

MASON COUNTY

PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

2023 - 2027

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

A public hearing on the 2023-2027 Parks and Recreation Master Plan was held on August 15, 2022. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan was adopted by the Mason County Board of Commissioner on November 1, 2022.

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A landscape photograph showing a row of cherry trees in full bloom with white blossoms. The trees are planted in a field of tall green grass with yellow wildflowers. In the background, a large, dark wooden barn with a corrugated metal roof is visible, along with some utility poles and a clear sky.

INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

Mason County has developed this Parks and Recreation Master Plan to serve as a guide to future decision-making regarding recreation facilities improvements, and the development of new recreation opportunities for the next five years. This document is the basis for policy implementation of improvements and new initiatives that will meet the recreational goals and interests of Mason County.

Before any Recreation Plan is adopted and enacted, it is first important to understand the needs of the current residents, existing recreational opportunities, the demographic characteristics of the area, program initiatives, and projects and facilities that are best suited for the community. This Plan was compiled from public input and suggestions from residents, officials, and other stakeholders with the collaboration of Spicer Group and the Mason County Parks and Recreation Commission. The community was a key component in creating this plan. Together, the voices of Mason County have united to develop a Recreation Plan that will enhance community member's and visitor's experience.

The foundation for the development of the Mason County Parks and Recreation Plan was based on the following goals:

- Involve the community throughout the process of updating the Recreation Plan.
- Identify and map existing County-owned/operated recreation facilities.
- Build common ground among the Mason County residents and stakeholders in addressing the future recreational needs, and priorities of the County.
- Enable the County to be eligible for financial assistance based on the Recreation Plan.
- Facilitate interagency collaboration in establishing parks and recreation goals, objectives, and actions in partnership with Mason County and other local groups.
- Support the implementation of improvements for barrier-free access to County parks and recreational sites.

In conclusion, Mason County officials intend to use this Plan as a guide for their work on all future recreation and park projects within the County. It is also a strategic document that articulates specific goals to various agencies and organizations that fund local recreational and park improvement projects. Specifically, this plan is developed in accordance with the guidelines for the development of community Parks and Recreation Plans published by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR). A five-year, DNR-approved Parks and Recreation Master Plan is necessary for Mason County to pursue DNR-administered grants. This Parks and Recreation Master Plan is written for Mason County and covers all aspects of recreation within the county over a five-year period from 2023-2027.



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COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

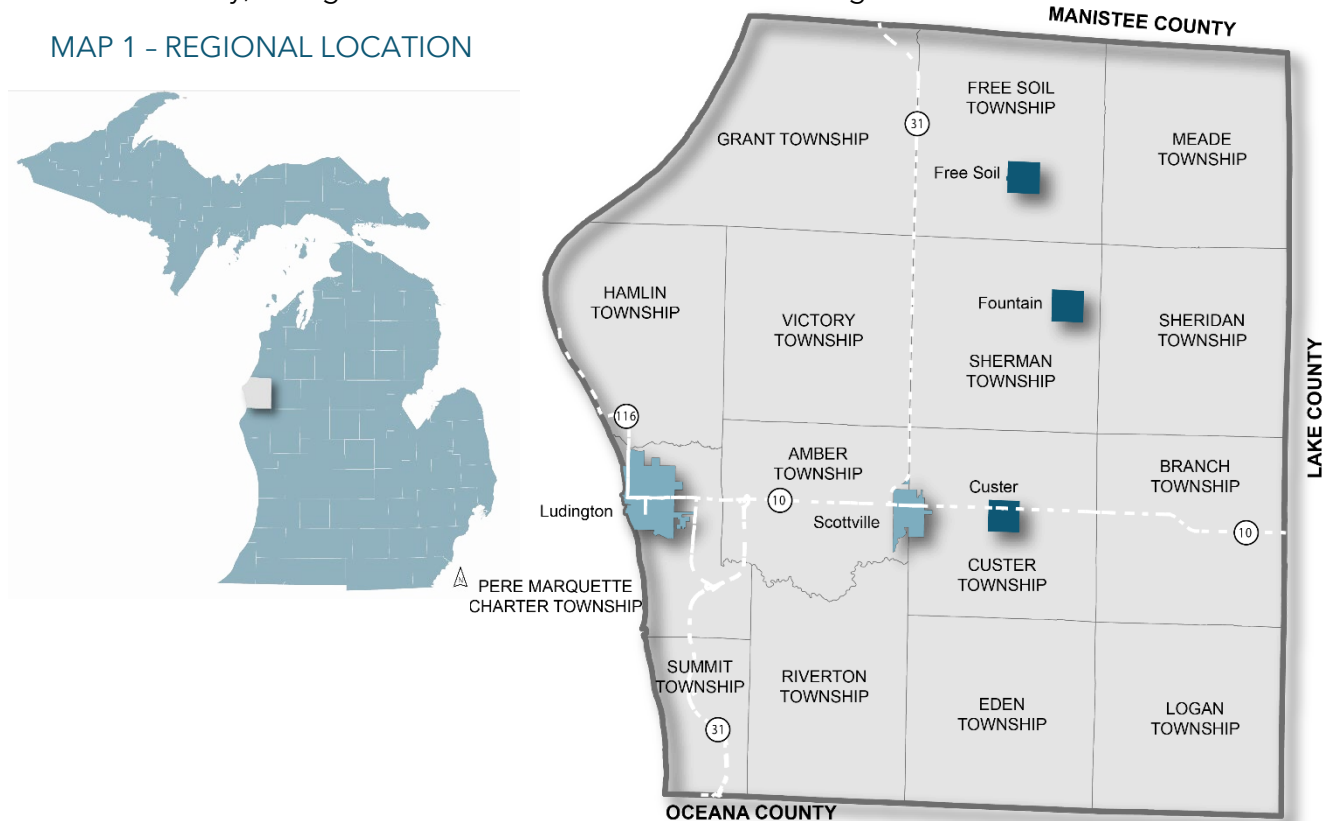
REGIONAL LOCATION

Mason County is located on the shore of Lake Michigan in central lower Peninsula of Michigan, at approximately 44° 1' 12" N (latitude), 86° 30' 0" W (longitude), occupying 1,241 square miles. The County is approximately 70 miles south of Traverse City and about 90 miles north of Grand Rapids. Adjacent counties include Manistee County to the north, Lake County to the east, Oceana County on the south. Lake Michigan borders the west with 28 miles of freshwater shoreline. The County is accessible by US-31 running north and south, and US-10 running east to west, both are important highways that extend the length of the County.

In 1855, Mason County was named after the first Governor of Michigan, Stevens Thomas Mason. The City of Ludington is the County seat, and is a small port city, where tourists and industry co-exist. Ludington's waterfront is a mix of deep-water facilities and industry, marinas, parks, and residential uses.

Within the County are many prominent features of the landscape including the Lake Michigan shoreline, large areas of farmland, and forest. The Lake Michigan shoreline features extensive bluff and dune areas, and cottages with seasonal and year-around homes. Major rivers such as the Pere Marquette River, Lincoln River, Big Sable River, and streams flow through Mason County, from east to west, and drain into Lake Michigan. In addition to Lake Michigan, Mason County has many small lakes scattered throughout. Hamlin Lake is the largest lake in Mason County, sitting behind a dam and the dunes at Ludington State Park.

MAP 1 - REGIONAL LOCATION



DEMOGRAPHICS

In this section, background information for the U.S Census was used to analyze Mason County's current demographic conditions. The following section analyzes Census-based data on overall population trends, housing characteristics, and economic information in the County to present an overall demographic condition analysis.

The information presented in this chapter uses the most recent Census Data from the 2020 Census and 2010 Census. The County will be compared to townships and cities within it and the State of Michigan.

Understanding the characteristics of the population is helpful when evaluating parks and recreation facilities and needs. The tables below provide a comparison of key demographic data for Mason County.

TABLE 1 - COUNTY POPULATION AND MEDIAN AGE

	2020 Population	Percent of County Total	Median Age
Amber Township	2,529	8.7%	47.5
Branch Township	1,405	4.8%	39.9
Village of Custer	289	1.0%	33.3
Custer Township*	1,321	4.5%	41.7
Eden Township	580	2.0%	46.6
Village of Free Soil	103	0.4%	47.6
Free Soil Township*	842	2.9%	53.1
Grant Township	925	3.2%	56.3
Hamlin Township	3,711	12.8%	56.7
Logan Township	329	1.1%	62.7
Meade Township	179	0.6%	41.3
Pere Marquette Charter Township	2,416	8.3%	45.9
Riverton Township	1,232	4.2%	38.1
Village of Fountain	202	0.7%	31.7
Sheridan Township*	1,044	3.6%	46.5
Sherman Township	127	0.4%	40.9
Summit Township	995	3.4%	49.3
Victory Township	1,406	4.8%	44.7
City of Ludington	7,655	26.4%	43.9
City of Scottville	1,356	4.7%	31.5
Mason County	29,050		46.2

*VILLAGE LISTED IMMEDIATELY ABOVE IS INCLUDED IN OFFICIAL CENSUS COUNT FOR THE TOWNSHIP.

According to the 2020 U.S. Census, Mason County has a population of 29,050, which is an increase of 345 people (1.19%) from 2010, when the population was 28,705 people. During this same period, Michigan's population increased by 1.95%. Table 1, above, shows the distribution of population and the median age throughout Mason County. Four of the twenty communities in the County comprise over half (57%) of the County's population. Those communities are the City of Ludington (7,655), Hamlin Township (3,711), Pere Marquette Charter Township (2,461), and Amber Township (2,529).

The median age of Mason County residents is 46.3 years. This is considerably older than the median age for the State of Michigan, which is 39.8 years. As the population increases, those residents recreational needs and wants may change. Towards more passive facilities such as paths and trails instead of playgrounds. The older population, 65 and older make up 23.7% of the County population. The younger population, under 18 makes up 20.3% of the population in the County. Together, the oldest and youngest population groups make up almost 50% of the County's population.

TABLE 2 - MASON COUNTY DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Select Census Data for Mason County and Michigan		
	Mason County	Michigan
Population- 2010 Census	28,705	9,883,640
Population- 2020 Census	29,050	10,077,331
% Of Population 65 & older	23.7%	17.2%
% Of Population under 18	20.3%	21.5%
Median Age	46.3	39.8
% With a Bachelor's Degree or higher	22%	30%
Poverty Rate	14.7%	13.7%
Median Household Income	\$51,568	\$59,234
Average Household Size	2.33	2.45
Median Housing Value	\$151,400	\$162,600
Renter-occupied housing as % of total Occupied Units	6.8%	9.4%
Vacancy Status	30.2%	13.7%

Table 2, above, shows that the County has a significantly lower percentage, 2.6% of renters compared to the State. Even though the County has a large amount of seasonal residents and visitors, their rental percentage is not affected. However, the County does have a significantly higher vacant status, 16.5% higher than the State's. The median household income in Mason County is \$51,568, a little under \$8,000 less than the State at \$59,234.

TOURISM POPULATION

There are three very important visitor groups in Mason County. The first is the seasonal residents, the second is the tourist population, and the third is day-trippers.

According to the 2020 U.S. Census, there are 17,392 housing units in Mason County. More than 4,000 of these (4,051) are designated for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. This number is significant because it means that the population of the County can swell by several thousand during peak vacation times. Further, seasonal residents of the community are a special population with unique needs in terms of recreational facilities. Most of these seasonal residents have chosen their second homes because of the recreational and natural resource opportunities that are available nearby. Seasonal people are a strong economic driver for the County, therefore, it is important that the recreation facilities remain up to the standards they've experienced previously.

The seasonal residential population can have a substantial impact on the economy in Mason County. Conservatively, if they are only 2-person households that only visit once a year, that is an addition of 9,002 to the population and the economy, which is approximately 30% of the year-round residents of the County. These estimations are low and conservative. Therefore, the seasonal residents at a minimum add 30% more people to the local economy. Furthermore, the seasonal residents tend to have a higher median income than year-round residents and spend a great amount of money while visiting.

The tourist population, also known as commercial lodgers, may be the most significant group to the County. These visitors typically stay in campgrounds, motels, hotels, and resorts. Generally, this group uses the western half of the County and the City of Ludington, where well-developed lodging facilities cater to them.

The last group is day trippers, they are visitors who use attractions and services for a single day. They come to fish, canoe, ski, attend festivals, or shop. The size of this group has increased over the years due to the accessibility of US-31 to US-10 just two miles east of Ludington. In addition, the five lanes of US-10 between Ludington and the northbound bypass of US-31 near Scottville provides ease of access to many points within Mason County.



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ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

INTRODUCTION

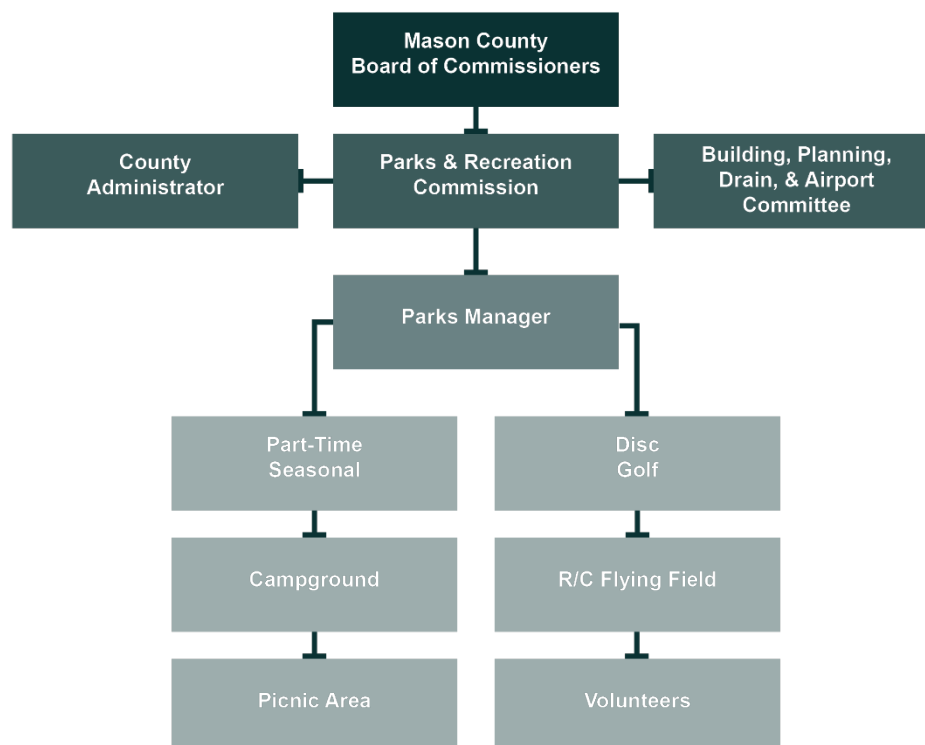
The Mason County Parks and Recreation Commission is a ten-member body established as provided by state law and has been delegated the responsibility for the planning and administration of recreational services for the County. The commission includes representatives from the Road Commission, Drain Commission, a representative from the Planning Commission, a member of the County Board, and six members from the public at large appointed by the County Board, with three-year terms. Generally, at the first meeting of each year, a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, and a Secretary are elected to act for the Mason County Parks and Recreation Commission. During this meeting, the Commission lays out the capital improvement plans for the parks and establishes the four meeting dates for the year, if needed the Chairperson will call special meetings.

MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS

The Parks and Recreation Commission is responsible for the maintenance and development of the parks in Mason County. They employ a year-round, part-time manager, a part-time, seasonal Senior Ranger, and three part-time, seasonal Assistant Rangers who work at the Campground and Picnic Area.

The organizational chart below shows the structure of parks and recreation administration in Mason County.

FIGURE 1 - ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE



FUNDING AND BUDGET

The Mason County parks are financed through the operations and maintenance budget and the capital improvements budget, shown in Table 3. Funding for these operations comes from registrations, user fees, and annual contributions from the Ludington Pumped Storage Plant. In the 2000s, Mason County Parks and Recreation Commission and The Ludington Pumped Storage Plant entered into a long-term agreement for 20 years. In 2012, Consumers Energy signed an amendment to the lease, and the agreement expires December 31, 2042. These funds generated by the Pump Storage Plant are to be used by the County only for park operations and improvements and are adjusted annually by the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The Parks and Recreation Commission currently does not provide any programming services.

TABLE 3 – COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION BUDGET

2020/2021 Parks and Recreation Budget		
	2020	2021
Operations and Maintenance	\$130,000	\$159,000
Capital Expenditures	\$43,000	\$0



Mason County Picnic Area

ADDITIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Volunteers

Volunteers provide crucial support to many programs and activities in the County. The Commission uses volunteers throughout the year to maintain facilities at the Campground and the Disc Golf Course.

Future collaboration

Mason County Parks and Recreation Commission is uniquely positioned to be a governing body with the possibility of advocating for and facilitating collaboration between all park entities in the County. The Commission is positioned to coordinate township, municipal, state, and federal goals and projects to create a county-wide recreation system that is most beneficial to residents and visitors. This model has been successful in other Michigan communities, and the County Parks and Recreation Commission believes it is a good strategy to ensure Mason County has a coordinated Recreation effort. In addition to coordination, this effort can also support local governments' recreation planning efforts by understanding their goals. An example where coordination is most important is in developing a complete non-motorized trail network. Residents and visitors have strongly indicated they would like to see a connected County-wide non-motorized trail system. By facilitating collaboration, the local jurisdictions will have a better understanding of their projects that may overlap, and be able to assist one another in achieving similar goals. In addition, collaboration is a successful way for the County and local jurisdictions to position themselves for grant dollars.

Mason County Parks participated in a region-wide trail visioning effort involving Mason, Lake, Newaygo, and Oceana counties. Throughout the process and working with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) trail planners, desired connections were identified.

The following trail connections were identified:

- A. A non-motorized connectivity between Ludington and Scottville
- B. Focus on extending/connecting to the North Country Trail, Iron Belle Trail, and Pere Marquette State Trail, and the Willian Field Memorial Heart-Montague Trail
- C. Improvements to U.S. Bike Route 35 between Ludington and Manistee especially in Free Soil and Grant Townships
- D. Improvements to Pere Marquette River bridge crossings
- E. Use sign or pavement markings to show regularly used routes
- F. Work with Pere Marquette Charter Township as it develops its new Conservation Park
- G. Work with Muskegon County and local tourism interests to create and market a "loop ride/trip" with Lake Michigan Carferry and Lake Express Ferry.

The map on the following page identifies Mason County's existing and planned trail networks as a part of the Regional Plan. The full Regional Non-motorized Plan can be found in Appendix A.

MAP 2 - MASON COUNTY NON-MOTORIZED PRIORITIES & DESIRED CONNECTIONS MAP



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PARKS AND RECREATION INVENTORY

NATURAL FEATURES

A natural resource inventory is used to identify open space areas that may be desirable for protection and/or public access through acquisition or other means. There are many significant natural resources in the County, including more than 28 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline, 9,700-acres of inland lakes, 59,000-acres of forest in the Manistee National Forest, approximately 238-miles of rivers and streams, and 6,440-acres of protected sand dunes. It's worthwhile to note that Mason County ranks 44th among the 83 Counties in Michigan regarding the total number of lakes and ponds within its boundaries and ranks 36th in total acreage.

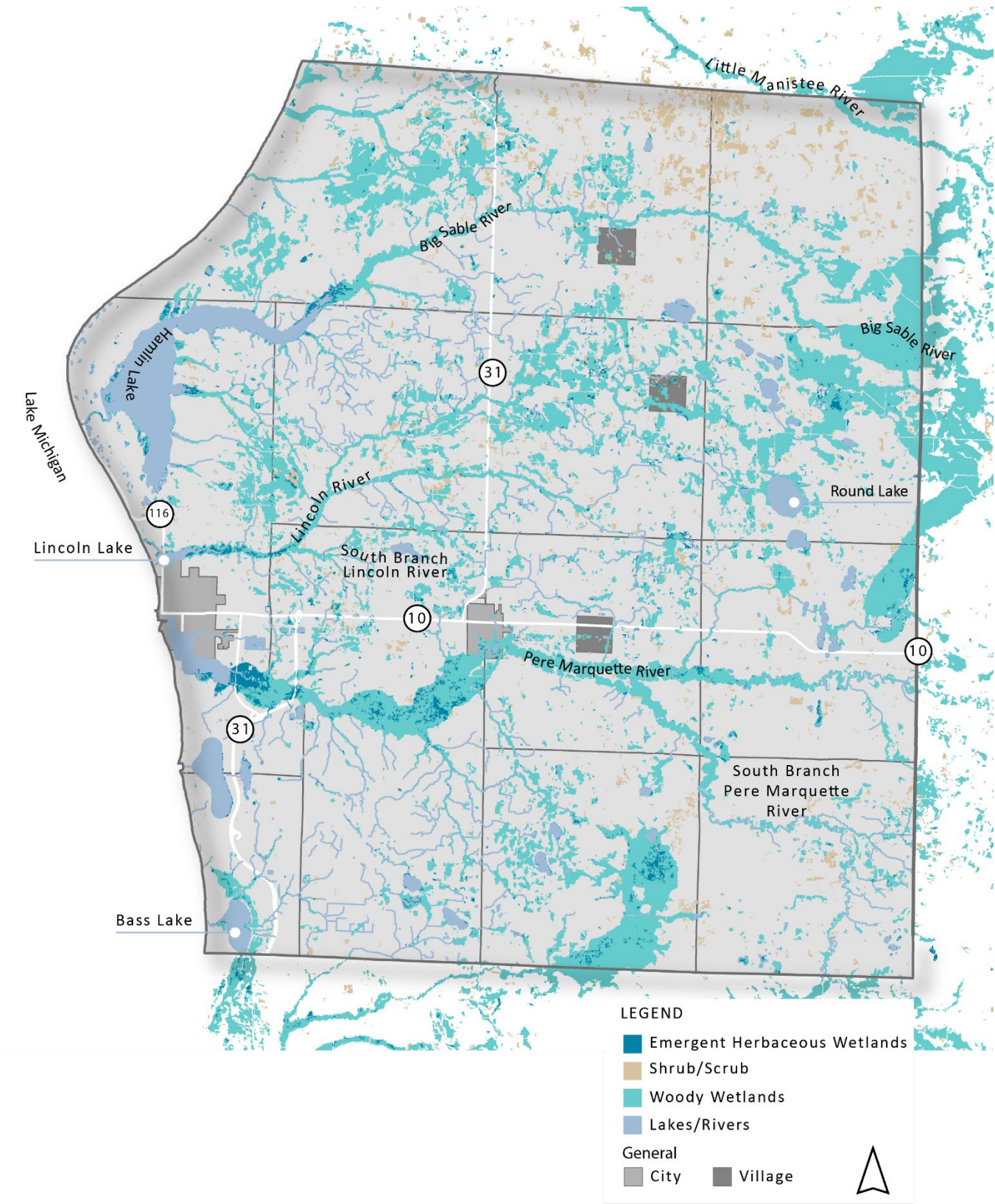
Wetlands & Waterways

The wetlands and hydrology map, on the following page, identifies lakes, rivers, streams, and wetlands in Mason County. It also highlights three types of wetlands; freshwater emergent, shrub/scrub and forested, and riverine. Wetlands are areas that are critical to the natural water system, filtration, and habitat. They should be protected even when used for low-intensity recreation. A more detailed account of wetlands in Mason County can be found on Map 3-2 ("Floodplains and Wetlands") in the Mason County Comprehensive Plan, in Appendix B.

Table 4, on page 18, shows a partial inventory of inland lakes in the County. The table includes which of those have public access. Table 5, on page 19 details the types of lakes and ponds in the County.



MAP 3 - WETLANDS & WATERWAYS MAP



Lakes and Ponds

TABLE 4 - INLAND LAKES

Inland Lake	Surface Area (acres)	Public Access
Allen Lake	18.0	
Augustine Lake	15.9	
Batcheller Lake	28.5	
Bartons Lake	40.2	
Bass Lake	494.2	Yes
Cartier Lake	41.5	
Casin Lake	25.1	
Chancellor Lake (Blue Lake)	67.4	
Clancy Lake	17.9	
Emerson Lake	58.3	
Ford Lake	182.8	Yes
Gooseneck Lake	85.9	Yes
Gun Lake	232.1	Yes
Hackert Lake (Crystal)	119.9	Yes
Hamlin Lake	4,665.8	Yes
Hoags Lake	35.2	Yes
Hopkins Lake	119.3	
Lake Eden	65.3	
Lincoln Lake	162.4	Yes
Long Lake	107.1	Yes
Lost Lakes	60.9	
Mud Lake	29.6	
Nordhouse Lake	18	
North Oxbow Lake	109.7	
Pere Marquette Lake	590.3	Yes
Pickerel Lake	20.7	
Picnic Lake	30.7	
Pleiness Lake	97.5	Yes
Pond Augustine Lake	15.8	
Romeo Lake	19.1	
Round Lake	541.1	Yes
South Oxbow Lake	58.1	
St. Mary's Lake	113.3	Yes
Tainer Lake	21.8	
Tallman Lake	159.6	Yes
Thunder Lake	65.6	
Vogel Lake	20.6	
Watassa Lake	6.2	
Whelan Lake	15.0	Yes
Woodruff Lake	58.8	

TABLE 5: TYPES OF LAKES AND PONDS IN MASON COUNTY

Type	Number	Acres
Natural lakes & ponds	193	3,660
Natural lake with dam	4	5,934
Artificial ponds	79	17.1
Marl lake	1	0.9
Settling pond	2	21.1
Fish breeding pond	1	0.5

Rivers and Streams

Most of the rivers and streams in Mason County are of very high quality and support desirable species of game fish. Major rivers in the County include the Pere Marquette, Lincoln (north and south branches), Little Manistee, and the Big Sable. The Pere Marquette River is the major east to west river in southern Mason County. The Lincoln River is the primary river running east to west in northern Mason County. Table 6, below, shows the river and streams in the County and their classification by size.

