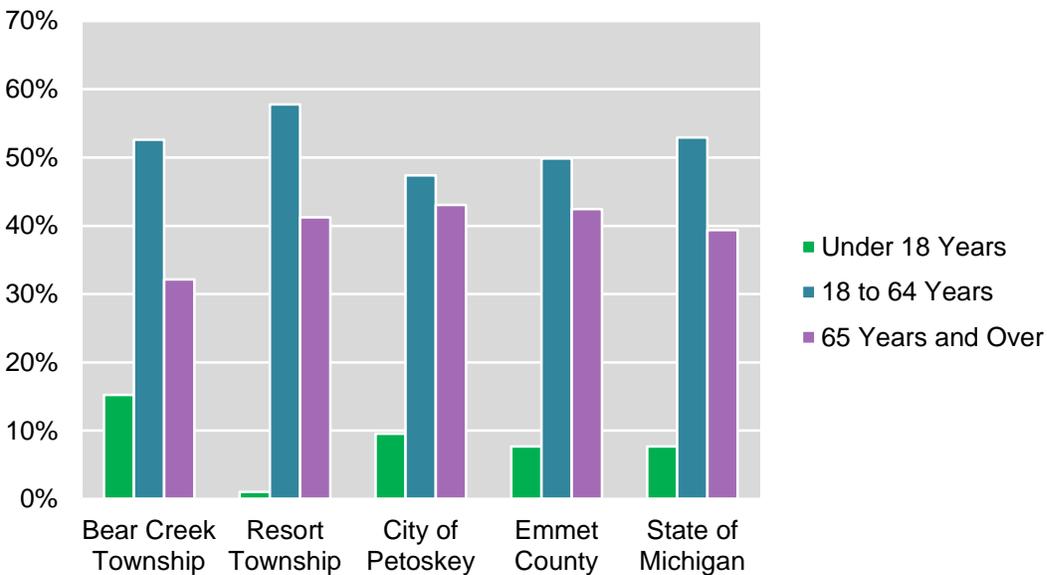
The following information was gathered from the 2018 American Community Survey for the total civilian noninstitutionalized population. Therefore the total differs slightly from the total population. Table 5 indicates that Bear Creek Township has the highest percentage of persons with a disability under 18 years old; Resort Township has the highest percentage of persons with a disability for those aged between 18 to 64 years; and the City of Petoskey has the highest percentage of persons with a disability for those aged 65 years and older. While the percentages of persons with a disability is similar across all five communities, the increased numbers in the local areas indicate a demand for barrier free recreational facilities and activities.

TABLE 5: DISABILITY STATUS COMPOSITION

	Bear Creek Township		Resort Township		City of Petoskey		Emmet County		State of Michigan	
Under 18 Years	109	15%	3	1%	68	10%	323	8%	108,113	8%
18 to 64 Years	376	53%	171	58%	337	47%	2,097	50%	742,869	53%
65 Years and Over	230	32%	122	41%	306	43%	1,785	42%	552,658	39%
TOTAL	715	100%	296	100%	711	100%	4,205	100%	1,403,640	100%

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

FIGURE 9: DISABILITY STATUS DISTRIBUTION



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

INCOME

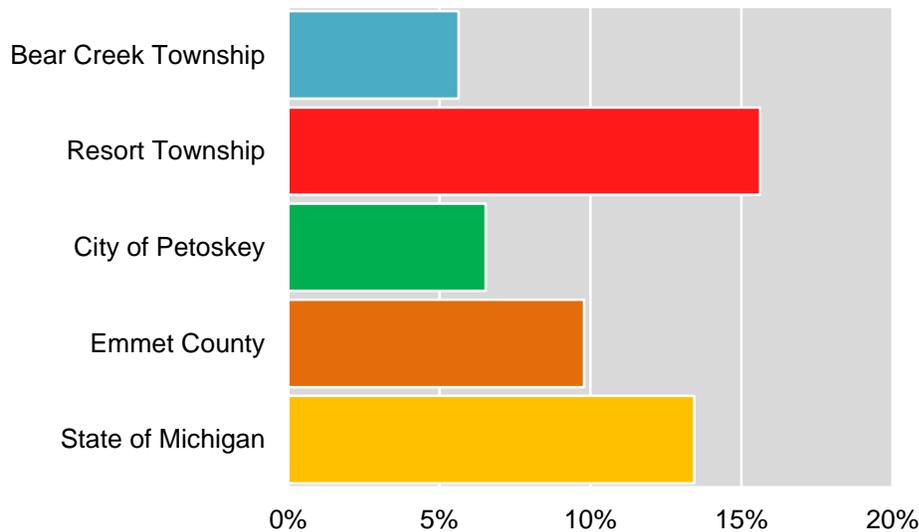
The median household income is provided to help establish the socio-economic profile for the three local communities, the County, and the State. In each community the median household income increased between 2010 and 2018. Resort Township experienced the largest percent change (16%) while Bear Creek Township had the lowest percentage increase (6%). Bear Creek Township, Resort Township, Emmet County, and the State of Michigan are close to the national median household income of \$ 63,179; the City of Petoskey is well below the national level. The economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, will likely be felt in subsequent years. While parks and recreation are a vital resource for people seeking to be active while socially distancing, the sudden rise in unemployment will effect state and local budgets as well as individuals' spending capacity.

TABLE 5: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

	Bear Creek Township	Resort Township	City of Petoskey	Emmet County	State of Michigan
2010	\$ 51,563	\$ 68,516	\$ 38,396	\$ 49,235	\$ 48,432
2018	\$ 54,471	\$ 79,219	\$ 40,903	\$ 54,055	\$ 54,938
% Change	6%	16%	7%	10%	13%

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

FIGURE 10: INCOME PERCENT CHANGE (2010-2018)

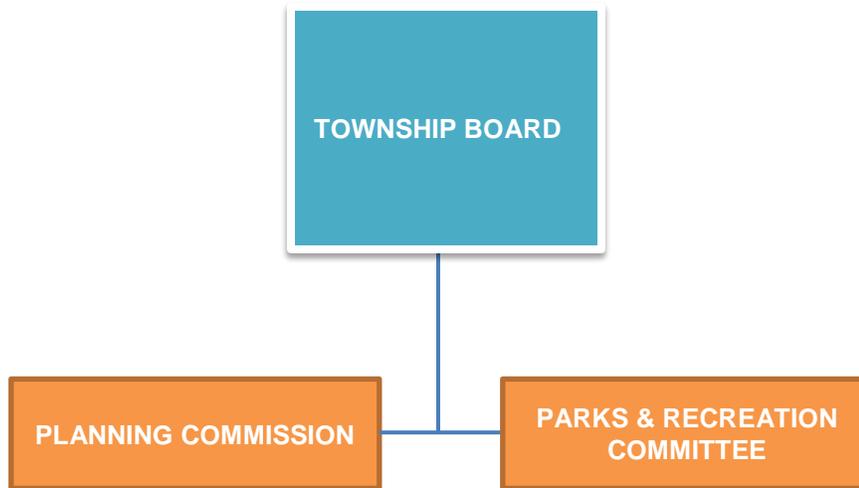


SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

The population concentration in southwest Emmet County makes Bear Creek Township an ideal place for recreation amenities and programs. The diversity in the Township population indicates a need for a variety of activities suitable for all ages, abilities, and cultures. However, trends experienced nationally are likely to also impact Bear Creek Township such as a continued increase in the median age as the largest demographic group, the baby boomers, those born between 1944 and 1964, age, and people within the family-forming age group, mostly millennials aged 22-38, have fewer children. The changing community make up will impact the demand for various recreation amenities. A discussion of recreation facilities and activities preferred by each age group is included in the recreation inventory.

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

The Parks and Recreation Committee was created in 2008 to oversee the development of the Recreation Plan and to help facilitate the engineering and construction of Jones Landing Park. The Committee has since overseen the creation of Jones Landing Park and its subsequent upgrades, the improvements made to Spring Lake Park and other improvements on recreation lands in the Bear Creek Valley south of Petoskey. The Parks and Recreation Committee works under the advisory capacity of the Township Board. The following administrative flow chart diagrams how the Township responds and takes action with regard to the recreation process.



TOWNSHIP BOARD: The Bear Creek Township Board sets the fiscal budgets for the Township, approves contracts, and works with the Township Staff to set policy and takes recommendations from the Planning Commission and committees including the Parks and Recreation Committee.

TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION: The Planning Commission members are charged with the responsibility for interpreting, updating and amending the Township Mater Plan, site plan review, and work with recommendations from the Parks and Recreation Committee and Township Staff. Currently, the Township uses Emmet County for regulating and enforcing zoning ordinances.

PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE: The Parks and Recreation Committee work with the public, Planning Commission and private consultants on recreation-based project planning and implementation. They make recommendations to the Township Board. The township designee is integrally involved as an ad hoc member and directly assists with development projects and board interaction.

PUBLIC AT LARGE: Outside of the Township administrative structure, but no less important, the public at large contribute input at regularly or specifically posted meetings and hearings for the Township Board, Planning Commission, and Parks and Recreation Committee.

RECREATION BUDGET & FUNDING

Parks and Recreation improvements and operational costs are currently funded on an as-needed basis. Funds are earmarked from the Township General Fund which has an annual budget approved by the Township Board. The Parks and Recreation Committee make recommendations to the township designee who submits a proposed budget to the Township Board for approval. The 2021 budget was approved for \$154,300. Typically, only operational costs are budgeted unless a major repair or improvement is planned or identified, so it is important to plan well in advance.

Currently, the fund balance of the general fund is being used as a savings account for improvements that are identified. The Township has been utilizing the Recreation Plan from 2015 to plan for project funding. The possibility exists that a portion of these reserves could be set aside in a Public Improvement Fund for any improvements the Township plans. The funds would also be available as local match dollars for awarded grants.

The Township does participate, together with the City of Petoskey and Resort Township, in pooling resources to provide recreational programs including soccer, day camp, and disc golf, among others. The Township allocates money from the General Fund to the City of Petoskey which in return provides administration, staff, and other necessary procedures to carry out successful programming. For fiscal year 2020-2021, the Township allocated approximately \$40,000.

The Action Program outlines estimated costs and approximations on how funding can be attained, as well as anticipated timeframes for actions to occur.

MAINTENANCE / IN-KIND SERVICES

The Township currently contracts with a landscape maintenance company, who maintains the existing facilities, including lawn landscape maintenance and trash removal. Bear Creek Township understands costs associated with maintaining recreation facilities and has allocated additional money to Jones Landing Park and Spring Lake Park operations and maintenance. Currently, the Township is allocating approximately \$30,000 for Jones Landing Park and \$30,000 for Spring Lake Park.

The Parks and Recreation Committee has an annual budget of \$3,000.

VOLUNTEERS

The Township continues to develop relationships with volunteer and service organizations to help maintain and develop park amenities. The Township partners with the Jordan Valley 45° Chapter to maintain portions of the North Country National Scenic Trail which traverses through the Click Road property and the River Road property. Furthermore, the Township is interested in expanding their work with volunteer and service organizations in the future for park development projects. The Township may potentially partner with the Northern Michigan Master Gardener Association, local garden clubs, youth scout troops, and other volunteer organizations focused on beautification.

RECREATION INVENTORY

As required by the *Guidelines for the Development of Community Park and Recreation Plans*, a detailed inventory of Bear Creek Township recreation facilities is provided. The inventory includes descriptions of recreation facilities that are owned by the Township, the overall condition of the parks, an accessibility score, and a description of planned or potential improvements for the site.

The update of the recreation inventory was completed with assistance from Township Staff, Parks and Recreation Committee Members, the *2015 Bear Creek Township Recreation Plan*, and an on-site inventory completed in June 2020.

PARK CLASSIFICATION

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources has developed definitions for park types and defines seventeen types of parks. The following table includes the park types that are most applicable to the Township and surrounding Emmet County.

Classification	General Description	Location Criteria	Size Criteria	Acres / 1,000 Population
Mini-Park	Used to address unique or isolated recreational needs.	Less than ¼ mile from residential setting.	Typically less than one acre	0.25 to 0.50 A
Neighborhood Park	Serves as a recreational and social focus for the neighborhood.	Less than ½ mile from residential setting.	Typically 5 to 10 acres	1.0 to 2.0 A
School Park	A park combined with a school site.	Determined by school location.	Determined by size of school property	Variable
Community Park	Focus on meeting community-based recreation needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces.	Usually serves two or more neighborhoods and is within ½ mile to three miles of a neighborhood.	Typically 30 to 50 acres	5.0 to 8.0 A
Natural Resource Area	Lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open space, and visual aesthetics/buffering.	Resource availability and opportunity.	Variable	Variable

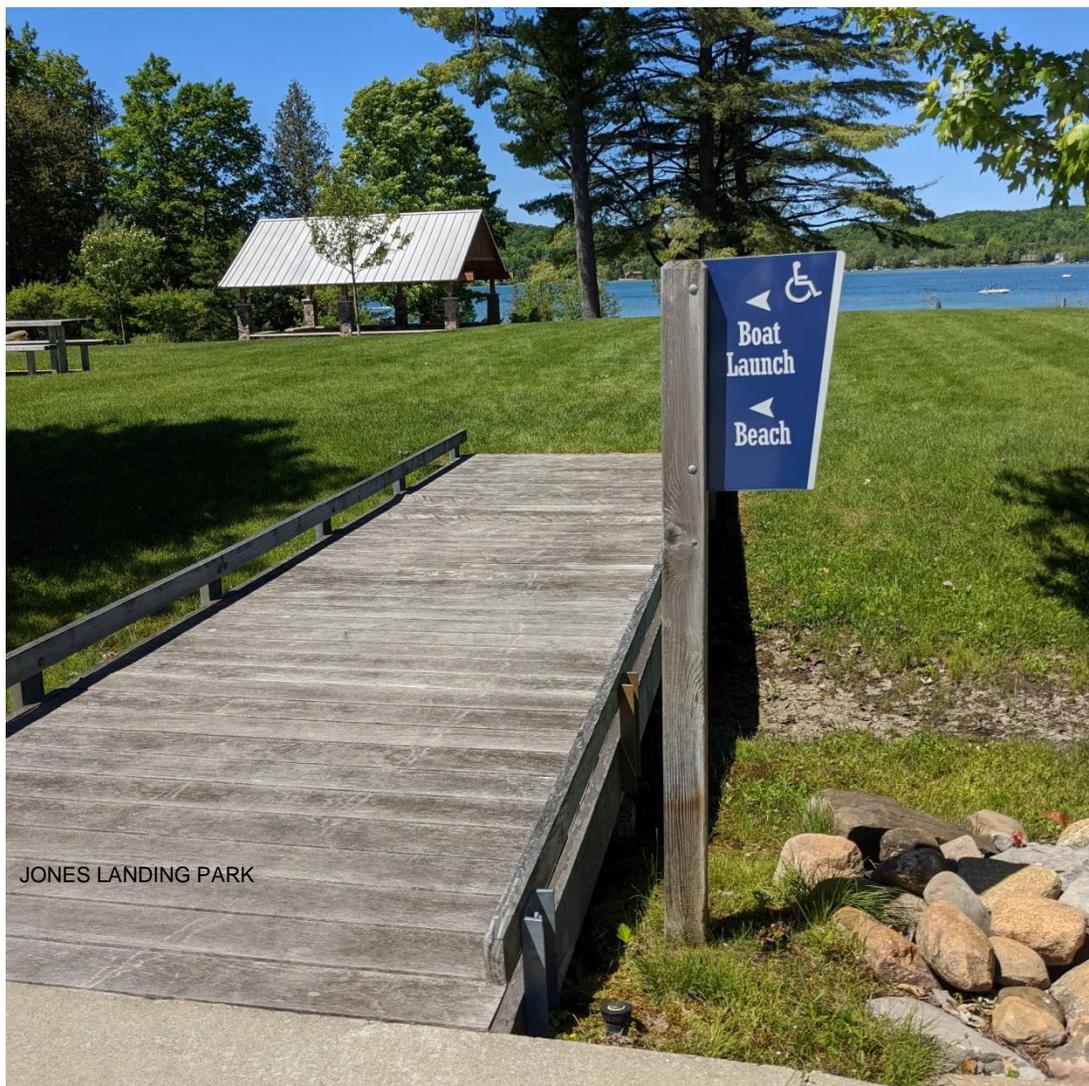
Special Use	Covers a broad range of parks and recreation facilities oriented toward single purpose use.	Variable – dependent on use.	Variable	Variable
Sports Complex	Consolidation of programmed athletic fields and associated facilities strategically located throughout the community.	Community-wide facilities.	Determined by project demand. Typically a minimum of 25 acres.	Variable
Greenways	Tie a park system together to form a continuous park environment.	Resource availability and opportunity.	Variable	Variable
Connector Trails	Multipurpose trails that emphasize safe travel for pedestrians to and from parks and around the community.	Typically follows railroad right-of-ways.	Variable.	
On-Street Bikeways	Paved segments of roadways that serve to safely separate bicyclists from vehicular traffic.	Bike Route: Designated portions of the roadway for the preferential of exclusive use of bicyclists. Bike Lane: Shared portions of the roadway that provide separation between motor vehicles and bicyclists, such as paved shoulders.	Variable	
Park Trail	Multipurpose trails located within greenways, parks and natural resource areas. Focus is on recreational value and harmony with natural environment.	Type I: Separate/single purpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians or bicyclists/in-line skaters. Type II: Multipurpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians and bicyclists/in-line skaters. Type III: Nature trails for pedestrians. May be hard or soft-surfaced.	Variable	

