

Chapter 5 Parks & Recreation



THE COMMUNITY AT PLAY

KINGSLEY'S COMMUNITY RECREATION

This chapter of the Kingsley Master Plan focuses on all aspects of the community's recreation. This includes the administrative structure that manages parks and recreation in Kingsley, an inventory of Village-owned sites, funding mechanisms, public input and objectives for the future. This chapter is important for two reasons. First, recreation plays an important role in Kingsley. Brownson Park and Civic Center South are especial points of activity for sports leagues, the farmers market, passive and active recreation, as well as local events. As new families locate to Kingsley, and older generations' recreation needs evolve, planning for parks and recreation has seldom been more important. This chapter prioritizes recreation initiatives for the next 1-10 years.

Second, this chapter includes components required by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to gain access to state recreation funding, including the Natural Resources Trust Fund. A full description of these guidelines can be found on the DNR's website titled *Guidelines for the Development of Parks and Recreation Plans*.

THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES PROVIDES FUNDING FOR PARKS AND RECREATION PROJECTS ACROSS THE STATE OF MICHIGAN. IN ORDER TO APPLY FOR THESE GRANT DOLLARS, MUNICIPALITIES MUST HAVE AN APPROVED PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN ON FILE WITH THE STATE OF MICHIGAN. THIS CHAPTER HAS BEEN APPROVED AS A STANDALONE DOCUMENT FOR THIS PURPOSE.

NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND GRANT PROJECTS REQUIRE A MINIMUM OF A 25 PERCENT MATCH FROM THE APPLICANT(S). APPLICATIONS ARE GRADED ON A SCORECARD THAT DEPENDS ON WHETHER THE PROJECT IS A DEVELOPMENT, AN ACQUISITION AND IF IT'S A DNR PRIORITY. PRIORITY PROJECTS INCLUDE TRAIL DEVELOPMENT, A REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT PROJECT, LAKE AND RIVER PUBLIC ACCESS OR WILDLIFE AND HUNTING ACCESS. A FULL LIST OF APPLICATION CRITERIA AND SCORE WEIGHTING CAN BE FOUND IN THE *MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND APPLICATION GUIDELINES*.

THE PRIMARY CONCERNS OF THIS RECREATION PLAN ARE:

- **THE VILLAGE'S FIVE PARK SITES. WHILE THERE IS ALSO A COMMUNITY PLAYGROUND AND SCHOOL RECREATION AMENITIES, THIS PLAN PAYS ATTENTION TO FOUR SITES OWNED AND MANAGED BY THE VILLAGE, AS WELL AS CIVIC CENTER SOUTH, WHICH KINGSLEY MANAGES AS PART OF A FOUR MUNICIPALITY RECREATION AUTHORITY.**
- **NON-MOTORIZED CONNECTIONS. THIS INCLUDES SAFE PEDESTRIAN MOBILITY THROUGHOUT THE VILLAGE. THIS ALSO REFERS TO POTENTIAL TRAIL CONNECTIONS TO THE VARIOUS REGIONAL TRAILS NEAR THE VILLAGE, INCLUDING THE NORTH COUNTRY TRAIL (OR IRON-BELLE TRAIL), THE BOARDMAN RIVER TRAIL AND THE SHORE-TO-SHORE TRAIL.**

REGIONAL RECREATION CONTEXT: TRAIL SYSTEMS

REGIONAL TRAIL SYSTEMS

Kingsley residents, and northwest Michiganders generally, are always in short distance to a trail system. The State of Michigan, citizens, non-profits and local municipalities have, more than ever, prioritized trail development as a means to improve health, support environmental protections and to build a strong recreation economy. Regional trail connections are important for various reasons.

First, trails support healthy lifestyles by connecting people to nature and to opportunities for exercise. As this generation becomes more health conscious, greater public support for trail development and maintenance has become paramount for communities to remain competitive in attracting and maintaining a stable population. Second, trails, and recreation sites generally, are major tourism attractions. This is especially true in Michigan. People travel from counties over to use long, continuous bike trails, to hike scenic off-road trails and to use unique recreation sites. A strong example of this is Kingsley's disc golf course at Civic Center South. Lastly, trail access helps to promote the importance of environmental stewardship. Access to nature and the need for conservation efforts is in line with the reason many people have chosen to live in Northwest Michigan in the first place.

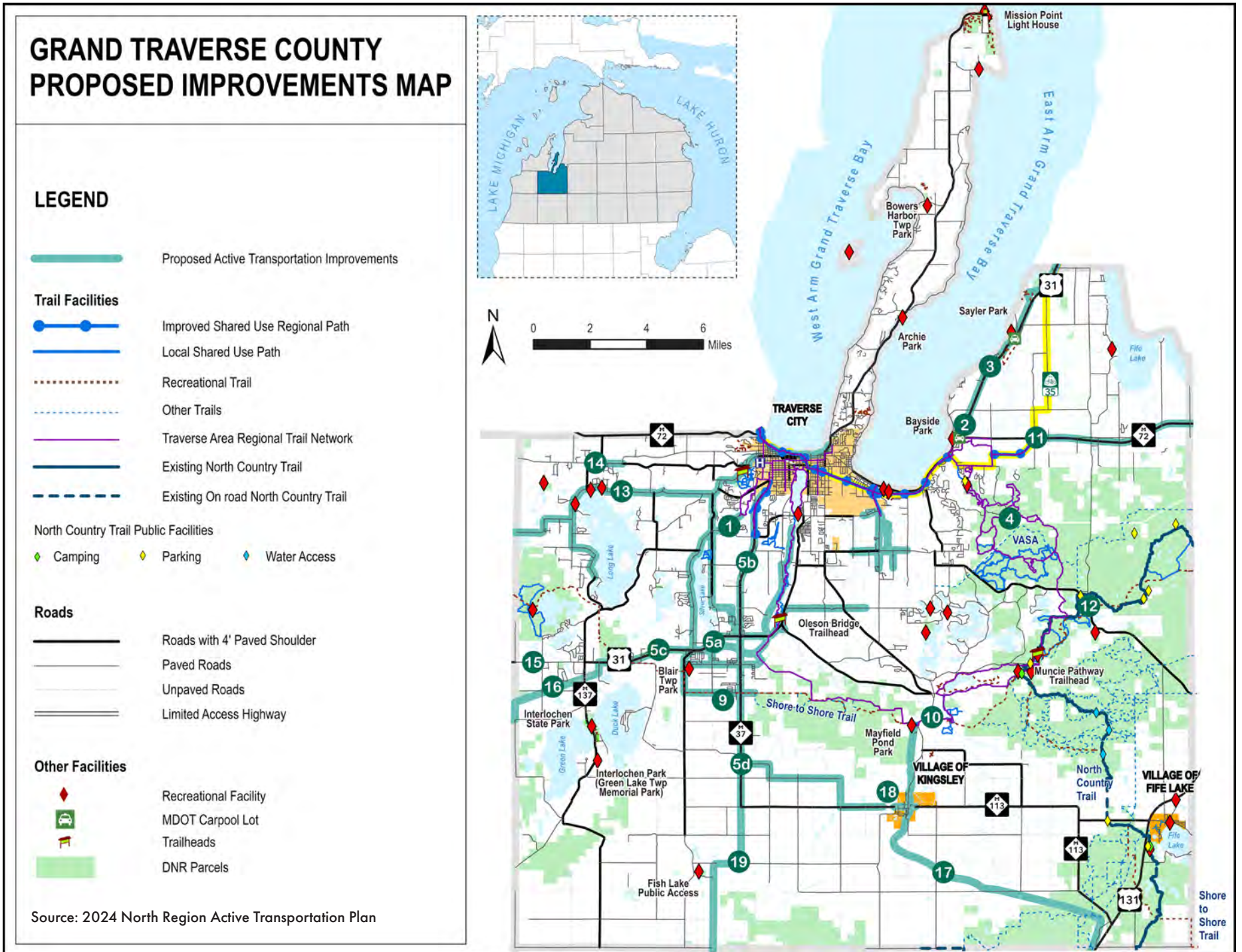
AT A REGIONAL SCALE, THERE ARE ONGOING EFFORTS TO FURTHER CONNECT DEVELOPED COMMUNITIES LIKE KINGSLEY TO REGIONAL TRAIL SYSTEMS. NORTHWEST LOWER MICHIGAN BOASTS THE IRON-BELLE TRAIL, WHICH OVERLAPS WITH THE NORTH COUNTRY TRAIL (SOUTH OF KINGSLEY), THE SHORE-TO-SHORE HORSEBACK TRAIL (NORTH AND EAST OF KINGSLEY) AND, CLOSER TO THE VILLAGE, THE BOARDMAN RIVER TRAIL (NORTH OF KINGSLEY).