Of the 251-miles of inventoried rivers and streams in Mason County, approximately 133-miles are designated state or federal wild/natural/scenic/natural rivers. The Pere Marquette River is designated as a State Natural River, and also as a Federal Scenic River. These designations mandate certain provisions to help retain the naturalness of the shoreline and to help protect river water quality. Provisions of this sort typically include deeper setbacks for buildings, greater minimum lot widths, limitations on the size of signs, deeper setbacks for septic systems, a natural vegetative buffer strip, limitations on the clearing of shoreline vegetation, and control of access to the river. These requirements are under the control of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

TABLE 6 - RIVERS AND STREAMS

Stream Size	Characteristics	Mileage
Very Small	Not canoeable at average water levels	174 miles
Small	Canoeable with difficulty	3 Miles
Large	Handles small to medium outboard motors	60 Miles
Very Large	Handles large outboard motors	10 Miles
Source: Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Recreation Services Division		

Woodlands

Other important natural features in Mason County are the wooded land and sand dunes. A total of 169,504.9 acres in the County is wooded land, categorized as deciduous forest (101,470.7 acres), evergreen forest (49,975.6 acres), and mixed forest (17,788.6 acres). Additionally, the County is home to 23,697.9 acres of grasslands and 3,626.9 acres of recreational grasses. Recreational grasses is land that's used for parks, golf courses, and other recreation or aesthetic purposes. Of the forest land, 60,323.4 acres is part of the Manistee National Forest, and 4,660 acres is State land managed by the DNR. That means 38% of the wooded land in Mason County is publicly-owned and managed by the State or Federal agencies.

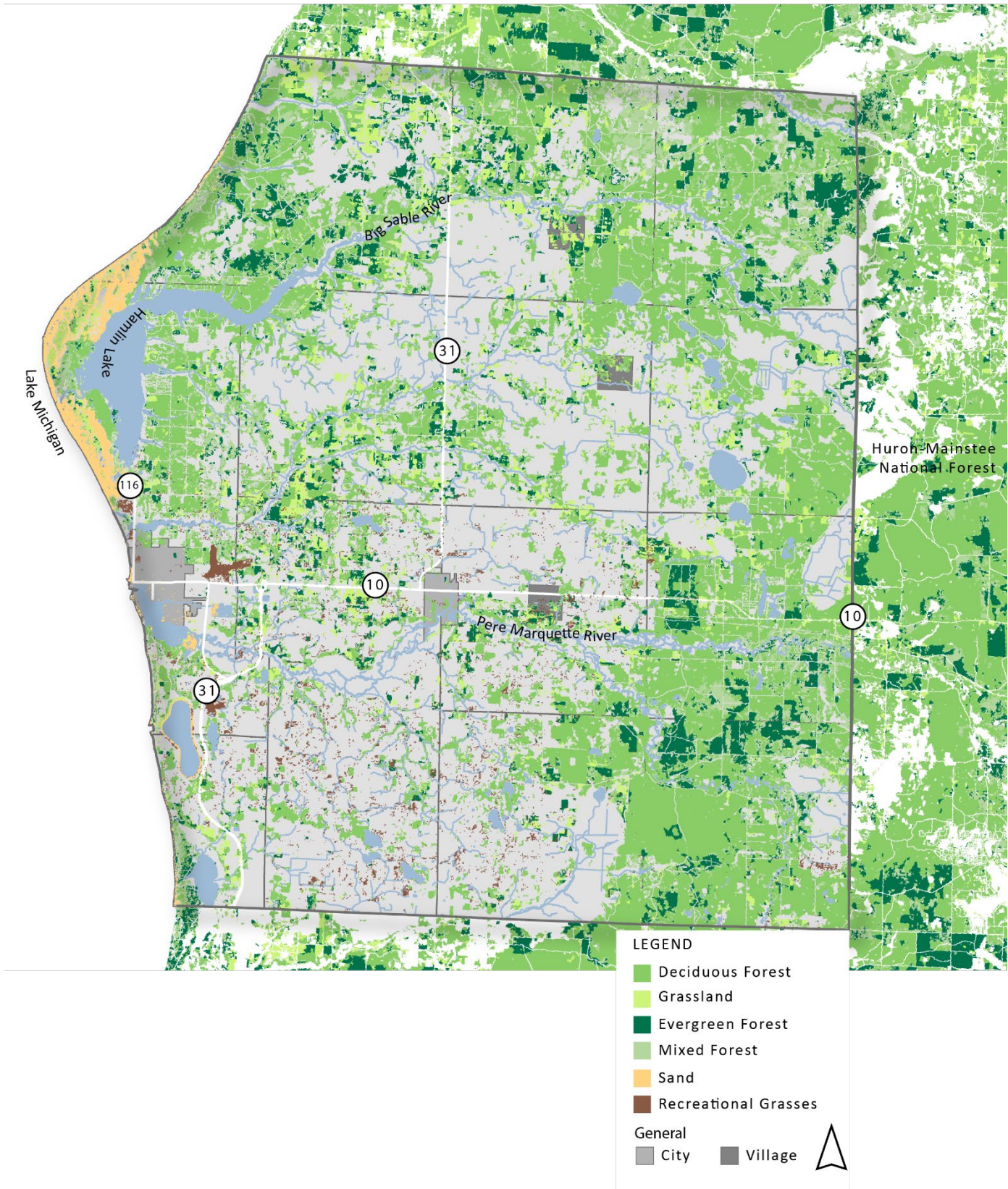
Map 3, on the following page also depicts the location of sand dunes in the County. Designated critical dune areas run along the shore from the City of Ludington north into Grant Township. Much of this area is in public ownership, either through Ludington State Park or the Manistee National Forest. Sand dune protection and management is administered by the EGLE. A more detailed account of sand dunes in the County is described in Chapter 3 ("Future Land Use") of the Mason County Comprehensive Plan, in Appendix B.

Water Access

As shown in this analysis and depicted in the maps, Mason County has bountiful natural resources and recreation opportunities. The residents and visitors enjoy access to a Great Lake, rivers, streams, and many inland lakes. Additionally, much of the County is wooded land, of which over one-third is open to public as federal/state managed forest land. Finally, a resource that is unique to the western shoreline of the state, is the sand dunes. All create very different and sensitive ecosystems that should be used while ensuring the natural resources are protected for future generations. The Lake Michigan shoreline along Mason County is part of the 90-mile long Lake Michigan Water Trails West.

Ludington State Park offers two canoe/kayak trails starting at the Hamlin Beach where a universal access launch is located. The long-established southern trail involves portages along a wetland pond route. The northern trail is being defined to include a stretch on Hamlin Lake looping through "Lost Lake". It is being signed and will not involve portages.

MAP 4 - WOODLANDS MAP



RECREATION INVENTORY

INTRODUCTION

The following inventory describes the parks in the County. This inventory was updated by the planning consultants in the spring of 2022 and verified by County Staff. The text below includes an in-depth description of parks located within the County, park classification, and ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) accessibility rating. Table 8, at the end of this section, summarizes park amenities in a tabular form. In this chapter, there is also a brief description of other recreation facilities within the region.

ACCESSIBILITY

Creating a park system that is safe, accessible, and usable to all individuals within the community, including those with disabilities, is essential. A grading system has been developed by the DNR to easily identify those parks and facilities which are most, and least, handicapped-accessible and usable, based on ADA guidelines. The following accessibility grading system uses a five-point system ranging from 1: None of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines, to 5: The entire park was developed/renovated using the principles of Universal Design.

An ADA compliance assessment of County facilities was conducted during the summer of 2017 and updated in the spring of 2022. As noted in the inventory listing in Table 8, some of the parks do not meet all criteria for accessibility. The Parks and Recreation Commission will continue its efforts towards improving accessibility at each of the parks when improvements are made. This includes accessible parking, paths, restrooms, activity areas, amenities, and signage.

TABLE 7 - ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS

Accessibility Grade	Definition
1	None of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
2	Some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
3	Most of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
4	The entire park meets accessibility guidelines
5	The entire park was developed/renovated using the principles of Universal Design

CLASSIFICATION OF COUNTY PARKS

A recreation inventory is the foundation for developing an understanding of the County's recreation needs, deficiencies, and future plans. An inventory provides a snapshot of all the available facilities within a community along with detail about the types of activities and features. The following classification system is adapted from the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) guide. It categorizes different types of parks based on size, service area, facilities, and use groups. Each park in the Mason County is classified as either a neighborhood park, a community park, or a regional park. The NRPA classifies several other park types, but they are not all applicable to Mason County.

A recommended classification system for local and regional recreation open space includes the following four types of parks.

Mini-Parks address limited, isolated, or unique recreational needs. They are usually between 2,500 square feet and one acre in size.

Neighborhood Parks are often considered the basic unit of a park system. They serve as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood. Their intended service area is $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile distance and uninterrupted by non-residential roads and other physical barriers. They are generally 5 to 10 acres in size.

Community Parks serve a broader purpose than neighborhood parks. Their focus is on meeting community-based recreation needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces. They are usually between 30 and 50 acres and serve a radius of $\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 miles distance. The undeveloped properties could also fall into the community park description.

- Inman Road Property
- Big Sable River Property

Large Urban Parks serve a broader purpose than community parks and are used when community parks and neighborhood parks are not adequate to serve local needs. They generally serve the entire community and are a minimum of 50 acres.

- The Mason County Campground
- Mason County Picnic Area

Special Park are parks that could cover a broad range of parks and recreation facilities oriented toward a single-purpose or use. There is no standard size or location criteria, both vary depending upon use and type of facilities.

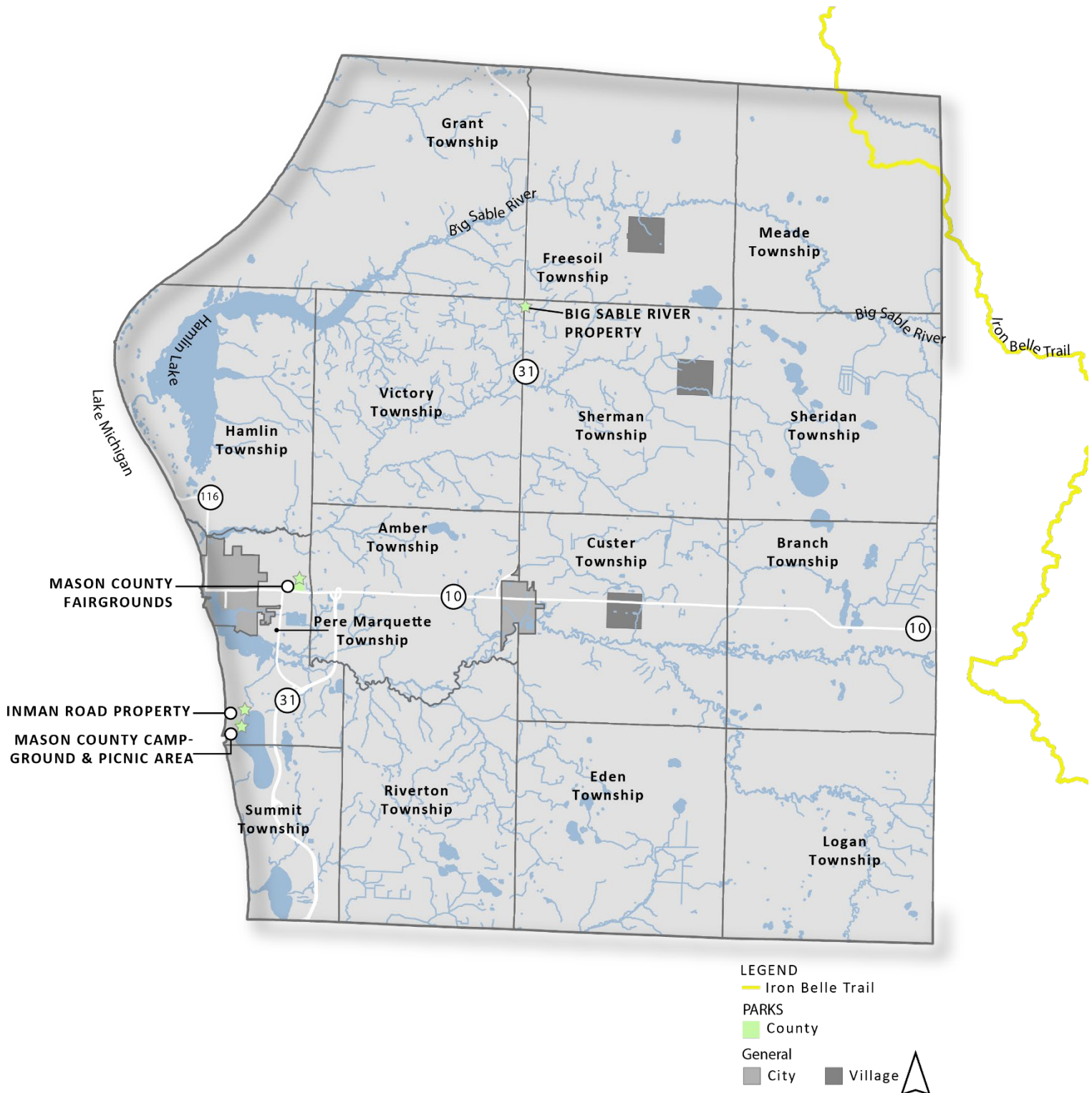
- Mason County Fairgrounds

COUNTY PARKS INVENTORY

An inventory of the existing Mason County parks and natural resources was completed using the information provided by the County. It was verified with a field review from the Parks and Recreation Commission. The County operated two park facilities adjacent to the Ludington Pump Storage Facility on land leased from Consumers Energy. Mason County also owns the Mason County Fairgrounds and two parcels of property that are not currently developed (Inman Road Property and Big Sable River Property). Map 5 shows locations of parks, facilities, and undeveloped land currently owned and administered by Mason County. An in depth inventory of all County-owned parks and facilities and other local parks are provided in Table 8 at the end of this section. This section of the Plan includes additional information including park descriptions, park classifications, park locations, and park ADA rankings. Also, this section contributes to a broader understanding of recreation facilities in the County, their past recreation grant history, current trail systems, and other local parks and facilities.



MAP 5 - MASON COUNTY PARKS



Mason County Campground

Park Classification: Large Urban Park

Location: 5906 West Chauvez Road, Ludington MI 49431

ADA: 2

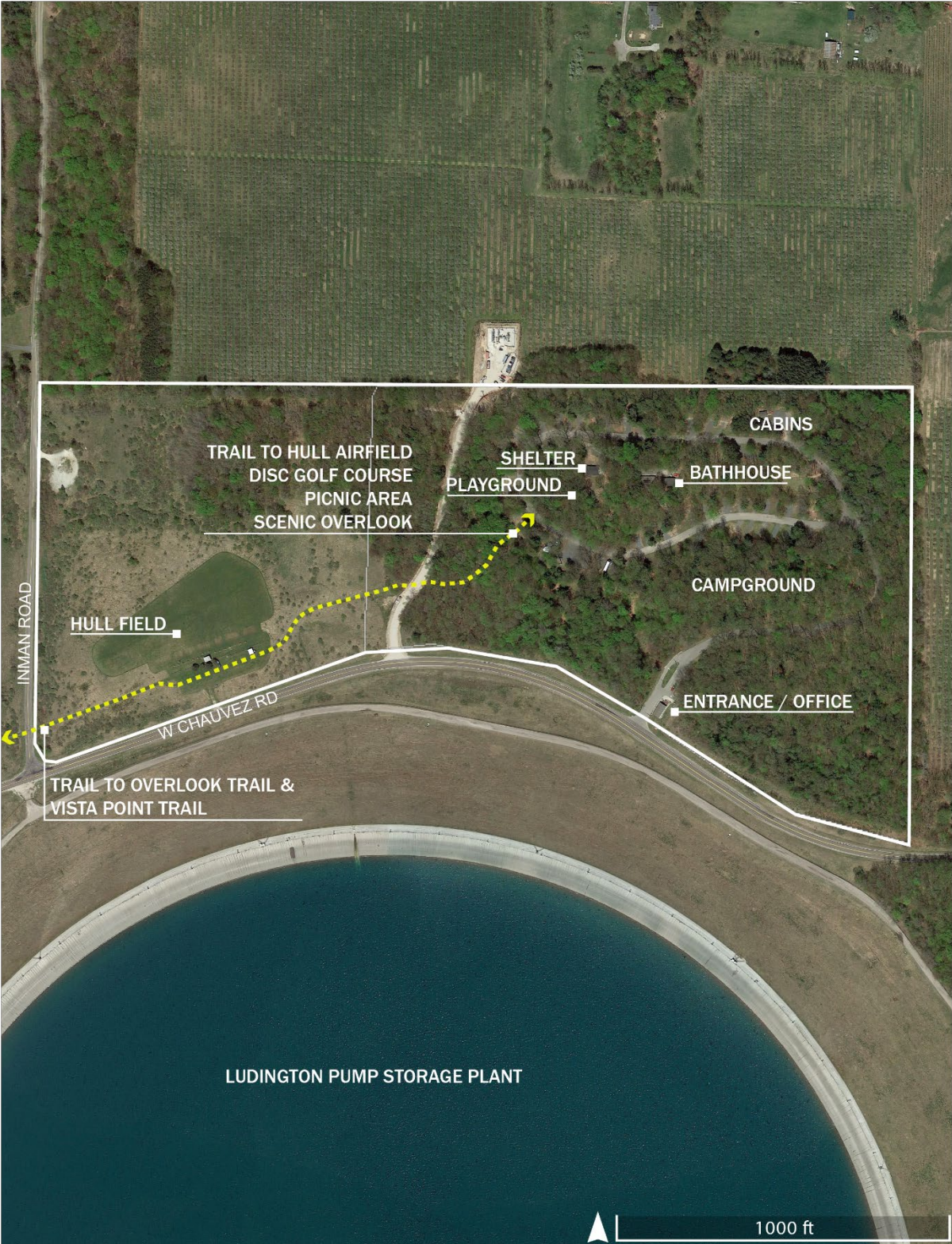
Acres: 60 acres

In 1974 the Ludington Pumped Storage Plant and Consumers Energy entered into a lease agreement upon the completion of the two parks. In December of 2012, the lease expired and the second amendment to the lease was extended for 30 more years, ending in 2042. The Ludington Pumped Storage Plant is jointly owned by Consumers Energy and Detroit Edison with the Parks and Recreation Commission, each have their terms and involvement with the Plant.

Over the years, the campground has undergone many updates. Beginning in 1999, and finish the first big update was to rebuild the bath house at the Mason County Campground to be ADA compliant. The second large project was an upgrade to the pavilion at the Mason County Picnic Area, bringing that building up to ADA specifications in 2000. The final project was to the Ludington Pumped Storage Plant which increased the size and number of campsites at the Mason County Campground, improved electric service to campsites, and improvements to the entire campground. Since then the Campground has added additional campsites, installation of a septic tank and drain field for the host site. In 2010, camping cabins were added to the campground, and in 2019, electrical services were updated at seasonal, electric and water sites and water has been added to all electric sites. In 2021, a new family-friendly disc golf course, the Tinderbox, was developed and opened at the campground.

The Mason County Campground includes 56 wooded campsites and the aforementioned camping cabins. The campground also features a pavilion, playground, and a nature trail that connects it to the Picnic Area. Hull Field, located just west of the campground is used as a flying field for radio-controlled (RC) model airplanes. The Twisted Sticks Radio Control Club built and operates Hull Field. Even though the club maintains the site, ultimately it is overseen by the Parks and Recreation Commission. The field is open to the public for pilots who possess an appropriate license. In 2019, Twisted Sticks added an online weather station, and in 2020 the club added a 30' x 150' geotextile material runway.

MAP 6 - MASON COUNTY CAMPGROUND



Mason County Picnic Area

Park Classification: Large Urban Park

Location: 6501 West Chauvez Road, Ludington MI 49431

ADA: 2

Acres: 150 acres

Mason County Picnic Area offers opportunities to view wildlife, native flora, and scenic vistas. In addition to the wildlife at the parks, the parks and recreation facilities at the Picnic Area include a large pavilion that seats 350 people and can be rented for public and private functions. Also located in this park, are three 24-goal disc golf courses, Beauty, Beast, and Goliath, which are operated by the Mason County Disc Golf Organization. These courses were built entirely with volunteer help and host tournaments and leagues through Mason County Disc Golf Organization and others. The three courses combined are advertised as the third largest disc golf course in the world. They are open to the public for a donation of \$1.00. Mason County Disc Golf has upgraded signage and improved its courses at the picnic area.

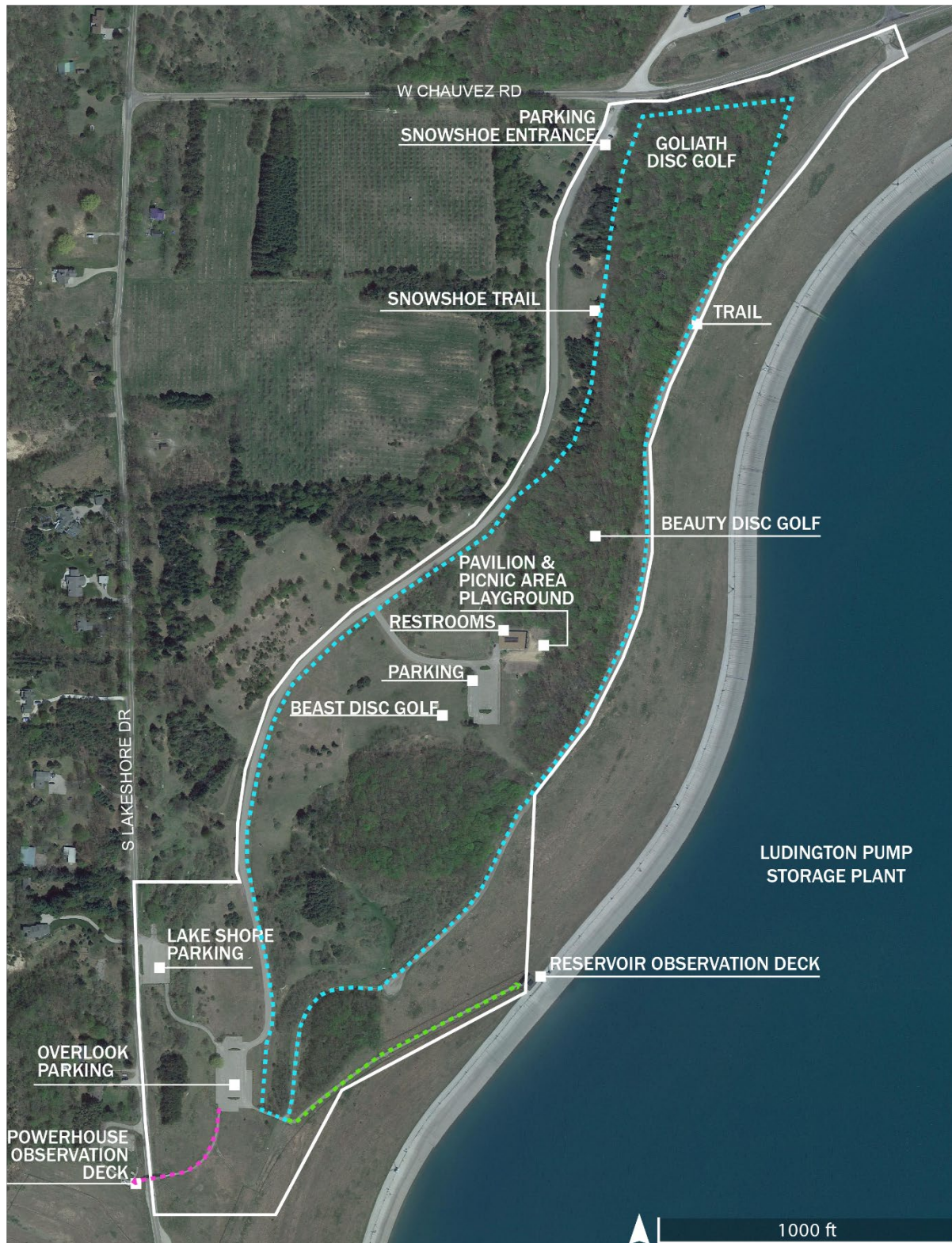
In 2017, a snowshoe trail was added to the area incorporating portions of the existing walking path, the next year the trail was laid and signage was included.