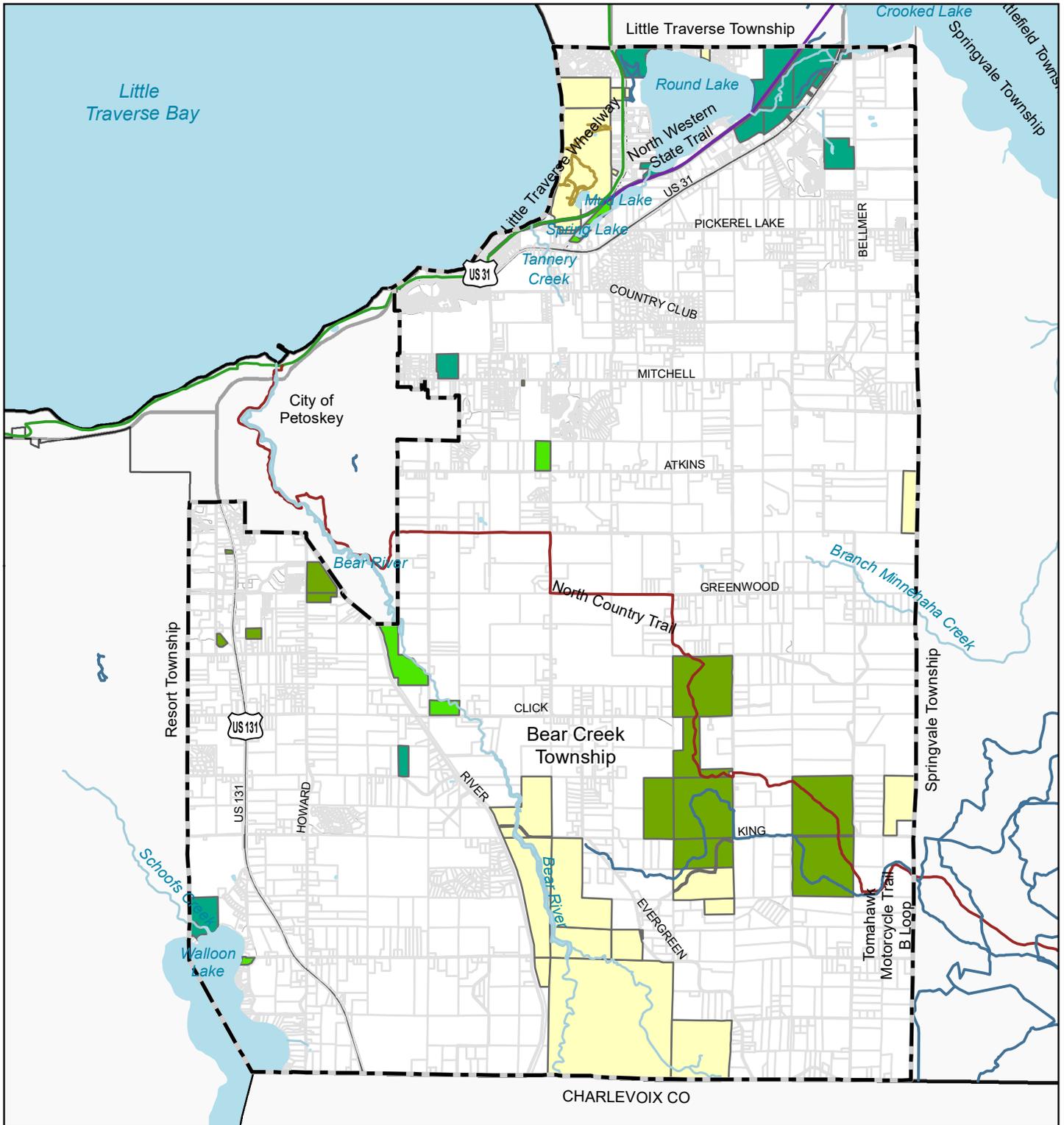
ACCESSIBILITY CRITERIA

Each of Bear Creek's parks and their facilities were evaluated for accessibility using the accessibility assessment criteria set forth by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. The Township shares a common goal with the State to develop universally accessible recreation facilities and the evaluation criteria is based MDNR guidelines. The scores range from 1-5; 5 being the most accessible. The definitions for each score are listed below.

1. The park is not accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities. The site includes little paved areas and the facilities such as play equipment or picnic areas are not easily accessible.
2. The park is somewhat accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities. Either the parking area or pathways are paved, but not both. Many of the facilities such as play equipment or picnic areas are not easily accessible.
3. The park is mostly accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities. Most of the parking areas and pathways are paved, and some of the facilities such as play equipment or picnic areas are accessible, but may not be completely barrier-free.
4. The park is completely accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities. Parking areas and pathways are paved and most of the facilities such as play equipment or picnic areas are easily accessible.
5. The entire park was developed or renovated using the principles of universal design, a design approach which enables all environments to be usable by everyone, to the greatest extent possible, regardless of age, ability, or situation.

Each park description includes an accessibility score and the analysis behind it.





Recreation Inventory

BEAR CREEK TOWNSHIP,
EMMET COUNTY

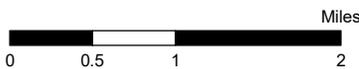
Date | August 2020

Source | Emmet County, Michigan GIS Data



-  Township Boundary
-  Little Traverse Wheelway
-  North Country Trail
-  North Western State Trail
-  Petoskey State Park Trail
-  Other Trails
-  Bear Creek Township Parkland
-  City of Petoskey Owned Parcels
-  Conservancy Lands
-  MDNR Owned Parcels

*Trail locations subject to change



ATKINS PRESERVE

Address	Acreeage	Amenities	Classification	Accessibility Score
Atkins Road at Cedar Valley Road	19.51	Unimproved green space Roadside parking	Natural Resource Area	1

BACKGROUND

The Atkins Preserve property is currently an unimproved greenspace located on the north side of Atkins Road at the intersection of Cedar Valley Road. The property has been designated a preserve due to its sensitive ecology, limited access, and deed restrictions. The property was donated to the Little Traverse Conservancy, and is co-managed in a restricted easement jointly with the township.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The existing property provides an assortment of landscapes including wetlands, meadow / fallow field, scrub-shrub, agrarian / cultivated, and forest edges. Limited access is provided by three roadside parking spaces. Shared access from adjoining properties could be considered.

ACCESSIBILITY

The property is undeveloped at this time. Additionally, the topography is steeply sloped.

CURRENT / FUTURE PLANNING

The Parks and Recreation Committee is actively planning for the future development of this site. The Committee has considered recreation opportunities that take into consideration the site's preservation designation as well as the natural landscape.



ATKINS PRESERVE AERIAL IMAGE
SOURCE: EMMET COUNTY

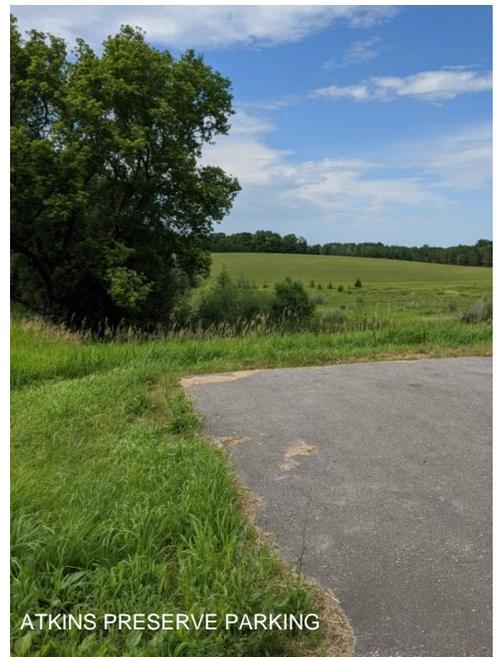
A conceptual plan shall be developed which will include a nature trail/boardwalk, platforms for scenic viewing, education signage identifying natural features, and potentially, physical activity stations for stretching, muscle building, and aerobic exercise. Other opportunities for the site may include providing a community orchard and / or improving bird and wildlife habitat by planting specific trees and native perennial plants. Other passive recreation opportunities for the site may be generated during the master planning process.



ATKINS PRESERVE ONSITE SIGNAGE



ATKINS ROAD AT ATKINS PRESERVE



ATKINS PRESERVE PARKING

CLICK ROAD PROPERTY

Address	Acreage	Amenities	Classification	Accessibility Score
1773 Click Road	18.70	Unimproved green space, Access to Bear River, North Country National Scenic Trail	Natural Resource Area	1



BACKGROUND

The Click Road property is located just east of the intersection of McDougal Road and Click Road. Access to the site is from Click Road using an unimproved driveway. The North Country National Scenic Trail, a hiking trail which traverses the property, offers pedestrian access to the site from McDougal Road and Click Road. The trail was constructed in 2019 by the Jordan Valley 45° Chapter of the North Country Trail Association. Previous planning efforts have identified a 3 to 4 acre area that may be suitable for development such as a potential location for park maintenance and storage facilities.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is largely made up of wetlands with wetland soils designated by the National Wetland Inventory provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The edges of the property are covered in scrub-shrub plant material while the interior is forested. The Bear River runs through the northwest portion of the site.

ACCESSIBILITY

The property is largely undeveloped at this time. Additionally, wet and uneven terrain makes the property difficult to traverse. The hiking trail is clearly defined and removed of obstacles regularly; however, it is not fully accessible. Future improvements to the site could include solid or hard-packed paths, site-grading on steep terrain (especially at entrances to the trail), and accessible ramps to be used for sloped terrain.

CURRENT / FUTURE PLANNING

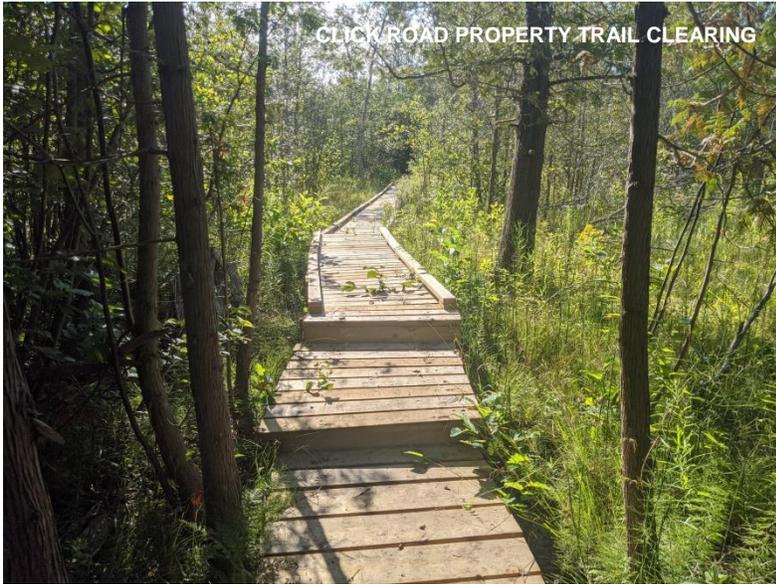
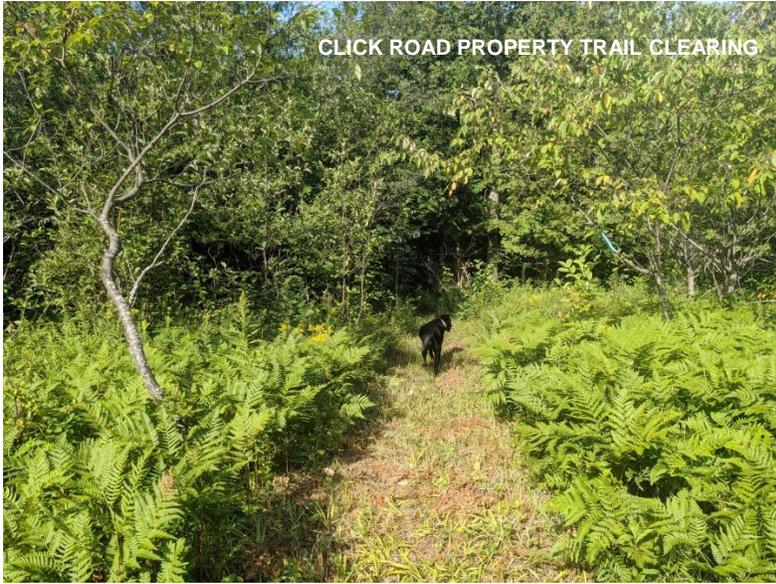
In 2019, the Jordan Valley 45° Chapter (JV 45°) of the North Country Trail Association completed a hiking trail through the Click Road property reaching across McDougal Road to the River Road property. The trail connects to the larger North Country National Scenic Trail which extends through multiple northern states. JV 45° maintains the trail and will provide necessary improvements such as trailhead signage. With such close proximity to the Bear River and the common usage of the water trail for fishing, the trail is likely to be used to create user access trails to the river bank. Walk-in access off of road crossings and through township property is important; however, user access trails should create minimal impact on the surrounding environment. The Township has begun to explore the possibility for other site improvements including a dog park, restrooms, parking, and a canoe/kayak launch. The dog park, restrooms, and parking are a joint effort coordinated by a local dog group supported by the Township, the City of Petoskey, Resort Township, and Emmet County. The Township will continue the site development by building a canoe / kayak launch. Conceptual drawings will be developed in the near future.

The Bear River continues to be a recreation destination for novice and experienced paddlers. The Bear River Canoe Livery is a popular private canoe service located just downstream from the Click Road property. When developing the kayak / canoe launch, the Township should consider providing water trail signage including emergency information. Additional discussion about the Bear River is provided at the end of this section under Other Public Recreation Facilities in Bear Creek Township.

Additional opportunities for the site include building a maintenance storage facility for the parks maintenance program.



BEAR RIVER AT CLICK ROAD PROPERTY



JONES LANDING PARK

Address	Acreage	Amenities	Classification	Accessibility Score
1193 West Gruler Road	3.3	Boat Launch, Beach Access to Walloon Lake, Picnic Pavilion, Playscape, Restrooms, Boat Trailer Parking	Community Park	3



BACKGROUND

Jones Landing Park is located in the southwest corner of the Township on Walloon Lake. Access to the park and boat launch is from West Gruler Road, west of U.S. 131. The park was acquired in 2005 utilizing a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant and improved in 2008 using MNRTF and Waterways Boating Access Site grants. The play equipment improvements were completed in 2018.

SITE DESCRIPTION

Jones Landing Park is largely an active recreation park. Most notably, the park has a boat launch, about 65 feet of sandy beach, and shallow swimming area with access to Walloon Lake. This is a popular public access site located at northern end of the north arm. The park also offers playground equipment including slides, swings, and bounce seats. Additional recreational amenities include a picnic pavilion, picnic tables, grills, a scenic viewing platform, and on-site parking for both cars and trailers.

ACCESSIBILITY

The park features numerous accessible amenities that encourage recreation for persons with a disability. The parking, picnic area and restrooms are accessible by providing paved paths, zero step entries, and space for a wheelchair at picnic tables. The topography of the site slopes down as it gets closer to the water, and a gently curved path allows access to the water's edge. However, the beach and playscape area have minimal accessible features and limit the ability of persons with a disability to participate. Future improvements to the site could include a solid or hard-packed path around the beach to the playscape, accessible swings, playscape with ramps, and beach mats.

CURRENT / FUTURE PLANNING

Jones Landing Park has been the primary focus for improvements in past years, and a few remaining projects are proposed over the planning period to complete the site. A shower tower for human washing is planned as well as a boat wash station for boaters to clean the bottom of their boat after leaving the lake. In subsequent years, the Township should consider adding play equipment for older children and accessible play and beach equipment. Should the opportunity arise, the Township recognizes the need to acquire additional property for overflow parking.





PICNIC AREA AT JONES LANDING PARK



PARKING AREA AT JONES LANDING PARK



ACCESSIBLE PICNIC AREA AT JONES LANDING PARK



JONES LANDING PARK PLAYScape



JONES LANDING PARK PLAY AREA



JONES LANDING PARK SWIMMING BEACH

RIVER ROAD PROPERTY

Address	Acreage	Amenities	Classification	Accessibility Score
North of Click Road, between River Road and Bear River	57	Unimproved green space, Access to Bear River, North Country National Scenic Trail , Access to River Road Sports Complex	Natural Resource Area	1



BACKGROUND

The River Road property is located on the east side of River Road, south of the River Road Sports Complex maintained by the City of Petoskey, and north of Click Road. To the east, the property has about 495 feet of frontage on McDougal Road, but access to the site is primarily through the sports complex. The sports complex's access through the railroad right-of-way could provide formal shared access for the River Road property. A secondary, direct, but limited access drive from River Road across the railroad tracks to the site is an opportunity to be explored in future planning efforts. Pedestrian access can be gained by way of the North Country National Scenic Trail at McDougal Road where the trail crosses to continue on to the Click Road property. At the north end of the property, the trail continues through the sports complex and other City property to cross the Bear River. The trail was constructed in 2019 by the Jordan Valley 45° Chapter of the North Country Trail Association.

