

MARQUETTE CHARTER TOWNSHIP

MARQUETTE COUNTY | MICHIGAN



RECREATION PLAN | 2022-2026

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INTRODUCTION

The *Marquette Township Recreation Plan | 2022-2026* shall serve as a recreational planning road map for the next five years in the Charter Township of Marquette, located in Marquette County. Recreation provision in Marquette Township is a key component in community planning, as it serves as a benchmark for how residents and visitors view their quality of life. As residents already know, we are home to world-class, four-season recreational opportunities. With approximately 10 miles of Lake Superior shoreline, epic trail networks, scenic vistas, historical sites, and abundant local, county, and state-owned recreational properties, we are truly a mecca for the outdoor enthusiast.

The plan's primary focus is to ensure that quality recreational opportunities are available for users of all ages and abilities. It is also intended to provide ways to achieve recreational goals and allow for eligibility for financial assistance from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund and Recreation Passport Grant Programs. Our five-year Action Program is based on Recreation Committee input, public input from residents and stakeholders, community survey results, and staff research.

This plan was written in accordance with the [Michigan Department of Natural Resources Guidelines for the Development of Community Parks and Recreation Plans](#), as administered by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Grants Management team. It has also been developed with the acknowledgment of [Michigan's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan \(SCORP\)](#). Many of the goals and objectives found in this plan reflect similar intentions of the SCORP and this plan aims to align Marquette Township's recreation planning with many of the state's long-range recreation planning objectives.

A final draft of the recreation plan was distributed to our surrounding municipalities, agencies, partners and the public for review and comment on Monday, January 24, 2022. The plan was also made available for review on our Marquette Township website at: www.marquettetownship.org.

Consistent Township Board leadership, effective planning and stable budgeting for recreation project matching funds have afforded us the opportunity to accomplish several improvement projects since the last publication of this plan.



View from Sugar Loaf Mountain | Marquette Township



COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

The jurisdiction of this plan represents the desired and anticipated outdoor recreation needs for residents and visitors of Marquette Township, Marquette County, Michigan. In addition, most municipalities within Marquette County also conduct recreation planning at some level. When possible, we coordinate with surrounding governmental, educational and stakeholder's efforts to support and advance their recreational goals. The plan speaks to our broader, regional audience further along in the document.

Marquette Charter Township is located in the central Upper Peninsula of Michigan in Marquette County, adjacent to the City of Marquette, the most populous city in the Upper Peninsula. Marquette County lies on the southern shore of Lake Superior, and consists of 19 townships and three cities.

A general location map is provided as Figure 1-1 and a base map showing surrounding municipalities, topographical information and a general transportation network is shown in Figure 1-2. The Township has a land area of about 54.7 square miles. The Township's northeast edge borders Lake Superior. Powell Township is to the north; Ishpeming Township makes up a portion of the west boundary; Negaunee Township makes up part of the south and west boundaries; Sands Township is to the south; and the city of Marquette is to the east.

The Township's geographic location is relatively remote from large urban areas of Michigan. It is an eight-hour drive to Detroit and seven hours to Lansing. However, the City of Marquette is adjacent to the Township, offering amenities found in larger urban areas, such as the university and the hospital. The Marquette area has become a regional shopping hub for much of the Upper Peninsula. Other recreational and resort areas of the Upper Peninsula are in close proximity.

The major transportation route in the Township is U.S. Highway 41/M-28. US-41 and M-28 are merged through the Township, and consist of a multi-lane highway running from Harvey through the City of Ishpeming. US-41 is an important north/south corridor connecting the central and northern Upper Peninsula with larger cities in Wisconsin and Illinois including Green Bay, Milwaukee and Chicago.

Although M-28 follows US-41 from Harvey to Baraga County, it is an important east/west highway. M-28 traverses the northern half of the Upper Peninsula from the City of Wakefield to Interstate 75 near Sault Ste. Marie. Other major transportation routes include County Roads 492 and 550.





Figure 1-1



Figure 1-2

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

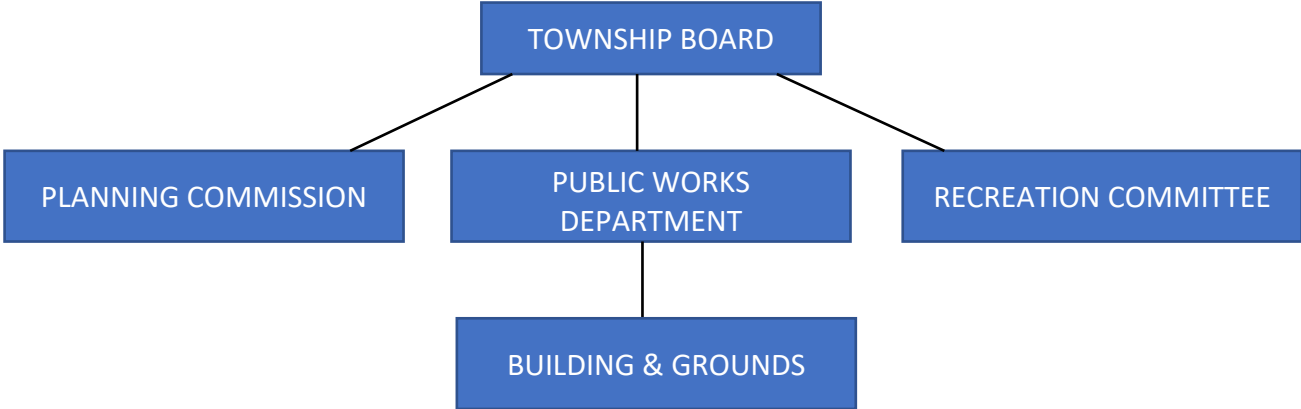
In Marquette Township, parks and recreation administration and program development are the responsibilities of the Marquette Township Board of Trustees. This includes programming, policy-making and the installation, operation and maintenance of the local public (non-school) recreational areas and facilities.

Park operations, maintenance, and our Action Program items are financed by the Township’s general fund, local donations, and various grant opportunities. The Township Manager serves as the Recreation Director, (in the sense of budgeting, coordinating programming, and facility maintenance schedules). The Township Planner & Zoning Administrator acts as a liaison between the Planning Commission, (established per, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act 33 of 2008, and the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, Act 110 of 2006, as amended), the Recreation Committee (established per, Act 156 of the Public Acts of 1917, as amended), as well as various organizations and stakeholders.

The Township’s Recreation Plan is administered by the Marquette Township Board of Trustees and reviewed annually to ensure that its goals, objectives, and Action Program improvements are focused towards providing the highest and best recreational opportunities for the entire township community.

Recreation Committee

The five-member Recreation Committee advises the Township Board regarding all aspects of recreation in the Township, including current operations, long-term recreation planning and recreation expenditures. The Recreation Committee is also responsible for the following duties:



Five-Year Recreation Plan

The committee periodically reviews the Charter Township of Marquette Recreation Plan. The complete Recreation Plan is updated at least every five years. The Committee submits recommended changes and updates to the Planning Commission and then to the Township Board for consideration and implementation. A copy of the most recent Recreation Plan is then placed on file with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). Having responsibility for recreation planning and grants, the Recreation Committee aims to assure that the funds made available are expended on projects that maximize total community benefit.



Recreation Programs

The Recreation Committee, along with the Marquette Township's Events Committee, has the continuing job of developing programs at township-owned parks. The committee has also been successful in maximizing the use of public and private partnerships to develop well-rounded and functional recreational programming.

Recreation Sites

Periodically, the committee reviews facilities located at township-owned parks and makes recommendations on issues and opportunities. Recommendations cover the use of the facilities, personnel required, the expenditure of funds on the improvement of the facilities, and types of facilities that may be needed. The Committee advises the Township Planning Commission and the Township Board on potential acquisition of new recreation sites.

Regulations

The committee makes recommendations concerning rules and regulations to be implemented at township-owned parks.

Current Funding Sources

Funding for recreation improvements and services in Marquette Township comes primarily from the approximate \$45,000 annual general fund budget. Where and when feasible, the Recreation Committee assists township staff in identifying possible grant sources to help offset costs.

The Recreation Committee also provides input in developing and preparing grant applications, although preparation and submittal of grant applications are still the responsibility of township staff.

Recommendations from the Recreation Committee are transmitted to the Township Planner. The Township Planner is responsible to ensure recommendations concerning land-use and planning matters are presented to the Planning Commission and other related agencies. The Township Planner is responsible to ensure that all recommendations are presented to the Planning Commission and Township Board.

Role of Volunteerism & Organizations

Two vital components of recreation provision in Marquette Township are volunteerism and stewardship. Every Action Program improvement or maintenance project at a Township-owned park has involved assistance from local residents, trail advocates and/or service group volunteers, as well as public and private financial assistance. Marquette Township is proud of our motivated volunteer base and of our strong public and private partnerships. This plan also aims to focus on improving and building our volunteer base.

Walking trails developed at Schwemwood Park were laid out and improved with the assistance of volunteers. Our Annual [National Trails Day](#) celebration held by the Recreation Committee at Schwemwood Park and the Lions Field Recreation Area have led to trail education and awareness workshops as well as an annual park maintenance clean-up and BBQ event.

All recent improvements at the Lions Field Recreation Area, including the ice rink and warming building, new Kiddee Park play structure, softball field infield surface, enclosed dugouts, and adjacent pavilion renovations, could only have been completed with assistance from our dedicated volunteers.