In 2020, a new, accessible playground was added and the old playground was removed. A year later, the picnic area, parking lots, and path to the new playground were seal-coated and the bathrooms were improved.

In 2021, a wind storm considerable damaged trees, the park walking trail and disc golf fairways in the park's northern area including the Beauty disc golf course. Tree removal has been completed. Trail renovation and disc golf course damage remediation is needed and being planned.



MAP 7 - MASON COUNTY PICNIC AREA



Inman Road Property

Park Classification: Community Park

Location: Corner of West Bradshaw & Inman (Section 35)

ADA: 1

Acres: 34 acres

Located near the intersection of West Bradshaw Road and Inman Road just north of the Mason County Campground is 34 acres of undeveloped land. This County-owned parcel is close to the Lake Michigan shoreline, the Mason County Campground, and the Mason County Picnic Area lending itself to many possibilities for new facilities, future connections, and existing recreation sites in Mason County.



MAP 8 - INMAN ROAD PROPERTY



Big Sable River Property

Park Classification: Community Park

Location: East Side of US-31, South of Big Sable Drive, Section 19

ADA: 1

Acres: 6 acres

This six-acre riverfront property consists of two separate parcels situated on the north and south sides of the Big Sable River in Free Soil Township. This scenic undeveloped property has direct access from US-31 and Big Sable River providing fishing access and an unimproved launch for canoes and kayaks. In 2020, a stream monitoring station was installed by Michigan Trout Unlimited and maintained by Hamlin Lake Preservation Society. The property is mostly undeveloped. In a recent study, by MDOT, it was determined there is insufficient space to develop the site which is primarily riverside wetlands.



MAP 9 - BIG SABLE RIVER PROPERTY



Mason County Fairgrounds

Park Classification: Special Park

Location: 5302 West US-10 Ludington, MI 49431

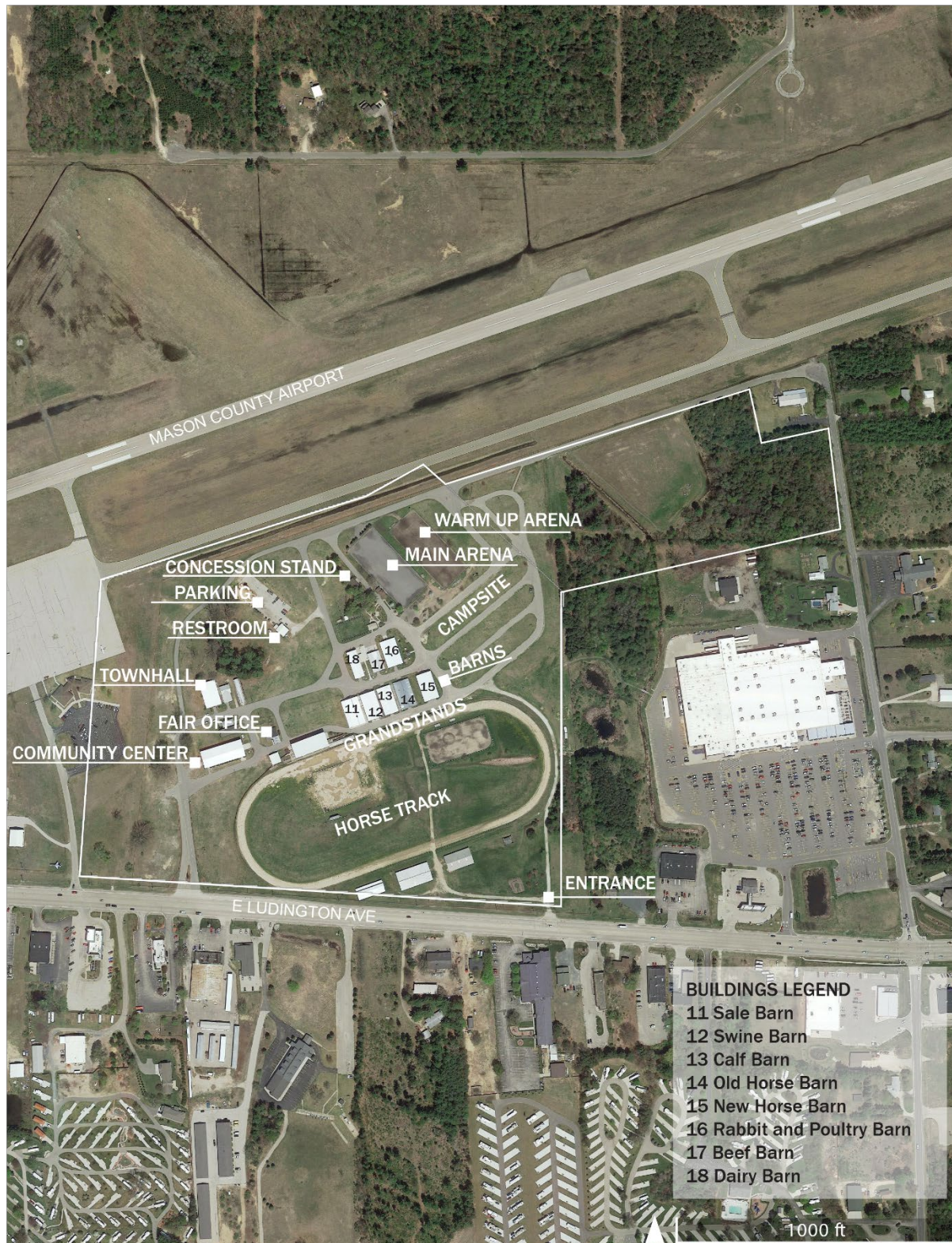
ADA: 2

Acres: 61 acres

The fairground property is owned by the County and is leased to the Western Michigan Fair Association. Located on the north side of US-10 in Pere Marquette Charter Township, this 61-acre site features a hiking trail, 115 modern campsites with a 30 or 50 amp service, water, Wi-Fi, and a community center. The Fairgrounds also has a state of the art 300' x 150' riding area, three horse arenas, several barns, and a grandstand with 3,500 seats.



MAP 10 - MASON COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS



	Ownership	Acreage	Classification	Ball Diamonds	Basketball Courts	Playground	Pavilion	Disc Golf Course	Picnic Area	Horseshoes	Sledding	Restrooms	Tennis Courts	Nature Trail	Grills	Boardwalk	Fishing Platform	Campsites	Swimming Pool	Beach Area	Ski Trails	River Access	Lake Access	Location	Other	Accessibility***	
Township Park	Branch Township			X																							
Sherman Township Park	Sherman Township			X		x	X						x							X			X	20524 N Center Lake Rd, Tustin, MI 49688	Swim raft, boat launch on Gun Lake		
Sherdian Township	Sherdian Township						x		x			x				x				x			x	Southeast of Fountain	Lake access to gun Lake and Round Lake, rustic camping		
City of Ludington Parks																											
Cartier Park	Ciy of Ludington	68.0				x											x						x	1254 N Lakeshore Dr, Ludington, MI 49431	Paved walking/biking paths, and mountain bike trail		
Copeyon Park	City of Ludington					x			x			x					x						x	1600 S. Washington Ave	Splash pad		
Stearns Park	City of Ludington					x			x			x			x					x			x	421 N. Lakeshore Drive	Mini-golf, shuffleboard, skate park, lighthouse breakwater for walking and fishing, beach concessions		
Rotary Park	City of Ludington											x												500 W. Ludington Ave	Bandshell and fountain		
Waterfront Park	City of Ludington					x			x			x												300 S. Williams Street	Sculpture oark, lake views, walkways		
State Parks																											
Ludington State Park	Hamlin Twp	5,300				x	x		x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	344	x	x	X	x	X	8800 M-116, Ludington, MI 49431			
Federal Land																											
Lake Michigan Recreation Area	US Forest Service					X			X					X				99		X				6000 W Forest Trail Rd, Free Soil, MI 49411			
North Country National Scenic Trail	US Forest Service													x													
Nordhouse Dunes	US Forest Service													x										Free Soil, MI 49411			
Pere Marquette Natural and Scenic River Corridor	US Forest Service																										
Totals		5,712		8	2	16	14	3	16	5	1	14	2	12	7	3	4	###	2	9	1	4	15				

COMPARISON TO STANDARDS

To help analyze the adequacy of parks and recreation facilities owned and operated by Mason County, it is helpful to compare the County's system to various standards and benchmarks.

Overall Quantity

Mason County has 300 acres of park land to serve about 29,050 people. This equates to approximately 10.3 acres of park land per 1,000 residents. General recreation guidelines suggest there should be 5 to 10 acres of park land per 1,000 residents. This means the County should have at least 144 acres of park land and as much as 287 acres to meet the general guidelines. The County exceeds these recommendations.

Facility Standards

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has published typical recreation facility standards that specify facility service area, the number of facilities needed to service the population, and the land area needed. These standards can be used in conjunction with the acreage standards to further identify Mason County's recreation needs. Table 9 provides a comparison of the County's public facilities against published recreation facility standards. Based on the standards, some deficiencies are apparent.

Deficiencies can be seen in basketball courts, tennis courts, baseball fields, softball, football, soccer, golf courses, and playgrounds. The resulting deficiencies, as determined by this NRPA standards evaluation, do not account for the recreational facilities owned and operated by other agencies and governmental entities that service local populations. Mason County can optimize the recreational resources available to all residents in the County by supporting recreation provided by the local municipalities.

Level of Service

More recent park guidelines indicate that one must also consider the "Level of Service" desired by the community. If Mason County residents' needs are met with the existing amount of park land and facilities, then that amount is sufficient. This is why the community input portion of a recreation plan is so important. The Parks and Recreation Commission needs to understand the wishes of the community it serves in order to provide the Level of Service desired by the residents.

Further, just because the County does not own or operate a recreation facility does not mean it does not exist. For example, while the County does not have a public pool, there is one available to the County residents. Also, while the County does not own/operate baseball or softball fields, several other townships within Mason County do and therefore residents have opportunities to access them. Finally, while the standards require two ice rinks, one indoor and one outdoor, survey respondents are more interested in other outdoor winter recreation activities and did not indicate a pressing need for a second ice rink. The County will assess the current facilities provided throughout the County, prior to expending taxpayer dollars that would duplicate services already being provided.

TABLE 9 - FACILITY STANDARDS

	Recommended Standard ¹	County Facilities	Recommended Public Need ²	Surplus/Deficiency ³
Basketball Courts	1/5,000	0	6	-6
Tennis Courts	1/2,000	0	14	-14
Baseball Fields	1/5,000	0	6	-6
Lighted Fields	1/30,000	0	1	-1
Softball	1/5,000	0	6	-6
Football Fields	1/20,000	0	1	-1
Soccer Fields	1/10,000	0	3	-3
Golf Courses				
9 hole	1/25,000	0	1	-1
18 hole	1/50,000	0	1	-1
Swimming Pool				
Indoor	1/20,000	0	1	-1
Outdoor	1/40,000	0	1	-1
Ice Rinks				
Indoor	1/50,000	1	1	0
Outdoor	1/20,000	0	1	-1
Playgrounds	1/3,000	2	9	-7
Trails	1 system per region	3	1	+1
1 Recommended number of facility per unit of population (National Recreation and Park Association)				
2 Population of 29,050 (2020 Census Data)				
3 Rounded to the nearest whole number				

The total number of facilities within the County as a whole can be found at the bottom of Table 8. Those total numbers include the County owned facilities, local public parks, City of Ludington Parks, State Parks, and Federal Land.

ADDITIONAL RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

TRAILS

Communities across the United States are creating regional trail systems in both cities and rural areas to provide a higher quality of life for residents. In fact, of all the states, Michigan has the largest rail-trail system. Even more impressively, these trails more often than not, cover long distances, which is uncommon in other states. Trails give residents the opportunity to be more active and healthy, safer while walking or biking on the roads, additional ways to experience their community, and give all users the option of increased mobility in different modes of travel.

Historically, the roads in Mason County have been designed with only automobile traffic in mind. However, communities are now working toward creating a network of trails and roads that are accessible to several forms of traffic. This often means sharing the existing road right-of-way with bikes or having a separate pathway running parallel to the road which is designated for non-motorized use and connects regional centers.

Why trails are important

While trails can be a challenge to implement, their positive effects on a community cannot be disputed. It has been proven that trails create a pride of place and a sense of ownership in Michigan residents. Trails are also an important driver in the local and regional economy, increase property values, and provide safe and healthy recreation options.

The growing trail trend in Michigan is also reflected in Mason County's residents' opinions. On the whole, they feel trails would be an asset to their community. In the public input, survey respondents emphasized how important non-motorized trails and connectivity to existing trail system are to the residents. In every open-ended question walking, biking, connectivity for trail users, and safety of trail users was a top response.

Trail users have a measurable impact on the local economy, By working with the local jurisdictions to connect with existing systems to expand the infrastructure the County and cooperating jurisdictions would create a long-term, valuable investment in the community and the opportunity to connect their region to others. This could promote economic vitality, encourage a healthier lifestyle in their residents, and create a safer travel environment.



Non-motorized trails

With some infrastructure in place, the County would like to be a foundation for coordination and collaboration between all the jurisdictions in Mason County, and trails seem a logical place to start. Working not only county-wide but also connecting to the regional trail system would be a great benefit to Mason County as a whole. A starting point would be creating safe bike lanes along the major roads in the County, and connecting the County's day use property parkland in Pere Marquette Township. Linking the two recreation areas will create connectivity that did not exist in the past.

Water trails

Just as the trend and desire for non-motorized trails are increasing, so is the interest in water trails. Currently, water trails do not hold the popularity of non-motorized trails, nor do they have the same awareness. But their popularity is increasing, and water recreation enthusiasts support the development of these trails wholeheartedly. According to Michigan Water Trails, a water trail is a marked route on a navigable waterway or coastline used for recreational use. They could include streams, rivers, lakes, or canals. The trails allow access to waterways for non-motorized boats such as kayaks, canoes, single sailboats or rowboats. Water trails feature well-developed launch points, and access to campgrounds, rest stops, restrooms, and connections to historical, environmental, or cultural points of interest. They are often near connections to municipalities for places to eat, shop, and sleep.

The National Forest Service has a designated national water trails program. The State of Michigan has a program as well. To be a designated water trail included in the Michigan Water Trails, a trail must:

- Be open to non-motorized craft
- Include access sites open to the public
- Have developed and up to date trail data that is publicly available
- Be actively supported, managed and maintained by at least one organization or community that serves as the source of information

The DNR has also developed Water Trail Standards and Designations so paddlers across Michigan have a consistent tool when planning a trip along a water trail.

The Lake Michigan Water Trail already exists. It follows the entire west coast of Michigan, the southern shoreline of the Upper Peninsula to Wisconsin. This trail is part of a much larger network that follows the entire Lake Michigan shoreline. Illinois, Wisconsin, and Indiana have already designated this trail in their respective states. The four states, including Michigan and numerous governmental, private, and non-profit organizations are working together to create one unified trail. At this time, the Lake Michigan Water Trail Plan has completed Phase I (Trail Assessment) and Phase II (Blueway Inventory), and is in the process of implementing the Phase II plan and encouraging local communities, via their Recreation Plans, to support this effort.

Mason County is part of the West Michigan Trail segment, which is an extension of the West Michigan Blueway/Greenways Plan. The West Michigan Water Trail extends from Northern Mason County to Southern Ottawa County, a total of 105 miles. The water trail includes 39 public access launching sites, two rest areas, 15 campgrounds, and four major river systems that provide access to additional water trails. Overall, this area has 103 inventoried public launching sites available along other adjacent water trails.

Of the 39 launch sites, the trail segment in Mason County has 11 access points on Lake Michigan, 22 public access points near the shoreline, and seven campgrounds. Table 10, on the following page lists the access points. Of the access points in the County, none are associated with Mason County Parks.

MAP 11 - LAKE MICHIGAN WATER TRAILS
(WEST MICHIGAN SEGMENT)



TABLE 10 – ACCESS POINTS AND CAMPGROUNDS

Type	Name	Location
Launch	Lake Michigan Recreation Area - Manistee National Forest Access	Grant Township
Launch	Nurnberg Road Boat Launch - Hamlin Lake Access	Grant Township
Launch	Wilson Hill Park	Hamlin Township
Carry-in Boat Access	Big Sable Lighthouse Access	Hamlin Township
Launch	Ludington State Park - Hamlin Lake Access	Hamlin Township
Carry-in	Ludington State Park - M-116 North Pull-off	Hamlin Township
Launch/Carry-in Boat Access	North Bayou Park	Hamlin Township
Alternative Boat Access	Long Skinny Park	Hamlin Township
Launch	South Bayou Park	Hamlin Township
Launch	Cartier Park- Lincoln River Access	City of Ludington
Launch	Stearns Park	City of Ludington
Launch	Loomis Street Boat Launch	City of Ludington
Carry-in	Waterfront Park	City of Ludington
Launch	Copeyon Park Boat Launch	City of Ludington
Launch	Father Marquette Shrine Boat Launch	City of Ludington
Launch	Buttersville Beach Access	Pere Marquette Township
Launch	Sutton Landing Township Park Access	Pere Marquette Township
Launch	Old U.S. 31 Bridge Access	Pere Marquette Township
Carry-in Boat Access	Summit Township Park Access	Summit Township
Carry-in Boat Access	Bass Lake Outlet	Summit Township
Campground	Lake Michigan Recreation Area - Manistee National Forest	Grant Township
Camping	Nordhouse Dunes Backcountry Camping	Grant Township
Campground	Ludington State Park - Pines Campground	Hamlin Township
Campground	Ludington State Park - Pines Campground	Hamlin Township
Campground	Ludington State Park - Beechwood Campground	Hamlin Township
Campground	Cartier Park Campground	City of Ludington
Campground	Buttersville Campground	Pere Marquette Township

OTHER PARKS AND FACILITIES

Within Mason County are twenty local municipalities, which include two cities, three villages, and fifteen townships, each providing local parks and community recreational facilities. In addition to the local recreational facilities, schools, the State of Michigan, and the Federal Government also provide other recreation amenities. These facilities are managed by the respective entity. While this recreation plan does not inventory and map each of the parks and recreational facilities under the ownership of other agencies and governmental entities, the County recognizes the health benefits and overall contribution to quality of life these local recreational assets provide to communities. The Mason County Parks and Recreation Commission supports efforts to improve all recreational facilities and services within the County. The County is committed to cooperating with communities and agencies on recreation projects. This section will give a brief overview of further recreational facilities that include federal, state, and local sites.

Federal

The United State Forest Service operates several facilities within Mason County.

Nordhouse Dunes: A hiking trail begins at the end of Nurnberg Road on the north side of Hamlin Lake and continues for a distance of 14.5 miles through the Nordhouse Dunes Wilderness Area north of Ludington State Park and touches Lake Michigan, ending at the Lake Michigan Recreation Area.

Pere Marquette River: A popular fishing and canoeing stream, classified as a National Scenic River and State Natural River. The Forest Service controls much of the river and provides various landings and facilities for those who navigate the stream.

North Country Trail: The North Country Trail Association describes the North Country National Scenic Trail (NCT) as a premier footpath that stretches for approximately 4,600 miles across seven northern states. From the getoffthecouch.info website, the NCT segment in Mason County is entirely within the Manistee National Forest and maintained by the Spirit of the Woods chapter of the North Country Trail Association. There are no official NCT trailheads in Mason County, but some parking at Tyndall Road is available with public access at Nine Mile Bridge to the north in Manistee County. The NCT is in Meade Township and heads east to Lake County and north to Manistee County.

Lake Michigan Recreation Area: This popular area is comprised of family and group campsites that are both scenic and natural. The area adjoins Lake Michigan to the west and Nordhouse Dunes Wilderness Area to the south. It is located about 15 miles north of the City of Ludington on Forest Trail Road 5629. It offers 99 paved spur campsites, each of which has a fire ring and picnic table with a lamp holder, half of which are barrier free. The area also has Lake Michigan swimming beaches, observation decks, picnic sites with playground, and more than three miles of graveled bicycle and hiking paths.

State

Ludington State Park: Located on M-116, approximately 8 miles north of Ludington, and is situated so that it boasts long water frontages on both Lake Michigan and Hamlin Lake. This 5,300-acre park has 344 modern campsites, two ski trails, 17 miles of hiking trails, encompasses the Sable River between Hamlin Lake and Lake Michigan, a camp store and seasonal beach concession, along with boat rental and launching facilities. Ludington State Park is undoubtedly the largest visitor attraction to the County.

Cities and Villages

The following municipalities operate a number of parks and recreational facilities in Mason County.

Ludington: Located at the western extremity of the County, along with the Ludington Area School District, has for many years given the youth and adults alike their formal recreation programming and will continue to serve the township populace that encompasses the school district. Although some financial changes have been made to this program, there continues to be a very good and active recreation program in this area. Ludington is able to optimize its many recreational resources and this avoids a costly duplication of services by the County.

Scottville: Located near the center of the County, and eight miles east of Ludington, Scottville operates a summer recreation program for the surrounding community in addition to owning and operating Riverside Park on the south side of the Pere Marquette River at the southern edge of the city. The city has installed a swimming pool at the park but this pool is only for the use of registered campers at the park. Scottville Riverside Park and the Old Engine Club use property owned by the City of Scottville, which is located on south Scottville Road on the south side of the Pere Marquette River. The campground was built over a period of time, and has now become an excellent campground with a swimming pool and modern bathhouse, and toilets. This facility is quite often used to capacity during the camping season.

Villages of Custer, Fountain, and Free Soil

These communities have active volunteer recreation associations that provide primarily softball and baseball activities.

Townships

The following townships own and operate their own recreational facilities.

Branch Township: Has an active volunteer recreation association that provides softball and baseball activities, inclusive of ball diamonds owned by the township.

Custer Township: Ownership of primarily unimproved area on the south shore of the Pere Marquette River about two miles south of the Village of Custer. This area is open to the public for boat and canoe access to the river.

Hamlin Township: Hamlin Lake that includes heavily-used day-use parks. Wilson Hill Park is located on the south shore of upper Hamlin Lake and has a picnic area with grills, playground, pavilion, ball diamond, horseshoes, shoreline fishing, and a boat launch ramp.

South Bayou Park is located on the west side of Lakeshore Drive on the south side of the south bayou of Hamlin Lake. This heavily used park has a picnic area with grills, a playground, fishing, and a busy boat launch providing small boat access to Hamlin Lake. Long Skinny Park on Lakeshore Drive provides fishing access and a picnic spot. In addition, North Bayou Park provides small and non-motorized boat access and a parking area near the North Bayou. The Middle Bayou pocket park provides a grassy sitting area at the bayou outlet with views of the lake.

Meade Township: Has a park at the Township Hall with restrooms, a pavilion, grills, ball diamond, horseshoe pits, volleyball court, basketball hoop, and nature trail.

PERE MARQUETTE CHARTER TOWNSHIP

Pere Marquette Charter Township: Operates an active park and recreation program. The township has five parks and is the only township to pay a per-capita fee to the City of Ludington for their children to attend activities sponsored by the Ludington Recreation Department.

Butterville Park and Campground: Is operated by the township parks commission. The 50-site modern campground with a playground on the high banks above Lake Michigan and has several hundred feet of beach on Lake Michigan for public use. In addition, a parking area provides access to several hundred feet of dog-friendly beach on Lake Michigan for public use and winter parking for ice fishing.

Memorial Tree Park: On Lincoln Lake is a 37-acre day-use park and has a T-ball diamond, hiking and biking trails, a playground, and a large picnic shelter with a building and flush toilets.

Suttons Landing Park: Located on the Pere Marquette River near Old Highway 31 has a large modern picnic shelter with flush toilets, a boardwalk on the river with handicap fishing positions, and a boat launch ramp on the river that connects to Lake Michigan.

Father Marquette Memorial Park (Pere Marquette Shrine): Located on Lakeshore Drive provided parking, a picnic area, and a boat launch ramp on Pere Marquette Lake and is a state historical site.