MAP 5-A ON THE NEXT PAGE IS DERIVED FROM THE 2024 NORTH REGION ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (NRATP). THIS DOCUMENT HIGHLIGHTS PROPOSED TRAIL CONNECTIONS BASED ON PUBLIC INPUT, DISCUSSIONS WITH THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (MDOT), DISCUSSIONS WITH TRAIL ORGANIZATIONS AND INFORMATION POSTED ON MUNICIPAL WEBSITES.

THE NEAR-TERM GOAL FOR KINGSLEY WILL BE TO WORK WITH GROUPS INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES (DNR), TART TRAILS, PARADISE TOWNSHIP AND GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY TO DESIGNATE A TRAIL NORTH, THEREBY CONNECTING THE VILLAGE TO MAYFIELD POND PARK AND THE BOARDMAN RIVER TRAIL. GOING FORWARD, THIS EFFORT COULD EVENTUALLY LEAD TO A CONNECTION TO OTHER TRAVERSE AREA REGIONAL TRAIL SYSTEMS, SUCH AS THE VASA TRAIL AND TART TRAIL.

Source Note: For a full description of trail efforts in Grand Traverse County and Northwest Lower Michigan, visit NetworksNorthwest.org and read the full 2024 North Region Active Transportation Plan.

Map 5-A. Proposed Trail Connections, Grand Traverse County



RECREATION-FOCUSED COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

This section of the plan builds on the community description provided in Chapters 2 and 3 to specify demographic factors influencing parks and recreation initiatives in Kingsley. This section looks at population, household makeup, the tourism economy, recreation spending and more. The intent is to provide context for Kingsley’s recreation needs.

For example, while the percent of youth in Kingsley has remained largely the same in the past decade, the age 65+ population has grown. This has implications for the types of recreation infrastructure and programming needed. At the same time, approximately a quarter of Kingsley’s population is under the age of 18 (2020 US Census; see Figure 5-A). This population has different recreation needs. Adults also need a variety of recreation opportunities to maintain a social and healthy lifestyle.

Therefore, this chapter evaluates descriptive statistics and makes inferences for how these numbers relate to the area’s desired recreation future. Essentially, these numbers, combined with public input, provided the context for the objectives written by the Planning Commission.

Table 5-A. 2020 Population by Relationship and Household Type

	Number	Percent
Total Population	1,457	100%
In Households	1,447	99.3%
Householder	547	37.8%
Biological Child	430	29.7%
Adopted Child	9	0.6%
Stepchild	28	1.9%
Grandchild	18	1.2%
Other	415	28.1%

Source: ESRI Community Profile

TABLE 5-A (ABOVE) SHOWS THE RELATIONSHIP TO HOUSEHOLDER BREAKDOWN FOR THE VILLAGE. THERE ARE 1,447 PEOPLE IN HOUSEHOLDS IN KINGSLEY. AROUND A THIRD OF THESE ARE THE HOUSEHOLDER. ANOTHER THIRD ARE CHILDREN. APPROXIMATELY 26.5 PERCENT OF KINGSLEY’S POPULATION ARE CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 18 (SEE FIGURE 5-A ON THE NEXT PAGE). PROJECTS LIKE BROWNSON MEMORIAL PARK’S RENOVATION WILL BE CRITICAL IN ENSURING THAT YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE ACCESS TO RECREATION AMENITIES THAT CATER TO DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES.

PERSONAL VEHICLE OWNERSHIP AND DISABILITY STATUS

While Northwest Lower Michigan enjoys a variety of parks and trails, the rural character of the region often spells reliance on a personal vehicle to get there. Additionally, a physical disability can make it difficult or impossible for some individuals to enjoy every recreation site. For this reason, communities like Kingsley do well when they have parks that are a short distance from residents, and that have adopted Universal Design principles. This is discussed further in the Recreation Inventory section of this chapter.

Eleven percent of Kingsley residents have a disability and around 5 percent of occupied households do not have access to a personal vehicle. Kingsley will continue to work towards improving access to parks and trails throughout the village.

Figure 5-A. Youth, Adult & Retirement Age Breakdown, Kingsley, 2010-2020

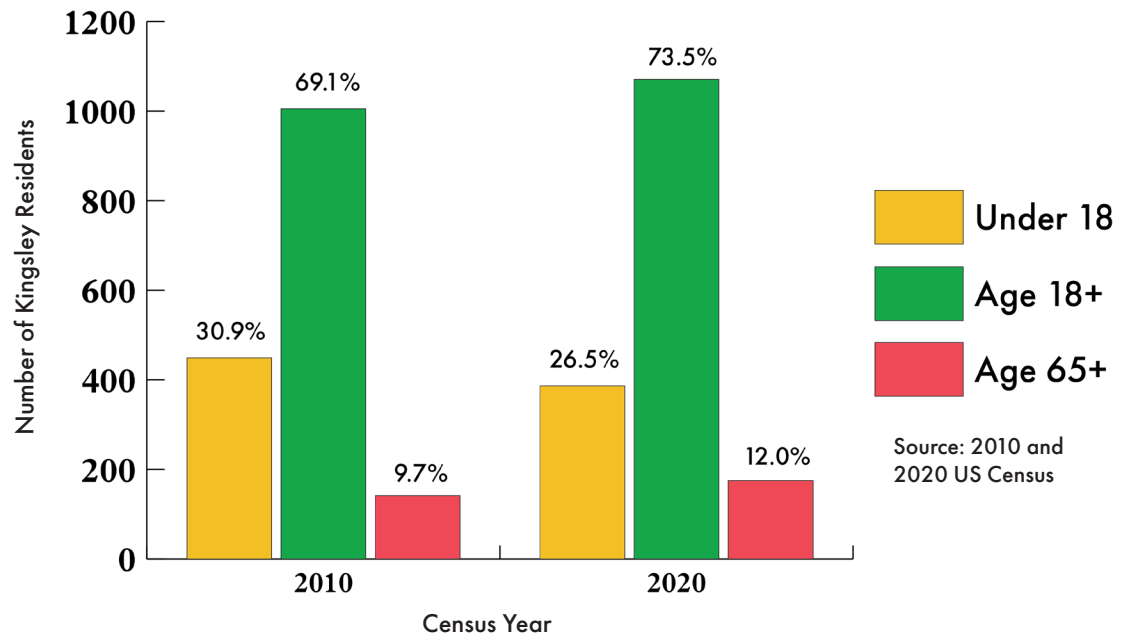
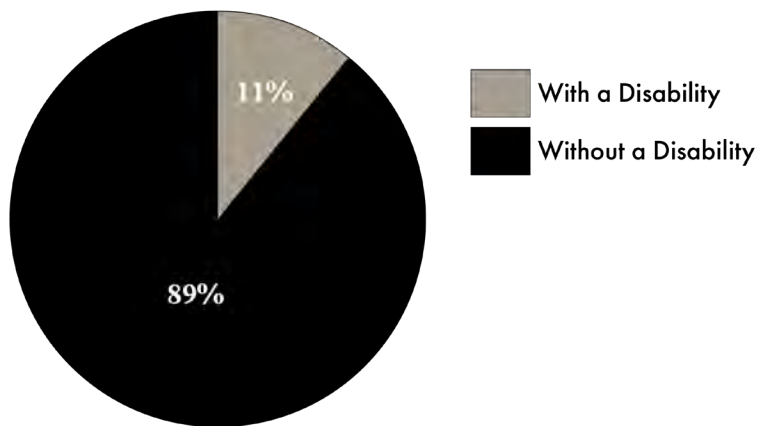
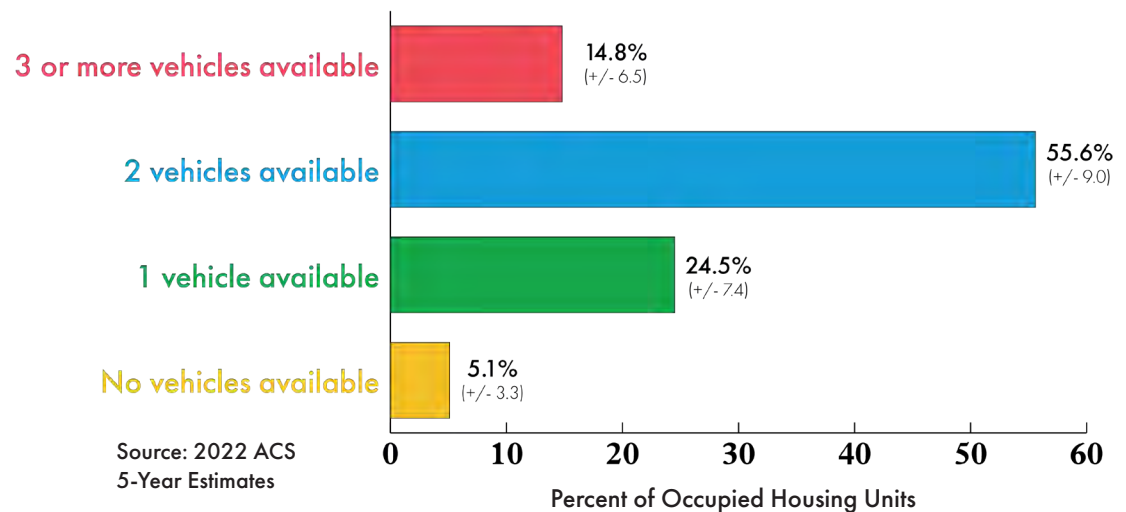