Relationships with School Districts and Public Agencies

Marquette Township features a multi-year contract with [Marquette Area Public School District](#). This contract specifies an agreement that allows the girls' junior varsity softball team to utilize Lions Field as their exclusive home field. The Marquette Little League also utilizes the Lions Field ballfield.

The Iron Ore Heritage Recreation Authority oversees the [Iron Ore Heritage Trail](#), a 48-mile, multi-use, year-round trail that connects communities and people to the region's historic sites and human stories. Through



various interpretive methods, the trail details the story of the [Marquette Iron Range](#) and the subsequent 160+ years of mining ore that changed the landscape of Marquette County and the United States.

Five townships, three municipalities, and Marquette County interdependent, comprise the largest multi-jurisdictional authority in the State. Reaching from Republic Township to Chocoday Township, this surfaced and signed transportation and recreation corridor will be preserved for generations to come. An official ribbon-cutting ceremony took place in 2013, with Governor Rick Snyder providing the keynote address.

The [Noguesmanon Trail Network \(NTN\)](#) has been developing and maintaining an interconnected, year-round, non-motorized land and water trail network in the Marquette area, including Marquette Township, for many years. Currently, there are nearly 50 miles of trails that the NTN maintains with a plan to create a total of 100 miles of trails as of 2020. The network is used for hiking, running, off-road biking, horseback riding, canoeing and kayaking, skiing, and snowshoeing. They envision a community with trails leading from schools, downtowns, and neighborhoods to each other and out into our beautiful wilderness areas. Marquette Township and the NTN view this network as an important asset to the health of our residents and economy.

The [North Country Trail Hikers Chapter of the North Country Trail Association](#) is based in Marquette. They are responsible for developing, maintaining, protecting and promoting the North Country National Scenic Trail (NCNST) in western Alger County beginning at Rock River Road, traveling west through Marquette County including the City of Marquette along the shore of Lake Superior, and ending in eastern Baraga County at the Long Lake outlet west of Craig Lake State Park. The North Country Trail Hikers Chapter was the North Country Trail Association's (NCTA's) first chartered chapter. The chapter organizes a variety of activities, including three General Membership Meetings a year, in January, May and September, a semi-annual Softies Hike, trail maintenance work days, hikes, canoe/kayak excursions, and snowshoe and cross-country ski outings.

In 2013, Marquette Charter Township was able to partner with the [Marquette County Road Commission](#) and the [Department of Natural Resources](#) to include improved recreational facility access within the scope of a Marquette County road project. This project involved driveway, parking and signage improvements, as well as future maintenance agreements.



RECREATION INVENTORY

Township-Owned Facilities:

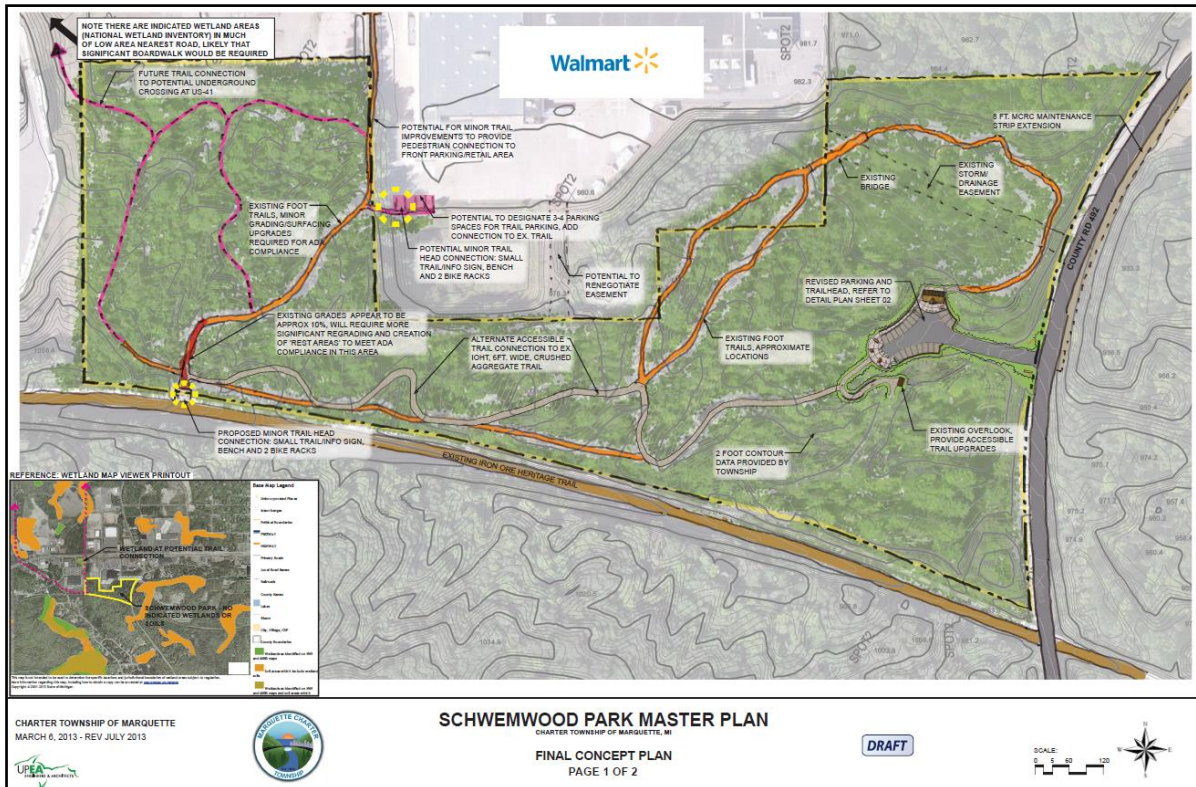
Schwemwood Park/Iron Ore Heritage Trailhead

The Schwemwood Park property was donated by the Schwemin-Woodbridge family to the Township for recreational purposes. Over time, the 6-acre parcel has been developed as a nature park with a walking path around the perimeter. Interpretive trails have been designed around the small ridge-encased wooded wetlands. It also features a handicap-accessible pathway from the parking area up to an overlook site.

In 2012, the Township acquired an adjoining 4.75-acre parcel with assistance from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) grant program. In 2013, a master plan of the entire 11-acre park property was commissioned. The *Schwemwood Park Master Plan* details a collective vision for developing the park as Marquette Township's first Iron Ore Heritage trailhead/access point to the 48-mile long Iron Ore Heritage Trail (IOHT), which is immediately adjacent to the park's southern boundary. To date, an ADA-compliant approach from the parking lot to the IOHT trail, as well as interpretive signage and maps denoting adjacent township businesses and restaurants, have been installed. The parking area has also been expanded. This park property aims to serve not only the residents of Marquette Township but area residents and visitors alike. To complete the master plan for this area, a restroom facility, additional picnic tables, drinking fountain, and bicycle racks are proposed. We believe that most facilities at this park meet accessibility guidelines.



Recreation Committee members (L to R) Dave Wiegand, Pete LaRue, and Michael Springer



In

2019, and as part of a Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) US-41 highway project, the western portion of the property now serves as part of a connector trail from the IOHT to the US-41 right-of-way where a below grade tunnel was installed to provide safe access for snowmobiles (winter) and non-motorized users to the north side of the highway. This project was funded in part by a Michigan DNR Trust Fund Development Grant and has been in the Township's long-range planning queue for years. Additional non-motorized pathways are proposed to be installed to further develop connectivity to our business and entertainment district along the north side of the US-41 corridor.

Lions Field Recreation Area

Located in the heart of our Township's urban residential district, this 2.5-acre neighborhood park currently functions as the Township's main recreation and gathering area. The park contains a ball field, ice rink, warming house, tennis court, open-air pavilion with picnic tables, restroom facilities, an updated play structure, handicap accessible picnic tables, and BBQ grills. A walking path that circles the park has also been added recently.

The Lions Field Recreation Area is used as a multi-purpose area, offering intense as well as passive recreational activities. Softball and baseball are the primary summer activities. Winter activity includes an ice sheet for neighborhood hockey games and recreational skating. A tennis court is also located at the site. The tennis court has also been utilized for pickle ball in recent years.

The [Lions Field Recreation Area Master Plan](#) that was commissioned in 2013 is nearly complete. Improvements made to date include: new playground equipment, a warming shack for the winter ice rink, added parking availability, walking path, benches, outdoor grills, and a permanent outdoor ice/roller rink surface. We believe the entire park meets accessibility guidelines.



South Vandeenboom Recreation Area

In late 2003, Marquette Township acquired 361 acres of land located south of Grove Street extending south to approximately M-553 near the Marquette Mountain Ski Hill along the Carp River. The property is used for municipal water supply facilities and multi-use recreation. Wellhead protection is established in this area and per the township's wellhead protection ordinance, recreational and low-impact land uses are permissible. Currently, a portion of the property has been developed by the Noquemanon Trail Network (NTN), where single-track mountain biking and hiking and ski trails have been developed. It is assumed that none of the property meets accessibility guidelines at this time.

Moving forward, the Township aims to work with the NTN to develop a trailhead off of Grove Street. Proposed improvements include a restroom facility with changing area, bike racks, picnic tables, drinking fountain, parking area, trail map(s), and an educational trail kiosk. Three large Township-owned parcels in this area were recently rezoned from the Rural Residential (RR) district to Forest Recreation (FR) district, in order to preserve and protect the property from additional future development.