Pere Marquette Conservation Park: Stretches from Lake Michigan along South Lakeshore Drive and East along Iris Road. The 254-acre day-use park has two pavilions and Pere Marquette Lake access. Recently the Township received a DNR Acquisition Grant to acquire land to add to their recreation facilities. The park is under development with a boat launch, bike and hiking trail, and a winter park among features to be phased in according to its master plan. (Copy available on the township's website under http://pmtwp.org/residents/recreational_parks.php).

Riverside Township: Has an active volunteer recreation association that provides softball and baseball activities, inclusive of ball diamonds owned by the township. This site also has disc golf, a picnic area, nature trails, fishing, and river access.

Sheridan Township: Operates a swimming area, boat launch, a rustic campground, and picnic area with grills and a pavilion on the north end of Round Lake with a beach area.

Sherman Township: Picnic area, pavilion, and a swimming/beach area with a swimming raft on the south side of Gun Lake.

Summit Township: Operates Summit Park located at the south end of the high bank's area on the Lake Michigan shoreline in the southwest corner of the County. Located at the site of a former fish tug base, this park has a modern toilet structure and includes a large pavilion for group use, a playground, a ball diamond, and tennis courts. The Township also has a park with a boat ramp at the end of Marrison Road on the northwest corner of Bass Lake.

Victory Township: Has an active volunteer recreation association that provides softball and baseball activities, inclusive of ball diamonds owned by the township. Also, Victory Park, is located on the east end of Hamlin Lake, with 30 acres for day use, fishing, picnicking, boating, lake access, playground, pavilion, grills, and hiking trails. The boat launch and other facilities were recently improved.

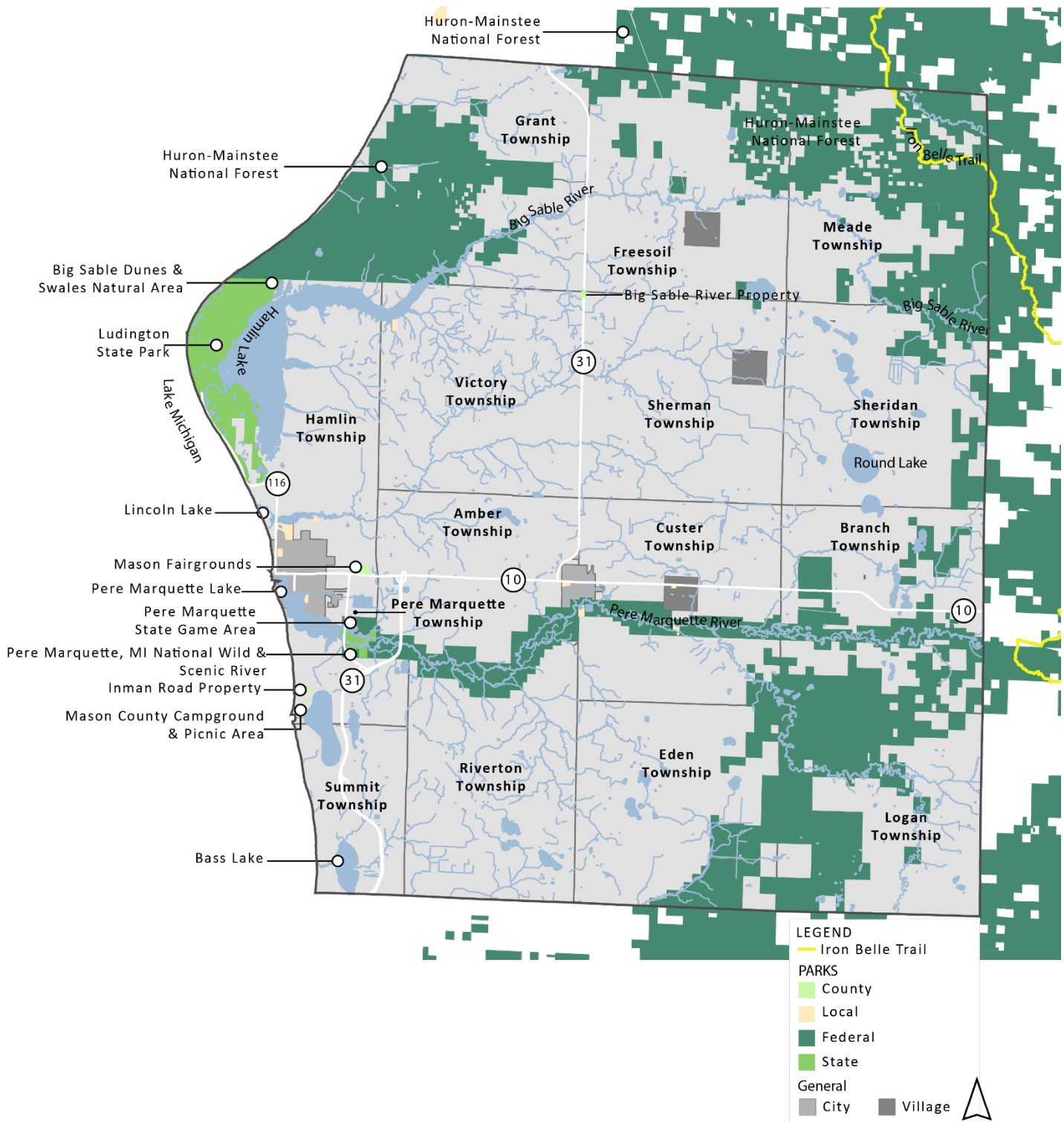
Other

West Shore Community College: Which is located near the geographical center of the County in Victory Township, has many facilities that are made available to the Mason County community. Included is a swimming pool, a large field house that includes gyms, handball courts, and many other sports and health-related and recreation related activities. The college has been a leader in recreation since it was established over 30 years ago. The West Shore Community Ice Arena was completed in 2003 on its campus and has been very popular with Mason County residents. In 2012, the college added a disc golf course.

White Pine Village: Which is a historical site operated by a non-profit organization. In addition, there is the West Michigan Old Engine Club, operated by a non-profit organization, located at the Scottville River Park, and provides educational programs for fifth graders. And the Port of Ludington Maritime Museum.



MAP 12 - ALL PARKS MAP



SPORT PARTICIPATION TRENDS

While the analysis under the previous sections provides an excellent start in understanding how the County's recreation facilities stack-up against the MDNR-recommended standards, it does not provide a complete picture. For example, some facilities offered in the County, such as the disc golf course, do not appear on the list of recommended standards. As a supplement to the MDNR-recommended standards, data from the Sports and Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) is another way to help understand recreation trends.

It is important to be aware of national recreation trends because this information can enable a place like Mason County to anticipate activities that have a large number of participants and show a growth in popularity. The SFIA conducts an annual survey that analyzes the size of sports product markets in order to determine sports participation trends. This report describes the overall participation figures over 110 sports in 6 different categories: Fitness sports, Individual sports, Outdoor sports, Racquet sports, Team sports, Water sports, and Winter Sports.

- 67.0% participated in Fitness
- 43.3% participated in Individual
- 52.9% participated in Outdoor
- 13.9% participated in Racquet
- 22.1% participated in Team
- 13.7% participated in Water
- 8.3% participated in Winter



PAST GRANT HISTORY

The following list identifies County grant projects that were awarded through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, as reported by the DNR Grant Management. This list does not reflect the other grant sources that have been used for recreation projects. See Appendix C for the grant history list.

TABLE 11 - MASON COUNTY GRANT HISTORY

Title	Project Number	Year	Grant Amount	Description
Regional Ice Arena	CM00-198	2000	\$750,000	Construction of indoor ice arena at West Shore Community College. The project included a hockey rink, seating for 350, restrooms, locker room, concession stand, staff office, and Zamboni room.
Mason County Fairgrounds Development	TF10-061	2010	\$320,000	Development included a nature trail, improved entrance, new signature, fencing, lighting, landscaping, and paving.
Mason County Campground Entrance Improvements	TF11-056	2011	\$129,600	Development included the replacement of an outdated entry station with a new Welcome Center building, site entrance drive, parking/pull-off area and new entrance gates and signage.



COMMUNITY INPUT

51 OVERVIEW

51 COMMUNITY INPUT SURVEY

05

COMMUNITY INPUT

OVERVIEW

Mason County believes in solid community input as the basis for decisions and capital improvement projects in the County. Public input helps community leaders determine the needs of residents and then provides the framework and basis for parks and recreation goals and objectives. To comply with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Guidelines for Development of Community Parks and Recreation Plans, the County offered two public input opportunities. These included an online community input survey and a 30-day public review period for comment on the draft plan.

A compilation of all the input received is located in Appendix D. A summary of the various methods of input and feedback received is described in the following pages.

The Plan was available for public comment during the required 30-day public review period held between July 15, 2022 to August 15, 2022 and concluding with a public hearing on August 15, 2022 and adopted by the Board of Commissioners on November 1, 2022.

COMMUNITY INPUT SURVEY

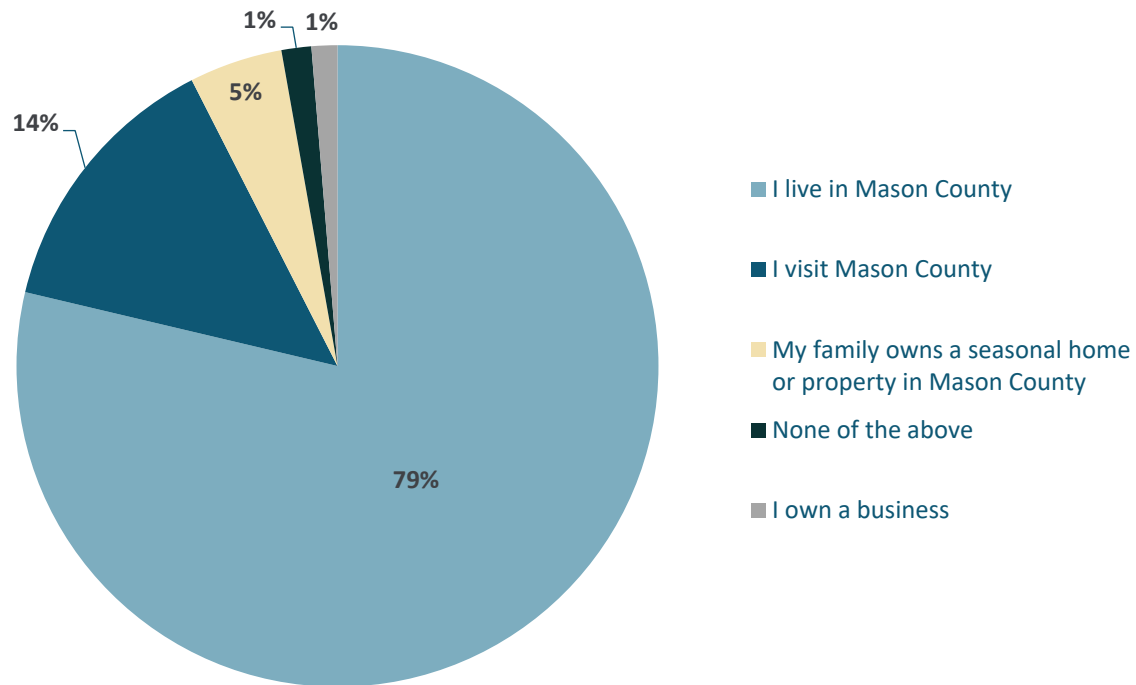
In the fall of 2021 and the winter of 2022, an online survey was available to gather input regarding parks and recreation in Mason County. The online survey included 21 questions regarding public park usage, additional park opportunities, trails, disc golf, ADA accessible equipment, and respondent demographics. The community-wide survey received 478 responses. The survey was assigned the web domain www.masoncountyparksurvey.com, was available on the County website and social media, and could also be found by scanning the QR code on the flyers placed around the County.

Key points of the survey are summarized on the following pages, and the remaining tables developed for the report can be found in Appendix D.

About the Respondents

At the end of the survey, respondents were asked to provide their relationship to the County and their age. The majority, 79 percent, of respondents, live in Mason County. Figure 2, depicts where the remainder of the respondents live.

FIGURE 2 - RELATIONSHIP TO MASON COUNTY



To understand more about the respondents, the survey asked respondents to select which age group they fall under. The top respondent's age groups were 65-74 (26%) and 55-64 (25%).

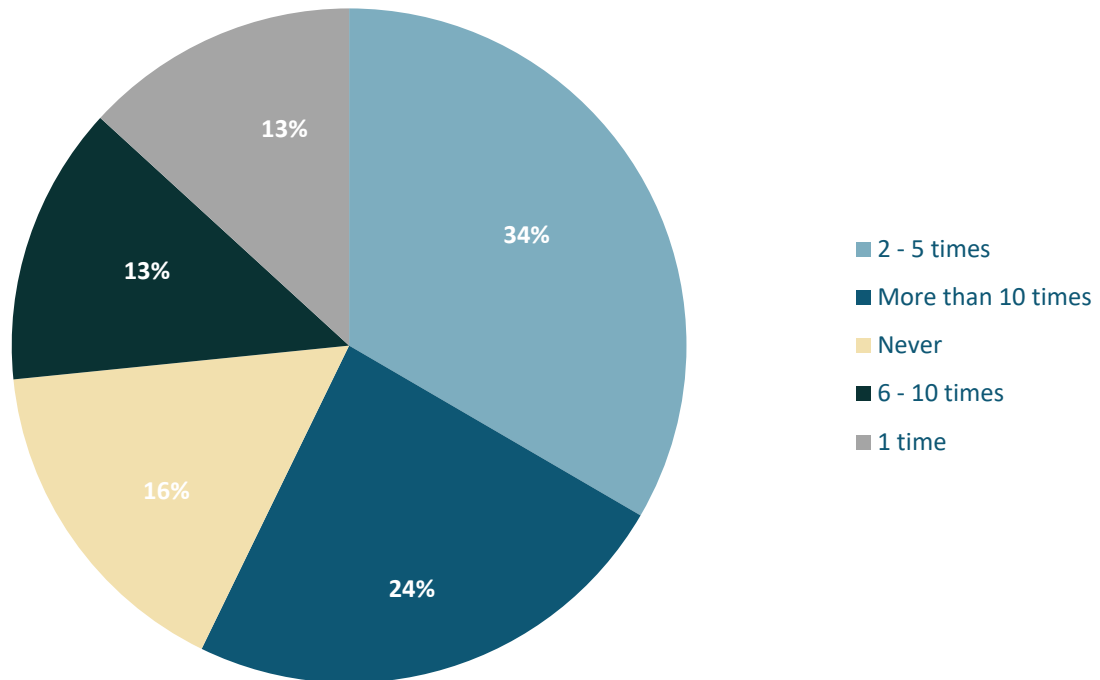
TABLE 12 - AGE OF RESPONDENTS

AGE GROUP	RESPONDENTS
Under 18	1%
18-24	2%
24-34	10%
35-44	14%
45-54	18%
55-64	25%
65-74	26%
80+	0%

Park Activity

To grasp a better understanding of how frequently parks are utilized, respondents were asked how many times they or their families used the Mason County Parks in the past year. The top response was two to five times, followed by ten or more times.

FIGURE 3 - MASON COUNTY PARK VISITATION



Mason County has three parks and recreation facilities, respondents were asked of the three parks which have you visited in the past year.

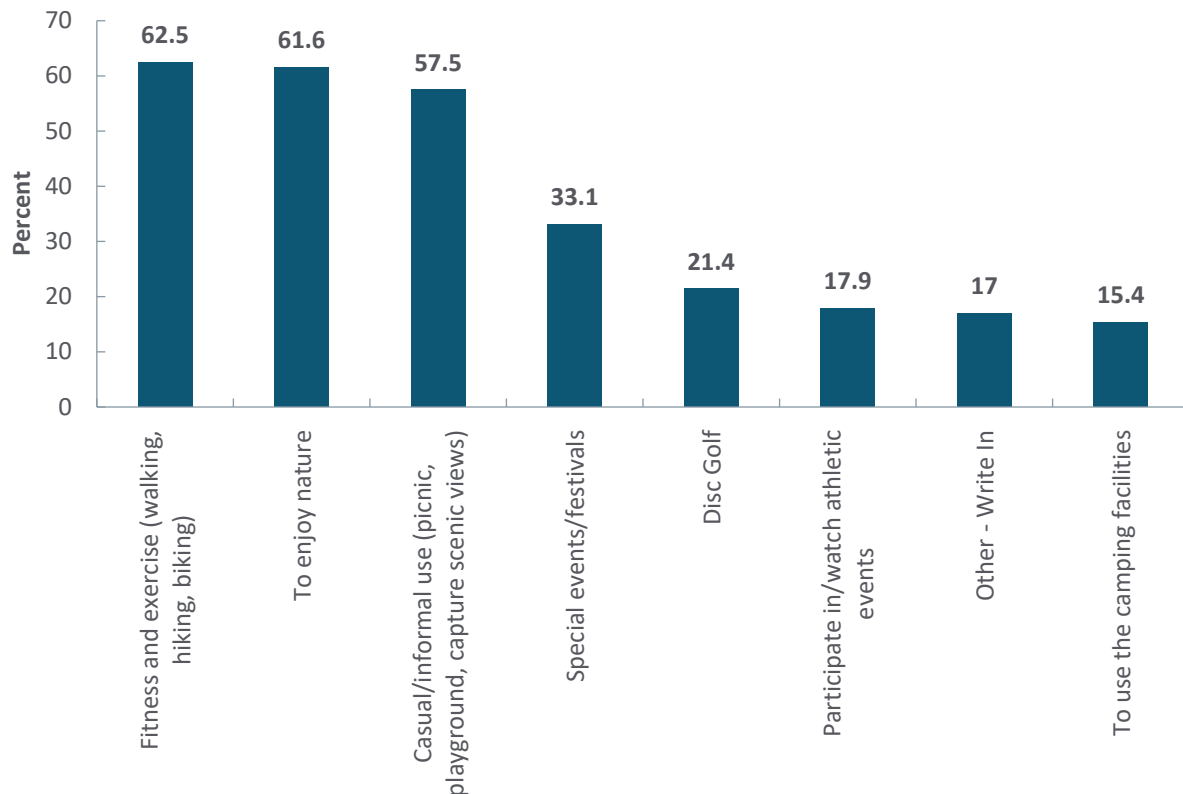
- **Mason County Picnic Area: 64.5%**
- Mason County Fairgrounds: 63.7%
- Mason County Campground: 34.8%

As a follow up, respondents were asked to select which Mason County park they have camped in the past year. Of the respondents who have camped, both sites were fairly close in responses.

- Mason County Campground: 53.8%
- Mason County Fairgrounds: 47.9%

Respondents were asked to select why they or their families visit the Mason County Parks. The top two responses were fitness/exercises (62.5%) and to enjoy nature (61.6%). The remaining responses are shown below.

FIGURE 4 - PARK ACTIVITIES



Other write-in responses:

- Horse show
- Birdwatching
- Sledding
- Walking dogs

Additional Park Amenities

Respondents were asked if the County had the opportunity to acquire a waterfront parcel of Lake Michigan, an inland lake, river frontage, or inland property would they support establishing a new park in one of these areas. Majority of the respondents, 86% were in favor of this.

- Yes: 86.3%
- No: 2.6%
- No Opinion: 11.1%

In addition to acquiring new land, the County asked survey respondents would they support the development of a multi-use trail at the Inman Road Property. This 34-acre site is currently undeveloped.

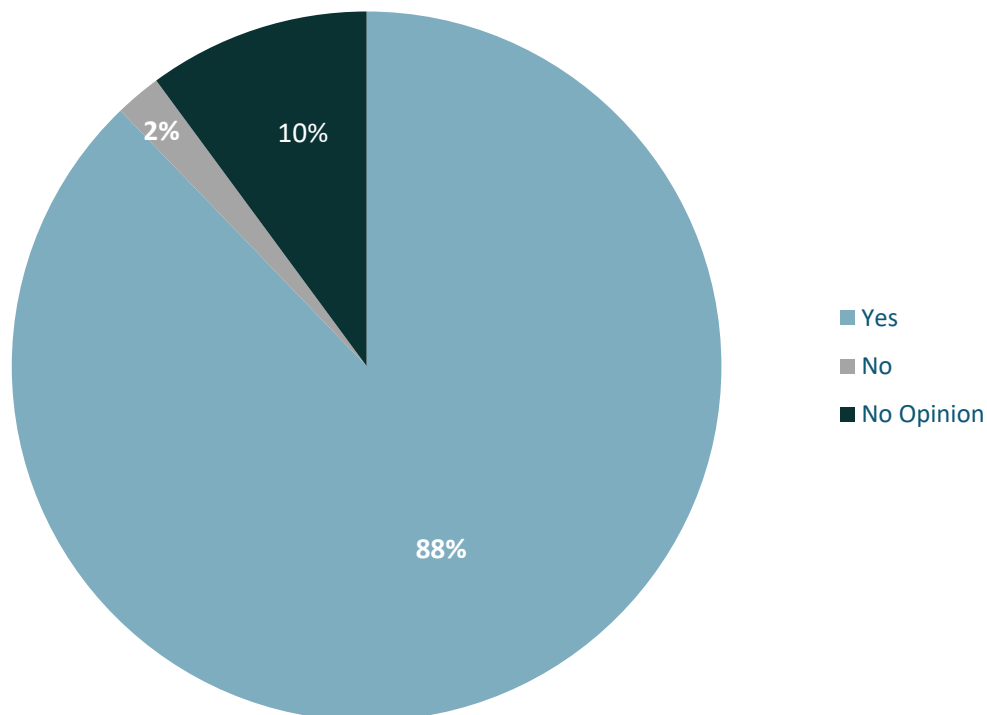
- Yes: 81%
- No: 4%
- No Opinion: 15%

As a follow up, respondents were asked if they have any other specific ideas or suggestions for improving the Inman Road Property. The top responses are listed below:

- Bike Trails / Mountain Bike
- Walking Trails
- Cross County Skiing
- Rustic Camp Site
- Disc Golf
- Native Plants
- Horse Riding Trails
- Fitness Stations
- Dog Park

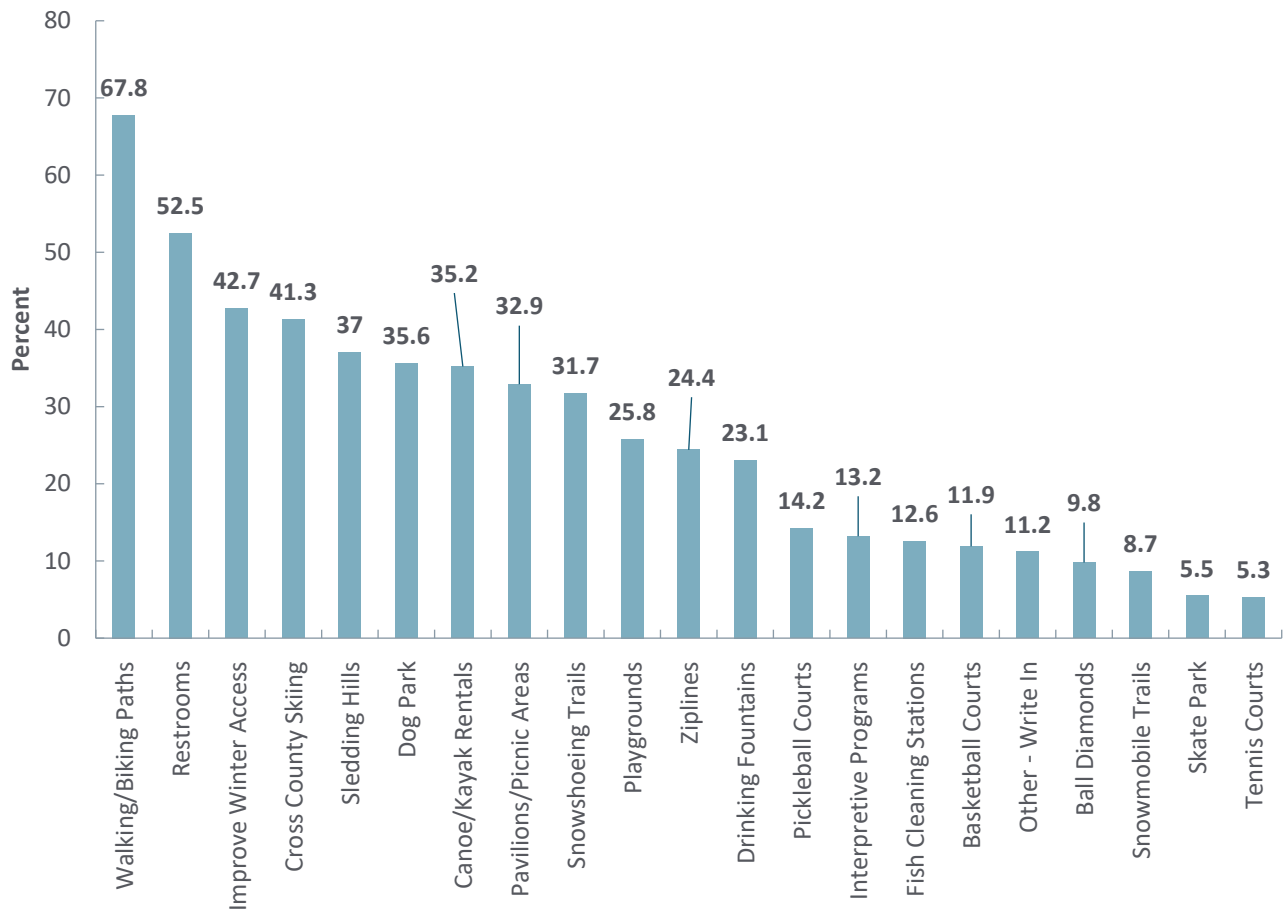
Respondents were asked if they would support additional non-motorized trails in the County, with potential regional connections to Pentwater-Hart Bicycle Trail, Hart-Montague Rail Trail and linking to Ludington to Scottville. Of the responses, 88% were in favor of additional trails.

