

Frequently Asked Questions

Why does Manistee County and each of the local municipalities need a 5-year park & recreation plan?

The Michigan DNR requires communities to have a 5-year park & recreation plan on file in order to apply for its funding opportunities. The Manistee County Minger Family Endowment Fund also guides its funding through adopted plans. Aside from funding acquisition, the planning process is also an opportunity to assess public desires for recreation in the area.

Why is recreation planning important?

Communities that effectively plan for their parks and recreation are more likely to feature public amenities that contribute to overall quality of life. Access to exceptional recreation leads to better health, a more robust local economy from tourism and greater social ties.

Will the planning meetings take place in person or online?

There will be two public meetings for each jurisdiction as part of this planning process. While we all want to reduce the potential spread of COVID-19 we also understand that some municipalities, for various reasons, cannot meet remotely. Because of this, each municipality will be left to their discretion to decide if meetings will be in person or remote. Meeting dates, times and how they can be accessed will be shown on the Networks Northwest project page (<https://www.networksnorthwest.org/community/current-projects/manistee-county-wide-park-recreation-plan-update.html>).

Manistee County has a Recreation Commission. How will this plan fit into the commission's role going forward?

One of the implied benefits of this county-wide plan and the creation of the County Recreation Commission is that they will streamline the grant application and acquisition process. Rather than each jurisdiction expending staff time, hiring a grant writer and applying for various funding sources, the Manistee County Recreation Commission will act as a centralized entity for this purpose. This is why this planning process will result in a "county-wide plan" rather than a "Manistee County Plan." This process will result in over 20 park & recreation plans, all combined into one document for the state.

Will there be an opportunity to provide public input towards this plan update?

Yes. There will be two planning meetings, hosted by Networks Northwest, for each municipality. We invite the public to provide input at each of these. In addition, there is a survey available to take by visiting [link will appear when available].

What will the plan cover?

The plan will cover everything required by the Michigan DNR in its guidelines, which can be viewed at https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-350-79134_81684_79209_81658---,00.html. This county-wide plan will also incorporate past planning projects including the Manistee Lake Non-Motorized Plan and the Railroad Relocation for the Manistee Lake Area Communities Plan.

Why does Manistee County need an update to its 2016 park and recreation plan?

Park and recreation plans in Michigan are valid for a 5-year period. The previous county-wide plan expired December 31, 2020. Additionally, community needs and desires change over time. This is an opportunity to review what the public values and wants to see.

Who is leading this planning process? Who should be contacted with questions?

Networks Northwest is leading this planning process, in conjunction with the Manistee County Recreation Commission and the Manistee County Planning Department. Any questions should be directed to Rob Carson and Zach Vega. Their contact information can be found on the project page.

What is the timeline for this planning process?

Networks Northwest will work directly with local officials and the public to update the plan during the spring and summer months. The final plan must be submitted to the DNR by February, 2022. A detailed timeline is available on the project page.