Figure 5-B. Disability Status, Kingsley, 2022



Source: 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Figure 5-C. Personal Vehicle Ownership, Kingsley, 2022





THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF RECREATION & TOURISM

Besides the social, health and environmental benefits that quality parks and recreation bring, communities should also take advantage of the economic perks. Unique, regional or high quality recreation amenities present the opportunity to expand the user base from local residents to visitors. Visitors spend money on local businesses, lodging and experiences. For example, Kingsley's Civic Center South has a highly sought after disc golf course. This amenity, which is relatively inexpensive to maintain, draws enthusiasts from across the region and state. This has direct and indirect positive benefits for the Kingsley community.

This section discusses three sources that highlight the importance of recreation on local economies in Northwest Lower Michigan. These include:

- *Outdoor Recreation Economic Impact Study for Northwest Michigan (2023)*. Networks Northwest and Fourth Economy.
- *2023 Tourism Economic Impact - Region & County (2023)*. Michigan Economic Development Corporation.
- *Esri Business Analyst Online Recreation Expenditures Report (2024)*.

The key takeaways from the Outdoor Recreation Impact Study are shown to the right. The recreation economy is growing in Northwest Michigan, and is already making up 3 percent of the labor force and 10 percent of Gross Regional Product.

In regard to jobs and tourism spending, Tables 5-B and 5-D on the next page describe visitor spending for Northwest Michigan and Grand Traverse County. Twenty-five percent of Northwest Michigan's tourism supported employment can be found in Grand Traverse County. This

represents \$303.6 million in labor income. Table 5-D describes visitor spending by year. Grand Traverse County has seen more visitor spending now than in the years before COVID, including an 8.1 percent increase from 2022 to 2023. In 2023 alone, visitors spent \$630.8 million in Grand Traverse County, which was 2.2 percent of visitor spending in Michigan as a whole.

Table 5-C shows Spending Potential Index for Kingsley. For this indicator, a score of 100 is equal proportionally to spending across the U.S. A score higher than 100 means that local residents spend more on average than people across the U.S. People in Kingsley spend relatively more in the categories Exercise Equipment and Gear, Game Tables; Bicycles; Camping Equipment; Winter Sports Equipment; Water Sports Equipment; and Rental/Repair of Sports/Recreation/Exercise Equipment.

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY FOR NORTHWEST MICHIGAN:

"THE OUTDOOR ECONOMY..."

- EMPLOYS 4,712 WORKERS / 3% OF THE REGIONAL LABOR FORCE.
- OFFERS AVERAGE EARNINGS OF \$44,627.
- CONTRIBUTED \$1.15 BILLION OR 10% OF GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT IN 2022.
- GREW BY 9% OVER 20 YEARS (2002 TO 2022).

OUTDOOR ECONOMY BUSINESSES...

- ARE GROWING - 96% OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS INDICATED SALES WERE INCREASING OR STABLE.
- ARE HIRING - 72% REPORTED THEY ARE PLANNING ON ADDITIONAL HIRING IN THE NEXT THREE YEARS."

Table 5-B. Tourism Economic Impact, 2023

	Northwest Region	Grand Traverse County
Tourism Supported Employment		
Direct	19,226	4,695
Total	28,180	6,948
Share of Region	100.0%	24.7%
Share of State	8.3%	2.0%
Share of County Employment	14.6%	9.2%
Tourism Supported Labor Income (Millions)		
Direct	\$789.3	\$180.1
Total	\$1,309.8	\$303.6

Source for Tables 5-B and 5-D: 2023 Tourism Economic Impact - Region & County, Michigan Economic Development Corporation

Table 5-C. Recreation Expenditures, Kingsley, 2024

Sports, Recreation and Exercise Equipment	Spending Potential Index	Average Amount Spent	Total
Exercise Equipment and Gear, Game Tables	109	\$116.22	\$4,549,282
Bicycles	115	\$91.76	\$3,591,984
Camping Equipment	118	\$19.73	\$772,418
Hunting and Fishing Equipment	87	\$53.62	\$2,098,937
Winter Sports Equipment	122	\$15.77	\$617,320
Water Sports Equipment	104	\$13.01	\$509,150
Other Sports Equipment	99	\$10.54	\$412,545
Rental/Repair of Sports/Recreation/Exercise Equipment	110	\$3.23	\$126,267

Source: ESRI Recreation Expenditures. Data note: The Spending Potential Index (SPI) is household-based, and represents the amount spent for a product or service relative to a national average of 100. Detail may not sum to totals due to rounding. Esri forecasts for 2024 and 2029; Consumer Spending data are derived from the 2021 and 2022 Consumer Expenditure Surveys, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Table 5-D. Visitor Spending Timeline, 2018-2023

	Visitor Spending, Millions						Percent Change (2023/2022)	Share of Region	Share of State
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023			
Northwest Region	\$1,964.2	\$2,017.8	\$1,698.5	\$2,136.5	\$2,372.6	\$2,520.2	6.2%	100.0%	8.6%
Grand Traverse County	\$465.9	\$477.1	\$389.6	\$493.2	\$583.8	\$630.8	8.1%	25.0%	2.2%

THIS SECTION DESCRIBES THE VILLAGE'S OPERATIONS AND HOW THEY FUND, ADMINISTER AND IMPLEMENT RECREATION PROJECTS. THIS SECTION IS HELPFUL TO STATE, FEDERAL, NON-PROFIT, FOR-PROFIT AND OTHER NEARBY MUNICIPALITIES TO UNDERSTAND THE BEST WAY TO COLLABORATE WITH KINGSLEY ON RECREATION PROJECTS. IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT KINGSLEY MUST OFTEN LOOK ELSEWHERE FOR PARTNERSHIPS AND FUNDING SOURCES TO COMPLETE PROJECTS. IN ADDITION, THIS SECTION SHOULD BE HELPFUL TO THE VILLAGE WHEN ON-BOARDING NEW STAFF OR VOLUNTEERS, AS IT DEFINES ROLES.

