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Village of Kaskaska Recreation Plan

*Prepared by the Village of Kaskaska in collaboration with the
Kaskaska Downtown Development Authority, Kaskaska County, and
Kaskaska County Public Library*

2018-2022

Village of Kalkaska Recreation Plan

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Introduction

Recreation and parks are a significant and integral player in the Village of Kalkaska's health, economy, and quality of life. The Village and surrounding region's parks, natural areas, trails, and water access provide opportunities for people to be social and active, greatly enhancing their health and quality of life. These recreational facilities and natural areas set the stage for events and activities, provide access to the areas water, forests, and other natural resources, and attract visitors from throughout the state and country. These events and visitors have an enormous economic impact, bringing tourism dollars to our region and supporting thousands of recreation-related jobs.

Because of its impact on residents' quality of life, as well as the economy, the provision of safe, adequate recreation opportunities is an important community role. This Recreation Plan is intended to identify the Village's highest recreation priorities and to offer an implementation road map for the recreation goals and objectives identified by the community throughout the various planning efforts. The Plan is organized as follows:

- ⇒ **Chapter 1, Community Description**, includes information regarding the Village's population, natural features, and other community information. The intent of this section is to provide a context for the plan that will assist in establishing goals.
- ⇒ **Chapter 2, Administrative Structure**, summarizes the process through which recreation decisions are made.
- ⇒ **Chapter 3, Recreation Inventory** itemizes the Village's existing recreational facilities.
- ⇒ **Chapter 4, Planning and Public Input**, explains how public input was gathered and used in developing and prioritizing recreation goals, objectives, and action program, and identifies recreation goals of existing county plans for consideration and in goals, objectives, and actions.
- ⇒ **Chapter 5, Goals, Objectives, and Action Program** describes proposed recreation goals and improvements, and suggests specific implementation activities to achieve those goals.

DNR Recreation Planning Guidelines

This Plan was developed according to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans.

Through its recreation grants program, currently funded through the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund and the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) provides financial assistance to communities that would like to purchase land for parks, or are planning to improve or develop recreation facilities.

To be eligible to apply for these grant programs, a community must have a 5-year recreation plan, approved by the DNR, that meets certain requirements. This Recreation Plan was developed to comply with all MDNR requirements for recreation plans.

Chapter 1: Community Description

The historic village of Kalkaska is found at the crossroads of rail, highways, airport, and trails amidst Northwest Michigan’s forests, fields, and hills. It’s home to about 2000 residents and important regional assets and employers, including a hospital, high-quality schools, a historic downtown, significant amounts of industrial property, government offices and services, and a large recreational complex. With strong leadership and infrastructure that has the capacity for growth, the Village is well-positioned for new business, industry, and population growth.

Regional Context

The Village is located in the northwestern portion of Kalkaska County, a rural, recreation-oriented place filled with pristine rivers, rich forests, and open farmland. Urban development is generally found in the Village and in the western townships. The eastern townships contain more forest cover and have cottage-like development patterns. State-owned land is prominent throughout the county, especially in the east and northwest areas. This amount of public land allows for vast recreation, especially snowmobiling, hunting, camping, and ATV riding. The Rapid River, the Boardman River, and the Manistee River highlight the natural corridors and provide for a multitude of recreation, especially fishing and canoeing. Although agriculture is not the dominant land use, it is the principal land use in the middle of the county, and is visually expressive of the county’s heritage. Housing is affordable, which is important. Housing types vary, which also makes the county accommodating to residents, second

home-owners, and visitors alike. Commercial and industrial sites are located along highway corridors, especially near the Village.

Population & Demographics

In 2016, the estimated population of the Village of Kalkaska was 2,039. This is a 1.0% increase from the 2010 Population Estimates.

Since the first recorded population count in 1880, Kalkaska’s population has risen from less than 500 to over 2,000, with its highest count—2,226 residents—recorded in 2000.

The Village’s steady population increases are an indication of the range of employment, education, commercial, and residential options available to its residents, as well as the discoveries of oil and gas reserves. However, between 2000 and 2010, the Village witnessed a change in this longstanding growth, when its population dropped by 9.3% to 2,020. Since this time, the population is estimated to have increased by around 1%.

Age and Household Characteristics

At 2.22 people per household (PPH) in 2010, Kalkaska’s average household size has declined by about 5% since 2000 (2.35 PPH), while the number of family households with children has dropped by about 22%. The decline in both household size and family populations is generally linked with the aging of the population, a trend currently being experienced nationwide. As the baby boomers—the country’s largest population group—reach

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retirement age, the number of one and two-person households increase.

Between 2000 and 2010, the numbers and percentages in the Village of both school-aged children and individuals over aged 65 dropped; in fact, the only growing age range in the Village was between 45-64 years. In 2010, about 23% of Kalkaska's population was under age 18, a 6% drop from 2000 percentages. The County as a whole, meanwhile, experienced growth in all age ranges 45 and up, and a decrease in school-aged children.

Fewer school-aged children and family households reflect growing numbers of “empty nesters” and contribute to the Village's shrinking household size.

According to the 2010 Census, the median age in the Village is 37.9 years, compared to the

County's median age of 43 years. Both County and Village ages and household sizes are close to the regional averages.

Income

The Village's income levels are slightly lower than the County and state averages according to the 2015 American Community Survey.

Poverty levels in the Village were estimated at 17.9%, which are slightly higher than the County, 17%, and state, 16.7%.

Economic Development

Recreation in Kalkaska is a vast untapped resource in terms of economic development potential. Studies report that the economic impact of recreation is related to the length of visitors' stays and overnight visits: the longer people remain in an area, the more they spend. However, with limited options for hotels, dining, or downtown entertainment Kalkaska misses important opportunities to capture additional revenue from visitors and tourists in town for events, trails, fishing, and hunting. This is reflected in arts, entertainment, and recreation earnings that are well below average for Northwest Michigan counties. And, while nearly half of the County's land is publicly owned, public investments and state grants in locally-maintained recreation amenities have historically been limited.