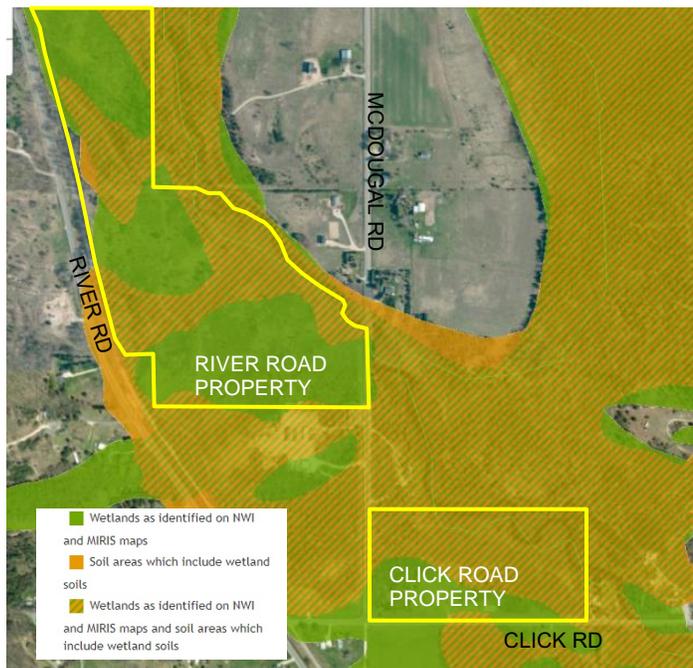
A seasonal snowmobile "agreement" allows access for sleds through the sports complex and south through the River Road property. The route ultimately connects the Petoskey Snowmobile Club on Evergreen Trail via some farmland along River Road south, and the Odawa Casino property to the north via easements through private and public lands to the Meijer Store (for gas access).

SITE DESCRIPTION

The River Road property has a diverse range of upland and lowland habitat, and similar to the Click Road property, the River Road site is largely made up of wetlands with wetland soils designated by the National Wetland Inventory provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The property is a mix of scrub-shrub plant material and forested area. The Bear River runs through the northwest portion of the site. The image to the right is a representation of the area covered by wetlands throughout the Click Road property and the River Road property. The image is sourced from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy.

ACCESSIBILITY

The property is largely undeveloped at this time. Additionally, wet and uneven terrain makes the property difficult to traverse. The hiking trail is clearly defined and removed of obstacles regularly; however, it is not fully accessible. Future improvements to the site could include solid or hard-packed paths, site-grading on steep terrain (especially at entrances to the trail), and accessible ramps to be used for sloped terrain.

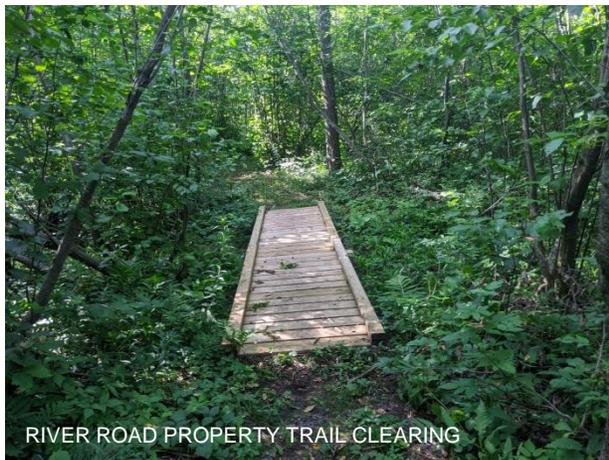


RIVER ROAD AND CLICK ROAD PROPERTY AERIAL IMAGE
SOURCE: STATE OF MICHIGAN, EGLE

CURRENT / FUTURE PLANNING

As mentioned with the Click Road property, the Jordan Valley 45° Chapter of the North Country Trail Association has recently completed a hiking trail through the River Road property reaching across McDougal Road to the Click Road property. The trail connects to the larger North Country National Scenic Trail which extends through multiple northern states. JV 45° maintains the trail and will provide necessary improvements such as trailhead signage. With such close proximity to the Bear River and the common usage of the water trail for fishing, the trail is likely to be used to create user access trails to the river bank. Walk-in access off of road crossings and through township property is important; however, user access trails should create minimal impact on the surrounding environment.

The Township would like to explore the possibility of developing a wilderness (rustic) campground with permanent bathhouse and trails throughout the site. Water trail related amenities such as kayak/canoe lockers, signage, and access to potable water should also be considered for the site. The River Road property adjacent to the Bear River may be an ideal location for a water trail rest stop if site conditions warrant it. Additional recreation opportunities for the site may be generated during the master planning process.



SPRING LAKE PARK

Address	Acreage	Amenities	Classification	Accessibility Score
1590 Harbor-Petoskey Road	12.3	Fishing Pier, Spring Lake Boardwalk, Picnic Pavilion, Restrooms, Parking Adjacent to North Western State Trail	Special Use	4



BACKGROUND

Spring Lake Park is located in the northern half of the Township just off US-31 on Harbor-Petoskey Road (M-119), north of Pickerel Lake Road. The park has received several grants in the past for site and transportation improvements including:

- MDNR NRTF Project #86-254
- MDNR Clean Michigan Initiative (CMI) Project #YF08-254
- MDOT Transportation Enhancement (TE) Project #96009

SITE DESCRIPTION

The park is situated between M-119 and Spring Lake. The park pavilion overlooks the lake and provides an ideal fishing and viewing location. Pathways along the lake's west shore may be accessed from the pavilion and the parking areas. Both paved paths and boardwalks are provided for wildlife and scenic viewing. In addition to standard park amenities like the picnic pavilion, picnic tables, and restrooms, the park is a trailhead for the North Western State Trail. This park is designated a Special Use area due to the uniqueness of the facilities onsite including the preservation of the natural features of the lake, park amenities, and access to a regional trail.

ACCESSIBILITY

Spring Lake Park provides several accessible amenities that allow for barrier free access to the park. The parking area provides accessible parking spaces, ramps are provided to access the pavilion and fishing platform, and the pathways are accessible, hard materials. The Township has identified the restrooms to receive a remodel; accessible features should be incorporated into the design.

CURRENT / FUTURE PLANNING

As mentioned, the Township has identified the restrooms to be renovated in the coming years. Secondly, there is a need for a wider mid-road crossing (as shown below) across M-119. Pedestrians and cyclists seeking to access the Little Traverse Wheelway going south or the Petoskey State Park going north, are encouraged to cross at the mid-road crossing at Spring Lake Park. However, heavy traffic on M-119 limits the ability to cross in one movement, and often pedestrians are stranded in the middle with limited space and insufficient protective features.



SPRING LAKE PARK PICNIC PAVILION



SPRING LAKE PARK SIGN



SPRING LAKE PARK TRAIL ENTRANCE



SPRING LAKE PARK AMENITIES



TRAIL CROSSING AT M-119
SOURCE: GOOGLE STREET VIEW



TRAIL MAP AT SPRING LAKE PARK

OTHER RECREATION FACILITIES

Other public recreation facilities include those facilities not owned or operated by Bear Creek Township; however, these facilities are available to Township residents, and, in many cases, bring visitors to the area to recreate and support the local economy. The Township seeks to partner with the owners of many of these recreation facilities to share costs and build additional recreation capacity in the region. Not all existing recreation facilities in Bear Creek Township and the surrounding areas are listed below – please refer to the City of Petoskey Parks and Recreation Master Plan or Emmet County’s Recreation Plan for a complete list of all available facilities.

BEAR RIVER VALLEY RECREATION AREA

The Bear River Valley Recreation Area is owned by the City of Petoskey and provides approximately 36 acres of passive recreation including hiking, cross-country skiing, fishing, kayaking, and environmental education.

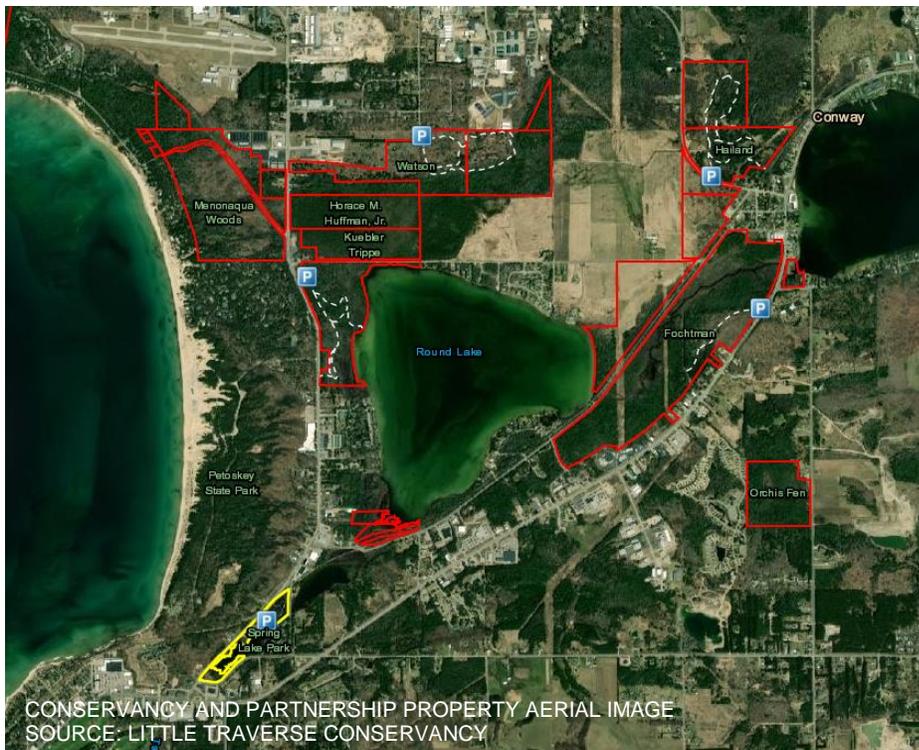


CLICK ROAD SPORTS COMPLEX

Owned and managed by Petoskey Youth Soccer Association (PYSA), the soccer complex provides a regional hub for competitive soccer.

LITTLE TRAVERSE CONSERVANCY LANDS

The Little Traverse Conservancy serves to protect the natural diversity and beauty of northern Michigan by preserving significant land and scenic areas. The conservancy protects lands in five northern Michigan counties through conservation easements, nature preserves, and partnerships with local units of government. Atkins Preserve, Jones Landing Park, and Spring Lake Park are examples of partnership properties in the Township. A sample of conservancy properties are shown in red below.

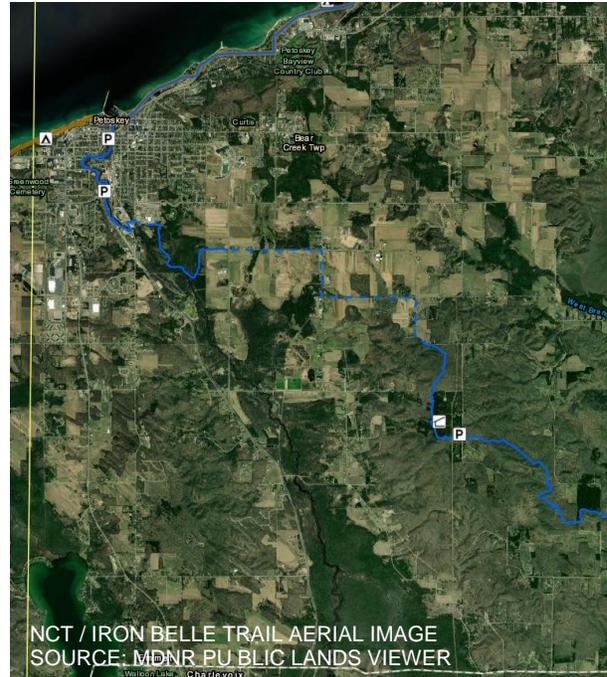


LITTLE TRAVERSE WHEELWAY

The Little Traverse Wheelway provides 26 miles of east-west access along Little Traverse Bay (Lake Michigan) connecting the City of Charlevoix and Harbor Springs. The Charlevoix trailhead is at the north end of town at Charlevoix Township Hall on Waller Road (Shanahan Field). The Harbor Springs trailhead is near the ballfields at Lake and Hoyt on the east side of town. Facilities and parking are available at each trailhead as well as at roadside parks along the way. In 2020, two portions of the trail were closed due to erosion issues. A long-term solution has yet to be determined. Ownership and management of the Wheelway is a collaboration with cities, townships, and state agencies (MDNR and MDOT).

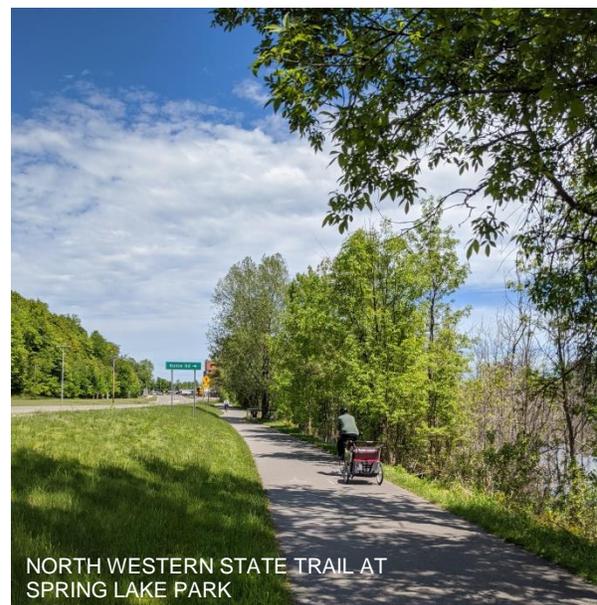
NORTH COUNTRY NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL / IRON BELLE STATE TRAIL

The North Country National Scenic Trail (NCT) is one of eleven national hiking trails, similar to the better known Appalachian Trail. The NCT extends from North Dakota to Vermont, with the longest section traversing both the lower and upper peninsulas of Michigan. In 2019, the Jordan Valley 45° Chapter (JV 45°) of the North Country Trail Association constructed a hiking trail extending from the City of Petoskey's River Road Sports Complex through the River Road and Click Road properties. This section of trail is part of a phased re-routing of a segment of the NCT to move the trail off local area roads. The trail is anticipated to become officially part of the NCT in the near future (2021). The Iron Belle Trail is the longest designated state trail in the nation and it incorporates a large portion of the existing NCT including portions through Bear Creek Township.



NORTH WESTERN STATE TRAIL

The converted rail-right-of-way provides a non-motorized corridor from Petoskey to Mackinaw. The section of trail in Bear Creek Township extends to the Village of Alanson and continues on to Pellston and Mackinaw City. The trail is 32 miles in length. The Top of Michigan Trails Council (TOMTC) helped coordinate the various NWST projects with MDOT, MDNR, Emmet County, and the Emmet County Road Commission. The TOMTC's Safety and Maintenance Director works closely with Emmet County to help maintain the section of the North Western State Trail from Spring Lake Park to Alanson. The MDNR maintains the trail north of Alanson. The TOMTC has a network of about 300 miles of existing or soon-to-be constructed trails throughout the northern lower peninsula including the previously mentioned Little Traverse Wheelway.



PETOSKEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The Petoskey Public Elementary Schools provide ideal recreation facilities for both young and older children. Please refer to the City of Petoskey Parks and Recreation Plan for more detail.

PETOSKEY STATE PARK

Owned and managed by the MDNR, the State Park provides over 300 acres of land for camping and access to Lake Michigan.



RIVER ROAD SPORTS COMPLEX

Owned and managed by the City of Petoskey, the River Road Sports Complex provides over 90 acres of mixed use recreational activities along the Bear River. Activities include soccer and baseball fields, disc golf course, and portable restrooms.

STATE FOREST LAND

The State of Michigan currently owns and manages over 1,500 acres of forest lands in Bear Creek Township that include mostly those lands found within the Mackinaw State Forest.



THE BEAR RIVER WATER TRAIL OPPORTUNITY

The Bear River flows from Walloon Lake and Springbrook Creek to Little Traverse Bay and is just under 15 miles in length. Beginning in Melrose Township, Charlevoix County, the river flows north and enters Bear Creek Township at Bear River Road near River Road and continues on until reaching the River Road property and the City of Petoskey at the River Road Sports Complex. The river is mostly slow-moving through the township, but a faster rapids section of the river extends about a mile long within the city limits before emptying into Lake Michigan. The change in water flow offers two different paddling experiences.

Much of the land surrounding the river from its headwaters up through Evergreen Trail is Michigan State Forest lands. The river continues to meander through rural and agrarian landscapes in southern Bear Creek Township until it reaches the City of Petoskey near North Central Michigan College. While the banks are still vegetated through the city and the Bear River Valley Recreation Area, a whitewater park was created by adding boulders and ledges to make faster rapids before the river empties into the the bay.

While the Bear River is frequented by various levels of paddlers it is not a designated water trail. According to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR), a water trail is a designated route on a navigable waterway such as a lake, river, canal, or bay that is designed and managed to create a positive outdoor recreation experience for the user. The creation of a Bear River water trail signifies the communities' intentional effort to establish the Bear River as a paddling destination which will attract users and tourists, support recreational fishing, grow the local and regional economy, and promote healthy lifestyles and clean water. In 2019, the DNR designated the first water trails in Michigan: eight waterways totaling over 540 miles of water trails. The applications for water trail designation were scored based on set criteria including:

- Provides a quality trail experience.
- Offers clear information for users.
- Enjoys broad community support.
- Has an appropriate water trail plan in place that addresses components like safety stewardship, signage, and funding.

As with the first designation in Michigan, water trails are an ever-growing trend in recreation. A Bear River water trail would complement the natural resources and recreation opportunities currently available while adding recreation capacity. Ideally, the Bear River water trail would connect to the larger Lake Michigan National Water Trail, a Nationally Designated water trail around the entirety of Lake Michigan. As a regional amenity the Bear River is beloved by many residents, advocacy groups, and recreation enthusiasts and should be included in any planning efforts to improve the river.