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART & STAFF DESCRIPTION

The Village of Kingsley is served by an elected Village Council. The Council makes appointments to the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals and Downtown Development Authority. Described in greater detail in Chapter 6, utilities are provided through a municipal water and sewer system, as well as a wastewater treatment plant.

The Village employs a full-time Village Manager, Zoning Administrator, Treasurer and Office Administrator. The Village Clerk is a part-time employee. The Department of Public Works maintains streets, parks and municipal services with three full-time staff members.

Civic Center South, the geographically largest recreation asset in Kingsley is managed through a Recreation Authority. Membership in the Recreation Authority includes the Village of Kingsley, Paradise Township, the Village of Fife Lake and Mayfield Township. Each jurisdiction has a member represented on the Authority's board.

ROLES OF COMMISSIONS

Kingsley's Planning Commission is the primary body responsible for recommending projects and their priorities to the Village Council. For this reason, the Kingsley Planning Commission led the update to this Master Plan and Recreation plan throughout 2024 and 2025. As of 2024, the Planning Commission consists of seven appointed volunteers.

ROLES OF VOLUNTEERS & ORGANIZATIONS

Kingsley's local government does not have a formalized group of volunteers. However, during past efforts such as erecting fencing at Civic Center South, the Village has been able to use social media and web posts to organize volunteer aid.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH SCHOOL DISTRICT & OTHER PUBLIC AGENCIES INVOLVED IN RECREATION

Kingsley does not have a formal relationship with Kingsley Area Schools. The most significant relationship for the area's recreation is the Village's participation and collaboration through the Civic Center South Recreation Authority.

STATUS OF PAST GRANTS & CURRENT FUNDING SOURCES

The Village of Kingsley has received one DNR grant, which was for improvements at Civic Center South in 2003. The details of this past grant can be found in Table 5-E (below). Currently, maintenance for Kingsley’s recreation sites is sustained through the Village’s general fund. This is shown in greater detail on the next page. Additionally, Brownson Park is undergoing renovations as of 2024-2025 with funding from a Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) grant.

Figure 5-D. Kingsley Organizational Chart

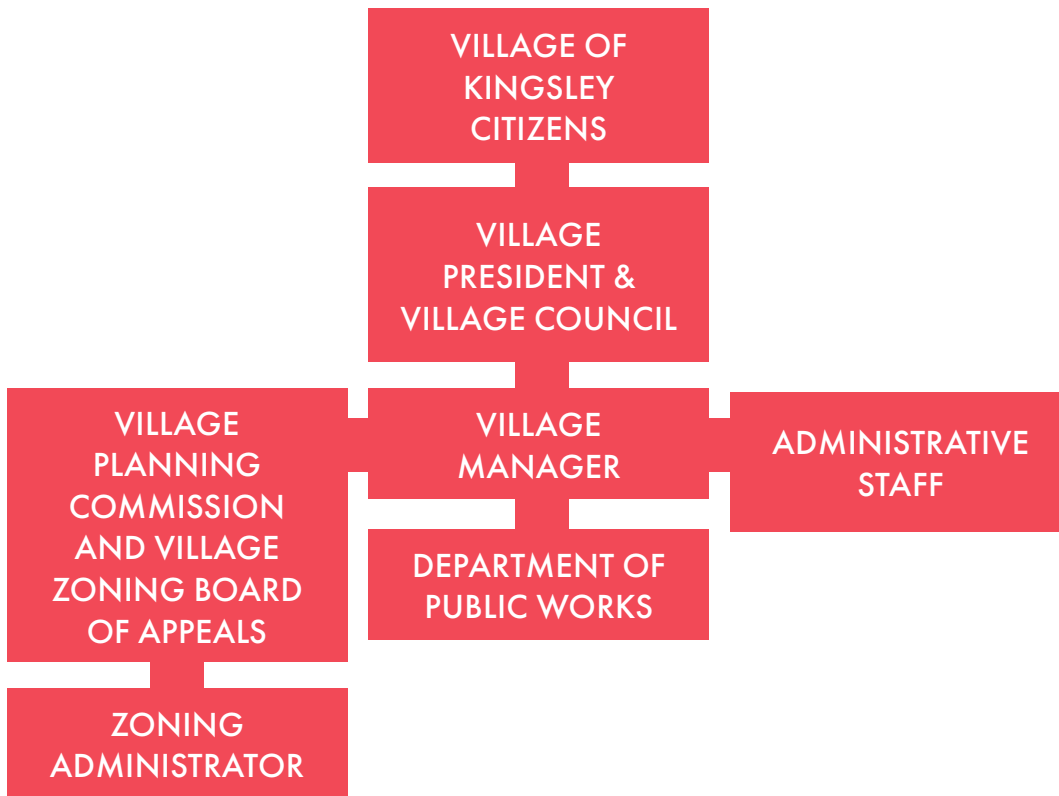


Table 5-E. Kingsley DNR Grant History

Project Number	TF03-079
Project Title	Civic Center South
Project Status	Grant Closed
Project County	Grand Traverse
Project Year	2003
Grant Amount	\$125,000
Project Description	Construct a multi-use recreational complex that includes an archery range, tennis and basketball courts, restroom and concessions building, driveway and parking lot, and a hiking path through a nature area.

ANNUAL BUDGET & CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Table 5-E (below) shows Kingsley’s annual budget as of November, 2024. The Village budgets \$1,000 for repairs and maintenance of park amenities. During 2024-2025, the primary recreation expenditure will be on the planned updates to Brownson Memorial Park. This park is a focal point of the community. It hosts live music, the farmers market and play equipment for younger youth. Kingsley’s recreation expenditures are planned in advance and allocated as needs arise. Going forward, the Village will seek more grant funding from state, federal and local sources to make some of the improvements listed in this chapter’s objectives section.

Kingsley’s last Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is from 2015-2020. While it does contain a section related to parks and recreation, the Village will work to update the CIP in order to have current costs for projects.

Table 5-F. Kingsley Budget, Parks & Recreation

Expenditures	2022-2023	2023-2024	2023-2024	2023-2024	2024-2025
Parks & Recreation	Actual	Adopted	Budget Amendments	Final Amended Budget 2/28/24	Requested Budget
Supplies/Printing	\$62,987	\$1,000	\$20	\$1,020	\$1,000
Utilities/Repairs & Maintenance		-	-		\$1,000
Master Plan & Recreation Plan			-		\$7,000
Brownson Memorial Park Reconstruction			\$95,000	\$95,000	\$1,260,000
Total Parks & Recreation	\$62,987	\$1,000	\$95,020	\$96,020	\$1,269,000

Source: Village of Kingsley

RECREATION INVENTORY

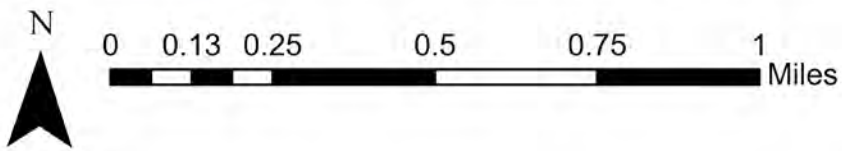
This section provides a comprehensive inventory of each recreation site owned and operated by the Village of Kingsley. To plan for the future, we must first know where we are. To this end, this section describes each parks' geographic size, current amenities and uses, Americans with disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility score and park location.

ACCESSIBILITY SCORE REFERS TO THE DEFINITIONS PROVIDED BY THE DNR'S GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION PLANS. THEY ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- 1 - NONE OF THE FACILITIES MEET ACCESSIBILITY GUIDELINES.
- 2 - SOME FACILITIES MEET ACCESSIBILITY GUIDELINES.
- 3 - MOST FACILITIES MEET ACCESSIBILITY GUIDELINES.
- 4 - THE ENTIRE PARK MEETS ACCESSIBILITY GUIDELINES.
- 5 - THE ENTIRE PARK WAS DEVELOPED USING THE PRINCIPLES OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN.