Recognizing the opportunities inherent in its location and local assets, natural resources and access to recreation are key components of Village economic development and land use planning initiatives. The potential for the Village to leverage its recreation assets has been a key

Table 1: Village of Kalkaska Age Cohorts, 2015

Age	Number	% of population
Under 5 years	160	7.6%
5 to 9 years	116	5.5%
10 to 14 years	132	6.2%
15 to 19 years	158	7.5%
20 to 24 years	77	3.6%
25 to 34 years	313	14.8%
35 to 44 years	280	13.3%
45 to 54 years	190	9.0%
55 to 59 years	189	8.9%
60 to 64 years	171	8.1%
65 to 74 years	119	5.6%
75 to 84 years	122	5.8%
85 years and over	86	4.1%
Total population	2,113	100%

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

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strategy identified in recent planning projects, including the Kalkaska Framework for Growth & Investment, US-131 Economic Development Strategy (2016) and Kalkaska Community: Designing and Achieving Our Potential—Strategic Plan (2016). These strategies are now being incorporated into the Village’s current Master Plan, this recreation plan, and other local plans and policies.

Transportation Systems

Kalkaska's transportation assets have helped drive the community’s development patterns and economy. Railroads historically provided context for development and growth. Easy access to three state highways has since spurred a great deal of commercial and industrial growth, and has become one of the Village’s defining features and economic foundations. Also within the Village are the foundations of non-motorized transportation infrastructure that can offer increased mobility to jobs, services, and shopping for those parts of the community that can’t or don’t drive due to age or disability. Nearby trail networks offer opportunities both for recreation and for connections with other communities and parts of the state. These transportation networks—including air, rail, roadways, bicycle, and pedestrian systems—are some of the most basic elements of the community. Effective, connected, intermodal transportation networks move goods, people and services, and provide connections and access to the region, the state, and beyond. When planning for future transportation needs, it is vital to consider a diverse range of users—including residents of all ages and incomes, commuters, and visitors—as well as commercial and industrial needs.

Snowmobiles and off-road vehicles (ORVs) are authorized to use road shoulders on County road rights-of-way, and a number of motorized trails are available on public land (see Chapter 3, Recreation Inventory). Trail opportunities for ORVs are soon to be expanded with Public Act 288 of 2016, which will open all state forest roads to ORV use upon completion of a statewide inventory of the roads/trails by the DNR.

Public Transportation

The Village’s public transit needs are served by the Kalkaska Public Transit Authority (KPTA), a public authority. Established in 1984, it receives funding from state and federal sources along with county tax revenues. KPTA provides fixed route service to Traverse City and dial-a-ride service within Kalkaska County. KPTA also provides some fixed-route service for schools.

Air and Rail Service

Rail, once the dominant form of long-distance travel and shipping, is now largely unused. Though there has also been increasing interest from the public within the region and statewide in enhancing the state’s capacity for passenger rail service, rail is used in Kalkaska only to serve industrial freight needs at this time.

The Kalkaska Village Airport is located in the southwest corner of the Village, off Island Lake Road, and is owned and operated by the Village. The airport includes a paved runway that runs from northwest to southeast. The facility is not attended on a regular basis, nor does it have amenities found at larger airports (i.e. runway lights, beacons, lookout towers, fuel services, etc.). Nevertheless, the airport provides an important service for area industries and tourists who use the facility for light air-craft landings.

Non-Motorized Transportation

The Village of Kalkaska is one of only seven official “Trail Towns” designated by the North Country Trail.

The Kalkaska Area Recreation Trail, an off-road, non-motorized transportation facility in the Village of Kalkaska, provides a 2-mile loop for residents. And the surrounding County boasts more miles of trails than any county in Northwest Michigan.

There is a strong interest in expanding and enhancing trailways within and beyond the Village, and Kalkaska village officials have been working with diverse trail stakeholders to link and develop trails in and outside the Village. Non-motorized trails are further discussed *Chapter 3: Recreation Inventory*.



above sea level, with hills and ridges along the eastern section of the County.

Natural Features

The natural resources in and surrounding the Village of Kalkaska are some of its most important strategic assets. Kalkaska County boasts nearly 300,000 acres of forest—much of it protected—along 86 lakes and over 270 miles of rivers or streams, and one of Michigan’s most successful oil-producing basins. These resources are key to Kalkaska’s economic prosperity and quality of life, and both residents and visitors take advantage of the wide range of recreation opportunities available in the forests, lakes, and streams surrounding the Village.

Topography

Kalkaska County is located over a geological formation known as the Salina-Niagaran reef, an important oil producing basin. The county’s topography includes hills, plains, and upland plains with elevations ranging from 590—1300 feet

Boardman River

The Boardman River is one of the greatest assets of the Village, County, and region. Considered one of Michigan’s top 10 trout streams, it is a major driver for tourism and recreation and is the focus of the community’s annual Trout Festival. The Boardman River watershed spans 295 square miles and drains approximately 182,800 acres of land through 175 miles of river and stream tributaries. It is the largest tributary to the West Arm of Grand Traverse Bay and provides about 30% of the surface flow to Grand Traverse Bay. Downstream of US-131, the Boardman River is classified under the state’s Natural Rivers Program as “Wild & Scenic.”

The north branch of the Boardman River flows through the heart of the village. This branch begins less than 10 miles northeast of the village in the Mahan Swamp. As it makes its way to the village, the flow is slowed by a small dam that

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forms a shallow mill-pond that warms up during the hot summer months.

Wetlands and Floodplains

Wetlands—often called marshes, swamps, or bogs—are areas where water is found, either on or near the surface, at any time during the year. These areas are invaluable natural re-sources for a variety of factors: they offer important wildlife habitat, along with opportunities for recreation such as fishing, hunting, boating, and birdwatching. They improve water quality by removing and sequestering excess nutrients and sediments found in rivers and streams; and reduce potential for floods by acting as natural “sponges,” slowing down flood and storm waters. About 28 acres of wetlands are located along the Boardman River and are designated as potential flood-prone areas.

Soils

Kalkaska Sands are the predominant soil type within the Village. These soils drain well and filter water very effectively, and, according to the 2009 WQAP, the predominance of this soil type in the County is largely responsible for the remarkable water quality of lakes and rivers nearby.

Chapter 2: Administrative Structure

Organizational Structure

The seven-member Village Council is elected to adopt Village budgets, approve contracts, adopt policies, and oversee staff. Budgets, planning, and other issues related to the parks and other Village facilities are overseen by the Village Council. Parks are maintained by the Village Department of Public Works.

The Department of Public Works maintains all of the Village’s recreational facilities. DPW reports to the Village Council on the status of recreation facilities.

The Village of Kalkaska Parks and Recreation Committee is an advisory group on recreation facilities and activities. Membership of the Committee is based on appointment by the Village Council.