Federal U.S. Forest Service-Owned Property in Marquette Township:

Escanaba River State Forest

The [Escanaba River State Forest](#) is a state forest in the central Upper Peninsula and encompasses forested lands in Alger, Delta, Marquette, and Menominee Counties. Like other Michigan state forests, Escanaba River is made up of clear-cut parcels of forest land that were seen by their owners as worthless after the old-growth timber had been cut. The parcels reverted to the state of Michigan in lieu of unpaid property taxes. The state reorganized these parcels of property as the Escanaba River State Forest. The forest is now managed for active recreational purposes such as hiking, canoeing, fishing, hunting, and the cutting of second-growth wood for paper pulp.

National Trails in Marquette Township:

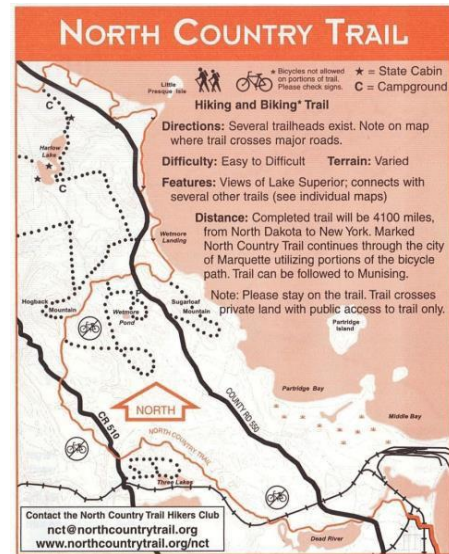
North Country Trail

The [North Country National Scenic Trail \(NCT\)](#) stretches approximately 4,600 miles from Crown Point in eastern New York to Lake Sakakawea State Park in central North Dakota in the United States. Passing through the seven states of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and North Dakota, it is the longest of the 11 National Scenic Trails authorized by Congress. Like its sister trails, it was designed to provide outdoor recreational opportunities in some of America's outstanding landscapes. As of 2010, over 2,100 miles have been certified. This trail passes through the northern part of Marquette Township.

State of Michigan-Owned Properties:

Wetmore/Little Presque Isle/Harlow Lake Area

Readily accessible by County Road 550, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources managed property consists of 2,800 acres. This area offers many quiet and scenic opportunities as well as rustic and cabin camping areas. Acquired by the State in 1979 in a land exchange with Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company, the property includes Harlow Lake (a 64-acre site), Hogback Mountain, Little Presque Isle, several streams, and an 8.6-acre island. Rustic cabins are available to rent on Harlow Lake and Harlow Creek. There are 19 miles of hiking and biking trails and a 6-mile Nordic Ski Trail within this recreation area. The shoreline portions of the trails offer a picturesque stretch of south shore coast with both great sand beaches and rocky



shoreline. The hike to the summit of Hogback Mountain offers excellent views of the surrounding area. Hogback Mountain has an elevation of 1,220 feet, making it the second highest point in the Upper Peninsula.



Elliott Donnelley Wilderness Area/Little Garlic River Access Site

This site is a State-owned public access site on County Road 550, near the Little Garlic River. It is primarily used for fishing and hiking activities and is owned and maintained by State of Michigan DNR.

Moose Pond – Section 21

Section 21 is a remote and picturesque wilderness area. This square mile of State of Michigan property can only be accessed by a narrow two-track road. Access off of County Road 550 is gained through Harlow Lake Road (Four-wheel drive is recommended). Very few people visit this area due to its remote accessibility. For those seeking a workout in the woods, this is area worth seeing. The section contains a height of land, rugged terrain, perched wetlands and a pond where moose have been photographed.

Dollar Lake

Dollar Lake is found in the southwest corner of 40 acres of State of Michigan land. This area contains an unnamed height of land with a view of a valley towards 'Our Lake' and adjoins the 480-acre Echo Lake Nature Conservancy land to the north. The majority of Dollar Lake however, is on private property.

Forestville Access Site

Located off Forestville Road, this State-owned 5-acre site includes a boat launch on the Dead River and rustic toilet facilities.

Marquette County-Owned Property:

Sugar Loaf Mountain Natural Area

Located on County Road 550 immediately adjacent to Little Presque Isle, Sugar Loaf Mountain is a 120-acre site owned by the [County of Marquette](#). It is an excellent day-use area. In an ongoing manner, significant improvements have been made to the trails in this area as well as the lookout platform at the top of the mountain enhancing safety and functionality. Developed facilities include a parking lot, trails and stairways leading to the top. The hike takes about one-half-hour. A lookout platform 315 feet above the base of the mountain provides a panoramic scenic view of Lake Superior and surrounding countryside. There is a monument at the peak that recognizes A. Bartlett King, a local Boy Scout leader who died in France during World War I.

Interpretive plaques and maps are also present on the north observation deck commemorating early Native American history and identifying settlements located within the view shed. A bike path was designed adjacent to County Road 550 leading to Sugar Loaf during a road construction project.



Northern Michigan University-Owned Property:

Forestville Recreation Property

This 180-acre forested property, owned by [Northern Michigan University \(NMU\)](#), is used for educational purposes. Used informally by the public, the parcel includes a nature trail, a physical fitness course and cross-country ski trail designed for experts (originally used by NMU’s cross country ski team). An effort is being made to incorporate this asset into a greenway corridor (connector trail) between the Noquemanon Ski Trail Network and the Harlow Lake Pathway.

Privately-Owned Recreation Assets in the Township:

Dead River Falls Hiking Trail

The [Longyear Realty Corporation](#) owns many large tracts of property within the Township, many of which are a part of the Commercial Forest (CF) Program. This program offers general use by hikers. One of the most picturesque sites in this category is the Dead River Falls site. The rugged terrain offers a well-established trail that leads to a series of waterfalls along the Dead River.

Badger Creek & Trowbridge Park Woods Trail

This trail is on approximately 8 acres of private property. Property owners have historically allowed neighbors to visit and walk in the last sizable wooded natural area within the Trowbridge Park subdivision.

City of Marquette-Owned Property in Marquette Township:

Heartwood Forest Property

In 2005, the city of Marquette purchased approximately 2,400 acres of pristine undeveloped land. The city purchased this property with the intent of preserving and fostering permanent environmental stewardship, controlled development, greenway preservation and preserving and maintaining existing motorized and non-motorized trail systems. This contiguous land was purchased for \$5,000,000 from Heartwood Forest Lands, usually referred to as the 'Heartwood'. Within the Heartwood, many multi-use trails providing a variety of year-round outdoor recreation opportunities exist. The existing non-motorized trail network is enjoyed by hikers, bikers, skiers and snowshoers. Users from all over the region currently take full advantage of the many varied outdoor activities in the Heartwood.

The Heartwood contains two watersheds, Morgan Creek and the Carp River. Marquette Township protects a certified wellhead protection overlay district west and adjacent to the Heartwood. Marquette Township also rezoned this property to Forest Recreation (FR) in 2017, in an effort to preserve and protect the property from commercial development. Only land uses that are recreational are permitted within this zoning district.

Six-hundred and twenty (620) acres are located immediately adjacent to the southern boundary of Marquette Township but are physically part of Sands Township. An intergovernmental “425 Agreement” was entered into by both townships which granted Marquette Township zoning (land use) authority over the property.

The city of Marquette, in cooperation with local interest groups and stakeholders, have improved trails and facilities, sponsored events and have brought national recognition to Marquette. It’s widely known that a large percentage of young mobile entrepreneurs enjoy outdoor recreation.

Thus, attracting the entrepreneurial mobile class enhances long-term prosperity for the community.



Non-Profit-Owned Recreation Properties in the Township:

Echo Lake Nature Preserve

The biologically rich and varied habitats of the 480-acre [Echo Lake Nature Preserve](#) include intact, diverse and old forests, dramatic granite bald mountains or bedrock outcroppings, wetlands, creeks, three high rock ponds and Echo Lake. A landscape of dramatic contours of exposed bedrock with high bluffs frames the western shore of the approximately 20-acre headwater lake. The woods surrounding Echo Lake is a mixed deciduous and conifer forest that includes some large trees on rock out-croppings. Harlow Creek flows from its headwaters at Echo Lake, takes in water from Harlow Lake and empties into Lake Superior. Vistas from the highest areas of exposed bedrock on the south side include Hogback Mountain, Little Presque Isle and Lake Superior.

Wetmore Pond/

Lilly Pond Interpretive Nature Trails

This nature trail system, located between Hogback Mountain and Sugarloaf Mountain, is primarily on corporate-owned land and is part of the North Country Trail System. A variety of terrain features are included ranging from rock outcrops to marsh wetlands. The project was a joint effort by the Mead Corporation, Northern Michigan University, North Country Trail Association, and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.



Wetmore Pond/Hogback Mountain

Vielmetti-Peters Conservation Reserve

The Vielmetti-Peters Conservation Reserve is a 123-acre working forest with nearly four miles of trails at the end of Brickyard Road near the western border of Marquette Township. The Reserve boasts an incredibly diverse ecosystem in a small area, featuring small waterfalls at the confluence of Midway and Spring Creeks on their way to the nearby Dead River. There is a trail system consisting of 3 loops in a variety of terrain and trail types. The project was a joint effort between a private landowner and the Upper Peninsula Land Conservancy.