Map 5-B. Kingsley's Park System



KINGSLEY'S DIVERSE PARKS SYSTEM: PASSIVE & ACTIVE

Communities do well when their recreation assets support both active and passive recreation amenities. **Active recreation** refers most often to activities that require more physical exertion and activity-supported infrastructure or equipment. Examples would include basketball courts, pickleball, playgrounds and fitness centers. **Passive recreation** refers to activities that have minimal impact on a site and typically function in sync with the natural features of the area. Examples include hiking, biking, fishing, camping and bird watching. Kingsley hosts both types of recreation.

At different scales, Civic Center South, Brownson Memorial Park and Whispering Pines provide active recreation opportunities. In contrast, Grove Park and Veterans Memorial Park are more passive in design.

INVENTORY PROCESS

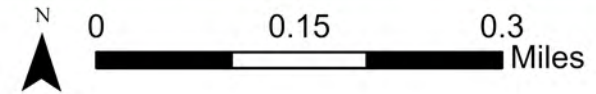
This recreation inventory was developed in the following process:

- The Kingsley Planning Commission and Networks Northwest reviewed inventory from the 2010-2015 Village of Kingsley & Paradise Township Cooperative Integrated Parks & Recreation Plan.
- The Networks Northwest team visited each of the five Village recreation sites to confirm the accuracy of the review.
- The Planning Commission and Networks Northwest did a final review of the inventory at another Planning Commission meeting.

CIVIC CENTER SOUTH



Map 5-C. Civic Center South Aerial

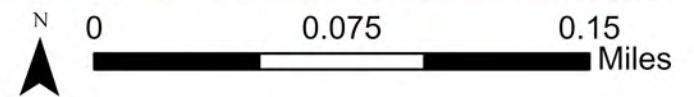
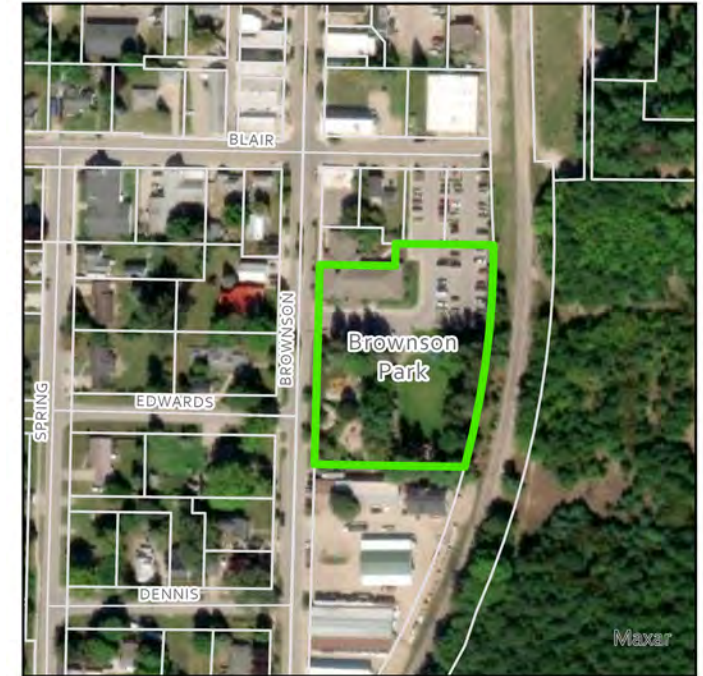


PARK NAME	Civic Center South
PARK SIZE	40 acres
GENERAL PURPOSE AND USES	Civic Center South is managed by a four jurisdiction recreation authority. It hosts sports leagues, and both active and passive recreation opportunities.
SERVICE AREA	Regional; Neighboring townships and villages
PARK AMENITIES	Walking paths; Two sand volleyball courts; Two ball fields; Three soccer fields; Seasonal ice rink; Tennis/basketball court; Half mile paved walkway; Benches; Natural area; Disc golf course
ACCESSIBILITY SCORE	3

BROWNSON MEMORIAL PARK



Map 5-D. Brownson Memorial Park Aerial

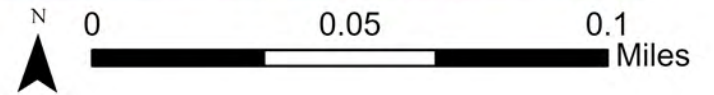
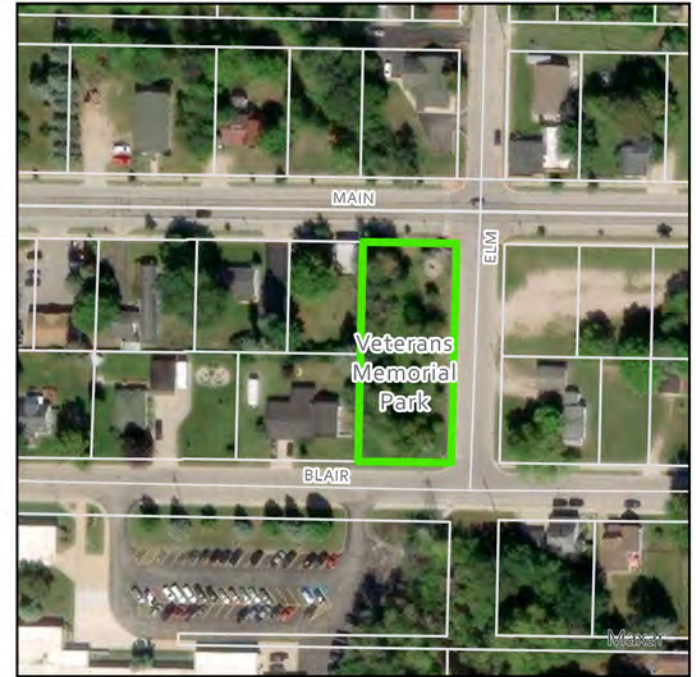


PARK NAME	Brownson Memorial Park
PARK SIZE	2.07 acres
GENERAL PURPOSE AND USES	This park hosts various community events including live music, the annual trunk-or-treat and the farmers market. It is located next to the Village offices. Other than Civic Center South, Brownson is the most used park in Kingsley.
SERVICE AREA	Local (primarily village residents); Neighboring townships and villages
PARK AMENITIES	Playground with swing set and jungle gym; 9/11 Memorial (moved to Veterans Memorial Park during 2024-25 renovations); Splash pad; Pavilion with electric; Restrooms; Drinking fountain; Lit walking path; Seven wooden benches; Three square picnic tables; One octagon wooded picnic table; Six metal benches; Two metal picnic tables; Five trash cans; Two grills
ACCESSIBILITY SCORE	4

VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK



Map 5-E. Veterans Memorial Park Aerial



PARK NAME	Veterans Memorial Park
PARK SIZE	0.50 acres
GENERAL PURPOSE AND USES	Veterans Memorial Park is a street-side park built around a memorial for those who have served in the United States Armed Forces.
SERVICE AREA	Local (primarily village residents)
PARK AMENITIES	Landscaping; Lighting; Two wood benches; Gazebo
ACCESSIBILITY SCORE	4