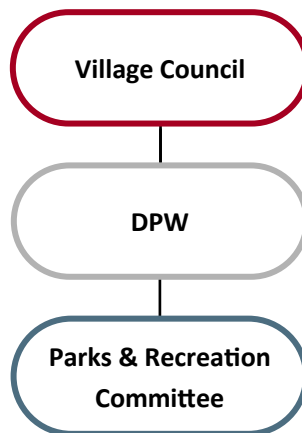
Relationship with Other Agencies & Volunteers

The Village of Kalkaska partners with Kalkaska County, MDOT, and Kalkaska Public Schools on

the KART Trail. The Village works with its KART Trail partners as well as volunteers and the Kalkaska Conservation District on management and landscaping efforts along the trail. The Village also maintains several other cooperative projects with the Conservation District to beautify and improve the environment at Village properties.

The Village works with the County and local and regional organizations to coordinate several events that utilize the facilities at the Kalkaska County Sports and Recreation Complex including Trout Festival, the Iceman Cometh Challenge, Winterfest, and others. These events require coordination among the DPW of both the Village and County, the Village’s Downtown Development Authority, the Sheriffs Department, the Department of Public Safety, and numerous local groups and volunteers.

In pursuing an enhanced trail network for the Village, officials have worked to build relationships with a number of additional organizations and



volunteers including the Grand Traverse Hiking Club, the Northern Michigan Biking Association, the DNR, the North Country Trail Association, the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, the Conservation District, and others. Several of these agencies have formally created a “Trail Consortium,” in order to move forward with the actual design and construction of priority trail routes/re-routes.

Funding & Budgeting

The Village General Fund is the primary source of funding for park maintenance, improvements, and activities. The 2016-2017 parks and recreation budget was \$12,254; the 2017-2018 budget (through 02/28/2018) is \$17,250; and the proposed budget for 2018-2019 is \$17,250.

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Chapter 3: Recreation Inventory

A large variety of quality recreation opportunities are available to Kaskaska residents and visitors, both within and beyond the Village limits. These opportunities are fundamental to the overall quality of life, and can serve as a strategic asset in new economic activity and community enhancements. To capitalize and build on these assets, the Village must consider current recreation facilities within a local and regional context, and determine gaps, needs, and priorities. The following recreation inventory, based on information provided by recreation stakeholders and public input, provides discussion on recreation facilities, as well as regional assets, and their place in the community

Accessibility

The accessibility evaluations for the Kaskaska County parks and recreational facilities were conducted by representatives of the County and Village of Kaskaska using the criteria provided in the MDNR *Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plans* (MDNR, 2016). These criteria are based on the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design. To assist with the assessments, the planning committee referenced the New England ADA Center “Checklists.”

The following ADA Ranking system was used for the evaluations:

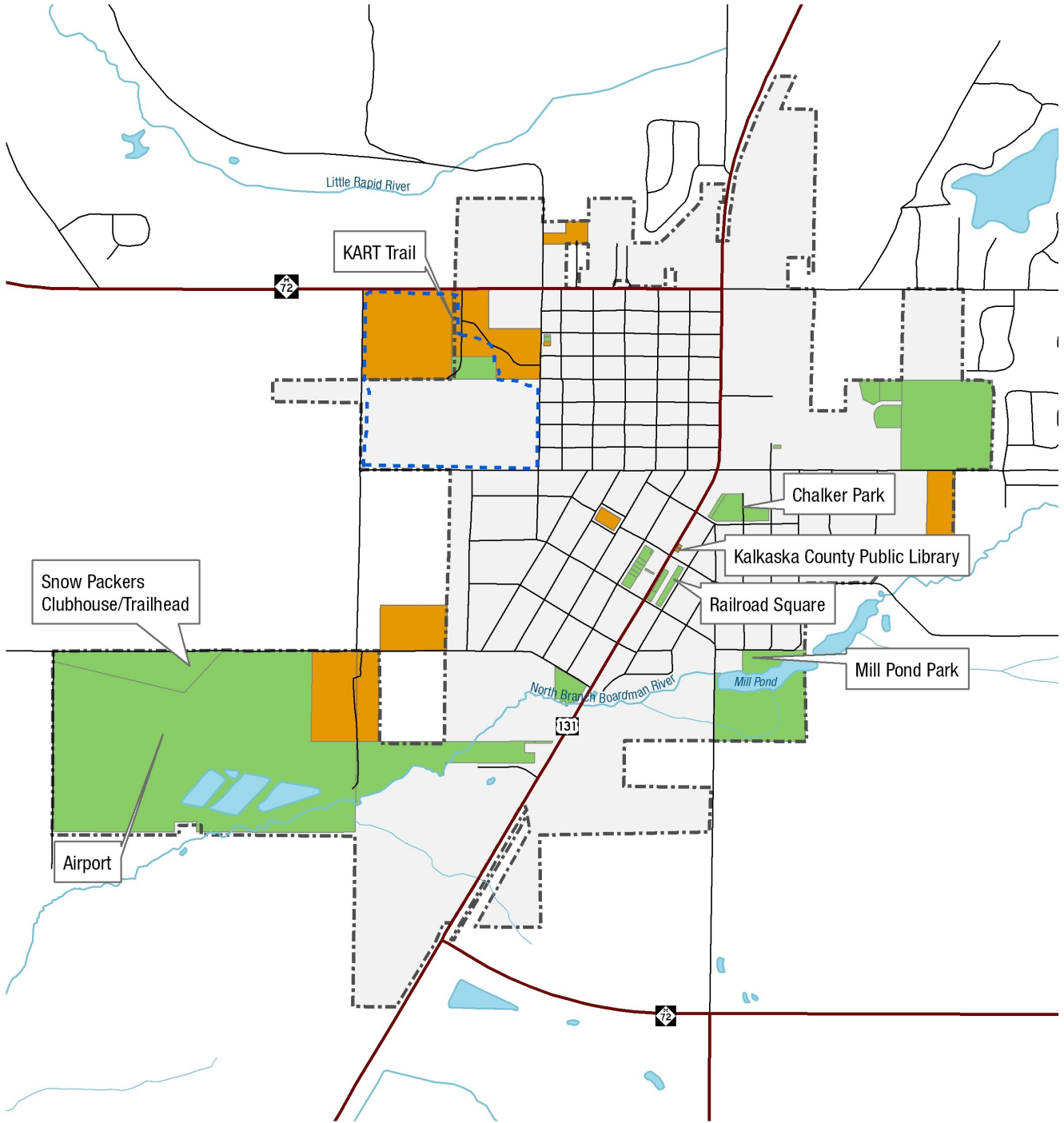
1 = none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines

2 = some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines

3 = most of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines

4 = the entire park meets accessibility guidelines

5 = the entire park was developed/renovated using the principals of universal design



KEY | Main Features

- Village Parcels
- County Parcels
- KART Trail
- Village Boundary
- State Roads
- Local Roads
- Lakes & Ponds
- Rivers and Streams



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Chalker Park

Chalker Park facilities include a picnic pavilion, basketball courts, the Imagination Station (a large wooden playground), and restroom facilities. The park is used frequently by people of all ages. Due to issues with vandalism, several security cameras have been installed at Chalker Park. The site is now a monitored safe exchange location.