Additional Trail Networks in Marquette Township:

Noquemanon Trail Network (NTN) North

The trail is a 25-kilometer point-to-point trail that starts in neighboring Negaunee Township, traverses Marquette Township and continues into the city of Marquette. The trail is groomed in the winter months for classic and traditional cross-country skiing and is utilized for mountain biking in the summer. The trail is a wooded scenic adventure that also serves as the course for the annual Noquemanon Ski Marathon, held each January, and the Ore to Shore Mountain Bike Epic, held each August. Volunteers and members of the Noquemanon Trail Network, a 501-c3 organization dedicated to silent sports, developed the trail system. The trail system has a trailhead facility located within the Township at the Forestville location off of Wright Street. The trailhead facility includes signage, lighting, an educational ski stadium, a heated building, and restrooms.

Noquemanon Trail Network (NTN) South

The NTN Singletrack trail system is a network of paths in south Marquette designed for non-motorized recreational use. Parts of the trail system have been around for 20 or more years, but new trails are

constantly being built and now IMBA (International Mountain Biking Association) standards for design and construction are being followed. The single-track system has received national acclaim as a premier mountain bike destination in several publications including Bike Magazine, Silent Sports Magazine, and others. The current goal of the single-track committee is to get recognition as an Epic Trail from IMBA.

Huron Gateway Trail

This trail is a 10-kilometer trail connector, which connects the city of Marquette Bike Path network and the Noquemanon Trail through the Township. The trail encompasses some of the old trail system within the Longyear Forest and Little Presque Isle. The trail system has one trailhead located within the Township at the designated Harlow Lake Pathway entrance location off of County Road 550, across from the Wetmore Landing parking lot.

North Country Trail

Portions of this National Park Service-sponsored hiking trail traverse Marquette Township. The trail meanders from the Lake Superior shoreline in the city of Marquette, west below the Dead River to County Road 550, north to Wetmore Pond, Hogback Mountain, Wetmore's Landing, and Little Presque Isle area, then northwest along the banks of the Little Garlic River. The North Country Trail links the Atlantic seaboard with the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail in North Dakota, and when finished will be 4,600 miles long, the longest trail in the United States.

Iron Ore Heritage Trail

This trail is a year-round, multi-use trail extending some 48 miles. The trail, reaching from Republic to Kawbawgam Road in Chocolay Township, connects, preserves, and interprets sites associated with the iron mining heritage in Marquette County. Recreational uses of the trail include walking, hiking, running, biking, roller blades, wildlife viewing, equestrian, and some motorized use in certain areas for ATVs as well as snowmobiles during the winter months.



Snowmobile Trails

There are a number of designated snowmobile trails (Trail 8, 14, 321, 322) in the Township with access to area motels and restaurants. The trail system, totaling nearly 20 miles, connects Marquette Township to the surrounding areas including Big Bay, city of Marquette, Negaunee, and beyond.

ATV/ORV Trails

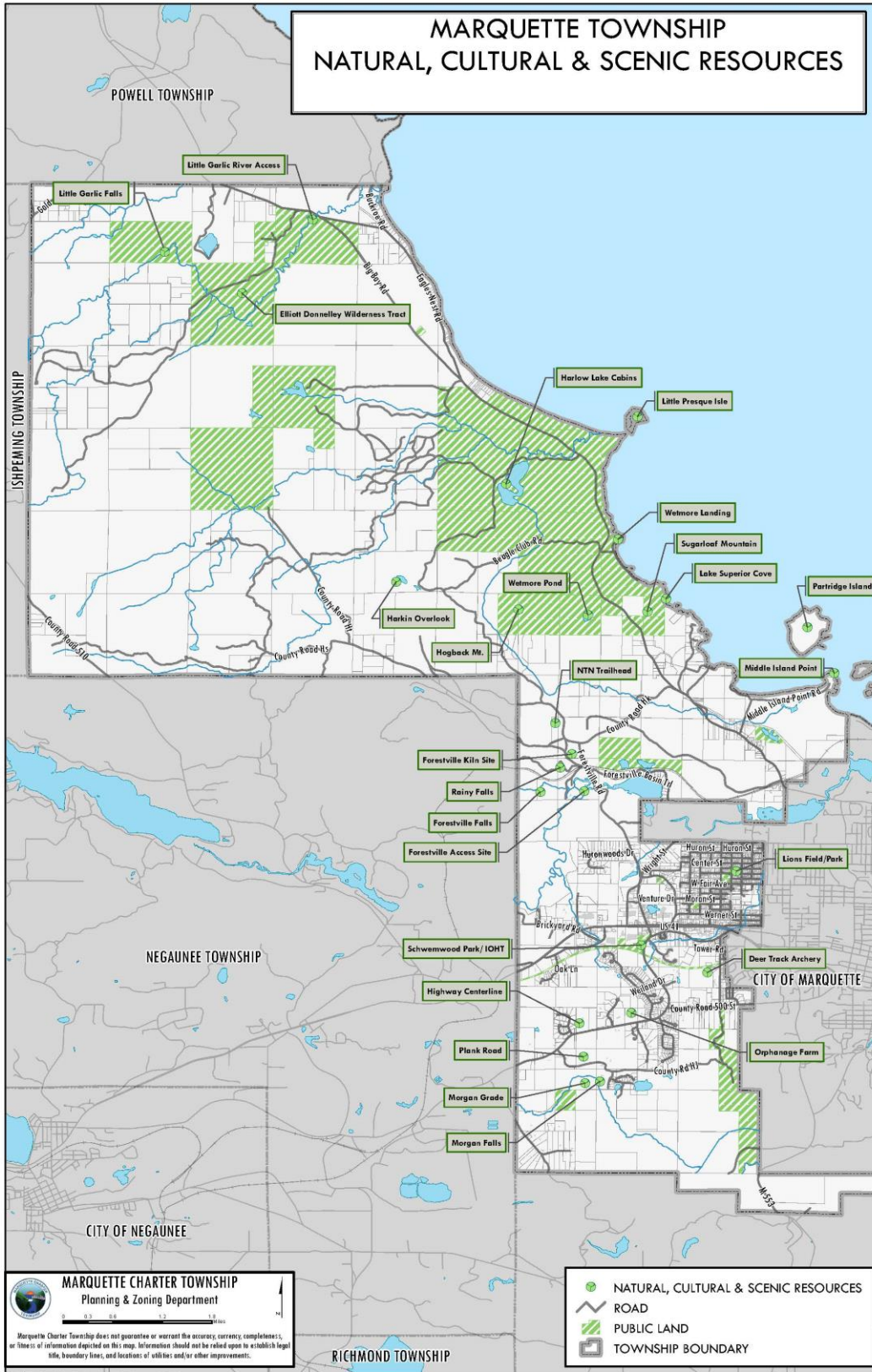
Efforts continue to develop a dedicated Marquette County-wide ORV/ATV trail network. Impeding this process, however, is a "patchwork" of ordinances that vary from municipality to municipality that affect which roads are open or closed. Marquette Township does not have an ordinance severely restricting use of some State Forest and private roads.

[Waterfalls in Marquette Township:](#)

There are four (4) waterfalls in Marquette Township. In the northwest corner of the Township is the Little Garlic Falls which is accessible by primitive roads and a half-mile hike. Rainy Falls and the Dead River Falls can be found in the Forestville area. Morgan Falls is found in the southern part of the Township off of Morgan Meadow Drive.


The below Figure 1-3 shows a map of natural, cultural and scenic resources found in Marquette Township:





STATUS REPORT FOR ALL GRANT-ASSISTED PARKS & RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Regarding the status of grant-assisted sites and facilities in Marquette Township, all sites are still open to the public and will be in perpetuity. Our grant history is listed below. We have only an ADA- compliant bench and a sign kiosk that need to be installed in 2022 to complete our requirements for TF17-0209.

	GRANTS MANAGEMENT Michigan Department of Natural Resources	Friday, November 5, 2021
GRANT HISTORY		
Grantee		
<u>Marquette Charter Township - Marquette County</u>		
<p>Project Description: Marquette Township intends to install a universally-designed, barrier-free walking pathway that traverses our Lions Field Recreation Area Park. The pathway is planned to be coupled with the installation of picnic tables, park benches and cooking grills that will be placed throughout the park. We also intend to finish off these improvements with native landscaping and proper site grading treatment. These proposed amenities will compliment the recent purchase of new playground equipment as well as the construction of our new ice/roller hockey rink and warming house (with accessible restrooms).</p>		
Project No. 26-01310	Project County: Marquette	Project Year: 1984
Project title: Lions Park Development		
Project Status: Grant Closed		Grant Amount: \$16,400.00
Scope Item		
<p>Project Description: Winter warming/restroom building, LWCF sign</p>		
Project No. TF10-081	Project County: Marquette	Project Year: 2010
Project title: Iron Ore Heritage Trailhead Acquisition		
Project Status: Grant Closed		Grant Amount: \$156,900.00
Scope Item		
<p>Project Description: Acquisition of a 4.75-acre expansion of the existing Schwemwood Park to be used as a trailhead for the Iron Ore Heritage Trail.</p>		
Project No. TF15-0077	Project County: Marquette	Project Year: 2015
Project title: Schwemwood Iron Ore Heritage Trailhead Parking/Path/Wetland		
Project Status: Grant Closed		Grant Amount: \$71,700.00
Scope Item		
Access Pathway 6' wide or more		
Bench		
Bike Rack		
Landscaping		
Paved Parking Lot		
Picnic Table		
Recycle Bin(s)		
Signage		



DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

Planning Method

The planning concept that we have been following for a number of years is the equity-based planning method. This planning process ensures all residents have access to programs, facilities, and public spaces in the community. The clear benefits of equity-based planning include improving community health, economic impact, access, and resiliency. This method is intended to assist with the assessment of the Township's parks, recreation, and open-space needs.