PRIVATELY OWNED RECREATION FACILITIES

Privately owned recreation facilities include those facilities that may require a user fee and have limited access. It is important to understand that these private facilities do contribute to the inventory of recreation facilities and provide an important component to the overall recreation inventory. The following private recreation facilities or organizations provide additional recreation opportunities:

- Bay View Association Open Space
- Bay View Country Club
- Bear River Canoe Livery
- Boyne Highlands
- Great American Adventures
- Hearthside Grove RV Resort
- KOA – Campground
- Nubs Nob
- Petoskey Cinema
- Petoskey Snowmobile Club
- Pirates Cove Adventure Golf



BAY VIEW WOODS



BAY VIEW WOODS TRAIL SIGNS

THE PLANNING PROCESS

REGULAR RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Throughout the update planning process for the Parks and Recreation Plan, Bear Creek Township Parks and Recreation Committee held monthly meetings; these meetings were open to the public for comment and feedback (June 15, July 6, July 27, and August 10).

PUBLIC INPUT SURVEY

An electronic survey was distributed throughout the community to gather public input regarding parks and recreation. The survey was available July 7 through August 4, 2020. Local community organizations were emailed a link to access the survey and asked to share within their network. Emmet County promoted the survey on their Facebook social media page. A total of 59 individual responses were collected. A summary report of the survey results follows this section. Complete survey results can be found in Appendix A.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE DRAFT PLAN

A formal meeting was held with the Recreation Committee on August 24, 2020 to release the draft plan for public comment for a one-month period. Following the one-month comment period, the Parks and Recreation Committee held an advertised public hearing on October 5, 2020 to receive public comment. The public hearing was advertised in a local newspaper and more than seven days prior to the meeting date. The Recreation Committee unanimously approved a resolution to support the plan and recommend approval by the Township Board (see Appendix B). All Parks and Recreation Committee meetings were open to the public.

ADOPTION

The Township Board reviewed a resolution of adoption of the updated Parks and Recreation Plan at their regularly scheduled meeting on October 7, 2020. The Bear Creek Township Board approved the 2021-2025 Bear Creek Township Parks and Recreation Plan for submission to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources at the October 7 meeting. See Appendix B for approval documents.

RESULTS OF THE PUBLIC INPUT SUREVEY

In order to identify public interest about the types of recreation amenities that are currently used and amenities that are desired in Bear Creek Township, a survey was developed with input from the Parks and Recreation Committee. The survey was 15 questions and was distributed through email and social media. Question answer types varied from multiple choice answers, to open-ended responses, to ranking answers to give survey-takers a variety of ways to provide input. The following report summarizes the results of the 59 individual responses:

Q1. Please select the status of your residency in Bear Creek Township:

Survey-takers were asked to identify as a year-round resident (77.19%), seasonal or part time resident (1.75%), or not a Township resident (21.05%). The most common residence of self-identified, non-resident survey takers was the City of Petoskey (five responses). Overwhelmingly, the majority of survey responses are from permanent Bear Creek Township residents. 57 of 59 individuals responded to question 1.

Q2: How many people reside in your household? (Choose one)

Question 2 was a multiple choice question with 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 or more people being the response options. 2, or two people, was the most selected response with 49.12% of the responses and 3 was the second most picked response (19.30%). The least selected response was 7 or more people with 0%. 57 of 59 individuals responded to this question.

Q3. What is the age range of persons in your household?

56 of 59 individuals responded to this question. A context analysis of the survey responses identified the average age for the younger age response as 42 years old while the average age of the older age response as 60 years old. Twenty responses (36%) of survey takers responded to having school-aged children or younger (children aged 0-19) in their household.

Q4. Select up to five outdoor activities you participate in most regularly.

Survey takers were asked to select five choices from a list of common recreation activities. The top ten choices are also those choices that received a response rate of 20% (the activity was selected by twelve or more people as an activity participated in most regularly). 58 of 59 individuals responded to this question.

Rank	Activity	Response Rate
1	Walking / Running	67.24%
2	Biking	48.28%
3	Beach / Lake Swimming	44.83%
4	Hiking	31.03%
5	Picnics / Grilling	27.59%
6	Camping	27.59%
7	Kayaking / Canoeing	27.59%
8	Cross-Country Skiing	25.86%
9	Farmers' Markets	20.69%
10	Downhill Skiing / Snowboarding	20.69%

Q5. Rank your selected activities in order of how often you participate. Rank them 1 through 5; 1 is the activity you participate in the most often and 5 is the activity you participate in the least often.

Many of the same responses captured in question 4 were also given in question 5. A context analysis was performed to identify only the choices selected in the top five. Survey limitations did not allow only ranking 1 through 5, so other responses were removed manually. Walking / running was the activity participated in most often. Disc golf is unique because a small group of survey takers selected the activity as an activity participated in most regularly which put it on the list of highest ranked activities, higher than Farmers' Market. The Score column below refers to the number of responses between 1 and 5 the activity received. 51 of 59 individuals responded to this question.

Rank	Activity	Score
1	Walking / Running	35
2	Biking	24
3	Beach / Lake Swimming	20
4	Hiking	15
5	Picnics / Grilling	13
6	Camping	13
7	Cross-Country Skiing	12
8	Kayaking / Canoeing	11
9	Downhill Skiing / Snowboarding	10
10	Disc Golf	9

Q6. How often do you participate in your preferred recreation activity? (Choose one)

Survey-takers responded that 55.56% participate in their preferred recreation activity daily, the most frequent option given. 54 of 59 individuals responded to this question.

Q7. What is the primary purpose for participating in your preferred recreation activity? (Choose one)

When asked what the primary purpose for participating in the preferred recreation activity 28 or 52.83% of responses identified "Improve physical or mental health" as the purpose. This was followed by "Enjoyment of the sport or activity" as a close second (33.96%). 53 of 59 individuals responded to this question.

Q8. Are there barriers limiting your ability to participate in your preferred activities or other desired recreation activities?

The majority of survey-takers, 44 or 81.48% did not have any barriers preventing them from participating in the recreation activities they are interested in. 18.52% of responders identified barriers to their ability to recreate. A summary of those barriers is provided:

- The COVID-19 pandemic was identified in two responses as a barrier to participating in recreation.
- Increased traffic is limiting the ability to ride and run on Township roads.
- Insufficient disc golf and skate park facilities limit their ability to participate in those activities.

Q9. How often do you visit Bear Creek Township recreation areas (Atkins Preserve, Click Road greenspace, Jones Landing Park, River Road greenspace, and Spring Lake Park)?

When asked how often survey takers visited Township parks, monthly was the most selected response (26.09%). This was followed by Yearly with 21.74%, and Weekly with 19.57%. 13.04% had never visited a Bear Creek Township recreation area. 46 of 59 individuals responded to this question.

Q10. What is your preferred Bear Creek Township recreation area?

The most preferred Bear Creek Township recreation area is Spring Lake Park (34.78%) followed by Jones Landing Park (30.43%), and those who responded “I do not know” (28.26%). 46 of 59 individuals responded to this question.

Q11. Do the amenities offered in Bear Creek Township parks meet your recreation needs?

While 22.22% responded “I do not know,” the majority of survey-takers (62.22%) responded, “Yes.” 45 of 59 individuals responded to this question.

Q12. What types of funding would you support for recreation improvements or activities?

Overall, grant funding was the preferred option of the given funding options for recreation improvements and activities. 40 of 44 survey-takers selected grants over other methods including millage, general fund, community endowment, and fees. Fees, overwhelming, were the least preferred option for recreation funding. 18 of 37 survey-takers responded they did not support fees.

Q13. Prioritize the following goals for parks and recreation in Bear Creek Township in order of importance (1 through 7). 1 is the highest priority and 7 is the lowest priority.

Survey responses placed the 2015 Recreation Plan Goals and Objectives in the following order:

1. Provide clean, safe, and well maintained recreational opportunities at Township facilities.
2. Develop a non-motorized transportation plan that would support future transportation improvements.
3. Provide access to Little Traverse Bay along Tannery Creek.
4. Inform, educate, and encourage. Inform Township residents of ongoing recreation projects and programs, educate them of all the recreational benefits, and encourage broader input from Township residents.
5. Purchase additional property on an as-needed basis that would support existing recreational facilities.
6. Provide access to and develop passive recreational opportunities at the River Road Property.
7. Provide additional recreational opportunities at Jones Landing Park.

Q14. What types of recreation amenities, facilities, or programs would you like to see improved or added to Bear Creek Township recreation areas?

Question 14 was an open-ended question that received 23 responses. The responses can be described in the following word cloud. The words are organized in both size and color. Larger, darker colored words are used more frequently in the open-ended responses shared by survey participants.



new disc golf river road disc golf course Easier park township
Trail

Q15. What is your big idea for Bear Creek Township parks and recreation?

Question 15 was an open-ended question that received 25 responses. The responses can be described in the following word cloud. The words are organized in both size and color. Larger, darker colored words are used more frequently in the open-ended responses shared by survey participants.



connecting bike path Access bike trail disc golf course Keep river

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following goals and objectives were developed as a result of several factors, including public input, Township staff and Parks and Recreation Committee member involvement, and expertise lent by the recreation planning consultant.

A community survey was used to facilitate public input, which resulted in the development of the goals and objectives below. The 2021 update of the Parks and Recreation Plan also referenced the 2015-2019 *Bear Creek Township Recreation Plan*, the *Emmet County Recreation Plan*, and the *City of Petoskey Parks and Recreation Master Plan*.

Other efforts continue to bring together ongoing recreation planning. The proposed dog park at Click Road property is a joint effort coordinated by a local dog group supported by the Township, the City of Petoskey, Resort Township, and Emmet County. The Township continues to seek opportunities to partner with other local municipalities and advocacy organizations to identify and protect vulnerable open space.

DECISION MAKING & FORMULATION OF GOALS

It remains important to understand that Bear Creek Township is located in a region that sees a large influx of seasonal visitors, both in the summer and winter months, which has an impact on recreational needs. Visitors are traveling north to recreate on Little Traverse Bay, Crooked, Round, and Walloon Lakes, and the Bear River which runs north and south through the center of the Township. Visitors are also recreating on the Little Traverse Wheelway and the overlapping North Country Trail and Iron Belle Trail, all of which have sections of trail in the Township. In the winter months, visitors arrive in Bear Creek Township and the surrounding Emmet County to downhill and cross-country ski at local resorts and snowmobile along miles of trails that connect communities across Northern Michigan.

The exact amount of recreational need is not always easy to identify in areas that are tourist-based. However, the Township recognizes the importance of the relationship between its tourism and recreation and the potential opportunities that exist, including the potential for positive economic impact on 'quality of life' of its residents.

ENCOURAGING ACTIVE LIFESTYLES

As the population grows and changes demographically, recreational needs change as well. It is important to monitor the changes so that recreational facilities are developed for the current and projected populations. Currently, a vast majority of recreational facilities in Michigan and the United States fall short in connecting with the population. Facilities are either under-managed, outdated, or in most cases, do not provide for the recreational needs indicated by the cross-section of the demographic population.

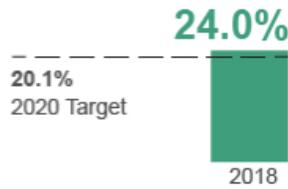
The US Department of Health and Human Services has established Leading Health Indicators (LHIs), or high priority health issues, that serve to measure public health. Their website, Healthy People 2020 (healthypeople.gov), lists Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity as a 2020 LHI Topic. According to Healthy People 2020, more than 80% of adults do not meet the guidelines for both aerobic and muscle-strengthening activities, and more than 80% of adolescents do not do enough aerobic physical activity to meet the guidelines for youth. Additionally, only about one in five homes have parks within a half-mile, and about the same number have a fitness or recreation center within that distance. The following infographics were taken from healthypeople.gov.

Healthy People 2020 Targets

Physical Activity

In 2018, 24.0% (age adjusted) of adults aged 18 years and over met the current federal physical activity guidelines for aerobic physical activity and muscle-strengthening activity.

Data source: National Health Interview Survey (NHIS), CDC/NCHS.

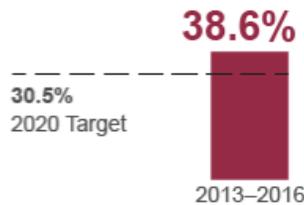


✓ Target has been met.

Adult Obesity

In 2013–2016, the rate of obesity was 38.6% among adults aged 20 years and over (age adjusted).

Data source: National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), CDC/NCHS.

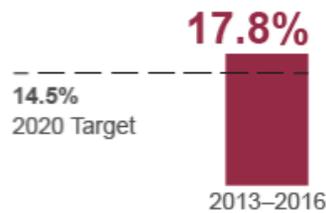


↓ 21.0% decrease needed.

Obesity in Children and Adolescents

In 2013–2016, the rate of obesity was 17.8% among children and adolescents aged 2–19 years.

Data source: National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), CDC/NCHS.

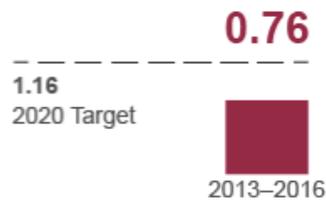


↓ 18.5% decrease needed.

Daily Vegetable Intake

In 2013–2016, the mean daily intake for persons aged 2 years and over was 0.76 cup equivalents of total vegetables per 1,000 calories (age adjusted).

Data source: National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), CDC/NCHS.



↑ 52.6% increase needed.

Although these statistics do not specifically represent Bear Creek Township, they do illuminate how critical it is to provide recreation opportunities for all age groups and to encourage active lifestyles.

RECREATION FOR ALL AGES & ABILITIES

In order to support a diverse population, “park infrastructure should enable rather than discourage inclusive and dynamic uses and activities.” A collaboration between the AARP, 8 80 Cities nonprofit, and the Trust for Public Land created the guide, *Creating Parks and Public Spaces for People of All Ages*. Noting the disproportionately small number of older adult park users and the declining amount of time children are spending outdoors, the collaboration created the Guide to give community leaders tools to improve public spaces.

The information provided is universal and may be applied strategically to any community’s parks. The Guide discusses good park design stating, “We know that women, older adults and parents with young children rate park safety and comfort as high priorities. Because of that, the presence of women, children and older adults is a significant indicator of good park design.” Safety and comfort features may include lighted parking lots and certain park features (such as fields and courts), emergency call stations, seating in shaded areas, and personal care facilities such as baby changing stations.

In addition to safety and comfort concerns, parks may be designed to increase multigenerational activity and interaction. The 8 80 Cities nonprofit believes if everything we do in our cities is great for an 8 year old and an 80 year old, then it will be great for all people. Combining activities that attract different user groups or user groups of all ages can enhance connections within the community. An example multigenerational area may include playground equipment for ages 2 to 5 and 5 to 12, exercise stations for adults, picnic tables, barbeque pits, benches, and drinking fountains. Additionally, the Guide describes, “Outdoor table and field games such as bocce, ping-pong, checkers and chess can be enjoyed by people of all ages.” Both Jones Landing Park and Spring Lake Park provide multigenerational recreation facilities and thus, regularly have visitors with a range of ages and abilities. Future parks and park improvements will apply these concepts which are further explored in the Goals and Objectives below.



JONES LANDING PARK AMENITIES

Goal #1: Provide clean, safe, and well maintained recreational opportunities at Township facilities.

The Township is proactively seeking to strengthen the maintenance program and thus improve the condition of all park facilities. Currently, the Township contracts maintenance of Spring Lake Park, Jones Landing Park, and the Township Hall site including landscape maintenance, building and picnic structure repairs, trail upkeep, restroom maintenance, mowing and fertilizing, and trash removal.

OBJECTIVES

1. Develop an operations and maintenance plan to adequately address immediate and long-term equipment, budgetary, and personnel needs for the existing and proposed facilities.
2. Develop and maintain a parks and recreation maintenance program in-house to ensure quality recreational opportunities at Township facilities long term.
3. The Parks and Recreation Committee shall provide oversight to assist staff with management of an operations and maintenance program and to make recommendations to the Township Board for improvements.
4. Consider feasibility of utilizing LEED & Green Building Standards.
5. Seek out additional in-kind or sub-contractual services where and when needed to supplement a maintenance program and staff.
6. Maximize Township parks' potential and minimize Township in-house costs by forming shared maintenance agreements with other public and private operators.

Goal #2: Develop a non-motorized transportation plan.

Currently, the Township's recreational facilities are not directly connected by non-motorized trails. Poor signage and lack of safe at-grade crossings limit not only a universally accessible system, but discourage active recreation. Township citizens have expressed much interest in expanding their existing non-motorized transportation system.

The creation of a non-motorized transportation plan (NMTP) would support a connected network of trails, paths, and sidewalks through future improvements. Many of the regional trails have been discussed throughout this plan; however a NMTP would discuss local routes and connections in detail, including to and from regional trails.

OBJECTIVES

1. Evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the current non-motorized transportation system.
2. Identify strategic locations in the non-motorized transportation network where gaps prohibit safe and efficient non-motorized travel. Priority should be placed on projects that connect Township parks, schools, and neighborhoods.
3. Continue to work together with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) and their ongoing trail improvements to the Little Traverse Bay Wheelway.
4. Participate in joint trail planning efforts supported by Emmet County, City of Petoskey and adjacent townships.
5. Coordinate with local Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) such as the Little Traverse Conservancy and trail advocacy groups including the Top of Michigan Trails Council for trail planning and development.
6. Implement universal design as a design standard for all new facilities and improvements to existing.
7. Consider feasibility of utilizing LEED & Green Building Standards.