FIGURE 5 - NON-MOTORIZED TRAILS



Respondents were asked what additional facilities/amenities they would like to see added to the Mason County parks and recreation areas. The top five responses were: walking/biking, restrooms, improve water access, cross country skiing, and a sledding hill. The remaining responses are listed below.

FIGURE 6 - ADDITIONAL PARK FACILITIES / AMENITIES



Other top write in responses:

- Bike paths
- Covered areas
- Guided classes
- Restrooms
- Horse trails

Disc Golf

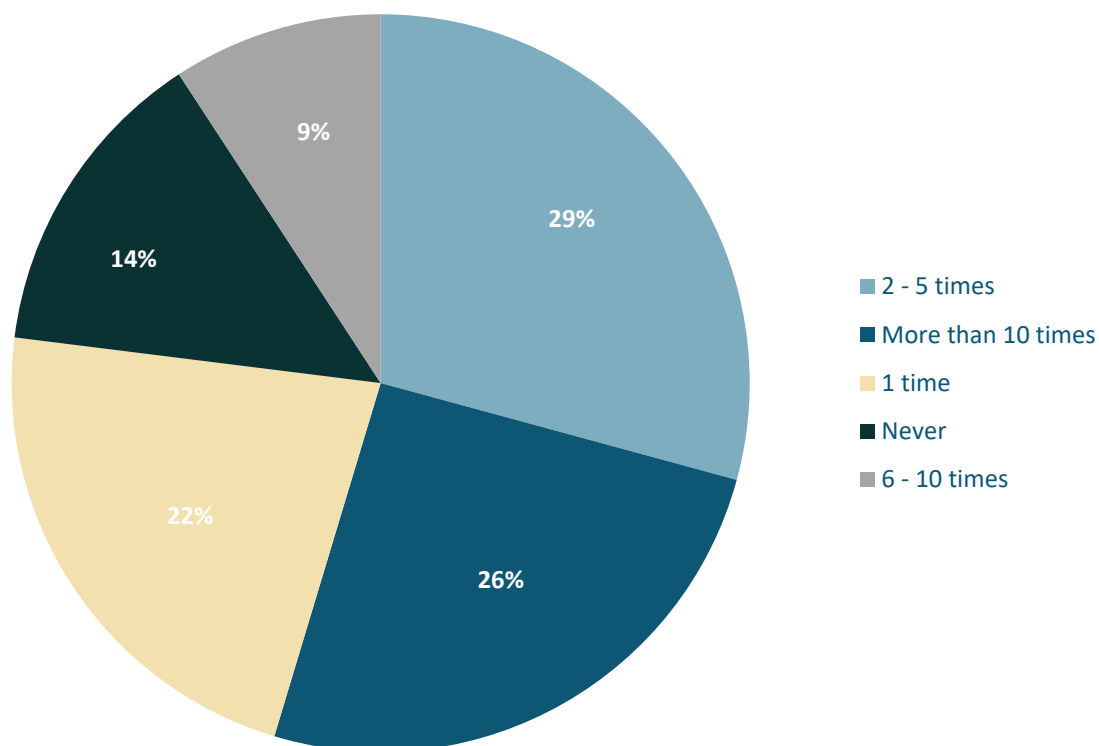
In Mason County, disc golf is a popular activity. The survey asked four questions regarding the disc golf courses in Mason County.

The first question was, have the respondents used any of the three-disc golf courses located in Mason County Picnic Area or the Campground.

- Yes: 28%
- No: 72%

Respondents were then asked how many times in the past year have they used one of the disc golf courses located at Mason County Picnic area or Mason Campground. The top two responses were two to five times (29%) and more than ten times (26%).

FIGURE 7 - VISITATION OF DISC GOLF COURSES



Respondents were asked to select which of the four courses they use.

- Goliath: 67.9%
- Beauty: 64.2%
- Beast: 50.9%
- Tinderbox: 20.8%

The final question regarding the disc golf courses asked respondents if they have any specific ideas for improving the courses. The top responses from the survey are listed below:

- Clean up/repair
- Improve signage/numbers on course
- New tee pads

General Park

Respondents were asked to evaluate the following aspects of Mason County Parks and recreation areas.

TABLE 13 – FACILITY CONDITIONS

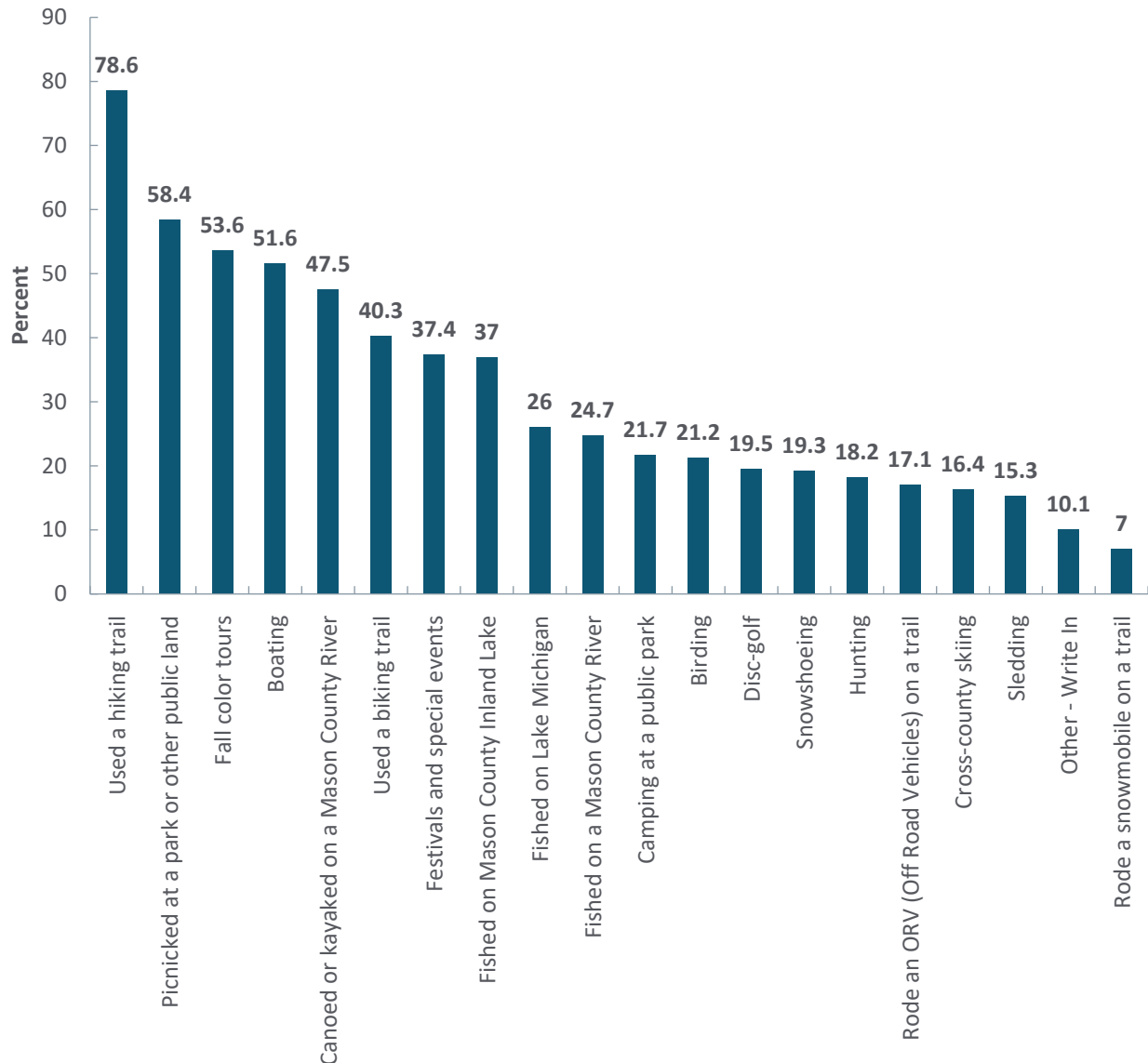
	VERY GOOD	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR	VERY POOR	DON'T KNOW
Variety of Facilities / Amenities	13%	36.9%	32.7%	5.1%	0.9%	11.4%
Maintenance and Appearance	17.5%	41.7%	25.0%	2.9%	0.7%	13.3%
Safety and Security	20.3%	34.7%	24.3%	4.6%	0.2%	15.9%
Water Accessibility	6.8%	25.4%	25.2%	13.2%	1.6%	27.9%
Programming in the Parks	3.4%	13.2%	23.3%	13.2%	3.8%	43.2%

TABLE SUMMARY:

- 49.9% said that the variety of facilities/amenities are “good” and “very good”.
- 59.2% said that the maintenance and appearance are “good” and “very good”.
- 55% said that the safety and security are “good” and “very good”.
- Top answer regarding water accessibility was that “don’t know”, 27.9%.
- Top answer regarding programming in the parks was “don’t know”, 43.2% and 16.6% said “good” and “very good”.

Respondents were asked which of the following activities have they participated in Mason County, in the past year. The top five responses were hiking trails, picnicking, fall color tours, boating, and canoeing or kayaking. The remaining responses are shown in the figure below.

FIGURE 8 – PARK PARTICIPATION



Write in responses:

- Horse shows
- Mushroom hunting
- Playground

Accessibility

Respondents were asked if they or a family member benefit from accessible facilities, if so please indicate which of the following are needed in Mason County Parks.

- Accessible Restrooms: 60.8%
- Accessible Waterfront Access: 47.4%
- Paved Trails: 43.3%
- Accessible Parking: 38%
- Flatter, easier grades: 29.8%
- Sensory Garden: 27.5%
- Accessible Playground: 24%
- Other write-in: 7%
 - Accessible Disc Golf
 - Benches
 - Covered facilities at the fairgrounds
 - Low visibility
 - Marked trails
 - Snowmobiling or ORV
 - Wheelchair accessible use in all areas.

Priorities for the Next Five Years

Respondents were asked what they like about the Mason County parks and recreation areas. The top responses from the survey are listed below:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ▪ Nature area | ▪ Clean |
| ▪ Disc golf | ▪ Accessibility/close approximately |
| ▪ Variety of activities | ▪ Affordable |
| ▪ Views | |

To understand what residents would like to see in the County Parks, respondents were asked what one thing is they would do to improve Mason County Parks.

- | | |
|---|------------------------|
| ▪ Non-motorized trails: biking and hiking | ▪ Adult play/exercise |
| ▪ Update restrooms | ▪ Advertise |
| ▪ Winter activities: sledding and cross country | ▪ Dog friendly area |
| ▪ Improve disc golf/create more | ▪ Water access |
| | ▪ Interpretive signage |

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

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65 ACTION PLAN

06

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Developing goals and objectives is an important part of the recreation planning process. The overall goal of the Parks and Recreation Commission is to provide recreation opportunities for the community and region they serve. More specific goals must be based on the demographic characteristics of the population served and other physical and environmental characteristics of the County.

Goals are the broadest level. They are overreaching and general. Objectives carry out the purpose of the goal. Action items are the last level, and they identify specific projects and programs to be pursued over the next five years. Action items can include organizational, staffing, programming, public information, and operation and maintenance actions. The Mason County Parks and Recreation Commission formulated the following goals and objectives based upon the characteristics of the overall community, the online survey, and other factors such as sports participation trends.

GOAL A: CONTINUE TO DEVELOP, PROVIDE, MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE DIVERSE RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR PEOPLE OF ALL AGE GROUPS AND ABILITIES. ENHANCE OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES THAT SHOWCASE MASON COUNTY'S WATER AND NATURAL FOREST RESOURCES FOR DIVERSE PARK USERS.

Objectives:

- Develop a funding program for enhancing recreational programs and facilities throughout the County.
- Develop recreation facilities that reflect the changing/diverse needs of the County.
- Encourage regular year-round use of the recreation facilities.
- Provide recreation facilities to improve health and fitness.
- Host regular events at Mason County parks and invite County residents to participate. Activities could include various programs such as guided hikes led by local volunteers, or other such events headed by local experts and enthusiasts.
- Increase marketing and promotion of Mason County parks.
- Continue to maintain high quality recreation facilities.
- Hire, train and retain customer satisfaction motivated park ranger employees.
- Enhanced facilities, including roads, car parking and campsite parking sites.
- Enhance internet service to campground.

GOAL B: PROMOTE AND CREATE LOCAL AND VISITOR AWARENESS OF MASON COUNTY AS AN ALL-SEASONS SPORTING AND RECREATION DESTINATION.

Objectives:

- Increase marketing and promotion of Mason County parks and recreational facilities.
- Use the County's website and social networking platforms and traditional media to communicate with residents about Mason County parks and activities.
- Work with local schools, governmental units, and non-profit organizations to share information regarding Mason County parks and other recreational opportunities. Promote County parks and recreation opportunities to visitors.
- Update and distribute a brochure for Mason County parks and campground that details park amenities and things to do.
- Enhance a signage system for area roads to help direct traffic to Mason County parks.
- Improve year-round pedestrian and vehicular access to parks and parking.

GOAL C: ENHANCE ACCESS TO THE VARIETY OF WATER AND NATURAL FOREST RESOURCES IN MASON COUNTY, CREATING CONNECTIONS TO FACILITIES AND BETWEEN COMMUNITIES.

Objectives:

- Continue to explore the feasibility of developing existing County-owned property into passive recreational destinations.
- Investigate opportunities for partnering with other groups and agencies to offer programs and events in Mason County.
- Improve access to water resources for activities such as boating, canoeing, kayaking and fishing.
- Support the efforts of the North Country Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA) to address invasive tree and plant species removal at Mason County parks.
- Address erosion and ground surface issues near pathways and amenities.

GOAL D: EXPAND AND IMPROVE THE NON-MOTORIZED TRAIL NETWORK IN THE COUNTY AND REGION, AS WELL AS OTHER PARK CONNECTIONS TO PROMOTE HEALTHY LIFESTYLES.

Objectives:

- Link existing federal, state, county and municipally-owned recreational facilities with non-motorized trails.
- Support and the feasibility plan for the regional non-motorized trail plan.
- Support trail links throughout the County.
- Investigate equestrian opportunities.

GOAL E: IMPROVE/PROVIDE FOR BARRIER-FREE ACCESS STANDARDS AT ALL PARKS. WHEN FEASIBLE, INCORPORATE UNIVERSAL DESIGN STANDARDS IN ALL NEW AMENITIES AND EXISTING AMENITIES AS APPROPRIATE.

Objectives:

- Provide equal access to recreation opportunities to all individuals.
- Improvements to existing facilities should be designed to meet or exceed minimum requirements of the Michigan barrier-free code.
- If feasible, new facilities should be designed to Universal Design standards.

GOAL F: PARTNER WITH OTHER UNITS OF GOVERNMENT AND RECREATION PROVIDERS TO FURTHER PROMOTE AND PROVIDE BROAD-BASED INTERCONNECTED RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES THROUGHOUT MASON COUNTY.

Objectives:

- Identify and explore new opportunities for recreation projects with federal, state, city, and local jurisdictions, including east side of County.
- Support efforts of Ludington State Park to maintain and improve its facilities.
- Establish appropriate ties to these entities.
- Support Fairgrounds and endeavors when appropriate.
- Prioritize support for the Fairgrounds horse arena.

GOAL G: ACQUIRE, RETAIN, AND DEVELOP APPROPRIATE PROPERTY TO EXPAND PUBLIC RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES.

Objectives:

- Retain and enhance existing park land to meet the recreational needs of the community and that of visitors.
- Partner with other federal, state, local and nonprofit recreation providers within Mason County to support opportunities for new and expanded recreational facilities.
- Seek and apply for grants to support recreational initiatives through the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and local foundations.
- Appropriate acquisition of additional recreation land through various grant programs.

ACTION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

With goals and objectives in place, Mason County was able to develop a five-year Action Program to work toward accomplishing the goals and objectives. The Action Program details the direction the County wishes to take over the next five years in order to maintain and improve the quality and diversity of area park and recreation opportunities.

Projects were assigned a priority of 1 through 3 with 1 being most important and 3 being least important. Each action item relates to one or more of the lettered goals described earlier. Potential projects described in this plan have been established not only to provide a framework for decision-makers but also to enable the County to apply for grant funding.

The project list is not a fixed element, and it is not either all-inclusive or exclusive. The project list reflects the results of the input received from the online survey, County officials, and the Parks and Recreation Commission. Future circumstances, especially availability of funding, may change priorities or require reprioritization of items. Before proceeding with any potential project, the County will require further study, such as though not limited to developing conceptual plans, seeking additional community input, or the development of operation and maintenance plans. The proposed Action Items are shown in this table. Top priorities are indicated with a "1" while lower-ranking priorities are indicated by a "3".

Action Items		
Proposed Project	Priority	Proposed Project Supports Goal(s):
Improve campsites at the Mason County Campground.	1	A
Improve traffic signage to the Mason County Picnic Area.	3	A & B
Evaluate options and install internet service at the picnic pavilion.	2	A
Work with local groups to determine areas of strategic cooperation focusing on themes of interconnections, diversity of users, and year-round outdoor uses.	1	A & B & F
Upgrade campground electrical service to 50 amps.	1	A
Develop list of grant options with examples and their requirements (e.g., type of project, funding level, timing to apply) for easy reference of potential funding sources.	2	A
Proactively seek funding/grants to fund park expansion plans accordingly and begin project implementation.	2	A
Continue to promote the disc golf courses including additional signage.	1	B
Add interpretive signs at the Mason County Picnic Area regarding wildlife, trees, and plants.	2	B & C
Run a promotional campaign annually with success metrics (e.g., website visits, increased pavilion rentals, camping capacity increase, etc.) to be defined.	3	B & F
Investigate and implement an online campsite reservation program using credit card payment.	1	B
Enhance public access to the Big Sable River, Pere Marquette River, Lincoln River, and other county rivers.	3	C
Possible connection from Mason County Picnic Area to the new Pere Marquette Conservation Park on Pere Marquette Lake.	3	C & D
Improve the pathways at the Mason County Picnic Area.	1	D
Begin implementation of the non-motorized trail system in Mason County using the MDOT non-motorized plan.	1	D
Investigate and develop recreational amenities at the Inman Road Property.	2	F
Develop joint plans with commissions that define accountability and follow-up timelines.	2	F
Acquire strategic properties with a priority of adjacency to camping, water access, and other properties that correlate to the community input feedback.	3	G
Begin removing Autumn/Russian Olive from park, campground, and other sites.	3	G

A large concrete bridge with multiple piers spans a green valley. In the background, a grassy hill rises under a blue sky with scattered clouds. The bridge has a long, straight deck supported by several tall, rectangular concrete pillars. A fence runs along the edge of the valley in the foreground.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

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68 REVIEW & ADOPTION

07

PLANNING PROCESS

PROCESS

In a continuing effort to provide quality recreational opportunities for its citizens, Mason County has developed this Parks and Recreation Master Plan as a tool to guide the development of community parks and recreational facilities over the next five years. This Plan is an update of the County's most recent plan which was adopted in 2018. The Plan will provide the County eligibility for grants from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to assist the community in reaching its recreational goals.

Mason County contracted with Spicer Group of Saginaw, Michigan to assist with the completion of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The consultant met with the County staff and parks committee several times during the development of the Plan.

During the development of the plan, two opportunities for input, participation, and review were provided:

- Online community input survey that was available from Fall 2021 to Winter 2022
- 30-day review period and public hearing held on August 15, 2022.

The plan was also discussed at several Council meetings between October 2021 and July of 2022.

Based upon the existing information and public input, the County developed the goals and objectives for parks and recreation for the next five years. Then, the County developed an action program to accomplish the goals and objectives of the plan.

REVIEW AND ADOPTION

A draft Parks and Recreation Master Plan was completed and available for the required 30-day review on the Mason County website and a hard copy was available at the County office. The review period from July 2022 to August 2022 was publicized on the County's webpage, Facebook page, and in the Ludington Daily News. The final opportunity for community input occurred at the advertised public hearing held prior to adoption of this Plan, which was held on August 15, 2022. On October 17, 2022, the Parks and Recreation Commission passed a motion to adopt the Plan. On November 1, 2022, the Board of Commissioners supported that motion and adopted 2023-2027 Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Copies of the Plan were transmitted to the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission. The Plan was uploaded to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for approval in January 2023. Copies of the noticed advertisement, the public hearing minutes, and the resolution are included in Appendix E.

APPENDIX

- A - REGIONAL NON-MOTORIZED PLAN
- B - MASON COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
- C - GRANT HISTORY
- D - SURVEY RESULTS
- E - ADOPTION DOCUMENTS

APPENDIX A

REGIONAL NON-MOTORIZED PLAN



MDOT Grand Region Regional Nonmotorized Plan

2017

Acknowledgements

This document has been prepared by MDOT in coordination with multiple agencies, communities, and regional stakeholders. MDOT would especially like to thank the individuals who participated as a member of the Nonmotorized Plan Team for their assistance in the development of this Plan.

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Consultants: livingLAB
 The Greenway Collaborative
 Williams & Works

Additional thanks to all those who participated in the Outreach sessions and provided review and comments during the Plan development.

September 2017

MDOT Grand Region



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Executive Summary

Nonmotorized transportation, commonly referred to as bicycle and pedestrian travel, is vitally important to Michigan residents. Walking and biking serve as both a means of transportation, getting people to important places in their daily lives, and as a means of recreation, better connecting residents to nature and their community. **Nonmotorized transportation is important to the region and state because it contributes to increased mobility, safety, transportation choices, recreation, placemaking, economic development, and the health of our residents.**

The MDOT Grand Region encompasses the western central portion of lower Michigan and includes 13 Counties: Mason, Oceana, Muskegon, Ottawa, Lake, Osceola, Newaygo, Mecosta, Montcalm, Kent, Ionia, Allegan, and Barry. The MDOT Grand Region: Regional Nonmotorized Plan was developed over a 13-month period from July 2016 – August 2017.

The primary goals of the Plan are to:

- Document the existing and proposed network
- Identify opportunities to enhance nonmotorized transportation
- Help prioritize nonmotorized investment
- Foster cooperative planning across municipal/county boundaries and continue to coordinate these efforts

The focus of this document and associated GIS database is on regional facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians. Specifically, how a regional network of trails, paths, and on-road facilities can provide connections between communities, counties, and adjacent regions.

There are a significant number of pedestrian/bike research projects, initiatives, and programs within MDOT that are cumulatively working toward

increased safety, achieving greater connectivity, educating, documenting, and collaborating. They are contributing to the understanding, growing, and implementation of context sensitive solutions and complete streets throughout the state. The development of this Regional Nonmotorized Plan document is just one of those efforts and tools that can help to further ensure we are all working together toward a more livable, sustainable community.