Population data is an important factor used to make land use decisions in any community. If the population of a community is growing, there will be a need for more housing, commerce, industry, parks and recreation opportunities, public services and facilities and roads.

Overall, Marquette Township has experienced steady growth in recent decades. The highest percentage growth occurred in the 1940's with an increase of 64.1 %, followed by the 1970's with an increase of 56.7%. The decade of the 1960's was the only period when Marquette Township's population declined. The Township increased in population between the 2000 & 2010 census by over 600 residents making the township's official population as of 2010 equaling 3,905 residents. The 2020 US Census saw another increase population of 6%, bringing the total number of residents to approximately 4,150 residents.

Marquette Township features 39% of its residents between the ages of 25 to 54 years. Due to the presence of Northern Michigan University within the city of Marquette, the City has much higher percentages of people under the age of 25 than the Township or the County. This is also an important factor in recreation planning.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

Early Public Input

Because our residents' opinions on recreation and open-space priorities are paramount in this plan's development, a Community Input Session was held at the Marquette Township Community Room November 16, 2021, from 5:30-7:30 PM. This session offered a chance for residents and stakeholders to share their outdoor recreation ideas, as the Township was preparing an updated draft of the Marquette Township Recreation Plan. Approximately 35 attendees were present to offer their input. Several Local organization representatives were also present including those from the Noquemanon Trail Network (NTN) and from the local pickleball non-profit group.



Wanted: Your recreation ideas!

This is a chance to bring your recreation ideas into ACTION, as Marquette Township prepares an update/amendment to our Recreation Plan and discusses potential grant opportunities.

Community Input Session: Tuesday, November 16th from 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM in the Marquette Township Community Room, 1000 Commerce Drive, Marquette, MI 49855



LIVE.
WORK.
PLAY.

Bring your friends and neighbors!

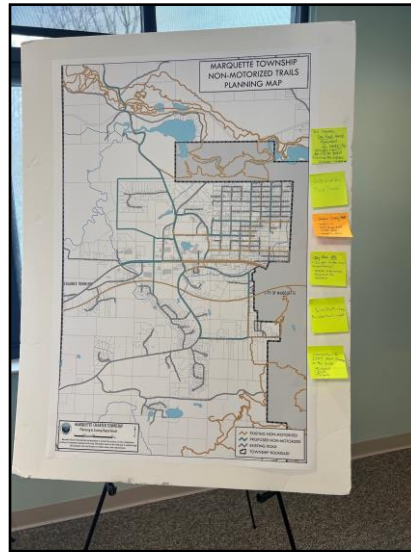


Marquette Township Recreation Plan Update/Amendment – Open House Discussion

The Marquette Township Recreation Committee will host an Open House Discussion on Tuesday, November 16th in order to seek input on the Marquette Township Recreation Plan update/amendment that will be taking place. This meeting will be held at the Marquette Township Community Room, 1000 Commerce Drive, Marquette, MI 49855, on Tuesday, November 16th from 5:30-7:30 PM.

The Recreation Committee and Planning Department staff are seeking input regarding future recreational opportunities that may be available to the community over the course of the next five (5) years. A short presentation will be made followed by a question and answer period and general discussion.

Please join us and provide your thoughts and opinions. Questions or comments can also be sent to: jasonmccarthy@marquettetownship.org



Marquette Charter Township

2022-2026 Recreation Plan Update Public Input Open House

November 16, 2021, 5:30-7:30 PM, Marquette Township Community Room

Name - Please Print	Business/Residence Location	Email (if desired)
TONY HARRY	6369 US 41 South	TONY1785A@yahoo.com
Sherry Johnson	2272 Cherry St	Sherrymj2@yahoo.com
Lyn DeGroot	2132 Montgomery St	lynde210@yahoo.com
Bill DeGroot	2132 Montgomery St	bdegroot41@yahoo.com
lyle Under Sheriff	235 Huronwood Dr.	lyleu@mac.com
Chuck WILLIAMS	media Brew Comm	Chuck@mediaBrewUP.com
Doug Lindblom	US. Sen. Peters - Marquette Office	doug_lindblom@peters.senate.gov
Zach McCarthy	2444 W Fair	ZPMcCarthy1@gmail.com
Alec Lindsay	1913 W. Fair Ave	alec.lindsay@gmail.com
Tom Furs	2283 Summit St	TFURS@Yahoo.com
FRANK T. STABILE	2463 US 41 W. MARQ.	FRANK@superiorensis.com
John Markler		
Lyn Durant	265 Bishop Woods Rd	diverlyn@hotmail.com
Pete LaRue	2082 Huron St	petelarue@charter.net

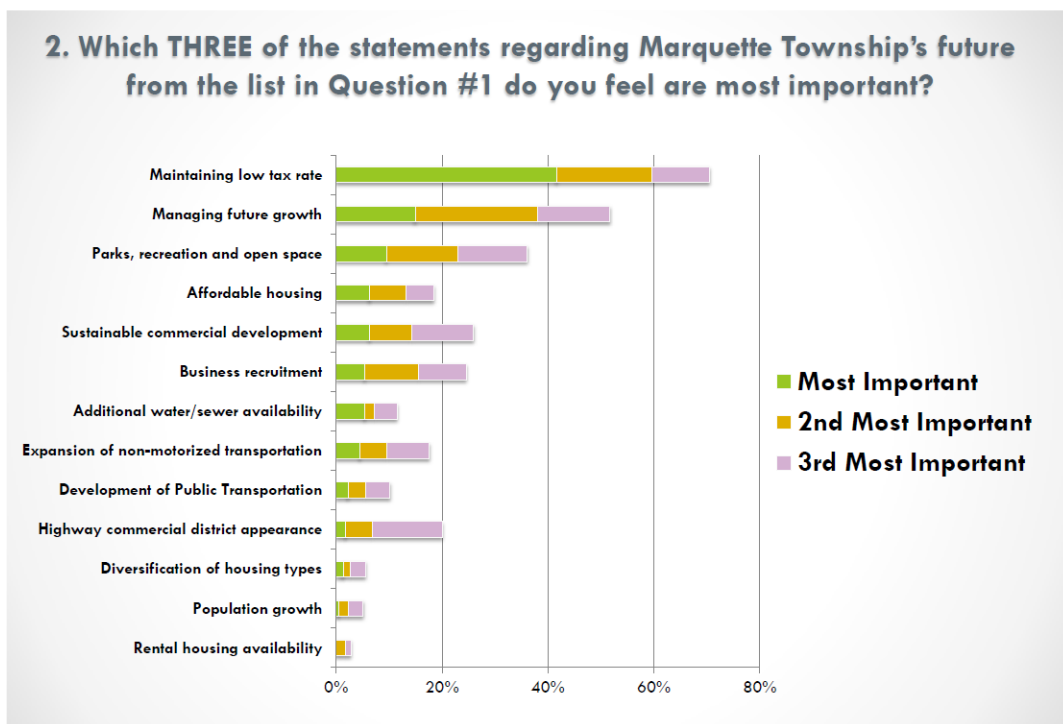
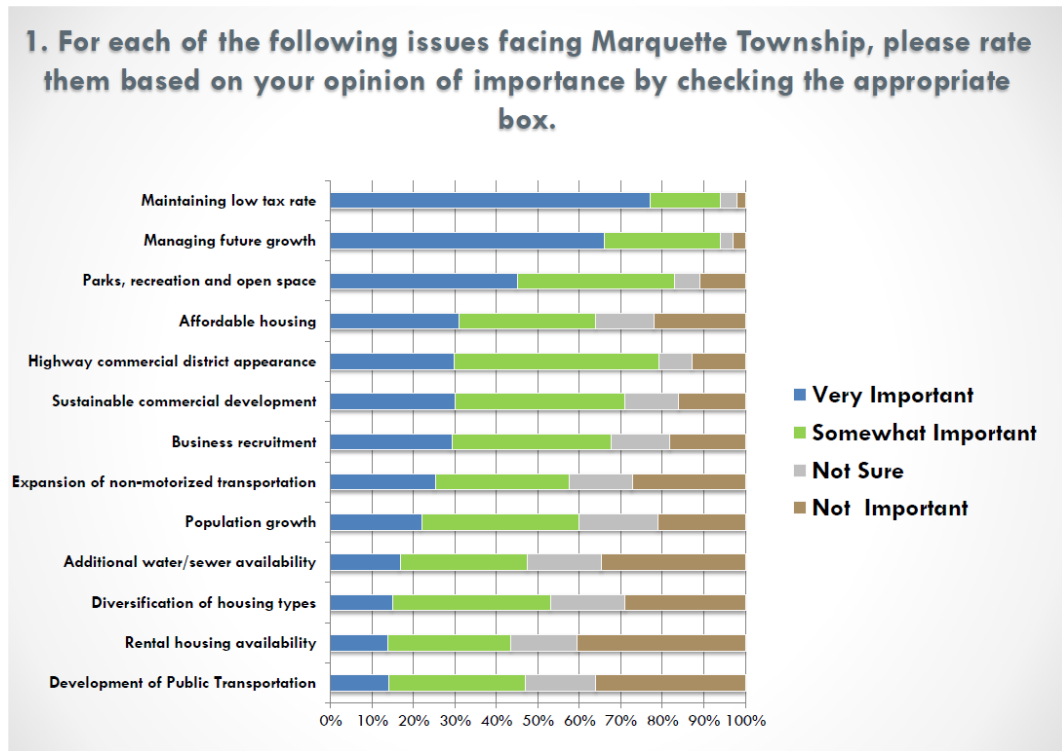
Name - Please Print	Business/Residence Location	Email (if desired)
Laura MacDonald	St. Laura Mac@gmail.com	Negaunee Twp
Madison Royce	Negaunee Twp	MRoyce32@gmail.com
KAREN BLAKE	MGT TWP	
Ryan Soucy	CUPPAD	RSoucy@cuppad.org
Greg McWhirter	Trowbridge Park	mccovgar67@charter.net
Sandy Bonsall	Trowbridge Park	sandybonsall44@gmail.com <small>Thank you!!</small>
Mike Harstock	US 41	
Michael Brunet	MGT	
Megan Hombogen	White Oak Dr. MGT	meganhombogen@gmail.com
Ed	226 Chpt. Rd.	
Dave Mingsy	1709 N. Dade	cbustmingsy@hotmail.com
Caleb Borzan	2246 Alast	
Christie Mastrie	Mining Journal	cblect@miningjournal.net
Dave Everson	Mgt Twp.	Dave TEVERSON@Yahoo