THE GROVE PARK



Map 5-F. The Grove Park Aerial

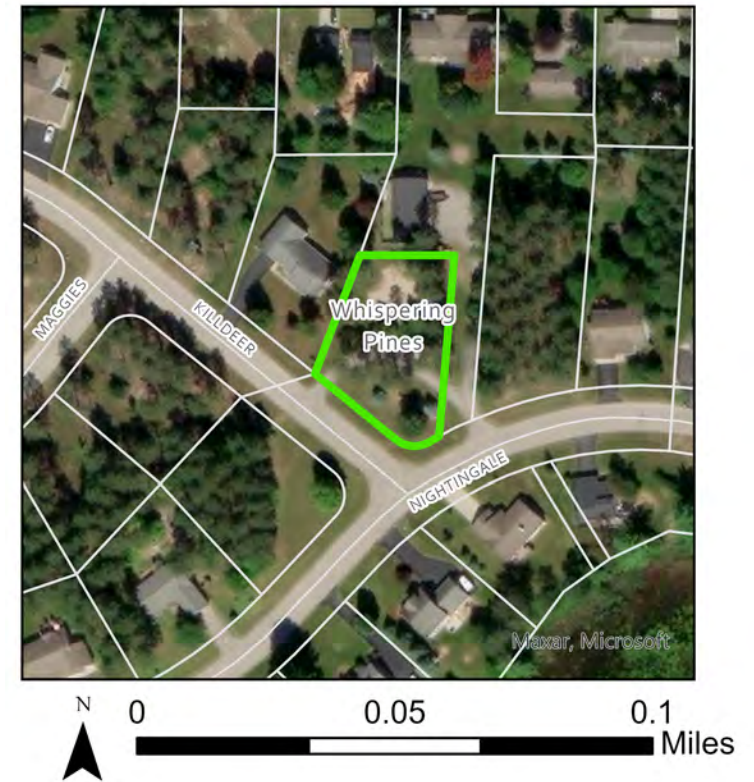


PARK NAME	The Grove Park
PARK SIZE	7.09 acres
GENERAL PURPOSE AND USES	Grove Park is a primarily undeveloped, wooded park that provides a passive recreation asset for hiking and nature viewing.
SERVICE AREA	Local (primarily village residents)
PARK AMENITIES	Unpaved hiking trail, unimproved parking, one bench and one of the Village's water pump stations.
ACCESSIBILITY SCORE	1

WHISPERING PINES



Map 5-G. Whispering Pines Aerial



PARK NAME	Whispering Pines
PARK SIZE	0.46 acres
GENERAL PURPOSE AND USES	Whispering Pines is a pocket park found in the Whispering Pines neighborhood.
SERVICE AREA	Neighborhood park (primarily serves residents within walking distance)
PARK AMENITIES	Swing set; Merry-go-round; Slide; Bench; Picnic table
ACCESSIBILITY SCORE	1

STUDENT INPUT SESSIONS

Networks Northwest’s Community Development team met with five civics and economics classes at Kingsley High School. Students in each class worked in groups of 2-4 to “design their own park” for the Village. Each group was provided with 22 optional park amenities but due to “budgetary constraints”, could only prioritize six park features.

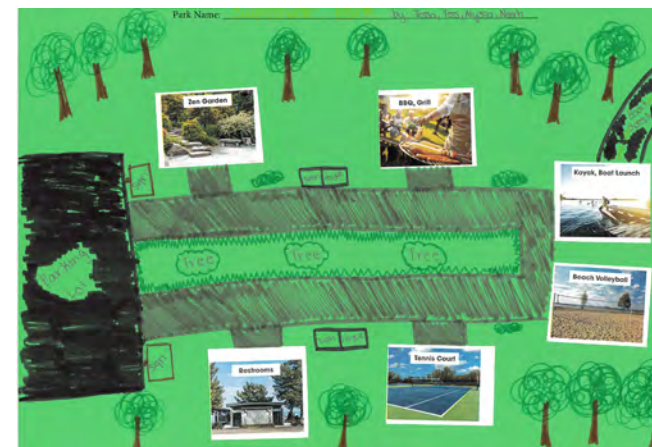
This activity and presentation from Networks Northwest provided three main learning objectives:

1. Learn about local government, public policy and urban planning as optional career paths;
2. Build consensus in a team by negotiating for some amenities over others; and
3. Advocate as a team for community improvements.

The top five most selected park amenities were Restrooms (23), Playground (15), Basketball Court (12), Walking Path (12) and Skate Park (9). For a full list of results and to see each park rendering, see Appendix A.

KINGSLEY’S STUDENTS WERE ABLE TO SELECT THE FOLLOWING RECREATION AMENITIES FOR THEIR PERFECT PARK: AMPHITHEATER; MURALS, SCULPTURES; BASEBALL, SOFTBALL; BASKETBALL COURT; DISC GOLF; DOG PARK; FIRE PIT; GAZEBO; SKATE PARK; TENNIS COURT; PLAYGROUND; RESTROOMS; OUTDOOR GYM; PICNIC TABLES; BBQ, GRILL; KAYAK, BOAT LAUNCH; BEACH VOLLEYBALL; WALKING PATH; ZEN GARDEN; CAMPING; COMMUNITY GARDEN; MOUNTAIN BIKING; OR OTHER.

Figure 5-F. Sample Student Park Designs



FARMERS MARKET

Networks Northwest setup at Kingsley's farmers market on September 18, 2024. The farmers market is well-attended each Wednesday throughout the summer and fall. The market features a diverse variety of vendors, as well as live music. Planners asked attendees to use sticky notes to give their ideas for Kingsley's future.

TRUNK-OR-TREAT

Networks Northwest attended the annual Kingsley Trunk-or-Treat to gather public sentiment and, more importantly, to pass out candy. Parents and children were asked, "What is one thing that would make Kingsley a better place?"

RECREATION-RELATED RESULTS FROM POP-UP EVENTS

- Winter/indoor activity (5)
- Walkable downtown & local amenities
- Live music
- Open space - don't cut down trees
- More winter activities for kids
- More for young people to do
- Fitness center
- Parks & walking trail needed
- Utilize more open space
- Ga-Ga ball and 9 Square
- Community garden
- Bigger parks/hiking trail
- Civic Center South upgrades
- Public pool (4)
- Indoor programming for kids
- Auditorium for music arts
- Pump track for bikes
- Bike trail (3)
- Improvements to Brownson
- BMX park
- Park updates (2)
- Workout gym
- Larger park
- More community events during winter (2)
- Skate park



PHOTOS: KINGSLEY FARMERS MARKET (LEFT); KINGSLEY TRUNK-OR-TREAT (RIGHT)

SURVEY RESULTS

Kingsley residents, business owners and visitors were encouraged to take an online survey from August to November, 2024. The following pages list some of the key findings from this survey, which helped Kingsley leadership to understand:

1. What people like about Kingsley’s recreation sites;
2. What improvements could be made;
3. What funding sources should be used to make these improvements; and
4. What would encourage more non-motorized travel within the village and to neighboring communities.

Pages 5-23 and 5-24 graphically display survey responses related to Kingsley’s parks and recreation.

The following were key findings from the survey, as they relate to parks and recreation:

- 118 survey responses were collected.
- 33 respondents want to see more sporting/fitness facilities in Kingsley.
- The most common summer activities that respondents participated in were Swimming/beach activities (85), Walking/running (76) and Hiking (71).
- The most common winter activities that respondents participated in were Sledding (52), Walking/running (46) and Hiking (36).
- As walking, running and hiking were listed as year-round activity, this emphasizes Kingsley’s goal of connecting the village internally and externally with non-motorized trails systems.
- Respondents noted a need for more sidewalks connections, especially around the high school.
- The community is very supportive of more trail connections.
- Grants, donations, re-appropriation of taxes and millages were all supported as means to fund recreation in Kingsley. Grants and donations were the most popular method.
- Respondents stated that safer pathways and bike lanes, sidewalk expansions, better lighting and more scenic views would all work to encourage people to use non-motorized transportation more frequently.
- Eight people noted that one of the top three reasons they chose to live in Kingsley was Parks & Recreation. Eleven people selected Nature & Scenic Views.

Figure 5-G. “Which of the following activities do you participate in during the summer months? (select all that apply)”

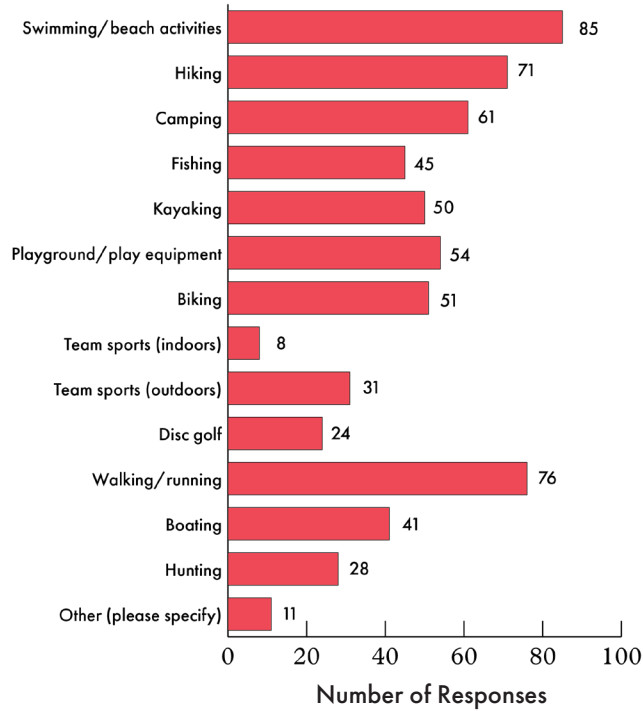


Figure 5-I. “Parks in Kingsley are well-maintained.”