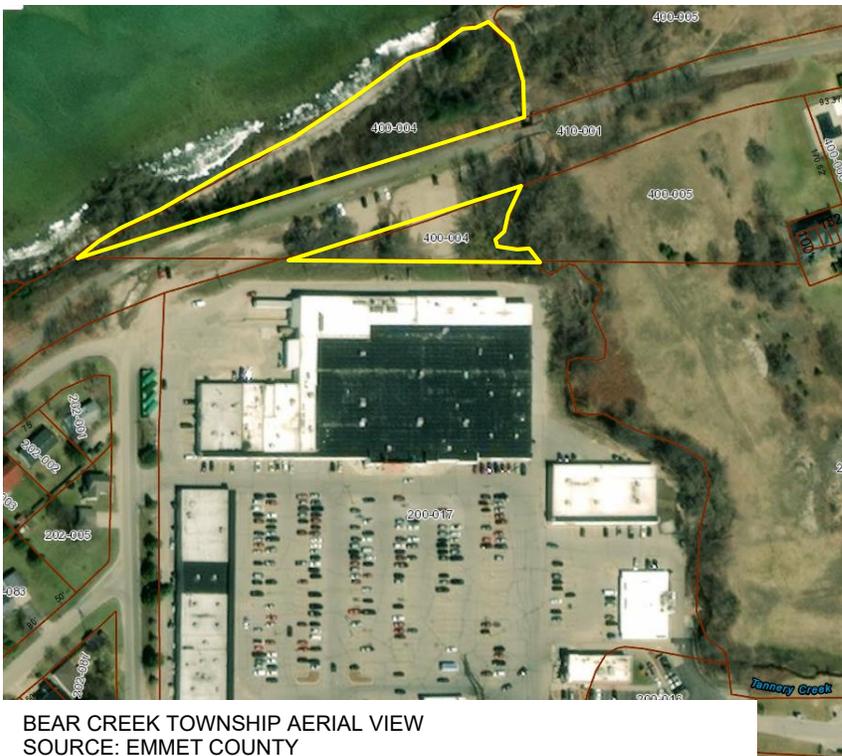
Goal #3: Provide access to Little Traverse Bay along Tannery Creek.

While the Township borders the Little Traverse Bay (Lake Michigan) on the northwest corner, the Township does not have public access to the lake. The Little Traverse Wheelway follows along the shoreline and provides adjacent access, but demand exists to expand access to the lake and develop amenities that would support trail users as well lake users. There is also a need to improve the ecological conditions of the nearby Tannery Creek which empties into the bay at this location.

Tannery Creek is located within the jurisdiction of the Little Traverse Bay Watershed Protection Plan created by the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council. The Watershed Council performs biological monitoring of the creek which has been impacted by aquatic invasive species and threats such as nonpoint source pollution, eroding riverbanks, and urban development. Efforts to improve the Tannery Creek will help ensure it remains a vital resource for wildlife viewing and cold water fishing.

OBJECTIVES

1. Consider feasibility of acquiring property at the end of Rice Street behind D&W Market to develop a park that would provide waterfront access to both Little Traverse Bay and Tannery Creek as well as provide trailhead amenities for Wheelway Trail-users.
2. Identify and reach out to the property owner(s) of parcels located behind D&W Market adjacent to Little Traverse Bay to discuss intentions for future development.
3. Continue to support improvement of basic amenities on-site that could include improved parking, restrooms, bike racks, drinking fountains, and waste receptacles. Coordinate future grants with the County and State.
4. Provide universal access to the Little Traverse Bay, Tannery Creek, the Wheelway, and restrooms.
5. Consider ecological sensitivity of the Tannery Creek and protect water quality and native wildlife species by applying stormwater best-management practices and Low-Impact Development standards when improving the site.
6. Work with local NGO's such as the Little Traverse Conservancy, trail advocacy groups including the Top of Michigan Trails Council, and MDNR.



BEAR CREEK TOWNSHIP AERIAL VIEW
SOURCE: EMMET COUNTY

Goal #4: Provide recreation facilities and amenities that encourage recreation access for a wide range of user groups.

As a vacation destination in Northern Michigan, there is a strong demand for a variety of recreation amenities. The demand is driven by people both young and older, of all ability levels, and racial backgrounds. This plan identifies opportunities at each park facility to improve the variety of recreation amenities and the accessibility of each park. These improvements will continue to encourage an active lifestyle for residents and visitors alike. An active lifestyle can be supported by providing active or passive recreational programming at recreation facilities.

Currently, the Township does not offer any active or passive recreational programming. User groups may seek authorization on a case-by-case basis to conduct organized games, practices, or events at Township facilities. The Township does however financially support programs offered by the City of Petoskey. The Township also has non-profit organizations that may wish to conduct activities. The Township is very interested in supporting user-defined programming needs for all ages.

OBJECTIVES

1. Work with non-profits, active sports organizations, and other recreation-based groups to promote and encourage their activities wherever possible in order to broaden programming availability and diversity in the Township.
2. Develop site master plans to determine the best possible uses and recreational opportunities at the Atkins Preserve Property, Click Road Property, and River Road Property.
3. Provide accessible recreation facilities wherever possible and is financially feasible.
4. Purchase additional property on an as-needed basis that would support existing recreational facilities and create new recreational opportunities.
 - i. Consider feasibility of acquiring small portion of the Platte Property as it becomes available (formerly Czerkie Property) that connects and extends land on the River Road Property directly adjacent to the Bear River.
5. Support the creation of a Bear River Water Trail and work with neighboring governmental jurisdictions to develop and implement a water trail.

Goal #5: Inform, educate, and encourage residents about parks and recreation opportunities in the Township.

As the Township continues to expand recreational capacity by improving existing sites, building new facilities, and implementing an operating and maintenance plan increasing the level of awareness about the types of facilities and resources available will be highly important.

OBJECTIVES

1. Utilize on-site messaging boards, the Township website, and social media to inform Township residents of ongoing recreation projects and programs.
2. Provide adequate signage to identify recreation facilities and promote educational opportunities throughout the parks.
3. Include parks and recreation information and updates in regular Township mailings throughout the year.
4. Perform an annual survey and regular engagement activities to encourage broader input from Township residents.
5. Maintain partnerships with surrounding communities that provide services and programs not currently offered in the Township.
6. Share reliable, up-to-date information about the conditions of the parks including potential hazardous conditions on land and water trails.

ACTION PROGRAM

RECREATIONAL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS SCHEDULE 2021-2025

In addition to current conditions, the Recreation Inventory provides a discussion of site-specific recommendations and future improvements. Subsequently, input was gathered from the community survey, 30-day Public Comment period, and Township staff to create and prioritize the Goals and Objectives. The following table organizes the specific projects over the next five years by recreation area, estimated year of implementation, estimated cost, and funding sources.

Park Name	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Atkins Preserve	Site Master Planning	Trail Clearing, Scenic viewing platforms	To Be Determined ¹			Planning - \$8,000 Site Development – \$50,000	Annual Twp. Budget, Recreation Passport, Volunteer Service
Click Road Greenspace	Site Development Conceptual Drawings	Dog Park, Restrooms, Parking, Canoe/Kayak Launch				\$450,000	City of Petoskey, Resort Township, Emmet County, Local Dog Group, General Fund, LWCF
Jones Landing Park	Shower Tower		Boat Wash	Playground and Beach Accessibility Improvements		\$220,000	MDNR LWCF, Local Grants, Annual Twp. Budget
River Road Greenspace			Site Master Planning	Wilderness Camping Development	To Be Determined	Planning - \$15,000 Site Development – \$300,000+	Annual Twp. Budget, Recreation Passport, MNRTF
Spring Lake Park		Restrooms Renovation	M-119 Road Crossing Improvement			\$175,000	TAP, RTF, General Fund
Other	Develop Parks Operating & Maintenance Plan	Develop Non-Motorized Transportation Plan	Trail and Sidewalk Improvements		Little Traverse Bay Property Acquisition	See Additional Comments Below	MNRTF, Safe Routes to School, TAP, General Fund

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

¹ To Be Determined refers to other projects that may be implemented as a result of the master planning effort for the given recreation area.

The Parks Operating & Maintenance Plan is scheduled to be developed in 2021. The estimated cost of writing the plan is \$4,000. At a minimum, the plan will identify the cost of personnel, required maintenance equipment, and the location and cost of facilities to store equipment. The estimated cost for personnel and capital maintenance equipment is \$200,000.

A Non-Motorized Transportation Plan is scheduled to be developed in 2022. The estimated cost of writing the plan is \$9,000. The NMTP will describe the current transportation network with an emphasis on non-motorized pathways. Additionally, the plan will identify gaps in the non-motorized transportation network, prioritize projects, and estimate costs for project implementation. The plan estimates improvements to the non-motorized transportation network will occur over multiple years and as funding for projects becomes available. Trail and sidewalk improvements are estimated to cost \$200,000+.

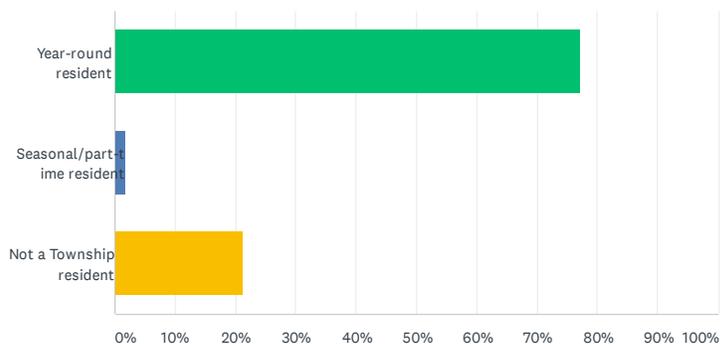
The acquisition of the vacant parcel situated behind the D&W Market at the Tannery Creek is estimated to be in 2025 or when it becomes available. The property acquisition would be primarily to allow public access to the Little Traverse Bay. Partnerships with local advocacy groups may result in additional efforts to improve the Tannery Creek ecosystem.

APPENDIX A

Bear Creek Township Parks & Recreation Plan

Q1 Please select the status of your residency in Bear Creek Township:

Answered: 57 Skipped: 2

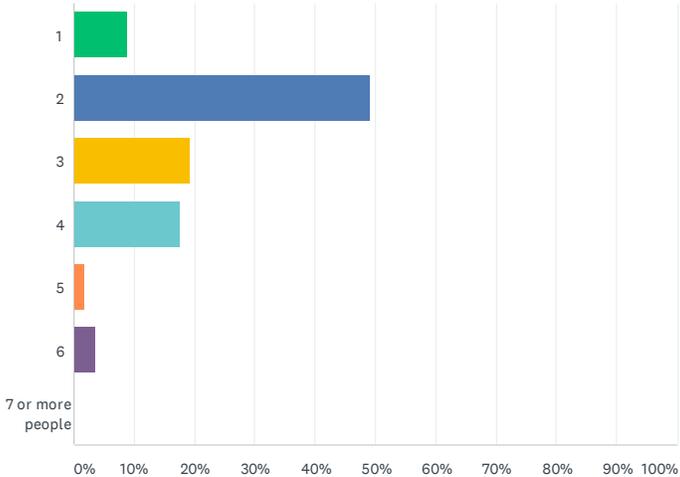


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Year-round resident	77.19%	44
Seasonal/part-time resident	1.75%	1
Not a Township resident	21.05%	12
TOTAL		57

#	IF NOT A TOWNSHIP RESIDENT, PLEASE SPECIFY YOUR COMMUNITY OF RESIDENCE.	DATE
1	City of Petoskey	7/29/2020 1:42 PM
2	Resort Township	7/23/2020 3:04 PM
3	Springvale Township	7/15/2020 4:17 PM
4	City of petoskey	7/14/2020 12:24 PM
5	Littlefield Township	7/14/2020 9:47 AM
6	City of Petoskey	7/13/2020 10:44 AM
7	Resort Township	7/13/2020 9:22 AM
8	Petoskey	7/10/2020 5:49 PM
9	Norwood Twp, Charlevoix County	7/8/2020 6:42 PM
10	harbor springs	7/8/2020 3:37 PM
11	Elmira/Boyne Falls	7/8/2020 3:34 PM
12	City of Petoskey	7/8/2020 3:18 PM

Q2 How many people reside in your household? (Choose one)

Answered: 57 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1	8.77%	5
2	49.12%	28
3	19.30%	11
4	17.54%	10
5	1.75%	1
6	3.51%	2
7 or more people	0.00%	0
TOTAL		57

Q3 What is the age range of persons in your household?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 3

Bear Creek Township Parks & Recreation Plan

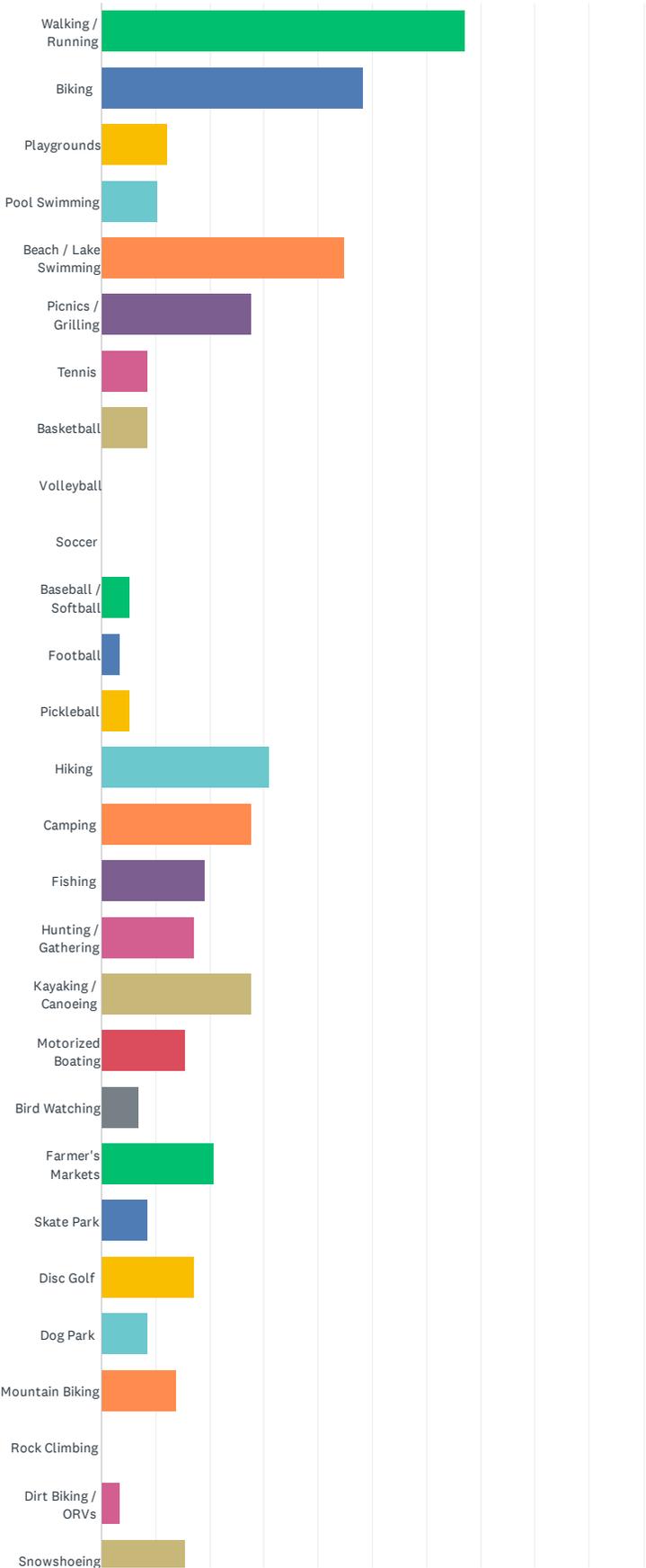
#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	19-63	7/30/2020 3:33 PM
2	8-44	7/30/2020 3:27 PM
3	7-56	7/30/2020 7:58 AM
4	18-57	7/29/2020 10:31 PM
5	33-35	7/29/2020 1:42 PM
6	67's	7/28/2020 9:20 PM
7	60	7/27/2020 10:02 PM
8	63 to 65	7/27/2020 8:48 PM
9	60-67	7/27/2020 8:28 PM
10	63-65	7/27/2020 8:25 PM
11	70	7/26/2020 9:35 PM
12	61-94	7/24/2020 9:21 AM
13	61 and 94	7/24/2020 9:17 AM
14	Over 70	7/23/2020 8:00 PM
15	Over 80.	7/23/2020 3:04 PM
16	14-51	7/23/2020 1:22 PM
17	68-69	7/23/2020 10:47 AM
18	49-50	7/23/2020 8:17 AM
19	11-47	7/23/2020 6:41 AM
20	71	7/22/2020 10:23 PM
21	5-42	7/22/2020 9:27 PM
22	49-59	7/22/2020 9:01 PM
23	54-54	7/22/2020 5:01 PM
24	28-60	7/22/2020 1:36 PM
25	18-52	7/22/2020 11:42 AM
26	11-55	7/22/2020 11:40 AM
27	18-52	7/22/2020 11:40 AM
28	16-45	7/22/2020 11:10 AM
29	72	7/22/2020 9:18 AM
30	17 - 56	7/21/2020 11:42 PM
31	70-72	7/21/2020 11:10 AM
32	70-80	7/21/2020 9:20 AM
33	59 to 97	7/21/2020 8:55 AM
34	63 and 64	7/20/2020 2:08 PM
35	21 to 50	7/15/2020 6:14 PM
36	66-70	7/15/2020 5:15 PM
37	15-55	7/15/2020 5:10 PM
38	33	7/15/2020 4:17 PM
39	60 - 65	7/15/2020 3:31 PM
40	18-50	7/15/2020 11:29 AM
41	60+	7/15/2020 10:27 AM
42	56-59	7/14/2020 12:24 PM
43	65-70	7/14/2020 9:47 AM
44	12-54	7/14/2020 9:20 AM
45	59-60	7/13/2020 4:17 PM
46	17-55	7/13/2020 1:42 PM
47	12-39	7/13/2020 10:44 AM
48	18-50	7/13/2020 9:22 AM
49	56	7/10/2020 5:49 PM
50	50-60	7/9/2020 7:21 AM
51	71	7/8/2020 6:42 PM
52	63	7/8/2020 3:37 PM
53	59	7/8/2020 3:34 PM
54	2-28	7/8/2020 3:30 PM

Bear Creek Township Parks & Recreation Plan

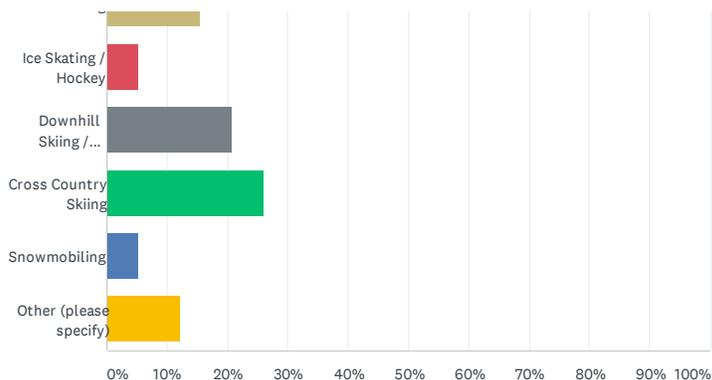
55	59	7/8/2020 3:18 PM
56	1-34	7/7/2020 3:42 PM

Q4 Select up to five outdoor activities you participate in most regularly.