Because of the location near a railroad and historically industrial area, there has been a need for additional landscaping to buffer the park from surrounding traffic and conflicting uses. To address this, the Village and Conservation District have been planting trees between the railroad track and pavilion.

Results from the community forum and survey indicate that Chalker Park is a valued recreation facility in the community, but that it is in need of improvements. Comments focused on concerns over loitering, and the need for maintenance and improvements. The Village is currently looking into ways to repurpose the cement square.

Facilities include:

- Picnic Pavilion
- Imagination Station (wooden playground)
- Swing sets
- Basketball courts
- Picnic tables
- Restrooms
- Sledding Hill
- Bike Racks

Accessibility Assessment = 3

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Mill Pond Park

River millpond and includes a pavilion with picnic tables, parking lot, and playground. The park is used for picnicking and occasionally for community events such as the Trout Festival, when the pond is used for a children's fishing event. The playground equipment includes a swing set and monkey bars. A portable toilet facility is located on-site.

Results from the community forum and survey indicate that Mill Pond Park is one of the least used recreation facilities in the community, and in need of improvements. Comments focused on the park being outdated, maintenance needs, and lacking amenities (such as restrooms).

Facilities include:

- Pavilion
- Playground equipment (swings)
- Bike Racks
- Porta John

Accessibility Assessment = 2



Snow Packers Clubhouse/ Trailhead

The Snow Packers Clubhouse is a community building located at a snowmobile trailhead. The clubhouse includes a kitchen and seating area, and is used by snowmobilers for dining, rest area, etc.

Accessibility Assessment = 2



Railroad Square

Railroad Square is a Village-owned property on the east side of downtown. In 2015 and 2016 the Village of Kalkaska and its Downtown Development Authority engaged the public in determining future uses and activities at Railroad Square. An online questionnaire and several public forums were held throughout 2015-2016. Responses and feedback provide indicate a strong interest in use of the Railroad Square property as public space. Specific ideas that were popular among participants were a pavilion/bandstand/outdoor theatre and open outdoor event space. Redevelopment of this important property will be catalytic for Kalkaska, bringing visitors, customers, and pedestrian activity to a highly visible portion of the downtown.

Results from the 2017 Kalkaska Community Survey indicate that development at Railroad Square is of interest to the community. When asked about recreational facilities valued most, it likely did not rank as high among survey respondents as there are no current recreational amenities located on the site. Several recent planning initiatives have sought public input to build a vision for the future of the site. However, efforts are now underway by

the DDA and Village to implement plans for repurposing this property as a flexible outdoor space that serves as an anchor for the downtown.

Facilities include:

- Open green space
- Parking
- Kalkaska Historical Museum (Kalkaska Train Depot)

Accessibility Assessment = 2



Kalkaska Area Recreational Transportation (KART)

The Kalkaska Area Recreational Transportation (KART) Trail is a 2-mile long, paved, non-motorized trail that loops around the Kalkaska County Fairgrounds, Kaliseum, Kalkaska Public Schools, and Kalkaska County administrative buildings. Residents and visitors can access the trail at the Kalkaska County Fairgrounds for walking, running, and bicycling.

The trail was constructed in 2007 with funding from Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) grants and local match from KART partners, including the Village of Kalkaska and Kalkaska County. Ownership and maintenance responsibilities are shared by Kalkaska County, the Village of Kalkaska, Kalkaska Public Schools, and MDOT. Volunteers provide some assistance with maintenance and landscaping.

The existing trail was intended to be Phase 1. Phase 2 of the trail would extend to a proposed reroute of the North Country Trail to the south of the Village of Kalkaska. Other suggested additions to the KART trail would include linkages to Village-

owned forest property and provide linkages to Chalker Park, Mill Pond, and Log Lake Campground.

Public input received during the planning process indicated that the KART Trail is one of the most valued park facilities. Most suggestions related to the trail focused on potential connections to other trail systems or parks.

Facilities include:

- Paved trail
- Landscaping
- Water fountains
- Dog waste bag dispensers

Accessibility Assessment = 4

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Other Recreational Assets

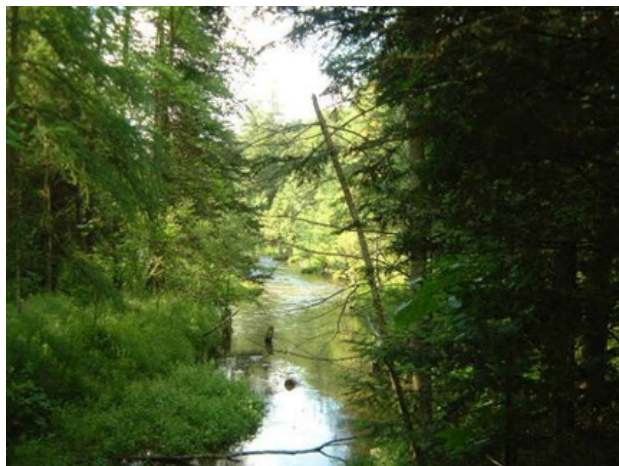
A wide variety of public and private recreation opportunities are available a short distance away from the Village and in the surrounding region. The County and townships maintain local parks and recreation facilities, while numerous state and federal parks, including campgrounds, boat launches, state and federal forest land, and the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore are located within or near the County. Private recreation facilities, including golf courses, casinos, campgrounds, numerous shopping opportunities, and statewide attractions such as the Interlochen Center for the Arts and Boyne Mountain Ski Resort are available in the County and regionally.