Name - Please Print	Business/Residence Location	Email (if desired)
Randy Garrison	Marquette Co. Co.	REGAT@AOC.com
Douglas Garrison	MGT	dgarrison@charterminet
Jon Kangas	Harvey	
Bill Tibot	HARVEY	bill@mediaBrewUP.com
Jeremy Barnes	MGT TWP	
Chubkey	MGT TWP.	chubsarnette@ymail.com
Sue Welliday	MGT twps	PERIYAWN@Yahoo.com

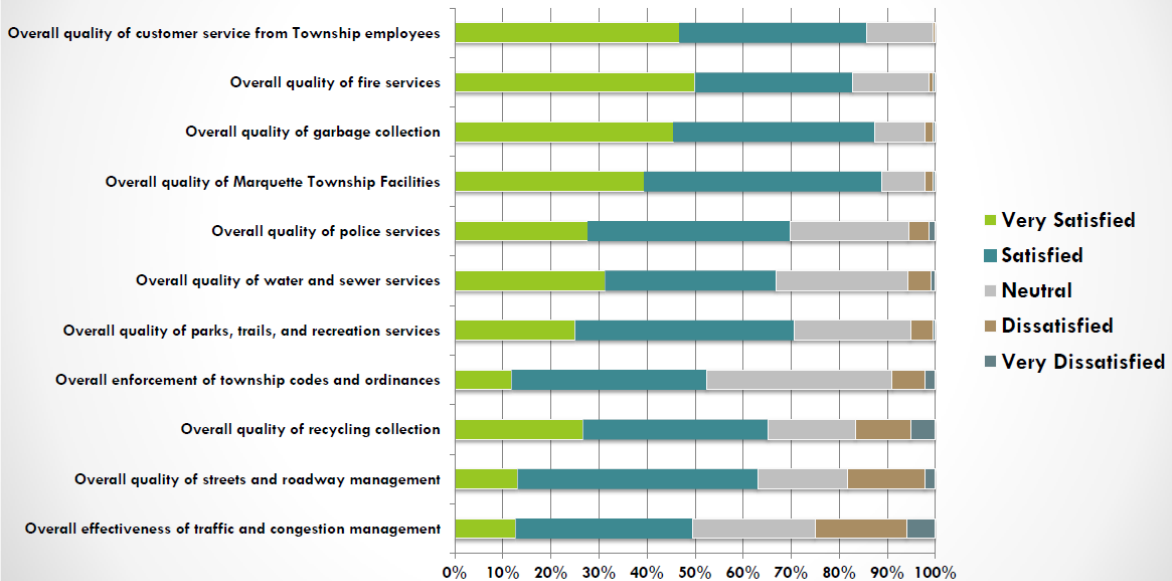


Additional Public Input Used in this Plan

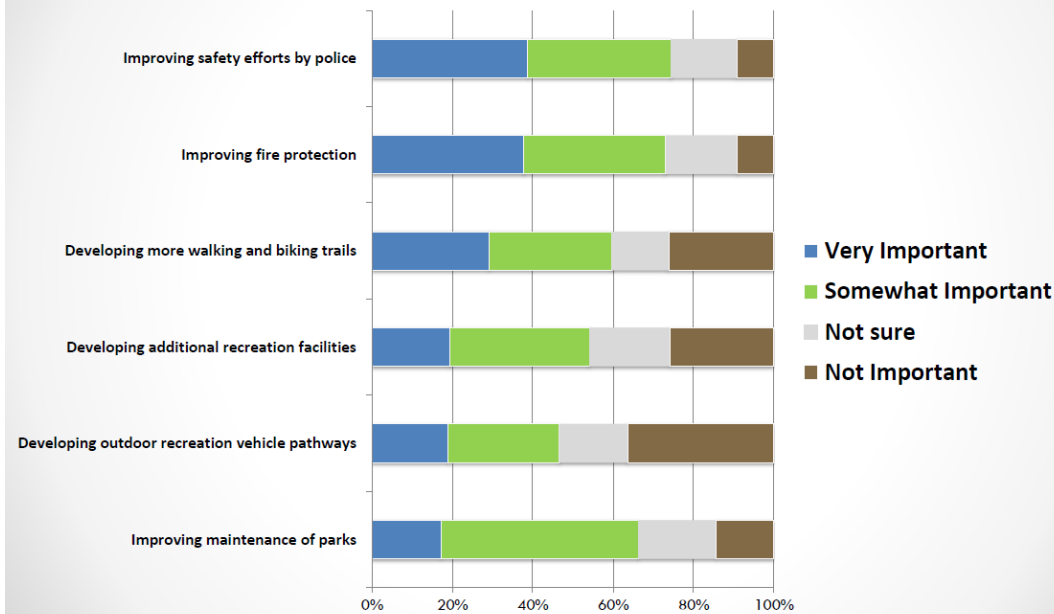
Because the community also recently updated our Master Plan (2020), community survey results from that process that were relevant to recreation were also used in the planning process. The results from those survey questions that are relevant to this plan are included below.



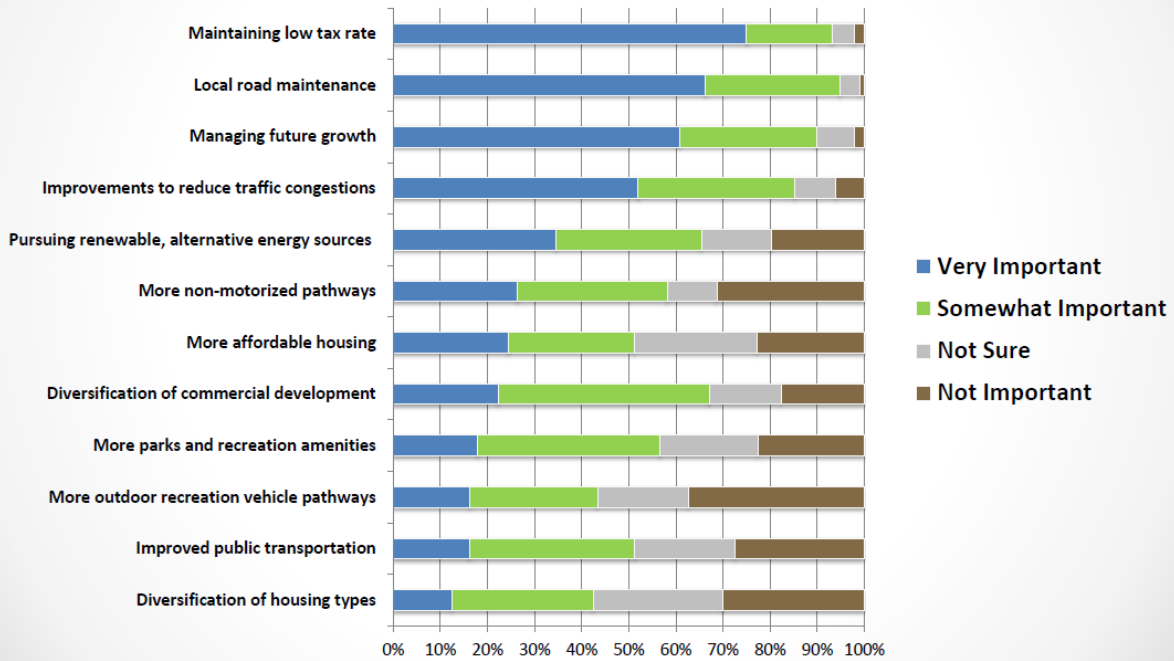
3. Of the major services Marquette Township provides, please rate your level of satisfaction with each.