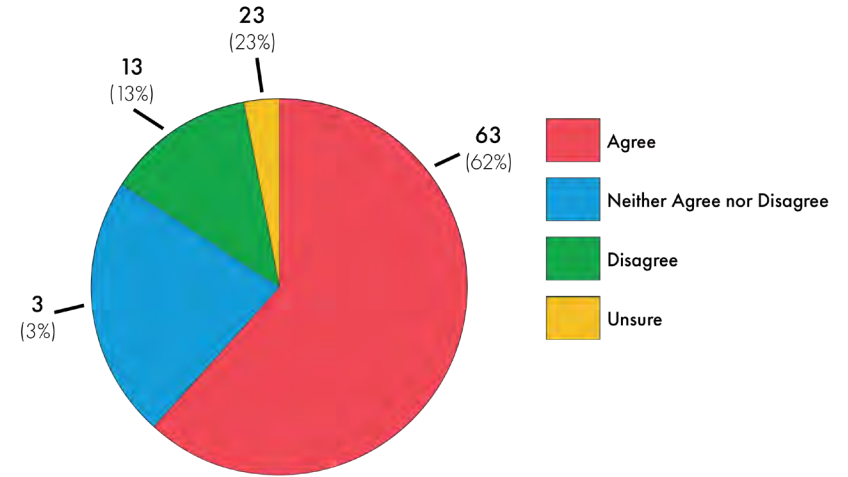


Figure 5-H. “Which of the following activities do you participate in during the winter months? (select all that apply)”

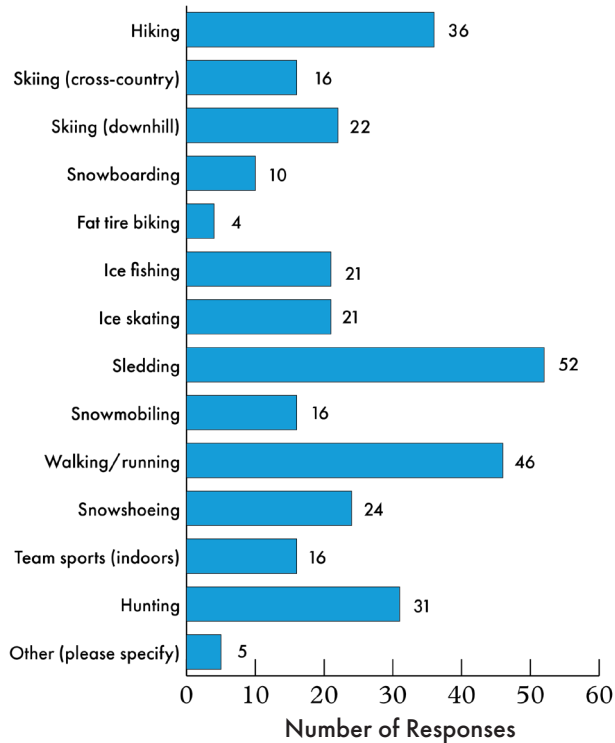


Figure 5-J. “Which funding methods do you support for parks and recreation in Kingsley?” (select all that apply)”

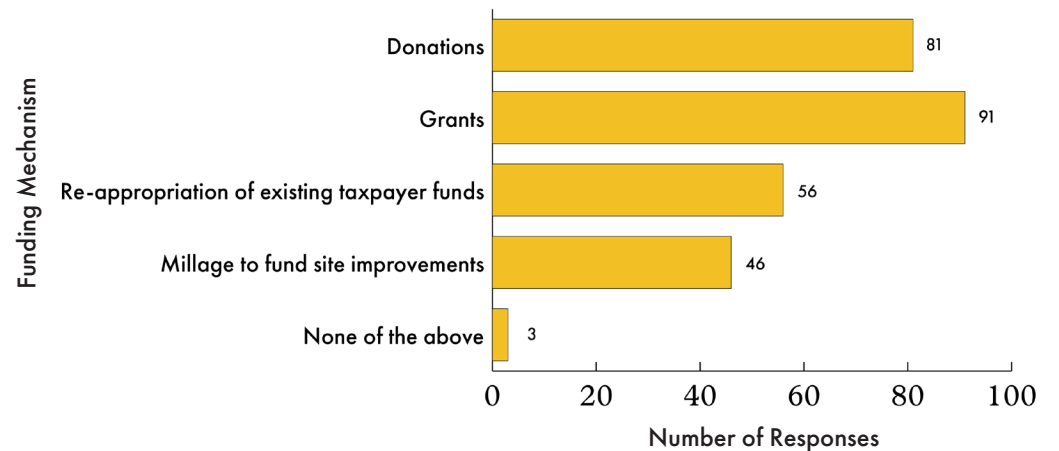


Figure 5-K. “To what degree would you support additional trail connections from Kingsley to other areas?”

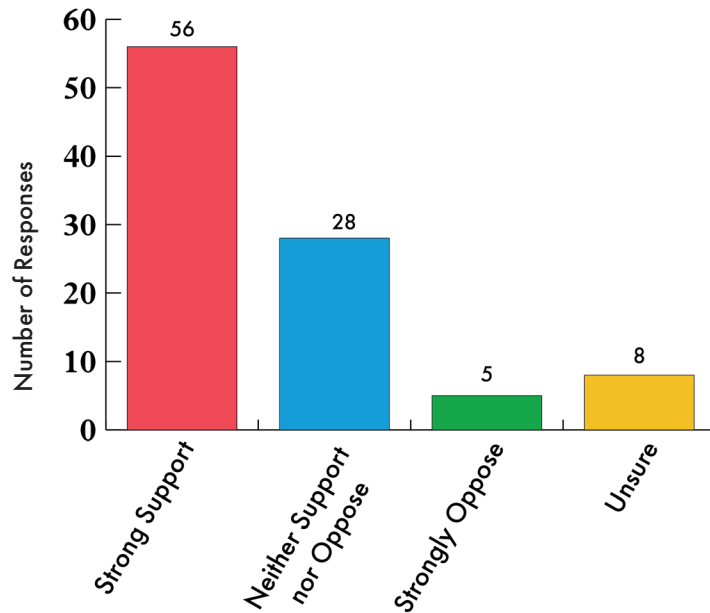


Figure 5-L. “What programs or recreation amenities do not currently exist within or near Kingsley that you would like to see implemented?”