State and Federal Land

Nearly half of Kalkaska County's total land acreage is in public ownership. While about 7% of that (16,526 acres) is federally owned and is primarily used for the military, a significant majority of public land is available for public use. About 153,255 acres, or 42% of Kalkaska County's total acreage, is owned by the State of Michigan. State-owned acreage is primarily part of the Pere Marquette State Forest. See Table __, page __, for recreational opportunities in Kalkaska managed by the State of Michigan.

Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy

The Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy has worked on several land protection and stewardship projects in Kalkaska County, and currently manages the South Boardman Preserve, Seven Bridges, and Skegemog Lake



Wildlife Area for recreational use. The Conservancy also recently acquired of the former Camp Tapico in central Kalkaska County, which is to become the Upper Manistee Headwaters Preserve. The Conservancy plays an important roll in providing recreational opportunities and protecting the natural beauty of the area.

Township & County Recreational Facilities

Kalkaska County and many townships own and maintain community parks, recreation facilities, and trails that are available to the public. See Table 6 (page 36), as well as the 2018 Kalkaska County Recreation Plan.

Kaliseum

The Kaliseum is a County-owned and maintained recreation complex that includes two pools, an ice rink, fitness equipment, and meeting space/room rental. A variety of fitness and recreation programs are available.

Kalkaska Public Schools

Active recreational facilities are also available at the Kalkaska Public Schools including

playgrounds, baseball diamonds, running track, soccer fields, and football fields.

Kalkaska Civic Center and Fairgrounds

The County fairgrounds, civic center, arena, and various athletic fields are located within the Village limits.

Kalkaska Library

Libraries serve as important social and educational functions, by offering access to reading material, technology, and civic space. The Kalkaska County Library is located within the village.

Festivals

Several vibrant and growing community festivals are held annually within the Village. The Trout Festival celebrates the region's quality fishing opportunities and heritage every April. The Winter Festival, held in January, is host to one of the country's biggest dog sled races and a number of other outdoor activities. The Iceman Cometh, a mountain bike race held every November, winds 28 miles from the Village of Kalkaska to Traverse City. The race continues to grow in size and popularity, with thousands of cyclists from throughout Michigan and the country competing every year.

The County Fair is another annual event, with a week of activities for families at the County Fairgrounds on the boundaries of the Village. Private Recreation Facilities Private golf courses, campgrounds, and other amenities are available throughout the Village and County.



Trails

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

Input received during the planning process indicate a strong interest in trail development among residents.

An understanding of trail systems in the area is important in identifying opportunities for trail linkages and enhancements. In addition to the KART Trail, the Village of Kalkaska is close to a number of significant trail systems, including:

- **Boardman Valley Snowmobile Trail.** The Boardman Valley Snowmobile Trail provides 25 miles of groomed and marked snowmobile

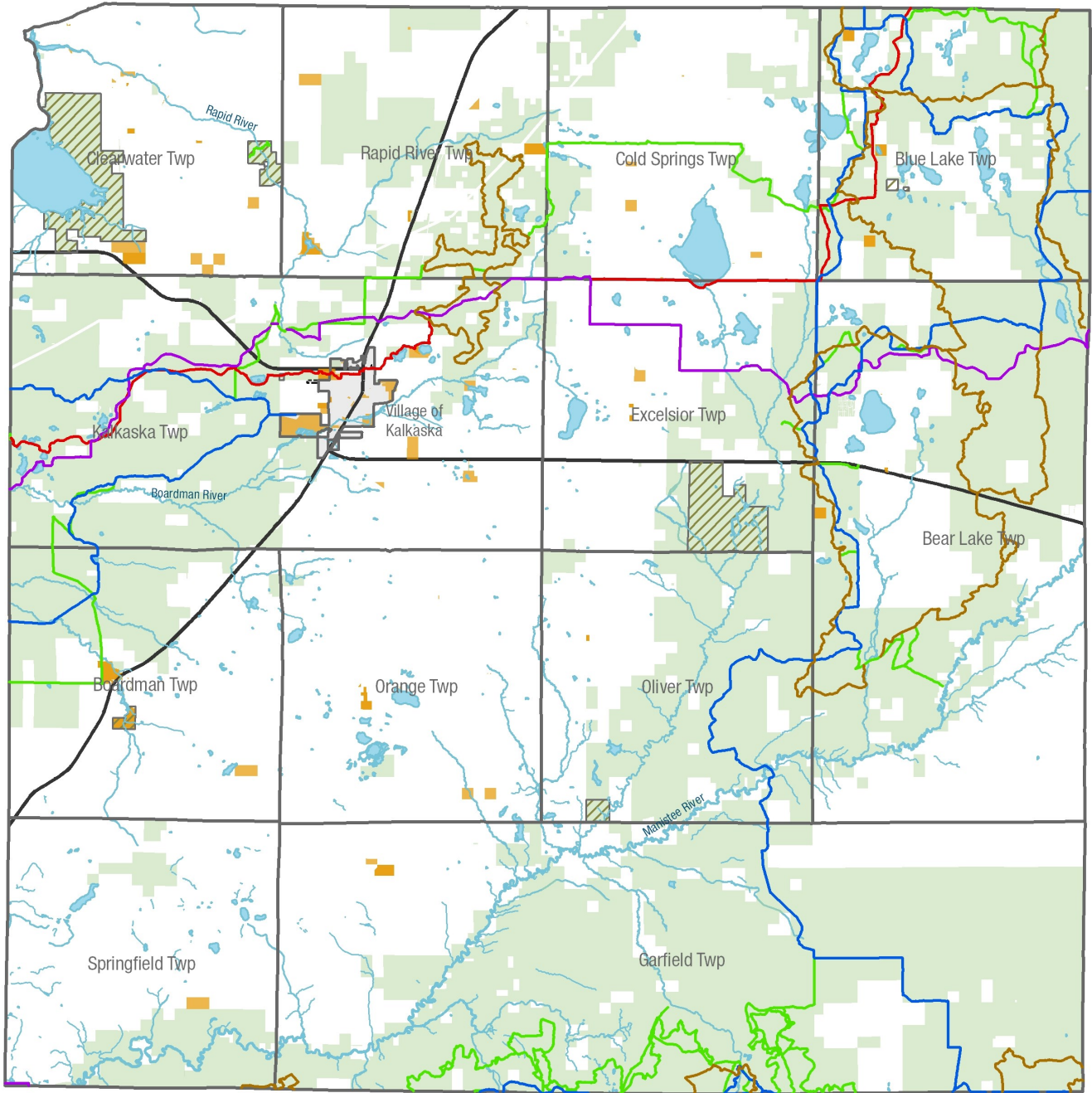
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trail in southern and western Kalkaska County.