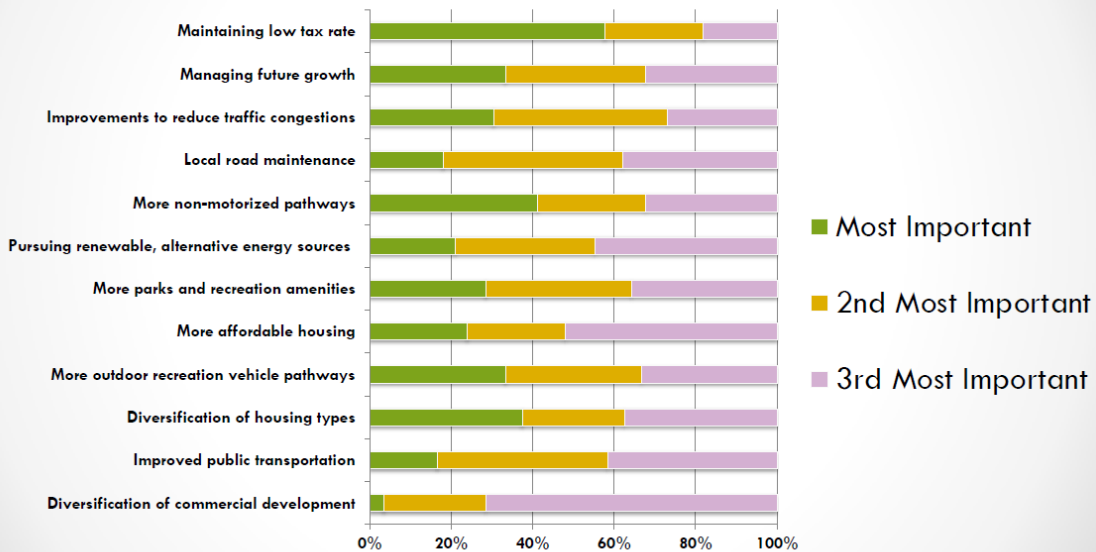
4. For each of the following actions Marquette Township can take, please rate whether you feel the action is very important, somewhat important, not sure, or not important.



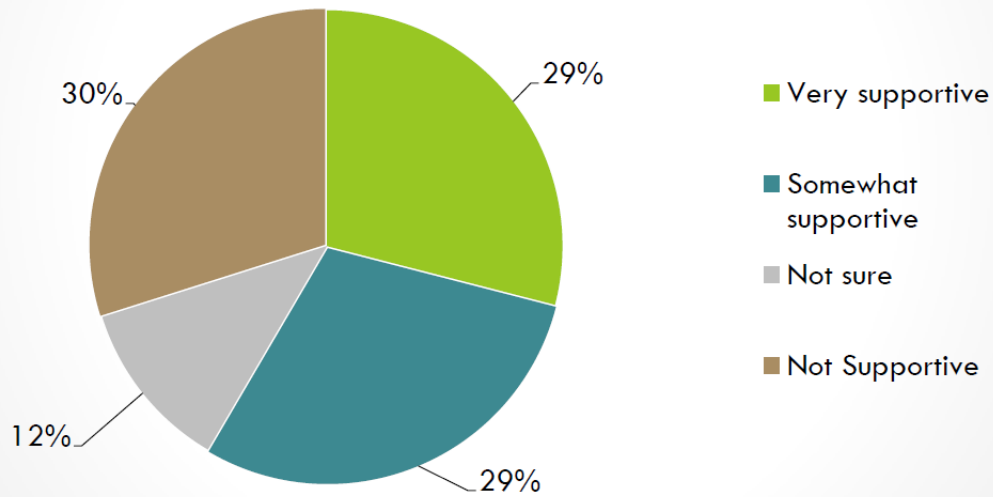
5. For each of the following statements regarding Marquette Township's future, please rate whether you feel the statement is very important, somewhat important, not sure, or not important.



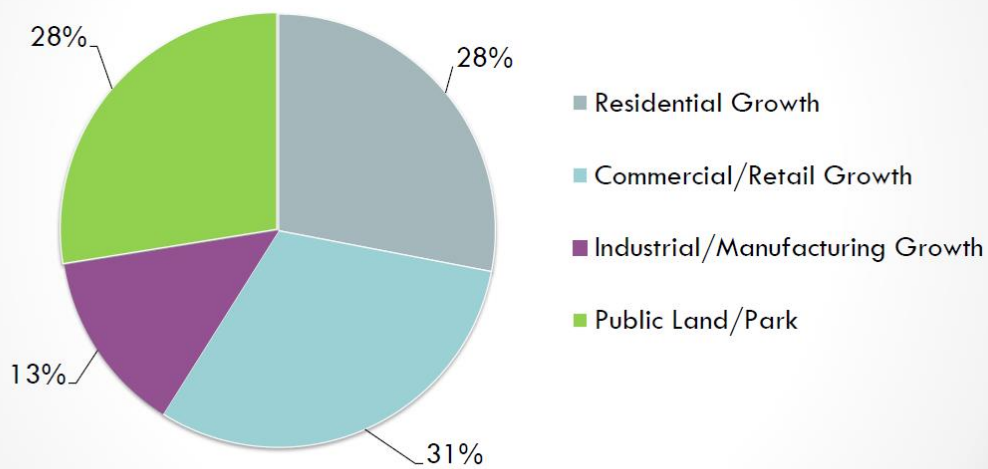
6. Which THREE of the statements regarding Marquette Township's future from the list in question #5 do you feel are most important?



11. How supportive would you be of Marquette Township purchasing additional land within the Heartwood Forest or similar locations with key scenic assets which could be used for preservation, parks, trails, and recreation purposes?



12. What type of development do you most support regarding future growth of Marquette Township?



Based on the Community Survey results, we can reasonably conclude that Marquette Township residents believe that:

- 1) Parks, recreation, open space, walking trails, and biking trails are some of the most important issues facing Marquette Township.
- 2) Nearly 70% of respondents are satisfied with the quality of parks, trails, and recreation services in Marquette Township.
- 3) Improving the maintenance of parks, developing additional recreational facilities, walking, and biking trails are important actions that Marquette Township leaders can take.
- 4) 58% of respondents support the purchase (if feasible) of part of the Heartwood Forest Property for recreation, trail, and preservation purposes.
- 5) Approximately 70% of respondents support Marquette Township acting to develop more biking and hiking trails.
- 6) Approximately 50% of residents believe that adding additional walking and biking trails are important to our future.
- 7) 65% of survey respondents stated that they support the development of additional outdoor recreational vehicle trails.

30-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD

The draft of the updated Recreation Plan was made available for review on Monday, January 24, 2022. Notice was posted in the Marquette Mining Journal. Copies of the draft plan were placed for review at the Marquette Township Hall and online on the township’s website: www.marquettetownship.org. Instructions for providing additional comments on the plan were included in the public notice placed in the newspaper. To summarize comments received by the public during this version of the Marquette Township Recreation Plan, several new requests for amenities came to light. These were activities and infrastructure improvements that the Township had not considered previously. They included an off-leash dog park, pickleball courts, bicycle pump track, and disk golf course. Themes of continued improvements to non-motorized transportation accessibility also ranked strongly with our residents. These new activities can be found in our updated Action Plan.

PUBLIC HEARING & RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION

Advance notice for the proposed adoption Public Hearing was also provided in the ad that was placed in the Mining Journal on Monday, January 24, 2022. The public hearing will occur on Wednesday, February 23, 2022. Our Planning Commission elected to pause their meetings in the month of January 2022 due to higher-than-normal Covid-19 cases in our area. A copy of the Public Hearing Notice, Adoption Resolution, and official meeting minutes will be provided in the final copy of this plan, when applicable.



GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The Michigan *State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)* provided assistance to staff and the Recreation Committee in developing Marquette Township’s recreational goals and objectives. The goals and objectives from the SCORP have been adapted to fit our community’s recreational needs. Public input from our residents and stakeholders also provided helpful engagement by way of our Community Survey and Open House Work Sessions for our recent Master Plan update. Many of the below goals and objectives are shared by our surrounding municipal neighbors. There are also provisions to collaborate with those entities if and when those opportunities should arise.

Goal #1 – Foster stewardship and conservation with businesses, organizations, and individuals in protecting Marquette Township’s natural and cultural resources.

Objectives:

- Encourage efforts directed at improving both the visual and physical characteristics of all shoreline and the many scenic views in Marquette Township.
- Support and promote initiatives to improve and/or maintain the water quality of Lake Superior and all waterways.
- Promote the preservation and expansion of recreational shoreline and other water-oriented opportunities for recreation.
- Encourage developers to retain open space and preserve trail rights-of-way to further enhance Marquette Township’s non-motorized transportation network.
- Collaborate with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Forest Management Division regarding planning and development concerns for Little Presque Isle, Forestville, and the Little Garlic River public access sites.

Goal #2 – Improve collaboration with recreation stakeholders to meet the outdoor needs of Township residents and visitors

Objectives:

- Collaborate with other municipalities, trail networks, non-profit organizations and other recreation program providers for the purpose of expanding recreational opportunities in the region.
- Develop a regional network of trails by collaborating with other municipalities, trail organizations, and recreational service providers.
- Participate in regional recreational planning to ensure multi-jurisdictional trail connectivity.
- Promote the short-term goals of the 2014 Multi-Jurisdictional Recreational Authority Feasibility Study.
- Collaborate with the Marquette County Planning Commission regarding mutual planning and development concerns for Sugar Loaf Mountain Natural Area and other municipalities’ plans.



Goal #3 – Raise the awareness of residents and visitors on the variety of outdoor recreational opportunities available in Marquette Township.

Objectives:

- Coordinate regional recreational planning; build environments and programming activities that identify opportunities, fill deficiencies, and avoid duplication of services and efforts so as to make optimal use of financial and other resources.
- Encourage cooperation and coordination between surrounding municipalities, school districts, recreational service providers, and developers with regard to recreational opportunities.