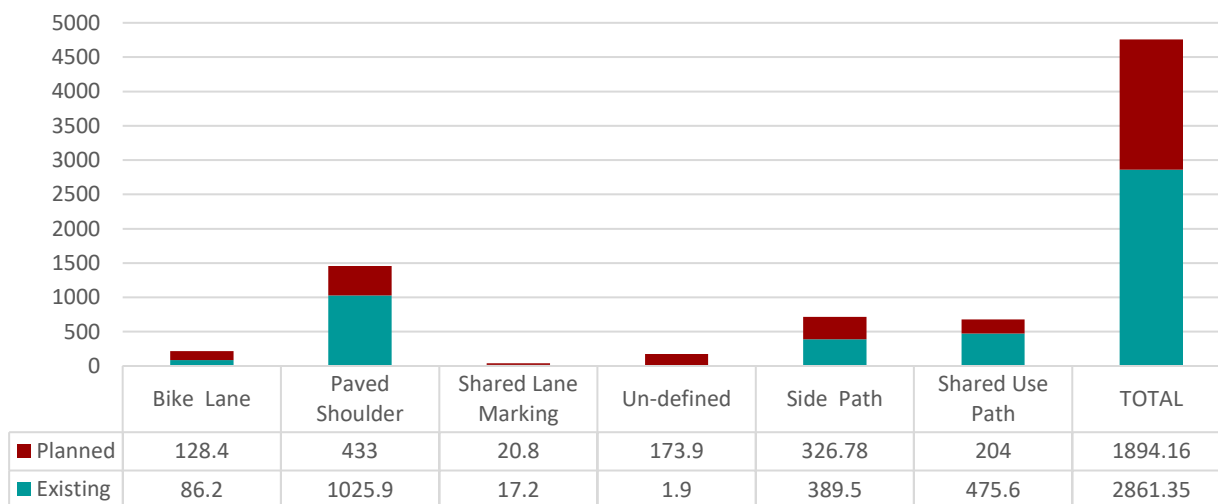
This Plan is focused on the regional level. For MDOT, this document serves as a critical piece for context-sensitive planning and development along with guidance on filling gaps along or across MDOT-owned trunklines as well as focusing resources, including the allocation of Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds. At the community level, it is hoped that this plan provides tools, information and resources to assist in identifying and improving key corridors that serve both a local and regional need within the greater nonmotorized network as well as prioritizing work on efforts that can benefit the region as a whole.

A significant amount of effort associated with this project was devoted to understanding and documenting the existing and proposed facilities within the region. This Plan, and the associated GIS database, are considered a first step at capturing the existing nonmotorized conditions, various agency

plans for future connections, and identification of priorities within the region and within each geographic county. Agencies, organizations, cities, and communities have made substantial investments in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, particularly in the last decade. The system and network are evolving at a rapid pace, therefore, the maps and graphics included in this Plan represent a “snapshot” in time. **It is fully realized that the database that has been created during this planning effort will need to be regularly and continually updated to reflect the most current conditions and plans.**

During the planning process, multiple nonmotorized transportation routes were identified within each county. This Plan highlights **Regional Corridors** on the maps. Regional Corridors illustrate desirable connections between existing nonmotorized transportation facilities (on-road and off-road), population centers, recreational areas, and points of interest. In some instances, they may not necessarily represent actual or planned routes – rather they reflect the desire for connectivity. In several cases, alternate, nearby routes, even though they are not as direct, may be a preference due to lower stress vehicle speeds, vehicle volumes, or trucks. **Further planning by a variety of agencies and stakeholders may be required to fully vet these systems and routes.**

Grand Region Facilities By Type (miles)





Purpose, Process, and Overview

Why Create a Regional Plan?

Agencies, community leaders, public health officials, residents, non-profits, and businesses are recognizing the benefits of bicycle and pedestrian travel and are looking for ways to better accommodate people who travel this way – whether they do so by choice or by necessity. The benefits of safe and connected pedestrian and bicycle facilities are well researched and documented – whether they are related to the economy, the environment, increased mobility, health, recreation, livability, or social justice. This document and the accompanying GIS database were developed in order to continue to support these overall goals and benefits.

In order to provide and plan for nonmotorized travel, many agencies and communities have

adopted nonmotorized and complete streets plans. These plans incorporate nonmotorized elements into planning documents, such as recreation plans, transportation plans, corridor plans, or master plans. These documents can cover every scale, from the neighborhood level, progressing to community or county level, and even up to the regional, state and national level. **This plan is focused on the regional level.** For MDOT, this document serves as a critical piece for context-sensitive planning and development along with guidance on filling gaps along or across MDOT-owned trunklines as well as focusing resources, including the allocation of Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds. At the community level, it is hoped that this plan provides tools, information and resources to assist in identifying and improving key corridors that serve both a local and regional need within the greater nonmotorized network as well as prioritizing work on efforts that can benefit the region as a whole.

Why Is Nonmotorized Transportation Important?

Walking and biking serve as both a means of transportation, getting people to and from a variety of destinations, as well as a means of recreation and way to connect people to nature and to each other. Nonmotorized transportation is important to the region and state because it contributes to increased mobility, safety, transportation choices, recreation, placemaking, economic development, and the health of our residents. A few of these are further described here.

Increased mobility and equity. Ensuring mobility options for all is paramount, particularly for our young people, seniors, or those physically or financially unable to drive. The number of young drivers in the US has been decreasing steadily. In 1983, about 87% of 19-year-olds had drivers' licenses and in 2014, only 69% did.¹ A 2014 MDOT study showed that 39 percent of households in Michigan reported someone in their home used a bike for transportation in the last year. A connected nonmotorized network provides an opportunity to meet multiple mobility needs. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities that are coordinated and connected to transit can increase the range that people can travel. Infrastructure that supports bicycling and walking expands transportation options.

Less than 2 miles

According to a national travel survey, about 40 percent of trips are shorter than two miles — about a 30-minute walk or a 10-minute bike ride.

--Ped & Bike Information Center

Recreation and health. While some Michigan residents use the nonmotorized system as a way to increase mobility, many use the system for recreational and health benefits. The correlation between land use patterns, transportation systems, and public health are being recognized and studied

by a number of agencies including the Centers for Disease Control and the National Institutes of Health. There is a movement to integrate public health objectives in transportation decision-making because of the link to increased physical activity and reduction in air pollutants.

Economic development and talent attraction.

Nonmotorized transportation contributes to continued economic growth. The [2014 Community and Economic Benefits of Bicycling in Michigan](#) found that bicycling provides an estimated \$668 million per year in economic benefit to Michigan's economy, including employment, retail revenue, tourism expenditure, and increased health and productivity. The statewide study included case studies for Grand Rapids and Holland that found a \$45.5 million total annual economic impact for these two areas alone. In order to maintain and enhance economic viability, communities are seeking to attract millennials and knowledge-based workers. According to research by the Rockefeller Institute, more than 50 percent of millennials surveyed said they would consider moving to another city if it had more and better transportation options.

Improved safety. Pedestrians and cyclists are the most vulnerable roadway users. While crashes involving pedestrians and cyclists make up only 0.2% of the Grand Region's total crashes, they account for 17.0% of fatal crashes and 10.7% of incapacitating injury crashes (between 2011-2015).² Incorporating well-designed pedestrian and bicycle facilities encourages predictable behavior and alerts motorists to their presence, thus improving safety for all roadway users.

The graphic on the following page is from the 2014 Community and Economic Benefits of Bicycling in Michigan Study that was completed by MDOT. The graphic summarizes findings for the City of Grand Rapids.

¹ The Decline of the Driver's License – The Atlantic. January 22, 2016

² Michigan Traffic Crash Facts Query

Bicycling in GRAND RAPIDS



Population: 189,340

Miles of existing infrastructure: 42

"Riding a bike isn't just about getting somewhere and saving gas...From a local economic perspective, there's a serious trickle-down effect."

- Matt Ruiter, Velocity Cycles

Bicycle Friendly Community™ Rating
Bronze

Bicycling retail revenue

\$1.7 million

39%

Residents who place an annual value of at least \$100 on the ability to use bicycle infrastructure

Total annual spending associated with bicycling events and vacations in Michigan

\$4.3 million

55%

Bicyclists who bike at least twice a week

People employed by bicycling industry: 32



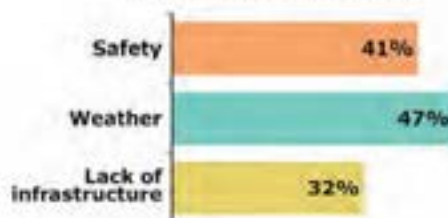
18%

Bicyclists who commute by bicycle at least twice a week

11%

Residents who participated in a bicycling event or bicycle-oriented vacation in Michigan in the past year

Key barriers to bicycling



Top primary bicycle types



Total annual economic impact of bicycling

\$39.1 million

Study funded by **MDOT**

For more information contact Josh DeBruyn, MDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator at debruynj@michigan.gov

Project Goals + Planning Process

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has worked to develop the Grand Region: Regional Nonmotorized Plan that serves as a tool, not only for MDOT staff, but also for the vast number of stakeholders, agencies, and organizations in the Region.

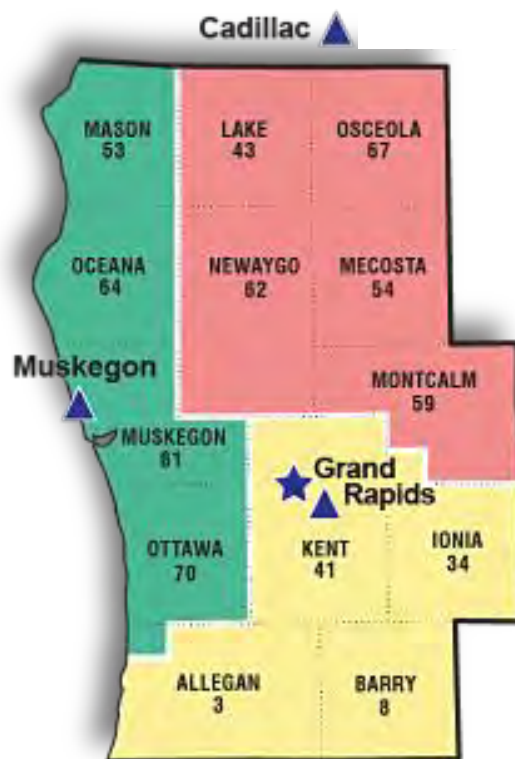
The primary goals of the Plan are to:

- Document the existing and proposed network
- Identify opportunities to enhance nonmotorized transportation
- Help prioritize nonmotorized investment
- Continue to foster cooperative planning across municipal/county boundaries
- Synchronization of Plans – understand what exists and what is planned to better coordinate efforts

This plan is not intended to supersede local planning efforts. It is focused at the regional level and the inventory included in this effort does not include more locally relevant facility types, such as sidewalks and crosswalks, nor does it prescribe detailed design recommendations for specific corridors. This project includes the development of new Grand Region Bike + Trail Maps: one for the northern and one for the southern portion of the region.

While the term “nonmotorized” means active transportation and includes walking, bicycling, travel by wheelchair, skates, skateboards, etc., the focus of this planning document is at the **regional** level. Specifically, how a regional network of trails, paths and streets can provide connections between communities, counties, and adjacent regions. The focus of this document is on **regional** facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians.

MDOT Grand Region



The MDOT Grand Region encompasses the western central portion of lower Michigan and includes 13 Counties: Mason, Oceana, Muskegon, Ottawa, Lake, Osceola, Newaygo, Mecosta, Montcalm, Kent, Ionia, Allegan, and Barry. The Region is divided into 3 Transportation Service Areas (TSCs): Cadillac, Grand Rapids, and Muskegon.

The MDOT Grand Region and Lansing staff facilitated the development of this Regional Nonmotorized Plan over a 13-month period from July 2016 – August 2017. The Plan development was also guided by a Nonmotorized Plan Core Team, and included a number of outreach efforts in order to gather input and feedback. The primary tasks associated with the development of the Plan included:

- Inventory and Data Gathering
- Outreach and Engagement
- Analysis
- Plan Development

Nonmotorized Plan Core Team

A number of MDOT staff and nonmotorized leaders were asked to be a part of the Nonmotorized Plan Core Team for this document. The purpose of the Core Team is to ensure this will be a useful tool for stakeholders in the region and state. The Core Team met periodically during the development of the Plan and served as a:

- Peer review team
- A local knowledge base
- A resource for community contacts
- A means to raise awareness of the plan and project

Nonmotorized Plan Core Team Members

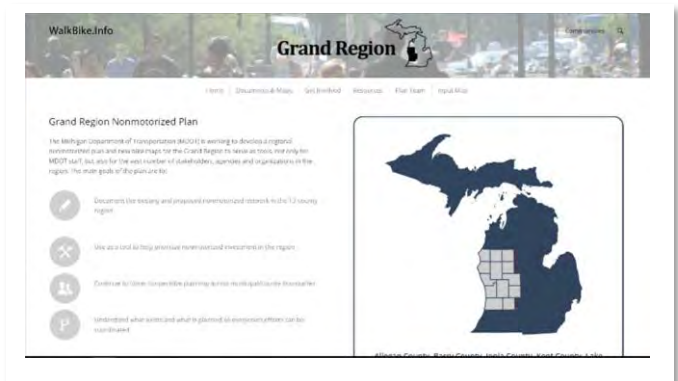
Steve Redmond, MDOT Grand Region
Dennis Kent, MDOT Grand Region
Cynthia Krupp, MDOT Lansing
Susan Rozema, MDOT Grand Region
John Morrison, West MI Trails & Greenways Coalition
Elisa Hoekwater, Macatawa Area Coordination Council
Nikki Van Bloem, DNR Trails Specialist
Mike Smith, MDOT Lansing – TAP Manager
Amy Matisoff, MDOT Lansing – TAP
Travis Mabry, City of Walker
Joe Pung, City of Kentwood
Mark Sweppenheiser, City of Big Rapids
Jay Fowler, Greater Grand Rapids Bicycle Coalition
Laurel Joseph, Grand Valley Metropolitan Council

Outreach

In addition to the input gathered at the Plan Team meetings, three additional primary means of gathering input were utilized to develop this document.

Project Website

A website was developed in conjunction with the Plan development at www.walkbike.info/grand-region. The website has been active since Fall 2016. The primary purpose of the site was to serve as an informational portal to describe the project, announce meeting dates/times, post draft maps and documents for review, provide opportunity for online input, and provide contact information.



Email Distribution

An email list was created in conjunction with the development of the Plan that grew to approximately 300 people, including a large cross-section of agencies, advocacy groups, trail organizations, bike clubs, residents, etc. The distribution list includes all attendees of the Outreach Meetings, the Grand Region Ped/Bike Committee, as well as those that provided their email address via the project website. Emails were sent throughout the project to gather input, announce meetings, and ask for review of draft documents.

Outreach Meetings

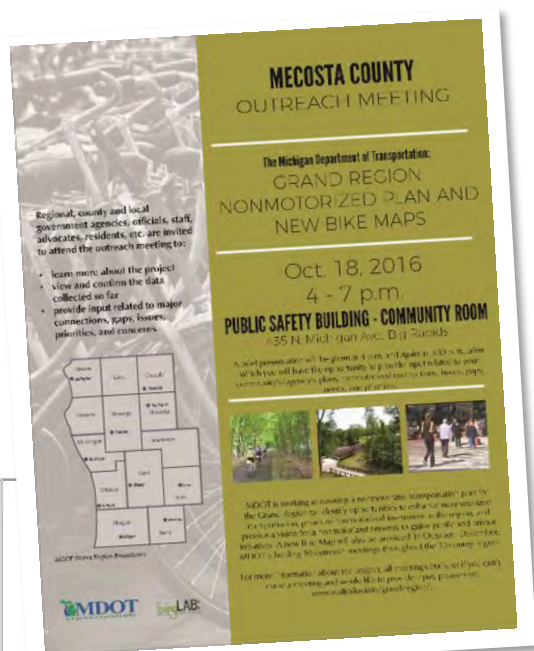
A series of Outreach Meetings were held during the development of the Plan. The first set of Outreach Meetings included ten Open Houses held throughout the region from October-December 2016. The goals for the Outreach Meetings were to learn more about the project, view and confirm data that had been collected, help the team understand what's happening in each geographic area, and provide input related to major connections, gaps, priorities, and concerns. Over 140 people attended this initial series of outreach meetings.

Fall 2016 Outreach Meeting Locations + Attendees



General observations regarding the Fall 2016 series of ten Outreach Meetings included:

- A broad cross-section of groups, communities and organizations attended
- Overall, attendees were supportive and enthusiastic
- Attendees were looking forward to continuing to provide input and ensure connections
- A lot of “new” existing facilities and plans were collected to add to the database and maps
- The handful of concerns heard at the meetings focused on:
 - Ensuring connectivity
 - Coordinating wayfinding
 - Understanding how to fund projects
 - Use of consistent terminology to describe the various facility types



Once a draft document was developed and reviewed by the Plan Core Team, a second series of Outreach Meetings were held including four Open Houses held in June 2017 in Ludington, Walker, Holland, and Hastings. Approximately 80 people attended (Walker – 31; Ludington- 20; Holland – 17; Hastings – 11) and provided comments that were used to further refine the Plan.



Data Sources and Database Basics

Development of a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) database and related mapping was a crucial and extensive part of the planning process. The inventory and data gathering process was extensive including: online research of existing plans and data on nonmotorized facilities; aerial imagery interpretation; feedback from community agencies; outreach meetings; online public input; and input from MDOT staff. Both existing and proposed nonmotorized facilities along with other existing data sets related to bicycle and pedestrian travel were synthesized into the GIS to form the basis for an understanding of existing and planned nonmotorized facilities in the region.

The Existing and Proposed Nonmotorized Inventory was created using ArcGIS Pro 1.4 and organized in a geodatabase. The GIS database is built using the Michigan Geographic Framework (MGF) base information version 14a. All attributes of the roadway and right-of-way (route designations, bike lanes, sidepaths, etc.) are referenced to the centerline using a unique segment identifier. This facilitates data portability and permits the information to be mapped at a variety of scales. *Contact Cindy Krupp, MDOT for GIS data files availability (kruppc@michigan.gov).*

Existing Nonmotorized Plans and Resources

During the development of this plan, considerable effort went into collecting existing plans and resources in the Grand Region that document various agencies nonmotorized visions. These were all mapped using [Google MyMaps](#) and .pdfs are



available for others to reference. When a dot on the map is clicked, a box will pop up with a link to the .pdf.

How Does This Plan Fit into MDOT's Bigger Picture?

In recent years, the US Department of Transportation (USDOT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) have elevated their focus, [resources, research, and encouragement](#) of the importance and need for quality, accessible, and connected pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

The USDOT developed a [Policy Statement on Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodation Regulations and Recommendations](#) (2010) (see next page) to reflect the Department's support for the development of fully integrated active transportation networks. The Policy Statement goes on to recognize that legislation and regulations exist that require inclusion of bicycle and pedestrian policies and projects into transportation plans and project development. Accordingly, transportation agencies should plan, fund, and implement improvements to their walking and bicycling networks, including linkages to transit. In addition, USDOT encourages transportation agencies to go beyond the minimum requirements, and proactively provide convenient, safe, and context-sensitive facilities that foster increased use by bicyclists and pedestrians of all ages and abilities, and utilize universal design characteristics when appropriate. Transportation programs and facilities should accommodate people of all ages and abilities, including people too young to drive, people who cannot drive, and people who choose not to drive.

Since 2005, MDOT has pursued the Context Sensitive Solution (CSS) approach as a core value of its business practices and approach to project development. CSS centers on engaging stakeholders and interdisciplinary teams to resolve transportation problems together. An understanding of the land use and the community is essential in responding to the unique needs and qualities of individual communities. At each step inclusiveness, flexibility, and creativity fuel development of fresh solutions

and increase the prospects for success.³ This dialogue helps to ensure bridges, interchanges, and other transportation projects "fit" into their communities. The goal of the CSS approach is to result in projects that respect a community's scenic, aesthetic, historic, economic, and environmental character.

There are a significant number of pedestrian/bike research projects, initiatives and programs within MDOT that are cumulatively working toward increased safety, achieving greater connectivity, educating, documenting, and collaborating. They are contributing to understanding, growing, and implementing context sensitive solutions and complete streets throughout the state.

The development of this Regional Nonmotorized Plan document (and the Regional Bike Maps) is just one of those efforts and tools that can help to further ensure we are all working together toward a more livable, sustainable community.

Several of the related MDOT initiatives and programs are further detailed on the following pages.

HOW DOES THIS PLAN FIT INTO THE BIGGER MDOT PICTURE?



³ MDOT CSS Website

United States Department of Transportation

Policy Statement on Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations (2010)

Recommended Actions include:

Considering walking and bicycling as equals with other transportation modes.

The primary goal of a transportation system is to safely and efficiently move people and goods. Walking and bicycling are efficient transportation modes for most short trips and, where convenient intermodal systems exist, these non-motorized trips can easily be linked with transit to significantly increase trip distance. Because of the benefits they provide, transportation agencies should give the same priority to walking and bicycling as is given to other transportation modes. Walking and bicycling should not be an afterthought in roadway design.

Ensuring that there are transportation choices for people of all ages and abilities, especially children. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities should meet accessibility requirements and provide safe, convenient, and interconnected transportation networks. For example, children should have safe and convenient options for walking or bicycling to school and parks. People who cannot or prefer not to drive should have safe and efficient transportation choices.

Going beyond minimum design standards.

Transportation agencies are encouraged, when possible, to avoid designing walking and bicycling facilities to the minimum standards. For example, shared-use paths that have been designed to minimum width requirements will need retrofits as more people use them. It is more effective to plan for increased usage than to retrofit an older facility. Planning projects for the long-term should anticipate likely future demand for bicycling and walking facilities and not preclude the provision of future improvements.

Integrating bicycle and pedestrian accommodation on new, rehabilitated, and limited-access bridges.

USDOT encourages bicycle and pedestrian accommodation on bridge projects including facilities on limited-access bridges with connections to streets or paths.

Collecting data on walking and biking trips.

The best way to improve transportation networks for any mode is to collect and analyze trip data to optimize investments. Walking and bicycling trip data for many communities are lacking. This data gap can be overcome by establishing routine collection of non-motorized trip information. Communities that routinely collect walking and bicycling data are able to track trends and prioritize investments to ensure the success of new facilities. These data are also valuable in linking walking and bicycling with transit.

Setting mode share targets for walking and bicycling and tracking them over time.

A byproduct of improved data collection is that communities can establish targets for increasing the percentage of trips made by walking and bicycling.

Removing snow from sidewalks and shared-use paths.

Current maintenance provisions require pedestrian facilities built with Federal funds to be maintained in the same manner as other roadway assets. State Agencies have generally established levels of service on various routes especially as related to snow and ice events.

Improving nonmotorized facilities during maintenance projects.

Many transportation agencies spend most of their transportation funding on maintenance rather than on constructing new facilities. Transportation agencies should find ways to make facility improvements for pedestrians and bicyclists during resurfacing and other maintenance projects.

Complete Streets

[Michigan Public Act 135 of 2010](#) defines Complete Streets as: "...roadways planned, designed, and constructed to provide appropriate access to all legal users in a manner that promotes safe and efficient movement of people and goods whether by car, truck, transit, assistive device, foot, or bicycle."

Complete Streets is an approach to transportation planning – one that supports balanced mobility and the appropriate provision for safe and convenient travel by all the ground transportation modes: transit, walking, bicycling, motor vehicles, and freight movement. The context of the road and surrounding land use play a pivotal role in what may be the appropriate Complete Street response. A rural road may not have the same solutions and provisions as an urban road. There is no "one size fits all" solution that can be applied to all roads and corridors.

PA 135 of 2010 provided for the appointment of a Complete Streets Advisory Council (dissolved in 2016) to educate and advise the State Transportation Commission (STC) and others on Complete Streets policies. The State Transportation Commission approved their Complete Streets Policy in 2012 and as of January 2017, 97 communities have passed their own local complete streets policies.

<https://michigancompletestreets.wordpress.com/>

Multi-Modal Development & Delivery (M2D2)

M2D2 is a project to support Michigan's economic recovery by partnering with Smart Growth America to work through an extensive process (in progress) to improve MDOT's institutional capacity to plan, design, construct, operate, and maintain Michigan's transportation system for Complete Streets and

multiple modes. M2D2 is intended to result in updated standards that consider multi-modal travel on state trunkline highway facilities, and provide MDOT staff with the knowledge and tools to effectively implement multi-modal travel.

Walkability Reviews/Training Wheels

Since 2006, MDOT has conducted a series of walkability and/or bikeability reviews (Training Wheels) on an annual basis to various communities in the State as funding is available. The sessions are designed to teach the basic principles of walkability from a non-technical perspective as well as details about the AASHTO guide and design of on-road bicycle facilities. The sessions are geared toward helping local administrators, officials, engineers, planners, business owners, residents, and other community stakeholders learn the benefits of providing safe and attractive environments for walking and biking.

Complete Streets

There is no one design prescription for complete streets. Ingredients that may be found on a complete street include: sidewalks, bike lanes (or wide paved shoulders), special bus lanes, comfortable and accessible public transportation stops, frequent crossing opportunities, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, and more. A complete street in a rural area will look quite different from a complete street in a highly urban area. But both are designed to balance safety and convenience for everyone using the road.