- **Cranberry Snowmobile Trail.** The Cranberry Snowmobile Trail provides 28 miles of groomed and marked snowmobile trails in northern and eastern Kalkaska County.
- **Kalkaska Cycle Trail.** The Kalkaska Cycle Trail is an 89 mile ORV trail that extends from Kalkaska north into Antrim County.
- **Leetsville Cycle Trail.** The Leetsville Cycle Trail is a 23 mile single-track ORV trail running through northern Kalkaska County.
- **Michigan Cross Country Cycle Trail.** The Michigan Cross Country Cycle Trail (MCCCT) covers hundreds of miles and connects many trail systems throughout Michigan’s lower peninsula. The MCCT trail is designed for off-road motorcycles and runs through western and northern Kalkaska County.
- **Miss-Kal Snowmobile Trail.** The Miss-Kal Snowmobile Trail is a 70-mile groomed and marked snowmobile trail that crosses into Kalkaska County from Missaukee County to the south.
- **North Country Trail.** The North Country Trail is a National Scenic Trail, stretching 4,600 miles over 7 states, from New York to North Dakota. 10 national forests, and more than 150 public lands, the North Country Trail is the largest National Scenic Trail in the US. In Kalkaska County, the trail runs roughly southwest to east, with parking access at the Kalkaska County Fairgrounds and Log Lake Campground. The Grand Traverse Hiking Club is responsible for developing, maintaining, protecting, and promoting this section of the North Country Trail.
- **Shore-to-Shore Trail.** The Shore-to-Shore Trail is a 220-mile horseback/hiking trail that runs between Empire to Oscoda, Michigan. A trail camp is available along the Rapid River in Kalkaska County. The Michigan Trail Riders Association works in partnership with the MDNR and National Forest Service to provide maintenance and promotional activities for the trail.
- **Mountain Bike Trail.** A new mountain bike trail system that would provide connections between the Village of Kalkaska and Grand Traverse County is currently pending approval from the State of Michigan (2013).

Other Facilities/Activities

Many other private facilities and activities are available outside of the Village in Kalkaska County, including numerous private youth camps, museums, nature centers, campgrounds, golf courses, cross country skiing, snowmobile clubs, horseback riding, fishing charters, and boat rentals. Hunting is available at different parks throughout the County. Please check with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for rules and regulations on hunting and fishing and the specific township for details.



KEY | Main Features

- ORV Trail
- Snowmobile Trail
- Shore to Shore Trail
- North Country Trail
- Other Trails
- Municipal Property
- State Land
- ▨ Conservancy Owned, Protected, or Managed
- Municipal Boundaries
- State Trunkline
- Rivers & Creeks
- Lakes & Ponds



Networks  Northwest
Science / Business / Community

Data Source | Michigan Geographic Data Library; Kalkaska County; Networks Northwest

Map Scale | 1:191,595

Date | 10/21/2017

Table. State of Michigan Recreation Facilities		
Facility	Description and Activities	Location
Pere Marquette State Forest	The Pere Marquette State Forest encompasses lands in the upper lower peninsula on the western side of the state. Counties within the Pere Marquette, are: Kalkaska, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Manistee, Wexford, Missaukee, Mason, Lake, Osceola, Oceana, Newaygo and Mecosta. Size: 177,000 acres	
Guernsey Lake State Forest Campground	Fishing, hiking, mountain biking, ORV trails, wildlife/birdwatching, boat launch, 36 rustic campsites, vault toilets, well hand pump	Kalkaska Township
CCC Bridge State Forest Campground	Fishing, canoeing/kayaking, ORV trails, wildlife/birdwatching, boat launch, 32 rustic campsites, vault toilets, well hand pump	Oliver Township
Pickerel Lake State Forest Campground	Fishing, ORV trails, boat launch, wildlife/birdwatching, 13 rustic campsites, vault toilets, well hand pump	Garfield Township
Sand Lake Quiet Area	Hiking, 36 rustic campsites, cross-country skiing, hunting, fishing, mountain biking. Size: 2,800 acres	Springfield Township
Torch River Boat Launch	Boat launch	Clearwater Township
Manistee River Boat Launch	Paved boat launch, parking	Springfield Township
Manistee River Boat Launch	Boat launch, parking	Garfield Township
Manistee River Boat Launch	Paved boat launch, parking	Oliver Township
Cranberry Lake Boat Launch	Paved boat launch, parking	Bear Lake Township
East Lake Boat Launch	Paved boat launch, parking	Orange Township
Bear Lake Boat Launch	Paved boat launch	Bear Lake Township
Big Blue Lake	Paved boat launch, skid pier, public toilet, parking	Blue Lake
Big Twin Lake	Paved boat launch, skid pier, public toilet, parking	Cold Springs Twp
Yellow Tree	Boat launch	Bear Lake Twp
Hole in the Fence	Boat launch	Bear Lake Twp
Sharon Road	Boat launch	Garfield Twp
Sandbanks	Boat launch, public toilet	Garfield Twp
Rainbow Jim's	Boat launch, public toilet	Springfield Twp
3 Mile Road	Boat launch	Garfield Twp
4 Mile Bend	Boat launch	Oliver Twp
Seven Bridges	Fishing, hiking, wildlife/birdwatching, hunting. Size: 314 acres	Valley Road North
Skegemog Swamp Pathway	Boardwalk, birdwatching, wildlife viewing. Size: 2700 acres	Rapid City Road
Starvation Lake	Boat launch, parking, restroom	Blue Lake Township