Answered: 58 Skipped: 1



Bear Creek Township Parks & Recreation Plan



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Walking / Running	67.24%	39
Biking	48.28%	28
Playgrounds	12.07%	7
Pool Swimming	10.34%	6
Beach / Lake Swimming	44.83%	26
Picnics / Grilling	27.59%	16
Tennis	8.62%	5
Basketball	8.62%	5
Volleyball	0.00%	0
Soccer	0.00%	0
Baseball / Softball	5.17%	3
Football	3.45%	2
Pickleball	5.17%	3
Hiking	31.03%	18
Camping	27.59%	16
Fishing	18.97%	11
Hunting / Gathering	17.24%	10
Kayaking / Canoeing	27.59%	16
Motorized Boating	15.52%	9
Bird Watching	6.90%	4
Farmer's Markets	20.69%	12
Skate Park	8.62%	5
Disc Golf	17.24%	10
Dog Park	8.62%	5
Mountain Biking	13.79%	8
Rock Climbing	0.00%	0
Dirt Biking / ORVs	3.45%	2
Snowshoeing	15.52%	9
Ice Skating / Hockey	5.17%	3
Downhill Skiing / Snowboarding	20.69%	12
Cross Country Skiing	25.86%	15
Snowmobiling	5.17%	3
Other (please specify)	12.07%	7
Total Respondents: 58		

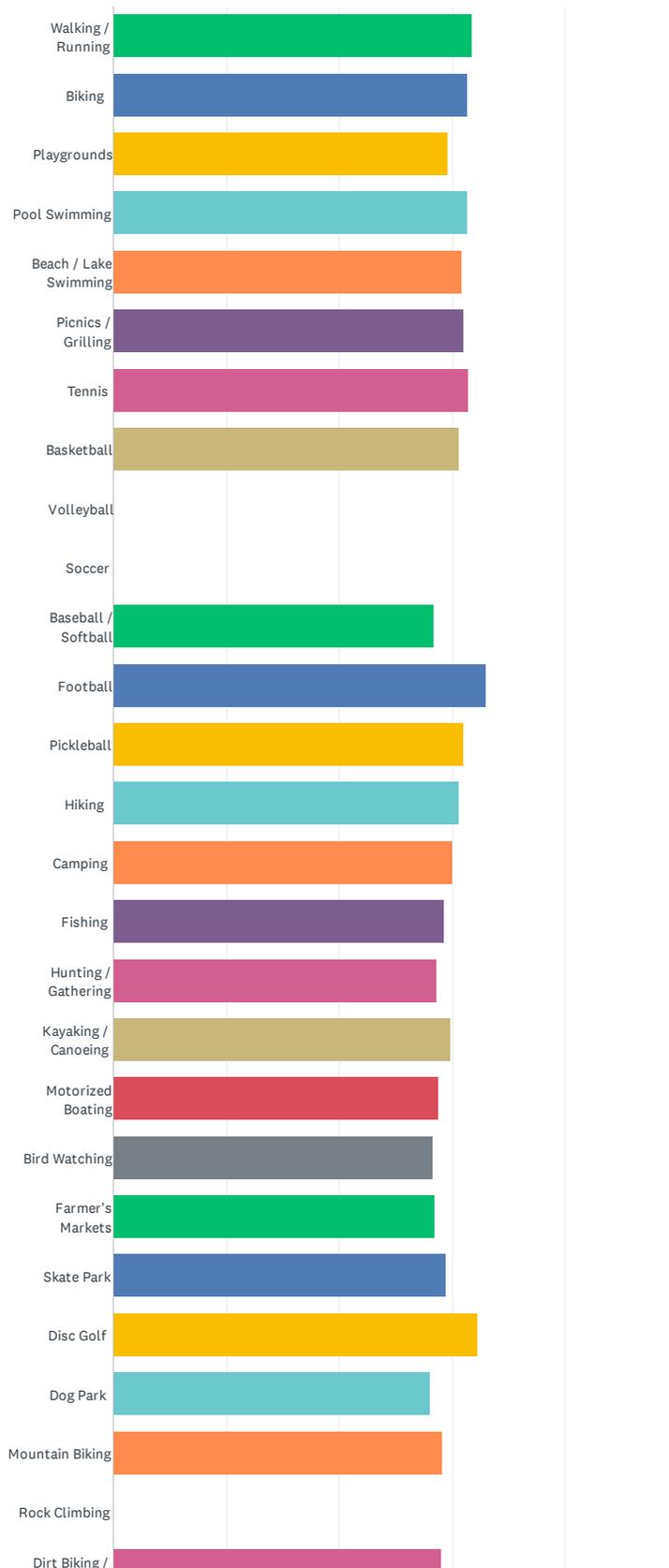
Bear Creek Township Parks & Recreation Plan

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Golf	7/23/2020 3:04 PM
2	golf	7/23/2020 10:47 AM
3	golf	7/22/2020 10:23 PM
4	Golf	7/22/2020 9:18 AM
5	gardening and home upkeep	7/21/2020 11:10 AM
6	Golf	7/17/2020 7:51 AM
7	Golf	7/8/2020 6:42 PM

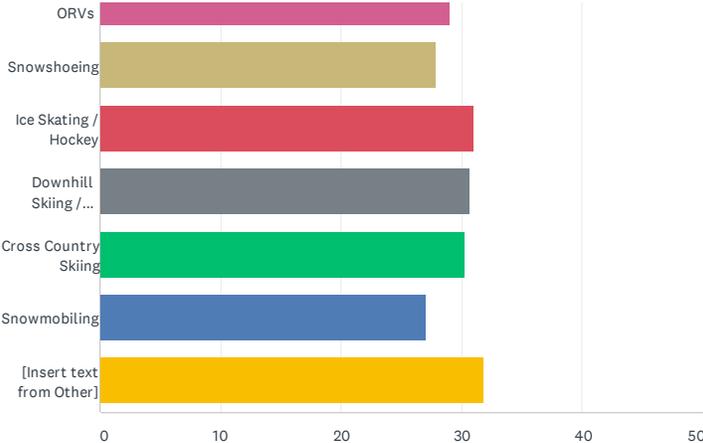
Bear Creek Township Parks & Recreation Plan

Q5 Rank your selected activities in order of how often you participate. Rank them 1 through 5; 1 is the activity you participate in the most often and 5 is the activity you participate in the least often.

Answered: 51 Skipped: 8



Bear Creek Township Parks & Recreation Plan

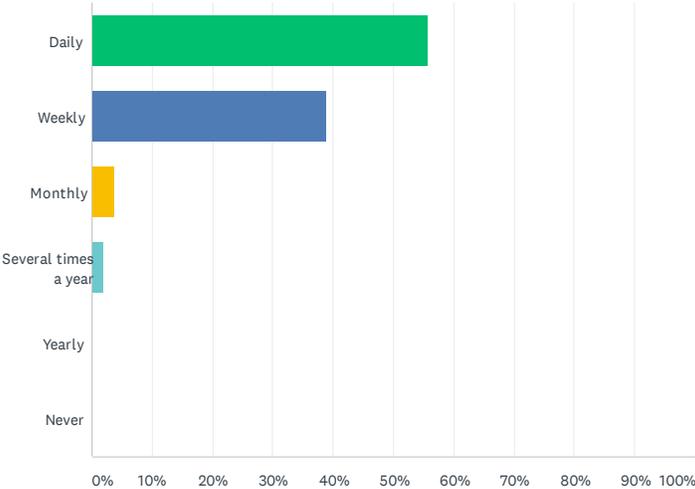


Bear Creek Township Parks & Recreation Plan

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Walking / Running	58.33% 21	11.11% 4	5.56% 2	8.33% 3	13.89% 5	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	2.78% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Biking	19.23% 5	34.62% 9	34.62% 9	0.00% 0	3.85% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	3.85% 1	3.85% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Playgrounds	20.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	40.00% 2	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	0.00% 0						
Pool Swimming	25.00% 1	0.00% 0	50.00% 2	25.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Beach / Lake Swimming	4.76% 1	33.33% 7	23.81% 5	23.81% 5	9.52% 2	4.76% 1	0.00% 0							
Picnics / Grilling	14.29% 2	14.29% 2	42.86% 6	14.29% 2	7.14% 1	7.14% 1	0.00% 0							
Tennis	0.00% 0	66.67% 2	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Basketball	25.00% 1	25.00% 1	0.00% 0	25.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	25.00% 1	0.00% 0						
Volleyball	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Soccer	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Baseball / Softball	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Football	100.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Pickleball	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	33.33% 1	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Hiking	11.76% 2	23.53% 4	23.53% 4	11.76% 2	17.65% 3	0.00% 0	11.76% 2	0.00% 0						
Camping	0.00% 0	14.29% 2	28.57% 4	14.29% 2	35.71% 5	7.14% 1	0.00% 0							
Fishing	11.11% 1	11.11% 1	0.00% 0	22.22% 2	33.33% 3	11.11% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	11.11% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Hunting / Gathering	14.29% 1	14.29% 1	14.29% 1	0.00% 0	14.29% 1	14.29% 1	0.00% 0	14.29% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	14.29% 1	0.00% 0
Kayaking / Canoeing	14.29% 2	7.14% 1	14.29% 2	21.43% 3	21.43% 3	7.14% 1	7.14% 1	0.00% 0	7.14% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Motorized Boating	0.00% 0	11.11% 1	22.22% 2	22.22% 2	11.11% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	11.11% 1	22.22% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Bird Watching	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	25.00% 1	50.00% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	25.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Farmer's Markets	0.00% 0	9.09% 1	9.09% 1	36.36% 4	9.09% 1	0.00% 0	9.09% 1	9.09% 1	0.00% 0	18.18% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Skate Park	20.00% 1	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	40.00% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Disc Golf	44.44% 4	33.33% 3	22.22% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Dog Park	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	25.00% 1	25.00% 1	0.00% 0	25.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	25.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Mountain Biking	25.00% 2	0.00% 0	12.50% 1	12.50% 1	25.00% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	12.50% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	12.50% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Rock Climbing	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Dirt Biking / ORVs	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 2	0.00% 0								
Snowshoeing	0.00% 0	22.22% 2	11.11% 1	11.11% 1	11.11% 1	11.11% 1	11.11% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	11.11% 1	11.11% 1
Ice Skating / Hockey	0.00% 0	66.67% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	0.00% 0								
Downhill Skiing / Snowboarding	20.00% 2	20.00% 2	0.00% 0	30.00% 3	30.00% 3	0.00% 0								
Cross Country Skiing	6.67% 1	13.33% 2	26.67% 4	26.67% 4	6.67% 1	13.33% 2	6.67% 1	0.00% 0						
Snowmobiling	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	0.00% 0	33.33% 1						
[Insert text from Other]	25.00% 1	50.00% 2	0.00% 0	25.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0

Q6 How often do you participate in your preferred recreation activity?
(Choose one)

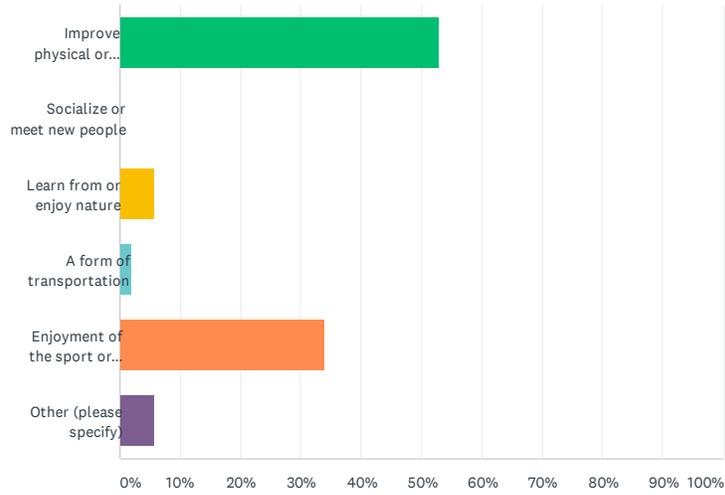
Answered: 54 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Daily	55.56%	30
Weekly	38.89%	21
Monthly	3.70%	2
Several times a year	1.85%	1
Yearly	0.00%	0
Never	0.00%	0
TOTAL		54

Q7 What is the primary purpose for participating in your preferred recreation activity? (Choose one)

Answered: 53 Skipped: 6

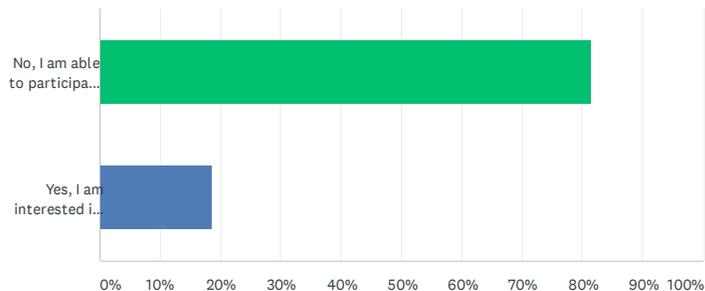


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Improve physical or mental health	52.83% 28
Socialize or meet new people	0.00% 0
Learn from or enjoy nature	5.66% 3
A form of transportation	1.89% 1
Enjoyment of the sport or activity	33.96% 18
Other (please specify)	5.66% 3
TOTAL	53

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Food and Entertainment and Relaxation	7/23/2020 8:02 PM
2	enough for our age	7/21/2020 11:11 AM
3	Family activity	7/15/2020 5:14 PM

Q8 Are there barriers limiting your ability to participate in your preferred activities or other desired recreation activities?

Answered: 54 Skipped: 5

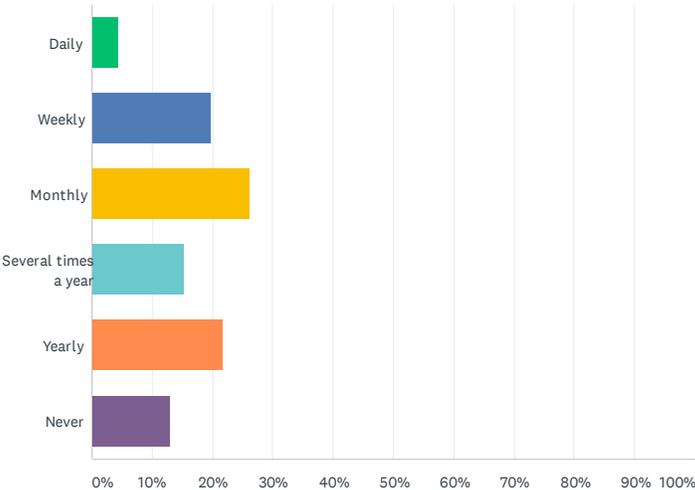


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
No, I am able to participate in all of the activities I am interested in.	81.48% 44
Yes, I am interested in other recreation activities, but unable to participate in them. Please explain those barriers.	18.52% 10
TOTAL	54

#	YES, I AM INTERESTED IN OTHER RECREATION ACTIVITIES, BUT UNABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THEM. PLEASE EXPLAIN THOSE BARRIERS.	DATE
1	We are staying away from crowded areas and group activities due to COVID.	7/30/2020 3:28 PM
2	Roads are getting busier and less safe to ride or run on	7/30/2020 8:00 AM
3	caregiver	7/24/2020 9:23 AM
4	caregiver	7/24/2020 9:18 AM
5	It would be nice to have access to a beach on Little Traverse Bay other than the State Park. Although the beach at the state park is beautiful the water becomes a collection spot for garbage from the bay. It would be nice to have a public beach away from the East end of the Bay. I am not sure if the township owns any property along the shore or if it is financially feasible but that would be a nice addition similar to the Park on Walloon lake that the township developed a few years ago	7/23/2020 6:51 AM
6	Disc golf in petoskey is very limited by the course we have, which is very unforgiving for players who are starting out, as well as players have have experience .	7/22/2020 11:51 AM
7	The skatepark needs dire improvement, and since our skatepark is so inadequate I have to resort to skating downtown which is frowned upon by the old crazy people of petoskey.	7/22/2020 11:44 AM
8	age	7/21/2020 11:11 AM
9	Too far to drive to get to available facilities that are available during school hours	7/15/2020 5:14 PM
10	Our current barrier is COVID	7/13/2020 1:44 PM

Q9 How often do you visit Bear Creek Township recreation areas (Atkins Preserve, Click Road greenspace, Jones Landing Park, River Road greenspace, and Spring Lake Park)?