--National Complete Streets Coalition

Safe Routes to School Program

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is an international movement to make it safe, convenient, and fun for children to bicycle and walk to school. In Michigan, the program is funded under the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and administered by The Michigan Fitness Foundation and MDOT. The program

includes the development of a SRTS Plan by each school and then eligibility to apply for funding for a variety of infrastructure, education, and encouragement projects. The program is focused on K-8 aged children and facilities that serve K-8 schools. <http://saferoutesmichigan.org/>



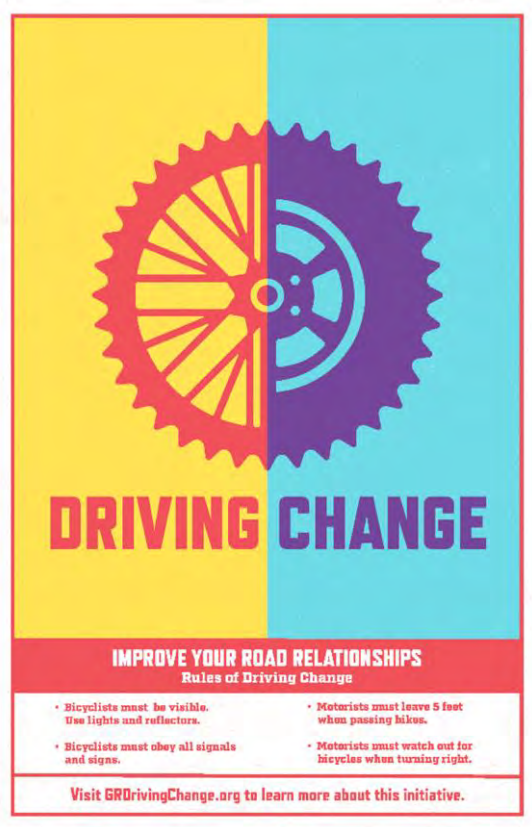
Safe Routes to School

Studies + Research

In recent years MDOT has received federal and state funding and contributed to funding a variety of nonmotorized initiatives, studies and research projects. Four of the most recent include:

Grand Rapids (GR) Driving Change

In 2014 the City of Grand Rapids secured considerable federal and local funding to embark on a multi-year project focused on reducing bicycle crashes. The focus of the project was to help people understand the “rules of the road” while fostering respect between motorists and bicycles and make everyone safer. Specific project tasks included research and analysis of bicycle related crashes, development of messaging, and broad community education and awareness through billboards, posters, tv and radio spots, a project website (grdrivingchange.org), training and much more. Among the project deliverables are a “playbook” that outlines the tasks the City undertook along with sample message and materials that can be replicated to a broader audience in the region and state. Several materials are available from the project website grdrivingchange.org.



Statewide Economic Impact of Biking

Phase I of the [Community and Economic Benefits of Bicycling in Michigan](#) report was completed in 2014 with Phase II completed in 2015. The two-phase project explains the economic benefit bicycling has on Michigan's local and statewide economies. The report finds that **bicycling provides an estimated \$668 million per year in economic benefit** to Michigan's economy, including employment, retail revenue, tourism expenditure, and increased health and productivity. Using both quantitative and qualitative data, the report takes a unique approach to illustrate both the economic benefits of bicycling on a statewide basis as well as broader benefits bicycling can have on communities. Case studies were done on five Michigan communities including Grand Rapids and Holland. Phase II of the project includes more specific data on the economic impact of bicycling "events," bicycle touring, and Michigan as a bicycle destination.

Best Design Practices for Walking and Bicycling in Michigan

MDOT led research and developed a document to assist in determining how to optimize pedestrian and bicycle safety while minimizing impacts to vehicular mobility. [The document](#), which was part of a larger study (Share the Road: Optimizing Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety and Vehicle Mobility) includes best



practices to provide guidance in the design of non-motorized improvements that have shown to reduce crashes involving pedestrians and bicyclists. The report is organized as a toolbox for planners and designers. Best practices are summarized into three categories: signalized intersections, unsignalized pedestrian crossing improvements, and corridor improvements.

Sidepath Applications for Bicycle Use

MDOT (Intermodal Division) began a research project in 2016 (slated for completion in 2018) to determine when on-road facilities are appropriate in addition to side paths in urban and suburban environments to accommodate bicyclists. Inappropriate application and use of side paths may result in higher risk to bicyclists who perceive such facilities as “safe” due to separation from the motor vehicle traffic stream. Objectives of the two-year study include:

1. Gain better understanding of bicycle crashes with respect to frequency, location, bicyclists’ direction of travel and speed, and severity of sidewalk and side path crashes versus on roadway crashes.
2. Investigate land use characteristics and general context of the crash locations.
3. Develop an understanding of the different reasons bicyclists choose to ride where they do.
4. Produce a tool/spreadsheet model for assessing crash risk/potential of various bicycle facilities that can assist planners, engineers, and bicyclists with information on the facility appropriateness based on land use and crash potential.
5. Develop educational materials to inform bicyclists and motorists about safety and crash scenarios with respect to bicycling on different facility types in different land use contexts.

Regional Ped/Bike Committees

Each of the seven MDOT Regions (including the Grand Region) hosts a Regional Ped/Bike Committee that meets on a periodic basis. The Committees include state, regional, and local agencies, communities and advocates that meet to:

- Discuss education, encouragement, engineering, evaluation, and planning issues;
- Learn from each other and support each other’s efforts; and
- Build relationships and partnerships.

The meetings are a venue to identify issues and become more knowledgeable of each other’s planning, design, engineering, and funding processes in order to enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety and mobility for improved quality of life in our communities. Contact Steve Redmond, MDOT Region Planner (redmonds@michigan.gov) for more information or to join the email list.

Grand Region Setting + Profile

The MDOT Grand Region encompasses the western central portion of lower Michigan and includes 13 Counties: Mason, Oceana, Muskegon, Ottawa, Lake, Osceola, Newaygo, Mecosta, Montcalm, Kent, Ionia, Allegan, and Barry. The MDOT Grand Region correlates with the boundaries of the [West Michigan Regional Prosperity Alliance](#) – one of 10 economic regions in Michigan that are focused on creating vibrant regional economies. The Region is fairly well connected in terms of major highways and roads including I-96, I-196, and US-131. The region has a main Amtrak passenger rail line between Grand Rapids and Chicago – The Pere Marquette (allows bikes on train car). The region is also connected to Wisconsin via two Lake Michigan passenger ferries: the SS Badger out of Ludington and the Lake Express out of Muskegon, both of which allow bikes on board. In addition, the first bus rapid transit (BRT) line in Michigan is the 9.6-mile Silverline along Division Avenue in Grand Rapids/ Wyoming/ Kentwood. All Silverline buses are also equipped with bike racks.

The Grand Region includes a number of destinations including the second most populated city in the state, Grand Rapids, and the fastest growing metro area in recent years. Major destinations and land uses include the Lake Michigan shoreline and beach towns, and a number of universities and colleges including Aquinas College, Calvin College, Cornerstone University, Davenport University, Ferris State University, Grace Bible College, Grand Valley State University, Hope College, and Kendall College of Art Design.

Major public lands in the region include the Manistee National Forest, as well as a number of State Parks and Recreation Areas including Ludington, Mears, Muskegon, Saugatuck Dunes, Silver Lake, PJ Hoffmaster, Grand Haven, Holland, and Newaygo State Parks. Also in the Grand Region are the Fred Meijer White Pine Trail State Park, William Field Memorial Hart-Montague Trail State Park, Yankee Springs, Bass River, and Ionia State Recreation Areas. Other major public lands include MDNR managed state game areas and forests, Millennium Park and the John Ball Zoo.

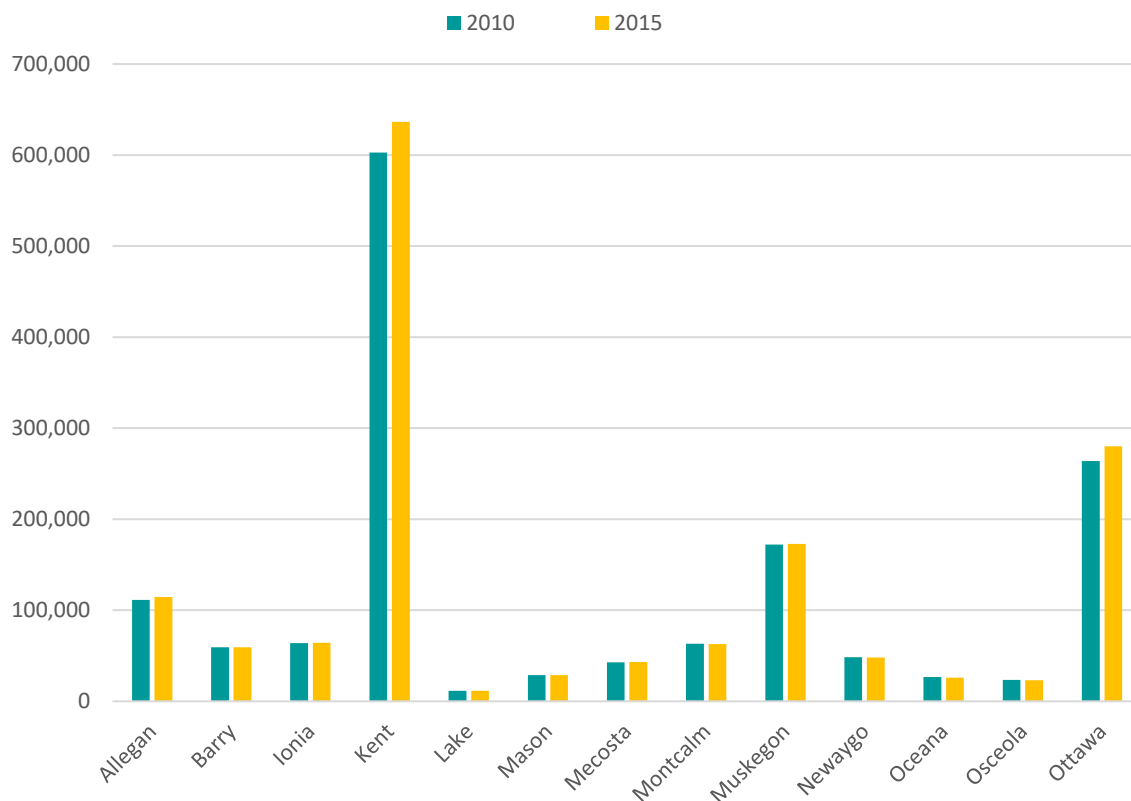
Population Change

LOCATION	2010 POPULATION	2015 POPULATION	% CHANGE
Allegan	111,408	114,625	2.9%
Barry	59,173	59,314	0.2%
Ionia	63,905	64,223	0.5%
Kent	602,622	636,369	5.6%
Lake	11,539	11,424	-1.0%
Mason	28,705	28,783	0.3%
Mecosta	42,798	43,067	0.6%
Montcalm	63,342	62,945	-0.6%
Muskegon	172,188	172,790	0.3%
Newaygo	48,460	47,948	-1.1%
Oceana	26,570	26,105	-1.8%
Osceola	23,528	23,058	-2.0%
Ottawa	263,801	279,955	6.1%
MDOT Grand Region	1,518,039	1,570,606	3.5%
Michigan	9,883,640	9,922,576	0.4%

Population Change

The 2015 US Census shows a population in the 13-County Grand Region of 1,570,606, a 3.5% increase from 2010. Populations (2015) range from 11,424 in Lake County to 636,369 in Kent County. Ottawa County and Kent County had the largest growth rates over the five-year period at 6.1% and 5.6% respectively. Kent, Ottawa and Muskegon Counties include 69.3% of the total population in the Grand Region.

Population per County

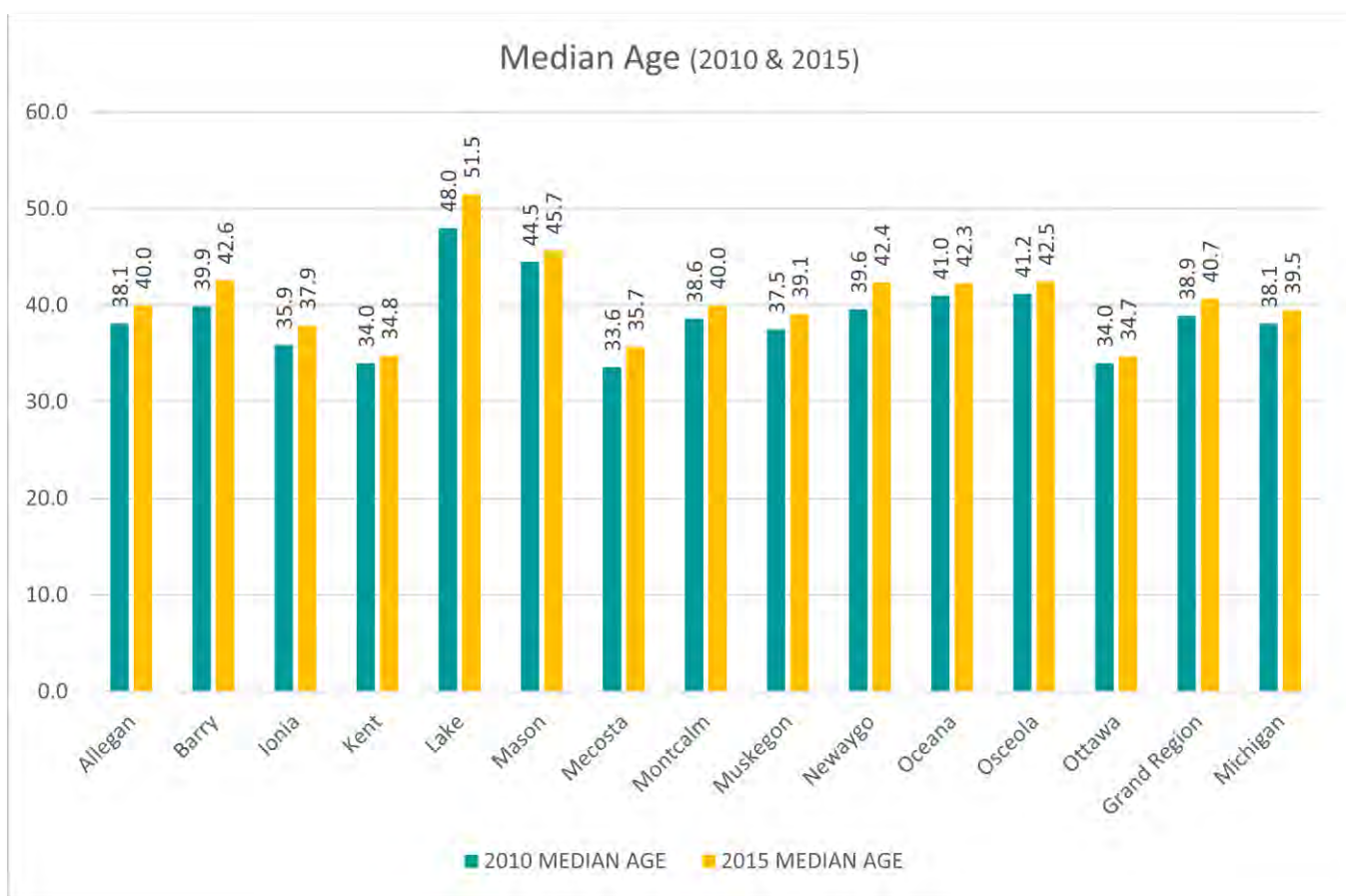


Median Age

The median age of those in the Grand Region has been increasing over the past several decades, as is the case statewide and nationally. In the past five years, the median age (US Census) in the Grand Region has increased by 4.6% from 38.9 to 40.7 years old, respectively. This is slightly older than the state as a whole which was at 39.5 in 2015. Within the Grand Region, Lake County (51.5) and Mason County (45.7) have the oldest population while Ottawa (34.7) and Kent (34.8) have the youngest. Eight of the 13 counties have a higher median age than the state. Behavior studies show that walking and biking for utilitarian purposes are highest for younger people, while the rates for exercise and recreation are highest among older people.⁴

Access to Vehicles

Ensuring mobility options for all is paramount for those that choose not to have a car and for young people, seniors, or those physically or financially unable to drive. A connected nonmotorized network provides an opportunity to meet multiple mobility needs. As estimated by the American Community Survey (five-year estimates 2011-2015), 8.0% of households in Michigan do not have access to a vehicle (9.1% in US). As is illustrated in the table on the following page, in the Grand Region, Muskegon County has the highest percentage (9.2%) of occupied housing units with no vehicle. This is followed by Osceola (8.4%), Kent (7.7%) and Mecosta County (7.6%).



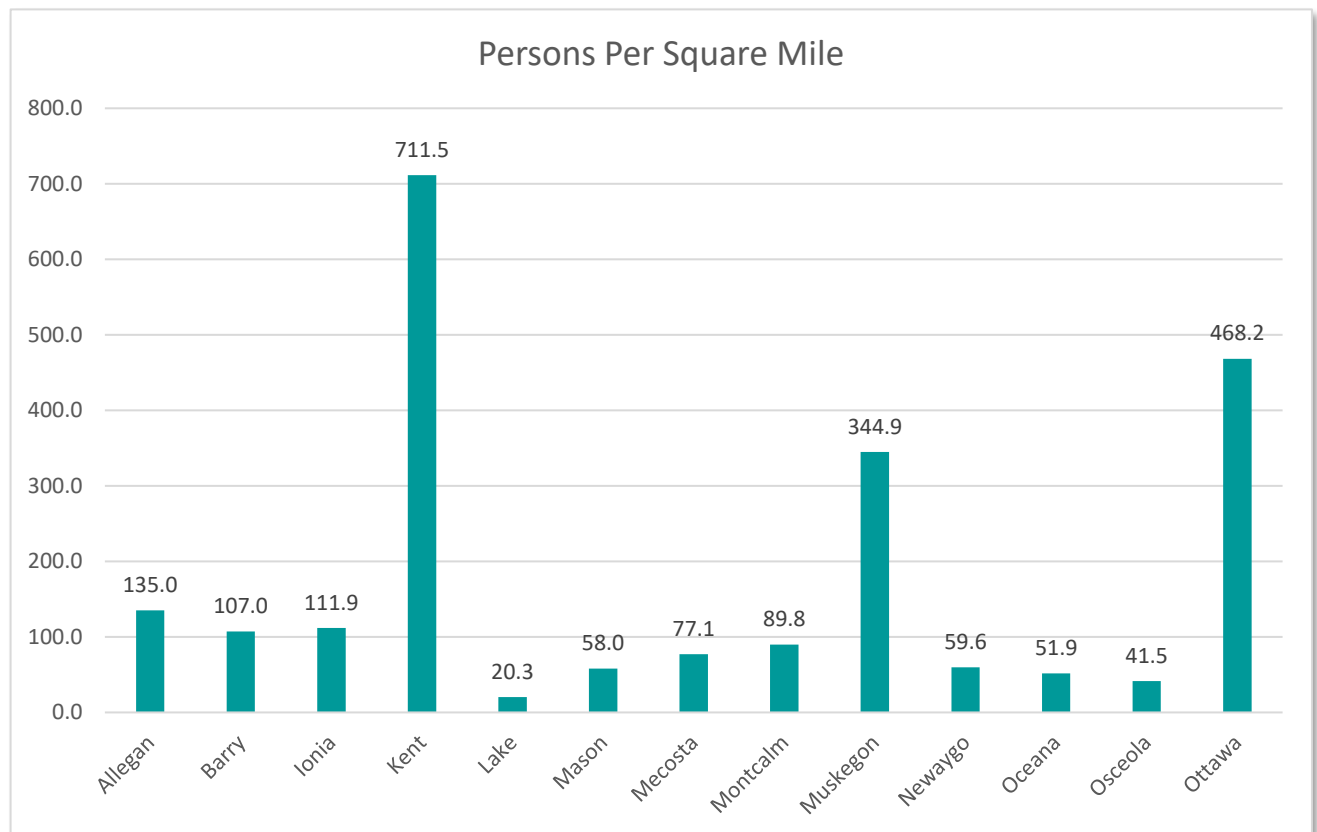
⁴ Estimating Bicycling and Walking for Planning and Project Development: A Guidebook (2014)

Vehicles Available Per Occupied Housing Units

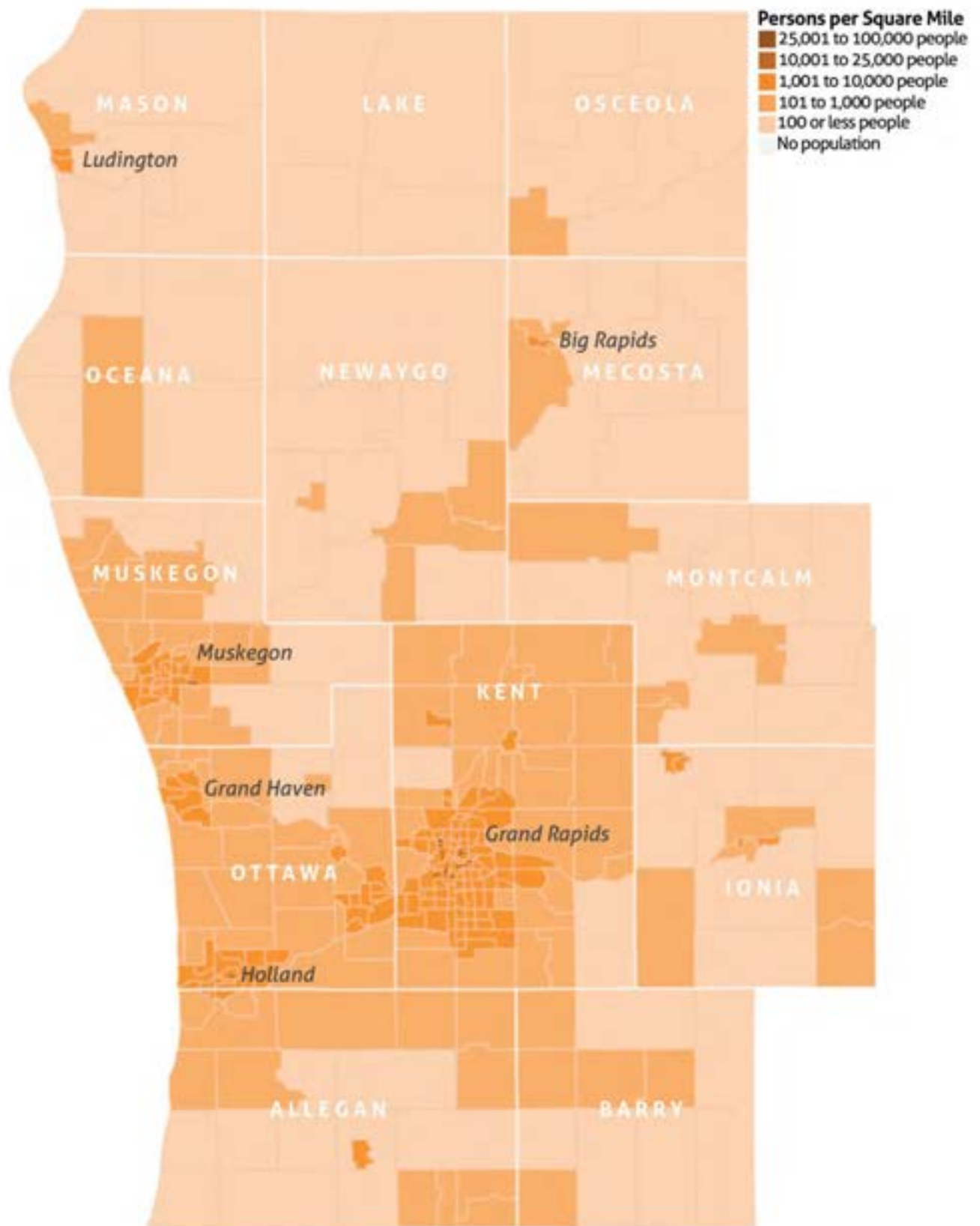
	% No Vehicle	% 1 Vehicle	% 2 Vehicles	% 3+ Vehicles
Allegan	3.8	28.6	42.6	25.0
Barry	4.8	25.2	42.7	27.4
Ionia	5.6	28.6	39.7	26.1
Kent	7.7	33.1	40.8	18.4
Lake	6.6	39.6	37.1	16.7
Mason	7.2	34.4	38.4	20.0
Mecosta	7.6	34.1	38.8	19.5
Montcalm	5.8	32.7	40.9	20.6
Muskegon	9.2	342.0	37.5	19.2
Newaygo	5.4	31.1	39.0	24.5
Oceana	5.0	30.8	40.4	23.7
Osceola	8.4	31.9	39.7	20.0
Ottawa	4.2	26.0	45.6	24.2
Michigan	8.0	34.9	38.4	18.7

Population Density

As is illustrated on the Population Density Map on the following page, the greatest density of people in the region are in and around the major cities including the Grand Rapids area, Holland, Grand Haven, Muskegon, Ludington, Big Rapids, and Ionia. Kent County has the greatest number of people per square mile (711), while Lake County has the lowest density with 20 people per square mile (2010).