Village of Kalkaska Recreation Plan

Table. Township Recreation Facilities		
Township or Village	Description and Activities	Location
Blue Lake Township		
Manistee Lake Swimming Access	Swimming access	
Boardman Township		
Township Park #13	Baseball diamond, basketball court, swings, volleyball court	School Street
Township Park #2	Picnic tables, grills	Near railroad tracks across from post office
Township Park #3	Picnic tables, grill, Mill Pond, fishing, dam	Young's Pond, on Mill St.
Township Park #4	Lighted baseball diamond, swings, outdoor bathrooms, concession stand, picnic pavilion, outdoor grills, picnic tables.	Boardman River Rd
Clearwater Township		
Clearwater Township Park	½ mile paved walking trail, baseball diamonds, soccer field, pavilion	Rapid City Rd
Freedom Park	Pavilions, playground, outdoor grills, baseball diamond, rustic trails to Rapid River, outdoor toilets	Rapid City Rd
Heritage Park	Baseball diamonds, picnicking, open space, play equipment	Rapid City
Coldsprings Township		
Sands Park	Lake access, picnicking, swimming beach, boat launch	Manistee Lake
Garfield Township		
Garfield Township Park	Baseball diamonds	
Rapid River Township		
Rapid River Township Community Park	Play structure, well, parking,	Phelps Rd, Rapid City
Croy Lake	Walking paths, wildlife viewing	Priest Rd
Springfield Township		
Springfield Township Recreation Center	Manistee River overlook, playground, pavilion, summertime farmers market, sledding hills, heated pavilion, community event center	

Chapter 4: Planning Process

The Village of Kalkaska Recreation Plan update was developed as part of a larger community planning process initiated in 2016 by the Kalkaska Downtown Development Authority, Village of Kalkaska, Kalkaska County Library, and Kalkaska County. The goal of this partnership endeavor was to update the Village of Kalkaska Recreation Plan, County Recreation Plan, Village of Kalkaska Master Plan, Kalkaska DDA Plan, and create a Kalkaska County Library Master Plan. The intention of updating all five of these plans via one process was to provide a collaborative and cohesive planning process, where all agencies involved participated on one “Kalkaska Planning Committee” and together had the opportunity to obtain public input, evaluate goals and objectives, and align their respective future visions as a unified team.

While the planning and public input processes were conducted concurrently, the data, analysis, and public input used to update and develop this Plan was collected and prepared to address issues and opportunities specific to recreation in the Village. To provide guidance and oversight on both the Village and County Recreation Plan content, representatives from local government, the Kalkaska County Parks and Recreation Committee, Village of Kalkaska Parks and Recreation Committee, Kalkaska DDA, natural resources agencies, local business owners, and members of the public were invited to participate in a recreation-focused work group in addition to the regular “Kalkaska Planning Committee” meetings.

Public Input

Public input was critical to this planning process, and two successful input opportunities were organized by the Kalkaska Planning Committee (not including the public hearing here). First, a public forum and visioning session, Speak Up Kalkaska!, was held at the Kalkaska High School Auditorium on February 1, 2017. Over 150 people attended. The event kicked off with a presentation to attendees regarding the collaborative planning process, and representatives from each of the agencies spoke. Following the presentation was an interactive community forum where participants visited stations and asked questions that they voted on with sticky dots and shared comments. Second, an online survey was made available following the event. The questionnaire was widely publicized online, and over two hundred and sixty-four (264) responses were received. Survey summaries and responses, along with information relative to public events, are included in Appendix A.

Guiding Principles

In addition to utilizing public input and community data to review and update the Village’s 2011 Master Plan and Recreation Plan goals and objectives, the recreation work group applied the “Guiding Principles” established by the Kalkaska Planning Committee. The “Guiding Principles” were intended to provide a means of consistently evaluating and prioritizing the goals and objectives identified in each of the five

plans. The “Guiding Principles” include:

Purposeful – The objective is relevant to the agency evaluating it and the agency can make significant change in this area.

Public Supports – The objective is important to the public, based on the results of Speak Up Kalkaska!, follow-up survey, and previous planning processes.

Public Safety – The objective supports, enhances, and protects public safety.

Economic Driver – The objective supports new and existing jobs and business.

Sustainability – The objective can be achieved utilizing existing capacity and resources, which can be reasonably maintained over its lifetime.

Compatibility – The objective supports the other agencies’ goals/objectives.

Participants were asked to review prior plans and public input in order to best evaluate the existing goals and objectives and make recommendations regarding the future priorities of the Village and County. This exercise reaffirmed the relevance and importance of collaboration among the partnering agencies, as the working groups concluded that the vast majority of goals and objectives supported, or were at least relevant to, each of the “Guiding Principles.” See Appendix _ for the complete evaluation.

Recreation Plan Review

The Kalkaska Planning Committee reviewed the draft plan at their _____ meeting, and agreed to release the draft plan for public review and schedule a public hearing. Notice was posted in _____ indicating that copies of the draft plan were available online at the Networks Northwest website, as well as at the _____ offices. Copies were also made available at other public offices throughout the County. Comments were received from ____ to _____.

Public Hearing & Adoption

Following the 30-day public review period, the Kalkaska Village Council held a public hearing on _____ to obtain additional public input and to review and discuss comments received during the 30 day review period. The Council approved the plan for submission to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources at their _____ regular meeting. See Appendix _ for the approval documents.

Chapter 5: Goals, Objectives, & Action Plan

The vision, goals, objectives, and action strategies are intended to guide future decisions about recreation in a manner that reflects the community's values and priorities. These goals were developed based on review of existing facilities and public input obtained through:

- 2017 Kalkaska Community Survey
- Speak Up Kalkaska! Community Forum
- 2011 Village Master Plan and Recreation Plan

A number of other local, County and regional plans and strategies have also been reviewed to ensure that goals, objectives, and action are consistent with and aligned with other Village goals and priorities.

Definitions

In order to appropriately administer goals, objectives and strategies—and to ensure that

progress is being made towards the community's vision—it's important to understand the roles of each and their relationship to each other.

- **Goals** provide general direction and serve as a description of the desired future. They address issues and specific needs, but are broad in scope.
- **Objectives** are a means of achieving goals, and are attainable.
- **Action Strategies** set forth the specifics necessary to accomplish objectives. One strategy might be used to accomplish multiple objectives; or an objective might require multiple strategies. Action strategies identify implementation tools (such as zoning changes) and the players involved in meeting goals and objectives.

Goal #1: Provide cost-effective, responsive, efficient recreation services and facilities.