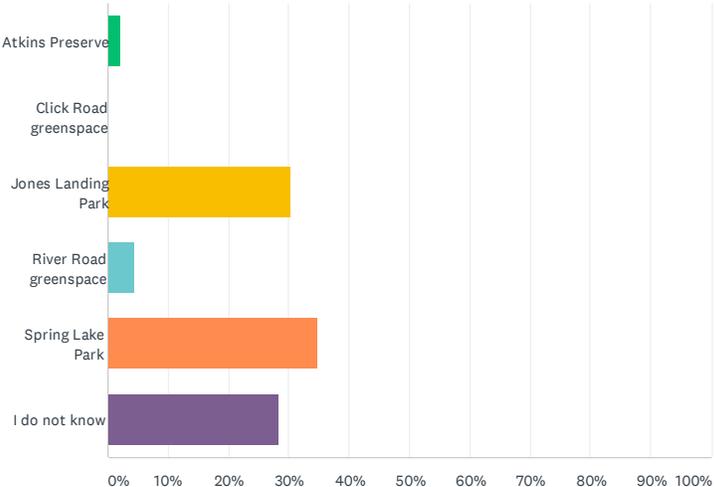
Answered: 46 Skipped: 13



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Daily	4.35%	2
Weekly	19.57%	9
Monthly	26.09%	12
Several times a year	15.22%	7
Yearly	21.74%	10
Never	13.04%	6
TOTAL		46

Q10 What is your preferred Bear Creek Township recreation area?

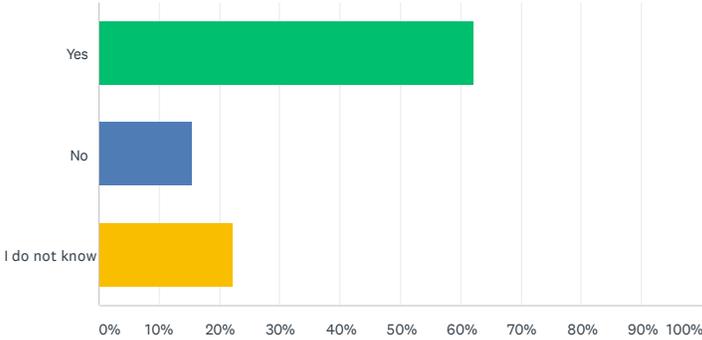
Answered: 46 Skipped: 13



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Atkins Preserve	2.17%	1
Click Road greenspace	0.00%	0
Jones Landing Park	30.43%	14
River Road greenspace	4.35%	2
Spring Lake Park	34.78%	16
I do not know	28.26%	13
TOTAL		46

Q11 Do the amenities offered in Bear Creek Township parks meet your recreation needs?

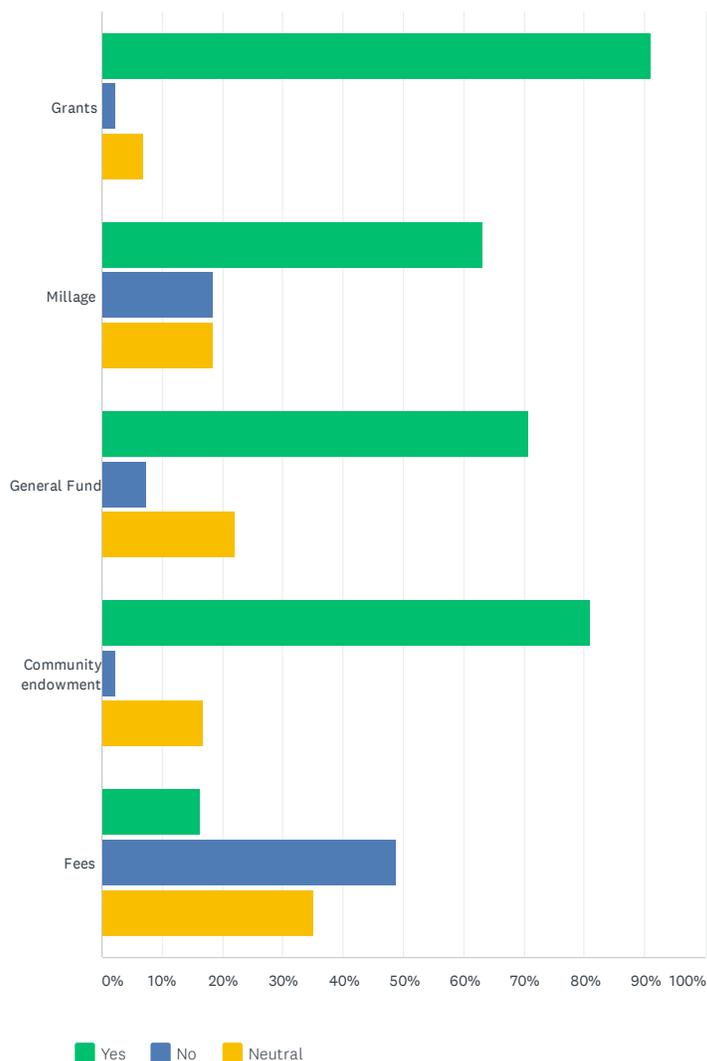
Answered: 45 Skipped: 14



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	62.22%	28
No	15.56%	7
I do not know	22.22%	10
TOTAL		45

Q12 What types of funding would you support for recreation improvements or activities?

Answered: 44 Skipped: 15



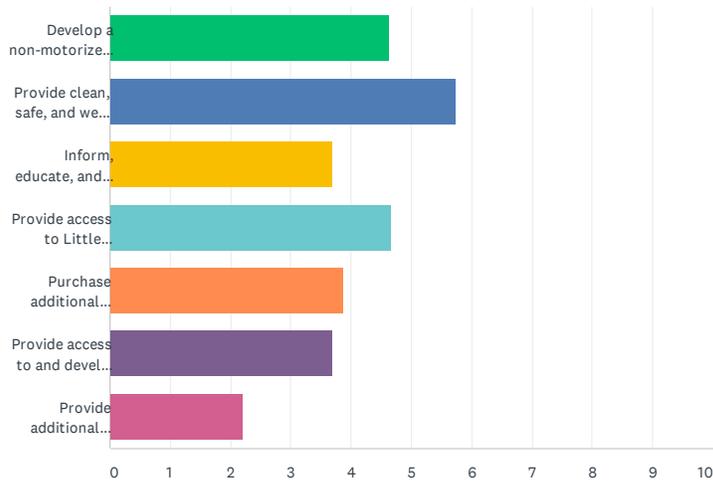
	YES	NO	NEUTRAL	TOTAL
Grants	90.91% 40	2.27% 1	6.82% 3	44
Millage	63.16% 24	18.42% 7	18.42% 7	38
General Fund	70.73% 29	7.32% 3	21.95% 9	41
Community endowment	80.95% 34	2.38% 1	16.67% 7	42
Fees	16.22% 6	48.65% 18	35.14% 13	37

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Fundraisers	7/15/2020 5:24 PM

Bear Creek Township Parks & Recreation Plan

Q13 Prioritize the following goals for parks and recreation in Bear Creek Township in order of importance (1 through 7). 1 is the highest priority and 7 is the lowest priority.

Answered: 43 Skipped: 16



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	TOTAL	SCORE
Develop a non-motorized transportation plan that would support future transportation improvements.	26.19% 11	23.81% 10	4.76% 2	9.52% 4	14.29% 6	9.52% 4	11.90% 5	42	4.62
Provide clean, safe, and well maintained recreational opportunities at Township facilities.	43.90% 18	26.83% 11	12.20% 5	4.88% 2	2.44% 1	7.32% 3	2.44% 1	41	5.73
Inform, educate, and encourage Township residents of ongoing recreation projects and programs, educate them of all the recreational benefits, and encourage broader input from Township residents.	7.32% 3	12.20% 5	17.07% 7	19.51% 8	14.63% 6	7.32% 3	21.95% 9	41	3.68
Provide access to Little Traverse Bay along Tannery Creek.	11.90% 5	21.43% 9	30.95% 13	11.90% 5	9.52% 4	9.52% 4	4.76% 2	42	4.67
Purchase additional property on an as-needed basis that would support existing recreational facilities.	2.44% 1	7.32% 3	24.39% 10	26.83% 11	24.39% 10	9.76% 4	4.88% 2	41	3.88
Provide access to and develop passive recreational opportunities at the River Road Property.	7.32% 3	12.20% 5	7.32% 3	21.95% 9	17.07% 7	34.15% 14	0.00% 0	41	3.68
Provide additional recreational opportunities at Jones Landing Park.	4.88% 2	0.00% 0	4.88% 2	4.88% 2	17.07% 7	21.95% 9	46.34% 19	41	2.20

Bear Creek Township Parks & Recreation Plan

Q14 What types of recreation amenities, facilities, or programs would you like to see improved or added to Bear Creek Township recreation areas?

Answered: 23 Skipped: 36

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	More connection to the North Country trail	7/30/2020 3:55 PM
2	Make it easier to bike through the township	7/30/2020 8:06 AM
3	Disc golf. Summer camp.	7/29/2020 10:41 PM
4	Grilling area at our parks	7/28/2020 9:25 PM
5	more bike trails separate from the road.	7/27/2020 8:31 PM
6	Better play grounds	7/27/2020 8:31 PM
7	Camping	7/26/2020 9:42 PM
8	none I think we have a lot to offer	7/24/2020 9:28 AM
9	The Township is doing a great job. Keep it up!	7/23/2020 3:17 PM
10	Nothing at this time.	7/23/2020 8:21 AM
11	Rotating weekly event throughout the summer At the various parks, where the community and guests can learn about the park, take a guided tour and enjoy the activities provided at the park	7/23/2020 7:00 AM
12	Sidewalks wherever possible.	7/22/2020 5:06 PM
13	A new disc golf course would be great to have. The one at river road is incredibly difficult, not very well maintained, and confusing to navigate and it's very easy to lose discs in the thick bushes and trees.	7/22/2020 11:47 AM
14	I would really like to see a new disc golf course added to bear creek township recreation areas. The disc golf course at river road sports complex is extremely unfriendly to beginner and intermediate players, which forces them to go elsewhere such as Harbor Springs or Charlevoix to play. Along with that, it is a fast growing sport which means that a new disc golf course will get plenty of use and foot traffic by increasing amounts of people.	7/22/2020 11:30 AM
15	We need a quality, playable disc golf course near Petoskey. River Road is almost unplayable. Kiwanis Park is almost always full. We could support another course.	7/21/2020 11:49 PM
16	Walking trails	7/21/2020 9:24 AM
17	Basketball or tennis. Access to the lakeshore.	7/15/2020 5:24 PM
18	Easier access points on Bear River for kayaks/canoes.	7/15/2020 11:32 AM
19	Dog park	7/14/2020 12:28 PM
20	Indoor pool facility	7/13/2020 4:23 PM
21	Reroute the North Country National Scenic Trail off Cedar Valley/Shanley/Brubaker	7/8/2020 9:37 PM
22	Boat Launch	7/8/2020 4:05 PM
23	walk/bike trails	7/8/2020 3:21 PM

Bear Creek Township Parks & Recreation Plan

Q15 What is your big idea for Bear Creek Township parks and recreation?

Answered: 25 Skipped: 34

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Develop a better disc golf course and an Ultimate Frisbee field. Start an Ultimate Frisbee league for kids and adults.	7/30/2020 3:55 PM
2	Creating community connectivity through trails.	7/30/2020 3:30 PM
3	Bike trail out river road to connect existing trails to Boyne Falls /Boyne City without being on busy roads	7/30/2020 8:06 AM
4	Disc golf course.	7/29/2020 10:41 PM
5	N/A	7/28/2020 9:25 PM
6	Access to little traverse bay	7/27/2020 8:55 PM
7	tubing center on the Bear River	7/27/2020 8:31 PM
8	Bear River Access.	7/26/2020 9:42 PM
9	have none	7/24/2020 9:28 AM
10	As available, continue shoreline and river bank recreation/ environmental property acquisitions, and if feasible, an M-119 trail underpass (or as a second choice, trail bridge over M-119. Long term safety and convenience to trail users (wheel way, North Country Trail, Northwest State Trail, Iron Belle Trail, etc.	7/23/2020 3:17 PM
11	No big ideas at this time.	7/23/2020 8:21 AM
12	Maybe a walking path through the Tanton property.	7/22/2020 5:06 PM
13	Either revamp or establish a new discing course that's easier and more enjoyable to play.	7/22/2020 11:47 AM
14	We live in a beautiful place, and it could be topped off by having a disc golf course on par with those of our neighboring communities.	7/22/2020 11:30 AM
15	Disc Golf. If you build it they will come!	7/21/2020 11:49 PM
16	To provide connecting paved trails from Mitchell rd area to the existing bike path	7/20/2020 2:12 PM
17	Safe Access	7/15/2020 8:20 PM
18	Access for pedestrians & bicycles across US-31 near Tannery Creek to access the lakeshore without driving.	7/15/2020 5:24 PM
19	Connected trail system	7/15/2020 4:21 PM
20	Keep them clean, keep them open. Keep the rivers clean and able to be navigated.	7/15/2020 11:32 AM
21	Dog park!!	7/14/2020 12:28 PM
22	Improve safety by including sidewalks, bike paths and bike lanes for non-motorized transportation	7/13/2020 4:23 PM
23	Purchase ppty from Jack Flynn to enable 14.	7/8/2020 9:37 PM
24	Boat Launch by tannery creek into Lake Michigan with a beach and allow food trucks to set up in the parking lot that is there and sell to customers at the beach and on the bike path etc....	7/8/2020 4:05 PM
25	Help maintain & fund the bike trails through Bear Creek Township	7/8/2020 3:45 PM



APPENDIX B

Proof of Publication

**STATE OF MICHIGAN
COUNTY OF EMMET
COUNTY OF CHARLEVOIX**

**Bear Creek Township
373 Division Road
Petoskey, MI 49770**

**Bear Creek Township
Notice to the Public**

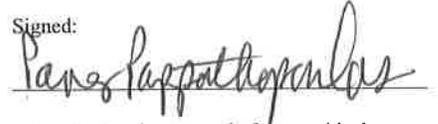
Parks & Recreation Plan
Public Review

The draft Parks & Recreation Plan for Bear Creek Township is available for public review and comment beginning September 1, 2020. A copy of the plan will be available online at bearcreektownship.com, or at the Township offices, located at 373 N. Division Rd., Petoskey. Please submit all comments to Networks Northwest at jennifer.neal@networksnorthwest.org or to the Township offices by October 2, 2020.

I, BEING DULY SWORN, DEPOSES AND SAYS THAT I am the Legal clerk of the Petoskey News Review, a newspaper printed and published in the Counties of Emmet and Charlevoix, in the State of Michigan, that the annexed printed notice was published in said newspaper on:

08/27/20

Signed:



Subscribed and sworn to before me this date:

12th
day of
February,
A.D.
2021

Signed:



NOTARY PUBLIC
State of Wisconsin
County of Brown

My commission expires

9/19/21

VICKY FELTY
Notary Public
State of Wisconsin

Proof of Publication

**STATE OF MICHIGAN
COUNTY OF EMMET
COUNTY OF CHARLEVOIX**

Bear Creek Township
373 Division Road
Petoskey, MI 49770

I, BEING DULY SWORN, DEPOSES AND SAYS THAT I am the Legal clerk of the Petoskey News Review, a newspaper printed and published in the Counties of Emmet and Charlevoix, in the State of Michigan, that the annexed printed notice was published in said newspaper on:

09/18/20

Signed:

Pang Pappathopoulos

Subscribed and sworn to before me this date:

12th
day of
February,
A.D.
2021

Signed:

Vicky Felty

NOTARY PUBLIC
State of Wisconsin
County of Brown

My commission expires

9-19-21

VICKY FELTY
Notary Public
State of Wisconsin

**Notice to the Public: Bear Creek Township
Parks & Recreation Plan Public Hearing**

October 5, 2020, 6:00 p.m.

Bear Creek Township Hall
373 N. Division Rd.
Petoskey, MI 49770

Notice is hereby given that the Bear Creek Township Parks and Recreation Committee has scheduled a public hearing for the Bear Creek Township Parks & Recreation Plan for on October 5, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. at the Bear Creek Township Hall, 373 N. Division Rd., Petoskey, MI 49770.