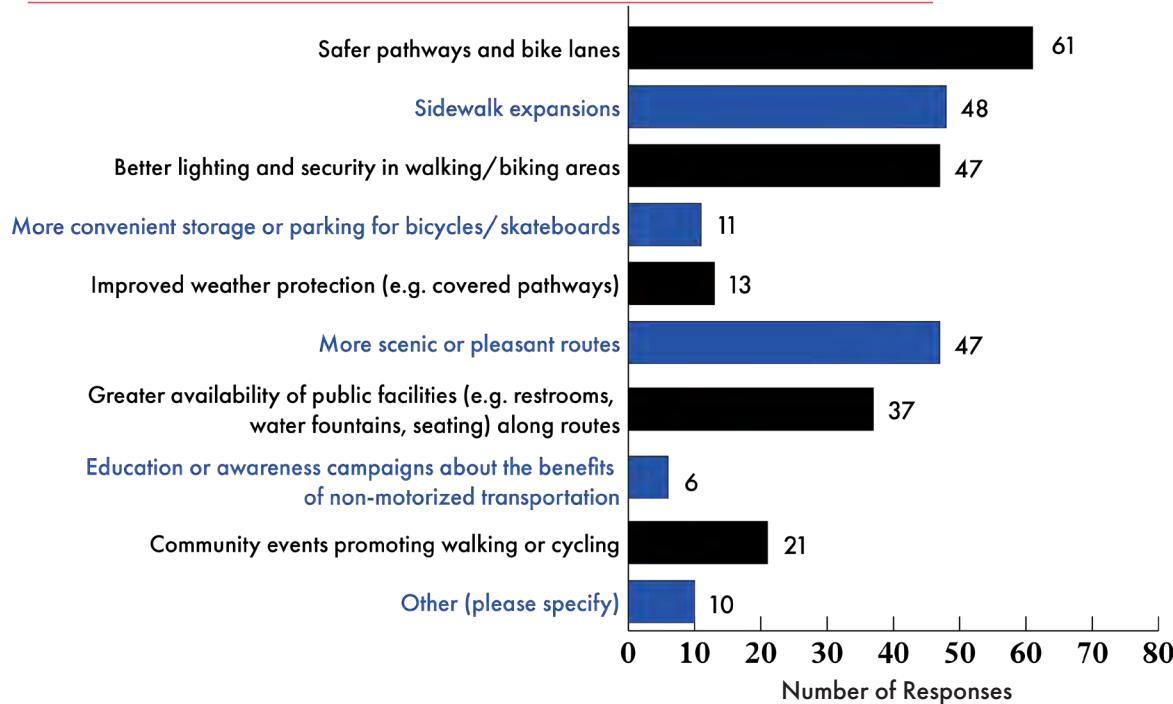


Figure 5-M. “Are there any areas that you think would benefit from additional sidewalk connections?” (Verbatim written survey responses)

- Would be nice to have sidewalk connection to the township office and polling place.
- Along South Brownson Avenue
- Spring St to Clark St north side of the road
- Up to the high school, walking path trail in track/football fields
- High School
- I would love to have sidewalk capability in the pleasant valley, Eden neighborhood.
- Side streets and a sidewalk from town all the way to the dollar general area
- I paid village tax and I do not have any sidewalk in front of my lawn. I was forced to drive my kids to school due to lack of sidewalk on my side of house.
- We need a biking path that connects us to TC
- Summit city road
- Civic center south NEEDS sidewalks leading into the facility along the road
- Improved crosswalk awareness at 4way
- Fenton Street all the way to Whispering Pines entrance
- High school to the fields and down town
- All the roads in town that don’t have them
- Connect to mayfield pond
- From Cherrywood to Dollar General
- Village to Family Dollar, better path to high school and across to the ball fields.

RECREATION GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The next two pages list goals and objectives that the Village of Kingsley will seek to implement, or begin implementing, over the next five years. While there are other objectives identified through this planning process, the following list were deemed by the Planning Commission to be the highest priorities to improving recreation in the village. This was determined through a review of the previous plan's goals, as well as by thoroughly discussing the input gathered from the four public input efforts. This list should act as a living document, wherein progress is regularly reviewed (see Action Plan) and objectives are updated as they are completed or when a new path to success is identified.

Goal 1. Create a health friendly community through walkability and other non-motorized travel.

Objective 1A. Add wayfinding to delineate a non-motorized route from Civic Center South to north village limits. While there is a network of sidewalks that support this connection already, the Village will prioritize signage and safe crossings along this route to help connect non-motorized travelers to these two key points of interest.

Objective 1B. Connect the Kingsley Trail to Mayfield Pond Park and to Boardman/Ottaway River Trail. There are two potential routes to accomplish this connection. The first is along the existing rail bed that runs north-south through the village and intersects Garfield Road. The second route was planned by Wade Trim. This route emanates from the road end on Madison Avenue and travels north through undeveloped, but privately owned, land until reaching Mayfield Pond Park. See Appendix A from the 2019 *Regional Trail Development Assessment for Grand Traverse and Leelanau Counties*, developed by TART Trails and LIAA. This objective would require a partnership between Kingsley, Paradise Township, the Michigan DNR and private landowner(s) to accomplish.

Objective 1C. Add wayfinding signage to non-motorized routes throughout the village to promote cultural sites, parks and local businesses. The Village may partner with the Downtown Development Authority to accomplish this objective. Once Objective 1A is completed, trail users should be guided to Kingsley's various points of interest.

Objective 1D. Increase barrier free accessibility for non-motorized routes. Pedestrian routes throughout the village will be safe and accessible for everyone, including children and individuals with a physical disability. The Village will continue to work with community members to identify specific areas of need. During the 2024-2025 plan update, the Planning Commission identified the following locations as needing engineering updates to improve their accessibility:

- M-113 (Main St) and Brownson Ave
- M-113 (Main St) and Elm St
- Road crossings on Fenton St, especially nearest the Kingsley Area Elementary School

Goal 2. Create multi-functional spaces for recreation, group and family activity.

Objective 2A. Improve barrier free accessibility at all parks. While Brownson Memorial Park and Veterans Memorial Park each have high accessibility ratings, there are opportunities for additional improvements in Kingsley. The Village will work with community members to identify potential projects at each Village park to better ensure that all parks are universally accessible in the future.

Objective 2B. Make improvements to Civic Center South to allow for both passive and active recreation uses. This may include rebuilding the ice rink due to its current disrepair, repaving the basketball courts, adding viewer bleacher seating around the ice rink and basketball courts, expanding or rebuilding the playground, and identifying additional family use activities. In its current configuration, Civic Center South is a hub for sports leagues. While this is the intended use in the near term, the Village would like to make the site more suitable for passive recreation, youth and family activity.

Objective 2C. Identify a location and conduct a feasibility assessment for a new community center in the village. Currently, there are few facilities available to village residents to rent for civic purposes. A new community center would help in this regard, and would also provide an additional revenue source for the Village. This objective would could also help with the ongoing request for more indoor youth activities during the winter months.

Objective 2D. Improve safety at Kingsley's recreation sites by adding or updating security camera systems. As of 2024, Civic Center South and Brownson Memorial Park each have security cameras. The Village will work to expand security camera usage to other park locations. Additionally, the cameras at Civic Center South and Brownson could be updated with newer cameras with higher resolution capabilities.

Objective 2E. Continue to identify opportunities to acquire or lease land for public open space or recreation purposes.

Progress Report: The 2010-2015 Village Recreation Plan contained an objective to "Create a Memorial reflecting the area at the Main Street Green Space." The Village has since completed this project.

ACTION PROGRAM

To successfully implement the objectives noted in this chapter, the Village will need to diligently review timelines, responsible parties, highlight successes and identify ways to overcome the inevitable barriers that will arise. The Action Program described on this page will guide the Village in this regard. Similar to the goals and objections section, the Village should make changes to the Action Program as needed. The four action items listed below are a starting point for the Village and should be updated on an ongoing basis.

ACTION ITEM 1

Assign Village leadership to a three to five member Parks Committee. This committee will be responsible for updating the Planning Commission and Village Council on progress being made towards implementing the objectives of this chapter. The Parks Committee will meet monthly and will make reports quarterly.

ACTION ITEM 2

Establish relationships and have ongoing communication with recreation actors in the region. This may include, but is not limited to, the Civic Center South Recreation Authority, the Michigan DNR, the Michigan DOT, TART Trails, Grand Traverse County and elected leadership at the state and federal level. Communication may consist of inviting these groups to present to the Planning Commission on funding opportunities or potential project partnerships.

ACTION ITEM 3

Work with the Civic Center South Recreation Authority to discuss the current budget and whether additional funding sources or allocations are necessary. Additionally, the popularity of Civic Center South may necessitate that Kingsley and its neighbors identify an alternative location to host sporting events and leagues.

ACTION ITEM 4

Develop a non-motorized connections plan in conjunction with the Kingsley DDA and Paradise Township. The plan should identify clear action items for improving walkability in Kingsley and connections to Mayfield Pond Park and other regional trail systems.