Goal #4 – Improve recreation accessibility for residents and visitors of all ages and abilities.

Objectives:

- Promote bicycling, walking, and rolling activities that provide opportunities for people of all ages and abilities.
- Continue to provide Americans with Disability Act (ADA) access, Universal Design features, and multisensory experiences to enhance access and attract all types of recreational users.

Goal #5 – Provide quality outdoor recreational experiences in balance with Township resource management and conservation.

Objectives:

- Purchase Heartwood Property to set aside, in perpetuity, for recreational use, if and when feasible.
- Identify, acquire and develop 'non-motorized rights-of-way' that connect residential, commercial, and recreational nodes.

Goal #6 – Enhance the health of Marquette Township Residents and visitors by providing physical outdoor recreational opportunities.

Objectives:

- Identify and develop safe pedestrian/non-motorized crossings at strategic intersections along the US-41 corridor, to include appropriate lighting.
- Continue the development of the Marquette Township's non-motorized transportation system and integrate with the regional trail networks.

Goal #7 – Enhance economic prosperity by supporting a high quality of life to retain talent in Marquette Township

Objectives:

- Acquire local, state, federal, and private funding opportunities to develop regional and local non-motorized transportation routes with appropriate Complete Street and American Disabilities Act amenities.



- Take advantage of opportunities to expand and develop trailheads, public access sites, and other facilities which further encourage hiking, biking, skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, boating, canoeing, kayaking, fishing, hunting, and other recreational uses of the natural assets in Marquette Township.

ACTION PROGRAM

2022

Acquisition of a 16-acre parcel of the E&J Land Company, LLC Property

Marquette Township has been in discussion with the owners of a 16-acre parcel of property adjacent to the platted portion of Trowbridge Park, Section 16. Of the over 4,000 residents in Marquette Township, approximately 52% live within the platted area of Section 16. This 16-acre parcel could be acquired and developed into a park that would feature many of the recreational opportunities requested by our residents and stakeholders. Strong support for this project was demonstrated at our public input session on November 16, 2021.

Estimated Cost: TBD depending on seller's proposed in-kind cash donation so that the Township may acquire the property.

Lions Field Recreation Area

Updated ballfield lighting is needed to replace antiquated lighting currently installed at Lions Field. Modern, efficient, and dark sky-friendly LED lighting is proposed. During a recent Master Plan public input session, multisensory playground equipment for autistic and emotionally impaired (EI) children was requested. Fencing around the Kiddee Park playground area was also recommended so parents can intermingle without being concerned about their children running into the street.

Estimated Cost: \$75,000 - \$100,000

Well Road Trailhead

Marquette Township owns property adjacent to our well field, which is also collocated adjacent to several highly-utilized NTN non-motorized trails that are part of the NTN South Trails network. A trailhead facility with parking, a bathroom/changing facility, bike maintenance stand, and educational signage would serve NTN users, residents, and visitors.

Estimated Cost: \$50,000 - \$75,000

Wright Street Non-Motorized Pathway Connector

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) US-41 highway project will result in a pathway being developed from the roundabout located at the intersection of US-41 and County Road 492 to Wright Street along the northern portion of the US-41 right-of-way. In 2016, Marquette Township secured a *Safe Routes to School* development grant which allowed for the construction of approximately 1.5 miles of non-motorized pathway connecting existing infrastructure to the North Star Academy charter school. One segment of pathway is an east/west route along the north side of Venture Drive, which connects to North Star Academy



via Wright Street. The Recreation Committee and staff recommend that an additional segment of pathway be constructed from the US-41 pathway to the Venture Drive pathway. This .30 mile connector pathway would allow for an additional 3% of Marquette Township residents on the south side of US-41 to safely connect to North Star Academy, via the US-41 underpass.

Estimated Cost: \$150,000 - \$175,000

2023

Lions Field Recreation Area

The Recreation Committee recently researched options to extend the ice-skating season at the Lions Field ice rink due to varying winter temperatures and sun exposure. Two options were explored: 1) Purchase and install synthetic ice. 2) Construct a roof over the ice rink. As the study moved forward it quickly became apparent that our residents use the ice rink for a multitude of other activities during the “off-season.” These uses would not exist with the installation of artificial ice. Uses such as: roller blading, roller skating, skateboarding, boot hockey, tots learning to ride their bicycles, and pickle ball were all detailed.

Considering that the Recreation Area has always been intended for the entire community, it was recommended that a roof be installed over the ice rink, as opposed to the artificial surface. While the roof will add 30 to 45 days of available skating and provide a much more comfortable environment for the off-season user, the roof would also mitigate the issue of projectiles (pucks) leaving the rink area, debris entering the rink from the surrounding park, and additional off-season uses that can be expanded to include basketball and/or “movie night”, as well as those listed above.

Estimated Cost: \$100,000 - \$150,000

Off-leash Dog Park

An off-leash dog park is something that Marquette Township residents have desired for a number of years. Depending on the availability of vacant land and funding, the Recreation Committee will continue to explore options to bring this amenity to the Township.

Estimated Cost: \$25,000 - \$50,000

2024

Marquette Township Hall/Community Center Outdoor Pavilion

Staff and the Recreation Committee have identified a potential project that would include the construction of an outdoor pavilion immediately adjacent to the Township Community Room. This room would be utilized by residents and visitors for a number of uses including wedding receptions, birthday parties, graduation parties, and the like. The ability to use an outdoor gathering space next to the Township Hall only adds to the attraction of the Community Room. It also provides additional flexibility for our residents and various users.

Estimated Cost: \$50,000 - \$75,000



2025

Bishop Woods Trail Connector

In 2018, Marquette Township staff was able to secure a recreational access easement without cost in order to provide a non-motorized trail connection between the Bishop Woods Subdivision and the Iron Ore Heritage Trail. The plan to improve the trail includes adding crushed limestone to the 10-foot-wide easement to eliminate trail and/or sediment erosion and to provide a barrier-free access for residents and visitors of the Bishop Woods Subdivision.

Estimated Cost: \$10,000 - \$15,000

Non-motorized Pathway Connections between Roundabouts along US-41

As a result of the 2019 Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) US-41 Boulevard Extension Project, two roundabouts will also be constructed. One will be located at the County Road 492 and US-41 intersection, and one will be located at the Brickyard Road and US-41 intersection. The roundabouts will be constructed with two-way crosswalks and pedestrian pathway spurs extending out from them. However, the pathways to connect the two roundabouts are not able to be completed due to budget restraints on the project. A key driver in completing the non-motorized pathway(s) is the connectivity potential with regard to the grade-separated underpass, which is also a scope item in the 2019 MDOT project. When completed, these pathways will provide all non-motorized pathway users with the ability to access our commercial and entertainment districts without having to deal with busy US-41 corridor traffic.

Estimated Cost: \$200,000 - \$250,000

Schwemwood Park

In an effort to complete the Schwemwood Park/Iron Ore Trail Head Master Plan, a restroom facility is still recommended to be installed. Several improvements have been made to this park over the course of the last Recreation Plan update. The restroom facility would be the final phase of this project.

Estimated Cost: \$25,000 - \$50,000

Recreation Access Easement Purchase(s)

Marquette Township will continue to expand and connect our non-motorized transportation network. To accomplish this, the purchase of recreation access easements may assist us. Staff and the Recreation Committee will continue to pursue these easements where and when feasible.

Estimated Cost: \$10,000 - \$25,000

2026

Acquisition of City of Marquette-owned property within Marquette Township

Several years ago, and as part of the Heartwood Forestland property purchase, the City of Marquette acquired property within Marquette Township's political boundary. Both communities have pledged the preservation of this property for passive recreational use, in perpetuity. To that end, Marquette Township rezoned the majority of this property to *Forest Recreation* zoning district, which limits land uses to those that complement passive recreational uses.



Staff and the Recreation Committee believe that Marquette Township should reacquire the property from the city of Marquette, where and when feasible, to ensure that the area is preserved, as planned, for recreational land uses.

Estimated Cost: To Be Determined

Acquisition of Adjacent Lions Field Recreation Area Property

The Recreation Committee and staff support the acquisition of adjacent properties to the Lions Field Recreation Area, as they become available, in order to expand the open space and amenities of the park. Fifty-two percent of Marquette Township’s approximately 4,000 residents live within the one (1) square mile Trowbridge Park Subdivision. Being that the Lions Field Recreation Area is located in the center of the platted area, it allows those residents to be within walking distance of the park. Any additional property that can be attached to the park only adds to the attraction and amenities of the park area and an increase in usability.

Estimated Cost: To be Determined/Market Value

Potential Funding Sources

Creative funding options for the above-mentioned projects may come from a number of sources including but not limited to: local matching funds, the Marquette County Community Foundation Grant program, the Michigan Natural Resource Trust Fund (MNRTF) Development and Acquisition Grant program, the Recreation Passport Grant program, private donations, the Michigan Department of Transportation’s Traffic Alternatives Program (TAP) Grants, in-kind labor or workforce donations, the Noquemanon Trail Network (NTN), Cliffs/Lundin Grant Program and bi-annual Keweenaw Bay Indian Community (KBIC) 2% Gaming Distribution requests.

Note: The Recreation Committee also recommends that the Township Board consider a recreation millage in the near future to provide matching funds for proposed future projects, maintenance and upkeep of existing facilities. It is also recommended that a comprehensive study be conducted regarding all Marquette Township-owned properties to determine the feasibility of developing (or not developing) additional recreational opportunities in the community.