The purpose of the hearing is to take public comment on the parks & recreation plan for 2021-2025.
A copy of the plan is available for review online at <https://bearcreektownship.com/>

Bear Creek Township Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting

Monday, October 5, 2020

Bear Creek Township Hall

- I. Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m.
- II. Roll call
 - a. Members present: Joe Villemure, Dan Goldsmith, Jerry Bush, Don Nowland, Matt Koontz, Dave Farris, Doug Kendziorski
 - b. Special Guest: Jennifer Neal(Networks Northwest), Dennis Keiser(Township Supervisor), Emma Kendziorski(Township Clerk)
- III. Dan Goldsmith made a motion to accept the 8/24/20 Parks and Recreation meeting minutes. 2nd by Jerry Bush. Passed unanimously.
- IV. Emma Kendziorski will be adjusting the start time posted on the township website to 6 pm for the Parks and Recreation meetings.
- V. Doug Kendziorski made a motion to open the public hearing for the 5 year Park and Recreation Plan at 6:05. 2nd by Jerry Bush. Passed unanimously.
- VI. Dennis Keiser shared with the committee three comments received from the public. Jennifer Neal shared with the committee comments from Paige Perry(MDNR), Marry Campbell(NCTA), Kerry Wawsck(NCTA), and Becca Nelson.
- VII. Dave Farris made a motion to close the public hearing at 6:10. 2nd by Jerry Bush. Passed unanimously.
- VIII. Jennifer went through the small changes she made to the 5 year Parks and Recreation Plan per the email she sent to all committee members, as well as making a couple of minor grammatical changes to the plan. Dennis Keiser questioned if we have permission to use all pictures in the 5 year plan. Jennifer gave full permission to use all of the photos she put in the 5 year plan and will be getting permission from the two pictures she included in the plan that she did not take personally. Jennifer will be taking out the language regarding the potential fire station at the Click Road property. Per Jennifer, Emily Meyerson wanted to know more about the access to the River Road property and if we have a primary access. Currently we use the City of Petoskey access. We have a secondary access, and until a feasibility study is done for the property's best use, it is not necessary to pursue getting a primary access, especially considering we don't know where the best location will be for a primary access at this time.
- IX. Dan Goldsmith made a motion that we send the resolution to the township board to accept the 5 year Park and Recreation Plan. Jerry Bush 2nd the motion. Joe Villemure took a roll call vote on the resolution. Every member on the committee vote in favor. Doug Kendziorski signed the resolution and gave to Emma Kendziorski.
- X. Joe Villemure let the committee know we will be discussing the Bear River Water Trail at the next scheduled meeting.
- XI. Per Dennis Keiser the shower tower installation is well under way at Jones Landing. We will be keeping the parks open while the weather permits. One of the Jones Landing dock posts is in need of replacement. This will be addressed in the spring.
- XII. Matt Koontz made a motion we accept the 2021-2025 Parks and Recreation Plan as drafted with the noted changes that will be made. 2nd by Jerry Bush. Passed unanimously.
- XIII. Dennis Keiser thanked Jennifer Neal of Networks Northwest for assisting us in getting this 5 year plan completed.
- XIV. ~~Don~~ Don Nowland moved to adjourn the meeting. 2nd by Jerry Bush. Passed unanimously.

Douglas J. Kendziorski

Bear Creek Township Board Meeting October 7, 2020

- I. Called to order at 7:00 p.m.
- II. **Roll Call**
 - a. Golding, Hoffman, Nowland, Keiser, Kendziorski
 - b. Others Present: Al Welsheimer, Tom Urman, Chris Powell
- III. **Pledge of Allegiance**
- IV. **Approval of Minutes**
 - a. Minutes from four meetings: Regular BCT Board Meeting on September 2, 2020, Closed Session on September 2, 2020, Election Commission Meeting on October 5, 2020 and Election Commission Meeting on October 7, 2020.
 - i. **Motion** by Hoffman to approve the minutes as presented, 2nd by Nowland. **Unanimous**
- V. **Request from the Floor/Discussion**
- VI. **Approval of the Agenda**
 - a. Keiser asked that we discuss the US-31 Service Rd first, as Chris Powell from OHM is present.
- VII. **New Business- US-31 Service Rd**
 - a. Chris Powell from OHM is the project manager for this feasibility study of the US-31 corridor. He explained that when the project was started, this discussion revolved around a service road which would run behind the businesses on US-31. Powell noted that the main goal of the study was to address the traffic and capacity issues at the intersection of M-119 and US-31. However, when the traffic engineers looked at this, they determined that a service drive would not fix the issues. It appears a service road would be very expensive due to the wetlands and it may not be used that heavily. Unless you closed off many access points to the highway from the businesses, there is no real way to force traffic to use the service road. The other potential issue with a service road is that you would need right of way from 9-10 properties. This may take a long time to acquire, and in the meantime the traffic is only going to grow worse. In summary, the service road behind the businesses on US-31 would be a large expense with no guarantee that it would work. Powell then share two options going forward that have a much greater chance of success. The first concept would be to use boulevards and a series of Michigan lefts along US-31. The second concept would be to have a series of three roundabouts, the first at the D&W light, the second in front of what used to be the bank property, and the third at US-31 and M-119. Powell did note that we could combine these two ideas and have a roundabout on either end with a Michigan left in the middle. It is important to note that in either of these concepts, we will have to acquire some property. Both concepts are feasible and would provide a much better solution than the service road.
 - b. Keiser explained that MDOT has proposed a roundabout at US-31 and M-119 before. He feels that the roundabout concept is a better solution than the service road, and it is a project we could accomplish in 3-5 years. If we were to attempt the service road, it would be a project that could sit for many years, plus you may just end up moving the congestion. Keiser asked what kind of property acquisition would have to happen to achieve the roundabouts.
 - c. Powell noted that in both scenarios, property acquisition will have to take place. The Michigan left/boulevard concept would need more property than the roundabouts. Powell suggested that the M-119 and US-31 roundabout would need a double lane, and we would probably need to acquire some property from the empty lot on the corner as well as the old La Seniorita lot. For the middle, we may need some of the old bank lot. By D&W, we would need the greenspace area as well as the lot with the small triangular building. It was noted that all of these properties are vacant at this time. Powell explained that MDOT would acquire the right of way and they could also replace the culvert that floods if we were to take on this project. This would be full reconstruction.
 - i. Keiser noted that this would be a good time to address the storm drainage there.
 - d. Hoffman asked if this needs to go to MDOT.
 - i. Powell explained that MDOT will have to be involved and to buy in at some point. They would fund some of this project but there would have to be contribution at a local level.
 - e. Keiser asked about the traffic numbers.
 - i. Powell noted that he has looked at them but not analyzed them yet. He noted that the two-way average for that corridor is 27,000 per day, peaking in August at 38000 per day.
 - f. Urman asked Powell to compare the boulevard and roundabout concepts.
 - i. Powell noted that the Michigan left/boulevard concept would be a little bit tighter than what you typically want with truck traffic, so from a functionality standpoint, he would lean towards the roundabout concept.
 - g. Welsheimer noted that Division Rd would have to be taken into account with this project, so that it wouldn't create a bottleneck.
 - h. Keiser noted that with roundabouts, traffic would be constantly moving.
 - i. Kendziorski asked if we should have a joint meeting with the Planning Commission.
 - i. Keiser will present this to the Planning Commission at the end of this month.
 - j. Hoffman asked about funding. He agrees that the service drive would be too expensive and too wet.
 - i. Powell explained that funding would come from MDOT, the Road Commission and the Township.
 - k. Keiser asked about Pickerel Lake Rd.

- i. Powell noted that this is a difficult intersection to correct due to elevation issues. He is leaning towards a roundabout there as well. However, he noted with the skew of the road, even that will present a challenge.
- l. Keiser noted that Brian Gutowski from the Road Commission has seen the two concepts and is in favor of the roundabouts.

VIII. Unfinished Business

a. Howard Rd- Sewer Extension

- i. Keiser noted that he hasn't done a final walkthrough yet, but has noticed a little bump near the bottom of the hill. Consumer's Energy is supposed to replace the power pole in October, but the road commission will not be able to complete their work, as it is too late in the season. If they open up the side of the bank without being able to replant grass, we will have washouts in the spring.

b. Roads

- i. Keiser reported that Country Club Rd has been postponed until spring. The contractor has agreed to honor this year's price and has said that it will be done by Memorial Day. Keiser shared a proposal from J. ~~Ranck~~ Ranck to upgrade the light at Division and Mitchell Rd. He explained that this needs to be a five-way signal and the light needs to be retimed. We would split the cost of the project with the road commission for this improvement. The total cost for this project would be \$9,310.00.
- ii. Kendziorski noted that it would be a good upgrade, but just a temporary solution, as we really need a larger intersection there.
 - 1. Keiser agrees, but because that would be such a large fix, at least this is a step in the right direction.
- iii. **Motion** by Hoffman to pay J. ~~Ranck~~ Ranck to replace the traffic light at Division and Mitchell and to split the cost with the road commission. 2nd by Kendziorski. **Passed**
- iv. Keiser explained that there was a request for a speed study at Boyer Rd. The average speed was 49MPH. We could reset the speed here to 45MPH. He will forward this onto the state police.
- v. Nowland asked if Country Club Rd was repaired from the damage done by the contractor.
 - 1. Keiser is working on that.

c. Library Report- Report by Golding

- i. Golding noted that Val Meyerson was supposed to be present. She explained that the library meeting went as usual and there is nothing new to report.

d. Spring Lake Park

- i. Keiser is hoping we can keep the park open through October, but will shut down the park when weather gets bad. He explained that Spring Lake Park has been empty because of the road construction.

e. Jones Landing Park

- i. Keiser is hoping we can keep the park open through October, but will shut down the park when weather gets bad. We will close both parks at the same time. He noted that we will pull the dock at the end of October. However, he did notice that a few boards need to be replaced on the dock, so this can be done next spring before we put it in. The rail has been replaced from the accident last winter and the shower tower project has started.

f. Blight- Existing Cases

- i. Keiser has nothing new to report.

g. Division Road Access

- i. Keiser noted that the Road Commission hired Tom Sweenor to survey the road and look through old records.

IX. New Business

a. METRO Act Application

- i. Keiser explained that he received a request from ACD.net to run a fiber optic cable along Mitchell to Division, headed down Division to the highway, along the highway to M-119 and then on to Little Traverse Township. Originally, they asked for a bilateral permit, which would grant them up to 30 years. However, they sent a new application asking for a unilateral permit, which would grant them five years. Keiser explained two things that need to be updated to go along with this permit: 1) Manager needs to be changed to supervisor and 2) The maps need to be attached. Keiser noted that they have sent us a \$500 application fee and will be paying us along the way. Due to legislation, the township cannot deny this permit application.
- ii. Urman asked if this is for the school system and where the fiber is headed. He asked if we can force them to bury it.
 - 1. Keiser is not sure of the final destination, but it is running north. We cannot force them to bury it.
- iii. **Motion** by Hoffman to authorize the supervisor to sign the unilateral Right of Way Telecommunications Permit for ACD.net with the proposed changes of changing "manager" to "supervisor" and attaching the maps to the permit. 2nd by Golding. **Passed**

b. Private Road Appeal

- i. Keiser explained that this has been postponed until next month. The private road in question is Longman Lane. There needs to be some sort of turnaround there and we need a road maintenance agreement with the property owners.

c. City Recreation Agreement

- i. Keiser shared the city recreation agreement that we participate in every year for the city to run the recreation department. We budgeted \$40,000 for this this year. This is based upon residents of Bear Creek using the city recreation programs.
- ii. **Motion** by Kendziorski to approve the city recreation agreement and pay the City of Petoskey in the amount of \$37,194 for these services. 2nd by Nowland. **Passed**

d. Adopt Recreation Plan

- i. Keiser explained that the Parks and Recreation Committee passed a resolution on Monday night recommending approval of the five-year Parks and Recreation Plan. We will need to adopt it at a board level. He remarked that Jennifer Neal from Networks Northwest has done a great job. We also received helpful comments from a few individuals and organizations.
- ii. Hoffman noted that there needs to be a balance of more trails to the Bear River while also preserving the character of the river.
- iii. Keiser noted that the launch spot on Evergreen Trail was busier than ever this year. He had complaints from people parking on or near the road in order to launch. They need a pull off spot. He also noted that the Bear Rive Canoe Livery had a busy year.
- iv. **Resolution** by Nowland to pass the 2021-2025 Bear Creek Township Parks and Recreation Plan. 2nd by Hoffman.
 1. Roll Call: Golding, Nowland, Hoffman, Keiser, Kendziorski
 - a. Yes: Golding, Nowland, Hoffman, Keiser, Kendziorski **Passed**

X. Planning/Zoning Report- Report by Kendziorski

- a. Kendziorski reported on two cases this month. The first case heard by the Planning Commission this month was Zeke Budnik for a Special Use Permit at 2230 N US-31 Hwy. Budnik would like to have a small outdoor car display lot. The Planning Commission recommended approval of this case. The second case was Reg Whitcomb for a Site Plan Review at 1001 Lears Rd. Dare Development would like to add four duplexes (8 units) to this parcel. The Planning Commission recommended approval of this case. The Board accepted the Planning Report, and noted that the county has already seen these cases.
- b. Keiser noted that Bay Township is reviewing their Master Plan right now. He also remarked that there is a virtual Housing Summit on October 20-22. Manthei is still working on their potential development concept and will present it when it is ready. Krist Gas Station is no longer considering the corner of Division and Mitchell. Keiser also explained that Tammy Doernenburg does a lot of work for Bear Creek Township. She comes to almost every meeting and knows the ordinance better than we do. Keiser would like to give her a per diem for attending our meetings.
 - i. Nowland suggested that she receive \$60, same as the commissioners.
 - ii. Urman noted that she is a professional and could potentially receive up to \$100 per meeting.
 - iii. Hoffman suggested splitting the difference and giving her \$80 per meeting.
 - iv. Keiser explained that it is not just the cost of the meeting. We also call her multiple times a week as a reference. She is always willing to help Bear Creek Township. He also noted that Mike Reeves is okay with the township paying her a per diem.
 - v. **Motion** by Hoffman to pay the Emmet County Zoning Administrator an \$80 per diem for every regular and special Bear Creek Township Planning Commission meeting attended. This would be backdated to start in July of 2020. 2nd by Nowland. **Passed**
- c. Keiser explained that it was brought to our attention that Hearthside Grove no longer has mobile home park licensing. We will need to investigate this further.

XI. Fire Department Report- Report by Welsheimer

- a. Welsheimer reported 6 EMS calls and 19 fire calls. They finished up the 800 radio training, but most likely will not start using them until after January 1st, because the law enforcement radios are being programmed first. He noted that they did a tanker filling from a hydrant and engine drafting here at the township parking lot. There is a practice burn coming up next week on Thursday at 1068 Kolinski Rd.

XII. Parks and Recreation Report

- a. Given earlier in the meeting.

XIII. Correspondence

- a. Keiser explained that he went to a meeting for the local revenue sharing board. The casino receipts are down 54%, which means we may only get \$12,400 from them this year. The winter may not be much better. Keiser shared other correspondence, including an annual report from the Petoskey Harbor Community Foundation, a letter from MML, a notice from Truestream, a letter from the Walloon Lake Association, and a notice from Great Lakes Energy that we have a new account representative. Keiser also noted that we are now under orders from the health department, rather than the governor's executive orders.

XIV. Clerk's Business/Bills- Report by Kendziorski

- a. Kendziorski reported bills in the amount of \$135,441.63.
 - i. **Motion** by Kendziorski to pay the bills in the amount of \$135,441.63. 2nd by Hoffman. **Passed**

- b. Kendziorski explained that we have sent nearly 2600 ballots for the November election, which amounts to about 46% of our voters. We have about 1000 ballots back at this point. She remarked that we are considering the possibility of security cameras, especially with the new dropbox that we have put in place. With the political climate now, it would be nice to have the extra safeguard. She also noted that if we were to put them outside, it would be a good time to the rest of the building. Jeff Haven from Common Angle is getting a quote for security cameras. Kendziorski will update the board when she finds out more. She also explained the legislative updates including Bill 757, which was signed into law by the governor on Tuesday, as well explained the postmark date situation with absentee ballots.

XV. **Treasurer's Report- Report by Golding**

- a. The Treasurer's Report shows a balance of \$7,061,319.41 as of 9/30/20. She explained that our CDs are not going to make as much as they did last year.

XVI. **Building Department Report- Report by Golding**

- a. Golding noted that the building department is going to be down about \$50,000 this year.

XVII. **Sewer Business/Bills**

- a. Keiser explained that we have been trying to close the authority for a long time. The bonds have been paid off and Sally is leaving. This would be a new set of books for someone to learn, as well as an additional audit, so this is the perfect time to close this. Keiser noted that what is owned by Springvale Twp will go to them, and what is owned by Bear Creek Township will come to us. All easements and deeded property that Bear Creek owns, we will get, along with all of the money in the accounts (which amounts to about \$550,000). The township has put that money there, so it is only fitting that we are the ones to receive it back. Keiser noted that this will save the township about \$20,000 per year.

i. **Motion** by Nowland to authorize the supervisor and clerk to sign the dissolution agreement and other paperwork to dissolve the Springvale Bear Creek Sewer Authority. 2nd by Golding. **Passed**

- b. Keiser reported August sewer bills in the amount of \$322,474.11 and September sewer bills in the amount of \$139,524.80.

i. **Motion** by Keiser to pay the August sewer bills in the amount of \$322,474.11. 2nd by Kendziorski. **Passed**

ii. **Motion** by Keiser to pay the September sewer bills in the amount of \$139,524.80. 2nd by Kendziorski. **Passed**

- c. Keiser noted that Gosling Czubak will be present next month to discuss the sewer study. There has been some pushback regarding setting up a special assessment district for Maple Creek. The township has hired Mika Meyers to help with that.

XVIII. **Request from the Floor/Discussion:** None

XIX. **Closed Session- Discuss Property Purchase**

- a. **Motion** by Kendziorski to enter into closed session to discuss property purchase and to invite Al Welsheimer and Tom Urman to join. 2nd by Hoffman.

i. Roll Call: Golding, Nowland, Hoffman, Keiser, Kendziorski- **Yes** **Passed**

ii. Time: 8:49pm

- b. **Motion** by Hoffman to come out of closed session. 2nd by Kendziorski.

i. Roll Call: Nowland, Hoffman, Keiser, Kendziorski, Golding- **Yes** **Passed**

ii. Time: 9:00pm

XX. **Other Business:**

- a. **Motion** by Hoffman to authorize the township supervisor and clerk to sign the purchase agreement to purchase approximately 5 acres from Bill and Mary Foster (at \$6,000 per acre) on the corner of Click and River Rd. 2nd by Golding. **Passed**

XXI. **Adjournment:** 9:03p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Emma Kendziorski

Emma Kendziorski, Bear Creek Township Clerk