		Timeframe
Objective	Pursue grant funding for planned recreation improvements.	
Action	Maintain an updated 5-year recreation plan for the purposes of guiding recreation activities and to help ensure grant funding eligibility through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.	Ongoing
Action	Link fundraising activities with marketing efforts.	Ongoing
Action	Partner with local units of governments, nonprofits, and other stakeholders to recognize mutual goals and interests to leverage funding opportunities.	Ongoing
Objective	Pursue the establishment of a community endowment to support recreation activities in Kalkaska	
Action	Work with Grand Traverse Community Foundation and community partners to establish a Kalkaska Community endowment fund.	2018
Action	Develop a funding strategy to guide fundraising efforts and identify funding opportunities for recreation activities.	2018
Action	Explore additional mechanisms for funding and managing recreational facilities	2018

Goal #2: Maintain and improve existing parks.		
		Timeframe
Objective	Ensure a high level of maintenance and management at all parks and recreation facilities.	
Action	Provide for ongoing funding to provide maintenance and improvements at Village parks and recreation facilities.	Ongoing
Action	Regularly review maintenance and improvement needs to determine appropriate staffing and funding levels.	Ongoing
Action	Explore possibilities for “adopt a park” programs or other volunteer programs to meet specific maintenance and update needs at all parks.	Ongoing
Objective	Provide improvements to existing parks and recreation facilities as needed.	
<i>Chalker Park</i>		
Action	Explore re-purposing the cement pad	2018
Action	Explore potential of developing a skate park at Chalker Park	Ongoing
<i>Mill Pond</i>		
Action	Provide permanent restroom facilities	2018+
Action	Update playground equipment	2018+
Action	Explore feasibility for a walkway along the pond and Boardman River	2018+
Action	Continue to support water quality	Ongoing
<i>KART Trail</i>		
Action	Maintain and improve trail facilities and provide quality, long-lasting amenities, including benches, dog waste bag dispensers, and landscaping as needed.	Ongoing
Action	Develop and execute updated maintenance agreements between Kalkaska Village, Kalkaska County, and the Michigan Department of Transportation.	?
Action	Plant trees along the KART Trail.	?
Action	Continue to work with volunteers and partners to provide landscaping/maintenance assistance.	Ongoing
Action	Work with partners to pursue funding to implement connections to the Boardman River Nature Trail.	2018+
Action	Pursue KART Trail linkages to additional trail systems.	2018+
<i>Railroad Square</i>		
Action	Support design and development of an information center, multi-use pavilion facility, perimeter bike paths, new parking along Maple St., open space, and community meeting and food vendor space.	2018-2020
Action	Support efforts by the DDA to develop Railroad Square	2018-2020
<i>Snowpackers Clubhouse</i>		
Action	Coordinate with Kalkaska Snowmobile Association	Ongoing
Action	Maintain as an event venue	?

Village of Kalkaska Recreation Plan

Goal #3: Provide a variety of recreation opportunities for all ages and abilities, that meet the community's existing and future needs.		
		Timeframe
Objective	Ensure a diverse range of recreation opportunities throughout the Village.	
Action	Encourage cooperation between federal, state, and local governments to further improve and expand opportunities at local park facilities.	Ongoing
Action	Continue to work with partner organizations to facilitate and further recreational programs for all population groups.	Ongoing
Action	Support township and County recreation planning and improvement activities through in-kind assistance or funding support.	Ongoing
Action	Explore appropriate locations to expand/enhance existing parks and recreation facilities as needed.	Ongoing
Action	Include major events and festivals, including the Trout Festival, Winterfest, County Fair, Iceman Cometh, and other major events, in all recreation facility planning activities.	Ongoing
Action	Work with partners and volunteer groups to seek grant funding and donations to establish a skate park on Village or County-owned property.	2018-2019
Objective	Ensure high-quality natural areas for outdoor recreation.	
Action	Continue to work with partners to protect and manage natural areas for outdoor recreation opportunities.	Ongoing
Action	Explore opportunities to expand or enhance natural areas for outdoor recreation.	Ongoing
Action	Provide for improved accessibility , and universal accessibility when feasible, when acquiring and improving parks and recreation facilities.	Ongoing
Objective	Ensure parks and recreation facilities are accessible to all users.	
Action	Ensure access for all by adding barrier-free features at all parks as needed.	2018+
Action	Work to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements at all existing and new park and recreational facilities.	Ongoing
Objective	Support local efforts that enhance recreational opportunities in the Village	
Action	Partner and coordinate with the County on projects, events, and programming that support recreation for residents	Ongoing
Action	Support the redevelopment of the Kalkaska County Library	Ongoing
Action	Pursue opportunities to partner on projects that enhance recreational programming and activities in the Village	Ongoing

Goal #4: Support and promote Kalkaska County as a trail destination.		
		Timeframe
Objective	Coordinate trail usage groups, goals, and activities.	
Action	Continue to convene a “Kalkaska Trails Task Force,” with representatives from user groups, County, local governments, and state and federal agencies in order to coordinate user groups and priorities.	Ongoing
Action	Work with partner organizations and volunteer groups to support community trail-building and maintenance efforts.	Ongoing
Action	Consider consistent signage for trails.	Ongoing
Objective	Promote and market trail information via information resources, social media, events and activities.	
Action	Work with and support volunteers, partner organizations, and trail user groups to provide guided hikes, races, and other trail-based events and activities.	Ongoing
Action	Support efforts by the Explore 131 North marking group to promote Kalkaska and the greater 131 Corridor as a trail destination	2017+
Objective	Develop an interconnected system of trailways that link communities, parks, and existing trails.	
Action	Partner with and/or support efforts to expand and connect existing trails in the Village and County	
Action	Work with/support the “Kalkaska Trails Task Force” to develop a prioritized action strategy for future improvements and trail connections.	Ongoing
Action	Re-route the North Country Trail through the Village of Kalkaska’s commercial district	2018-2020
Action	Partner with the DDA, Kalkaska County Library, Kalkaska Public Schools, DPW, County, and others to create a hard surfaced, intra-village trail system that connects the KART with other recreational and community assets, including Mill Pond, Chalker Park, Railroad Square, the Library, schools, etc.	2018-2020
Action	Identify gaps/linkage needs in existing trailway systems.	Ongoing
Action	Explore opportunities and pursue funding to create linkages between trail systems as well as to other recreational facilities	Ongoing
Action	Work with local governments and partner organizations to expand and connect existing trail networks, and to create linkages to local parks and recreation facilities, and neighboring communities.	Ongoing
Action	Develop relationships/partnerships with regional trail organizations to explore additional opportunities for trail connections and enhancement.	2018-ongoing
Action	Support and participate in the development of a regional trail plan	Ongoing
Action	Re-address snowmobile connector from the Village northeast to the Blue Bear Trail	

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Appendices

To be included with final plan.