2012 Population Density



Facility Types and Terminology

The Michigan Department of Transportation utilizes terms and definitions that are used by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) as it relates to the various types of nonmotorized facilities. The following are the most common “facility types” in the Grand Region and are based on the [AASHTO: Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities 2012](#). These are brief introductions to the common facility types. This is how facilities have been classified in the GIS Database that was developed in conjunction with this Plan document. More detailed design considerations can be found in the Design Considerations section of this document. Some of the facilities are for both pedestrians and cyclists such as Shared Use Paths and in some cases Wide Paved Shoulders and Side Paths. On-street bike lanes and marked shared lanes (sharrows) are facilities for cycling.

Design of nonmotorized facilities should be guided by the [AASHTO Guidebook](#), the [Michigan Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices](#) (MMUTCD) as well as the National Association of City Transportation Officials ([NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide](#)). As noted by the [FHWA 2013 Guidance Memo](#), the FHWA is in support of taking a flexible approach to bicycle and pedestrian facility design. The memo notes that the [NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide](#) as well as the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) [Designing Urban Walkable Thoroughfares](#) guide builds upon the flexibilities provided in the AASHTO guides.

Facility Types and Terminology

Based on AASHTO: Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities 2012



Shared Use Path/Trail

- › For use by pedestrians, bicyclists and other nonmotorized users
- › Physically separated from motor vehicle traffic
- › Two-way travel
- › Examples include rail trails and river trails



Sidepath

- › Specific type of Shared Use Path that run adjacent to a roadway
- › Set back from edge of roadway or has physical barrier between path and roadway
- › Depending on frequency of curb cuts, may not be safe for bicyclists due to intersection conflicts



Bike Lane

- › On-street
- › Designated and marked for use by bicyclists
- › Typically one-way travel in same direction as motor traffic
- › Can be buffered, protected/separated



Shared Lane Marking (sharrow)

- › On-street
- › Pavement symbol to help position and/or direct bicyclists while sharing lane with vehicles
- › Not a substitute when bike lanes are otherwise warranted or space permits



Paved Shoulder

- › 4+ feet wide
- › Provides space for pedestrians/bicyclists but not marked as a bike lane
- › Occasional use by disabled vehicles and mail delivery vehicles



Routes

- › Designated through signage as a preferred route for bicycle or pedestrian use
- › May be used in conjunction with any facility types listed above or on a road without any facilities
- › Typically indicates cardinal direction along with number or name
- › National, state, regional, and local route designations (eg. US Bike Route 35)

Refer to “Highlighted Design Considerations” section of the Plan for more details.

Credit: MDOT White Pine Trail over Rice Creek

Funding Options + Design Considerations

Financing the acquisition, development, and maintenance of the nonmotorized system is essential to sustaining the system. Several opportunities exist to fund acquisition and development of the nonmotorized system. Within the local government structure, understanding the far-reaching benefits of a walkable and bikeable community (economic, health, recreation, mobility, transit, etc.) can often times open up opportunities for cost-sharing, thereby reducing the financial burden on one entity, organization, or department. Additional information on federal transportation funding sources for bicycle and pedestrian projects can be found on the [Federal Highway Administration's](#) and [MDOT's Bicycling in Michigan website](#). Most federal funds can be used for bike/ped projects. A few of the most common funding programs are summarized here.

It should be noted that being a proposed/planned facility, priority, or desired connection in this Plan does not mean the project or facility meets eligibility requirements of these funding sources.

Infrastructure Projects

Regardless of the source of funding, it is advantageous for bicycle and pedestrian projects to be coordinated with other road and infrastructure projects. If included early in the planning and design phases of roadway projects, there is potentially more design flexibility and economies of scale. A number of communities and road agencies throughout Michigan have made significant progress by including pedestrian and bicycle facilities, striping, crosswalks, signals, ramps, signage, etc. in with a larger road improvement project.

ACT 51

Created by Public Act 51 of 1951, this is where all state fuel taxes and license plate fees are deposited. This revenue is shared among transportation agencies for construction, maintenance, and operation of Michigan's transportation systems. **The state transportation law (MCLA 247.660k) requires a minimum of 1% of state transportation funds be spent for non-motorized transportation.** The table on the following page provides greater detail regarding work items creditable against the Section 10k 1% expenditures. Act 51 funds can be spent on ped/bike items such as:

- Shared Use Paths
- Sidewalk/Ramps/Curb Cuts
- Nonmotorized Planning + Education
- Bike Lanes
- Shoulder Paving

Local agency work being funded with Michigan Transportation Funds must have a clear transportation purpose. This work typically takes place within the road rights-of-way or is reasonably appurtenant to the roadway.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ)

The primary goal of the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) is to reduce traffic congestion and enhance air quality. These funds can be used for either the construction of bicycle transportation facilities and pedestrian walkways (new construction), bike lanes on existing streets, or non-construction projects such as bike share equipment. Funds are available to counties designated as non-attainment areas for air quality, based on federal standards. The standard local match is 20%. Applicants are required to work with Metropolitan Planning Organizations or Regional Planning Agencies in selecting projects that are most effective in reducing congestion and transportation related emissions in a cost effective manner. Additional MDOT CMAQ program details at michigan.gov/cmaq

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

TAP is a competitive grant program that uses federal transportation funds designated by Congress for specific activities that enhance the intermodal transportation system and provide safe alternative transportation options including pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. Additionally, investments made through TAP support place-based economic development by offering transportation choices, promoting walkability, and improving quality of life. MDOT is responsible for selecting TAP projects in the Grand Region and has a considerable amount of information and frequently asked questions on their website for reference (www.michigan.gov/tap). The Grand Valley Metro Council also selects TAP funds in Kent County and eastern Ottawa County. The most competitive aspects for MDOT TAP funding are:

- to connect and develop documented regional or statewide bicycle and pedestrian transportation networks
- broad public engagement and strong support
- project coordinated with other infrastructure work, economic development, or community improvement initiative
- strong, detailed maintenance plan, including sources of funding
- high match (40% and higher, ability to pay is considered)
- high constructability level

Constructability on a typical trail project is measured by use of industry design standards, secured right-of-way, and ease of obtaining all necessary permits and approvals.

Eligible applicants include county road commissions, cities, villages, regional transportation authorities, transit agencies, state and federal natural resource or public land agencies, nonprofits responsible for the administration of local transportation safety programs, and tribal governments. MDOT may partner with a local agency to apply for funding and implement the project. Other organizations, such as townships or trail groups, may work with an eligible agency to apply. [Grant coordinators](#) are available to assist you by providing more information on the program, guidance on competitive projects, and how to best develop a competitive application.



WORK CREDITABLE AGAINST THE SECTION 10K 1% EXPENDITURE REQUIREMENT

PA 51 of 1951 as amended by PA 82 of 2006

DESCRIPTION OF WORK	WORK CREDITABLE AGAINST SECTION 10K 1% REQUIREMENT	ELIGIBLE COST	
		Engineering	Construction
NON – ROAD FACILITIES			
Shared Use Path as a project	All Engineering/construction	100%	100%
Shared Use Path as part of a road project	1) All path related construction 2) Non-path work in the road project, necessitated by the path component (e.g. extra fill, culvert extension, etc) 3) Prorated engineering costs	Prorated*	100% of 1 and 2
Shared Use Structures	All engineering/construction	100%	100%
Bicycle Parking	Acquisition and Installation	100%	100%
Sidewalks, ramps and curb cuts	All engineering/construction	100%	100%
Curb Extensions and Median Refuge Islands	All engineering/construction	100%	100%
Signs, Pavement Markings, Pedestrian Signals	All work specifically associated with the non-motorized facility and its pedestrian/non-motorized users	100%	100%
SERVICES			
Non-motorized Planning and Education	Costs associated with the development of non-motorized planning documents or educational materials intended to promote the development, benefits and use of non-motorized transportation.	NA	NA
ROAD FACILITIES			
New Bike Lanes and associated, pavement, pavement markings, and signage	That portion of the engineering and construction that can be attributed to the bike lane	Prorated	Prorated**
Shoulder Paving as a project	All Engineering/construction	100%	100%
Shoulder Paving as a part other road or bridge construction, reconstruction, resurfacing, or widening work	That portion of the engineering and construction that can be attributed to the paving shoulder portion of the work	Prorated	Prorated**
Road or bridge Construction, Reconstruction, Resurfacing, or Widening	That portion of the outside lane width in excess of the minimum design width for motor vehicles	Prorated	Prorated
* Proration: $Enm = (Cnm / Ctot) \times Etot$, where E=Engineering \$s, and C=Construction \$s			
** Proration: $Cnm = (Wnm / Wtot) \times Ctot$ where W=Width of roadway, and C=Construction \$s. Note only road/bridge project pay items which include the non-motorized width in the width proration.			
All work needs to be done to AASHTO and ADA standards.			

Non-road facilities are accommodations which occur off the edge of the road, and may or may not be within the road right of way. The shared use path (the appropriate name for what are often called bike paths or trails) and shared use structures on those paths are off-roadway facilities intended for non-motorized travel.

Road facilities are non-motorized accommodations built in a roadway. They include paving wide shoulders 4' or greater, and portions of road or bridge construction, reconstruction, resurfacing or widening suitable for non-motorized users. In general, any work that adds width to the roadway beyond the minimum design width provided for motor vehicles use is considered as an accommodation for bicyclists. "Road Diets" or the restriping costs associated with converting a roadway from four lanes to three lanes (two travel lanes, a turn lane and two bicycle lanes) within the existing curb alignment can also be considered an eligible expenditure.

Sidewalk "addition or improvement" are eligible non-motorized expenditures per Public Act 82 of 2006, effective March 29, 2006.

Michigan Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) 2016 Accomplishments



**MDOT and
six metropolitan
planning organizations
invested**

\$27.2 million
in funding in
**47 projects in 63 communities
within 25 counties**

- Leveraged \$12.1 million in matching funds, of which \$5.3 million was non-transportation funding.
- MDOT and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources partnered on eight projects utilizing \$5.7 million in TAP funds.
- Project highlights include:
 - Development of 60 miles of shared-use trails, paved shoulders, and bike lanes;
 - Construction of a pedestrian tunnel under M-45 in Walker to address regional trail system gap;
 - Construction of 3 miles of streetscape to improve safety and mobility for pedestrians and bicyclists;
 - Property acquisition of 5.3 miles of railroad right of way for a future trail;
 - Restoration and relocation of one historic bridge; and
 - Support for roughly 460 construction jobs.

Including SRTS Infrastructure...

- 6.2 miles of sidewalk repair or construction;
- Changeable speed signs and crosswalk enhancements;
- 3/4-mile, 10-foot shared-use path with Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant ramps; and
- Curb bump-outs to reduce pedestrian crossing distances.

\$2.1 million
in Safe Routes to
Schools (SRTS)
infrastructure
projects



\$203,617
in non-infrastructure
investment

...and SRTS Education and Outreach



- Pedestrian and bicycle education and skills training;
- Walking school buses, bike trains, and other engagement activities;
- 60 percent of projects involved engaging communities with a multi-school planning process rather than single-school planning (process piloted with one community in 2014).



Bike to School Day

51,000 students at 201 schools

Number of Michigan schools
participating ranked 3rd in the nation!

Walk to School Day

80,500 students at 325 schools



For More Information visit these websites at: www.saferoutesmichigan.org and www.michigan.gov/tap.

Safe Routes to School

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is an international movement to make it safe, convenient, and fun for children to bicycle and walk to school. In Michigan, the program is funded under the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and administered by The Michigan Fitness Foundation and MDOT. Developing a SRTS Plan is a process that involves schools, cities, and community groups working together to develop a plan that helps students walk or bike to school safely and in greater numbers.



The Michigan SRTS program offers communities two kinds of opportunities to receive Federal funding for a SRTS program: The Mini Grant and the Major Grant. The **Mini Grant** is a programming only grant to help schools build a culture of walking, biking, and rolling among students. Mini grants fund things such as a walking school bus, incentive program, remote drop site, and bike rodeos. Schools can apply once a year for up to \$5,000 each or up to \$25,000 for multiple schools. Applications open in January.

The **Major Grant** is to help communities build sidewalks, crosswalks, and any other infrastructure improvements that may be needed to make it possible for students to walk, bike, and roll safely to school. There is up to \$200,000/school available for infrastructure, and up to \$8,000/school for the same programmatic activities funded by mini-grants. Application deadlines are on-going and quarterly. Major Grants require an in-depth planning process prior to submitting an application. Funding details can be found at www.saferoutesmichigan.org.

USDA Rural Development

The **Community Facilities (CF)** program offers primarily loan dollars to municipalities, non-profit organizations and tribal entities interested in improving or developing essential community facilities. This may include motorized and nonmotorized transportation infrastructure as well as equipment to maintain infrastructure. Loan rates are typically lower than those available on the open market and can have a term equivalent to the life of the infrastructure, up to 20 years. Loan guarantees may also be available to work in partnership with local lenders. Eligible rural areas must have a population of 20,000 or less, demonstrate a need for assistance and have a

documented ability to repay. Additional priority can be given to projects that include multi-jurisdictional collaboration. More details and local office contact information is available at www.rd.usda.gov/mi.

MDNR Trust Fund

The [Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund \(MNRTF\)](#), provides grants to local governments and the DNR (with approved plan) to secure and develop lands for recreational purposes. Trail projects connecting communities to one another and to natural resources are a priority of the Trust Fund Board and are routinely awarded grants through the MNRTF. Additionally, since the MNRTF is a state source of funds, it can be used as match for TAP or other federal grant projects. Providing legal pedestrian access to the Great Lakes Shoreline (acquisition) and the Iron Belle Trail (among other items) are additional priorities for the Trust Fund Board in 2017. Applications are due April 1st and applicant must have a MDNR approved Recreation Plan. Development grant maximum is \$300,000 with a 25% local match.



MDNR Iron Belle Trail Appropriation

From 2015-2017, the [MDNR awarded funds](#) via a General Fund appropriations for engineering/design and signage for projects on the Iron Belle Trail. This was an annual appropriation with availability unknown in 2018.



Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

The LWCF Federal program provides matching grants to local governments and the MDNR (with approved plan) for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. Applications are due April 1st, the maximum grant request is \$150,000, and there is a 50% local match. Pedestrian paths, trailheads, and support amenities have been funded in the past. [Additional LWCF details](#).



Recreation Passport

PA 32 of 2010 created the Local Public Recreation Facilities Fund to be used for the development of public recreation facilities for local units of government. Money for this fund is derived from the sale of the Recreation Passport which replaced the resident Motor Vehicle Permit (MVP) - or window sticker - for state park entrance. All local units of government are eligible. Applications are due April 1st. Maximum grant request in 2017 was \$75,000. Renovation of trails and trail heads, accessible pathways, restrooms, and related amenities have been funded in the past. [Additional RP details.](#)



Other Funding Sources

Non-traditional sources of funding can also be used for bicycle and pedestrian projects such as local millages, tax increment financing (TIF) district funds, and state and local philanthropic organizations. A number of "local" millages are in place in the Grand Region that are assisting in the implementation of road improvements, trails, and nonmotorized facilities.

Highlighted Design Considerations

This section of the document details some general design considerations, resources, and characteristics related to the accommodation of bicycles and pedestrians within road rights-of-way and off-road corridors. Information is also included related to comfort level and behaviors of pedestrians and bicyclists.

This section is not intended to replace the wealth of manuals and design guidance documents that exist. There are a number of design manuals and other guidance that should and/or must be used by agencies, designers, landscape architects, and engineers on how to best accommodate bicycles and pedestrians in their planning efforts.

Pedestrian and bicycle trips need to be viewed as part of an interconnected and multi-modal transportation system. Pedestrians and bicyclists have similar concerns and needs, including being vulnerable roadway users. However, those needs are not always identical.

Reference Material and Guidance

- AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, 4th Edition
- AASHTO Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities
- AASHTO Roadside Design Guide 2011
- ITE's Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach
- The United States Access Board Proposed Guidelines for Pedestrian Facilities in the Public Right-of-Way (PROWAG)
- National Association of City Transportation Officials' Urban Bikeway Design Guide (NACTO) ([only portions compliant with AASHTO and MMUTCD are accepted by FHWA](#))
- FHWA table on Bicycle Facilities and the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices
- FHWA's Guide for Maintaining Pedestrian Facilities for Enhanced Safety
- FHWA Separated Bike Lane Planning & Design Guide 2015
- FHWA Achieving Multimodal Networks 2016
- The Michigan Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MMUTCD)
- MDOT's Design Manual Standards and Guidelines

Pedestrian Considerations

Walking trips are typically around 20 minutes in length and under one mile in distance. The number of pedestrian trips tend to be higher in urban areas where there is a mix of land uses and the infrastructure exists to support pedestrian travel. Pedestrians are the most vulnerable roadway users. Unlike motorists and cyclists, pedestrians are capable of crossing a street in almost any location. This exposes pedestrians to conflicts with motor vehicles that are not prepared for their presence. Slow speeds, generally three miles per hour, also expose pedestrians to traffic for longer periods.⁵ One solution is to design clear pedestrian facilities including sidewalks, crosswalks, and crossings with signalization (where appropriate), that encourage predictable behavior and alert motorists to pedestrian presence.

Accommodating Pedestrians in the Public Right-of-Way

There are three primary ways in which pedestrians can be accommodated in the public right-of-way:

1. **Sidewalks**

The preferred pedestrian facility and provided on both sides of a street. Provide the greatest degree of comfort for pedestrians and are associated with increased safety for pedestrians.

2. **Shared Use Paths or Side Paths**

An off-road path can be an appropriate facility in rural or low-density suburban areas. Generally set back from the roads and separated by a green area or trees.

3. **Shoulders**

Wide shoulders on both sides of a road are a minimum accommodation for providing a possible place for people to walk.

--pedbikesafe.org

Bicycling Considerations

People bike for a number of reasons including recreation, exercise, and for transportation. Depending on the trip purpose, there are varying considerations when developing bicycle infrastructure. Commuting or transportation-related bicycling typically involves the shortest and easiest route to the destination, which is typically within or along road corridors. Trips for exercise or leisure are more likely to include scenic, low stress routes on off-road facilities and often during off-peak times and weekends.

Before discussing types of facilities and typical design considerations, it is important to discuss the general types of cyclists and how design decisions can impact the number of cyclists using the facilities. Most people can be categorized as one of four types of cyclists.⁶ as illustrated on the following page.

When working with agencies, stakeholders and advocates to discuss context sensitive solutions related to encouraging bicycling as a safe mode of transportation, it is the “Interested But Concerned” group of the population that should be kept in mind. This group represents the majority of latent demand for bicycle facilities. As such, their preference should be given significant consideration.

⁵ SEMCOG/Metro Region Nonmotorized Plan, 2014.

⁶ R. Gellar, Portland Office of Transportation

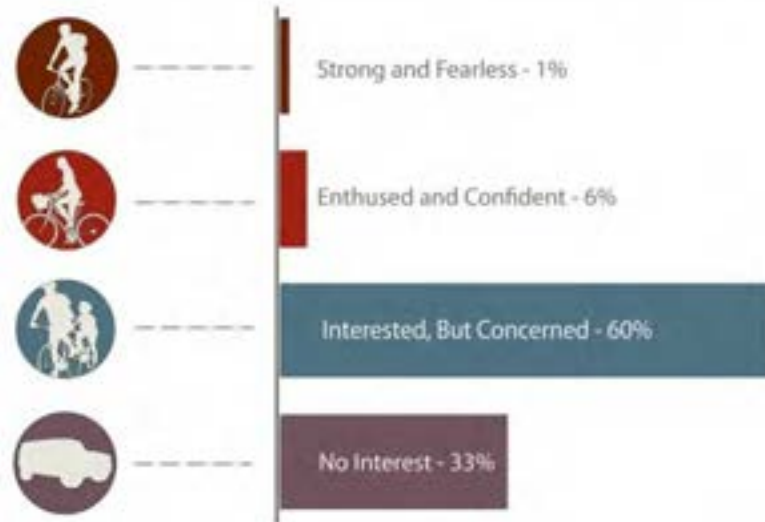
1 The “**Strong and the Fearless**” are the people who will ride regardless of designated facilities or roadway conditions.

2 The “**Enthusied and Confident**” are comfortable sharing the roadway with automotive traffic, but they prefer to do so with designated facilities.

3 The largest portion of people fall into the “**Interested but Concerned**” category. These people are curious about bicycling. They like riding a bicycle and they would like to ride more. They would ride if they felt safer on the roadways.

4 Finally, approximately one-third of the population falls into the last category of ‘cyclist.’ This is the “**No way, No how**” group that is currently not interested in bicycling at all, for reasons of topography, inability, etc.

The Four Types of Bicyclists



Portland DOT: 2006

Highlighted Design Resources and Facility Types

Design of nonmotorized facilities should be guided by the [AASHTO Guidebook](#), the Michigan [Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices](#) (MMUTCD) as well as the National Association of City Transportation Officials ([NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide](#)). As noted by the [FHWA 2013 Guidance Memo](#), the FHWA is in support of taking a flexible approach to bicycle and pedestrian facility design. The memo notes that the NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide as well as the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) [Designing Urban Walkable Thoroughfares](#) guide builds upon the flexibilities provided in the AASHTO guides.

There are also an extensive number of design details, treatments and considerations that may be applicable to projects that strive to improve the safety and mobility of pedestrians and cyclists. As this document is not intended to replace existing

design standards, guidelines, and references, not all design considerations and treatments are discussed or illustrated. These include, but are not limited to elements such as:

- Mid-Block Crossings
- Intersection Treatments
- Road Diets
- Signalization
- Striping and Signage Details
- Design details of facilities such as pavement color/pattern

A few publications and resources are highlighted on the next page followed by a brief overview of design considerations for various nonmotorized facility types.

Highlighted Recent Design Resources



FHWA Separated Bike Lane Planning and Design Guide (2015)

Outlines planning considerations for separated bike lanes (also sometimes called “cycle tracks” or “protected bike lanes”) and provides a menu of design options covering typical one and two-way scenarios. Includes options for providing separation, midblock design considerations for driveways, transit stops, accessible parking, and loading zones. Includes detailed intersection design, case studies, and lessons learned.

A .pdf of the document can be accessed via [FHWA's website](#).



NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide, 2nd Edition

Based on the experience of the best cycling cities in the world. Substantive guidance for cities seeking to improve bicycle transportation in places where competing demands for the use of the right-of-way present unique challenges. Discusses bike lanes, cycle tracks, intersection treatments, bicycle signals, signing, marking, bike boulevards, etc.

FHWA issued a [memorandum](#) officially supporting use of the document in August 2013.

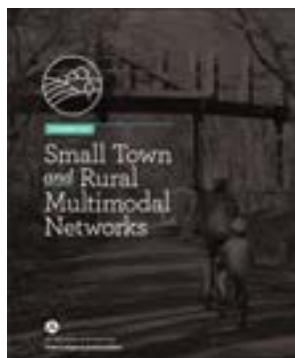
Organized to review on the NACTO website at [nacto.org](#).



MDOT Guidance for Trunkline Main Streets (2016)

Developed to serve communities and public agencies in Michigan that seek to study or implement modifications, improve multi-modal transportation options, and provide greater accessibility for residents, visitors, and businesses along trunkline main streets – **non-freeway business loops, business routes, M route or US route**. Includes discussion of MDOT Planning Process as well as Traffic Impact Analysis, Permitting, Jurisdictional Transfers of Road Mileage, Maintenance Agreements, etc.

A .pdf of the document can be accessed on MDOT's website [Michigan.gov/mdot](#).



FHWA Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks (2016)

Resource and idea book intended to help small towns and rural communities support safe, accessible, comfortable and active travel for people of all ages and abilities. It provides a bridge between existing guidance on bicycle and pedestrian design and rural practice, encourage innovation in the development of safe and appealing networks for bicycling and walking in small towns and rural areas, and show examples of peer communities and implementation.

A .pdf of the document can be accessed at the FHWA website [fhwa.dot.gov](#).



Shared Use Path



Highlighted Design Considerations

- Provides a low-stress travel area for pedestrians and bicyclists separate from motorized traffic.
- Two-way travel that can provide direct access to key destinations and natural resources.
- 10-14' wide (per AASHTO) depending on user volumes.
- 2' clearance on both sides.
- Where paths intersect roads, enhancements should improve conditions for path users.

Modified from FHWA Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks



Side Path



Highlighted Design Considerations

- Bidirectional shared use path located immediately adjacent and parallel to a roadway.
- Can offer quality experience for all user abilities (as compared to on-road facilities) in heavy traffic environments.
- Requires a wide right-of-way to provide for separation.
- 10-12' wide path with 5' minimum separation from road.
- Reduce frequency of driveway crossings.
- Design intersections to reduce driver speeds.

Modified from FHWA Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks



Sidewalk



Highlighted Design Considerations

- Provides dedicated space intended for use by pedestrians.
- Physically separated from road by curb or buffer space.
- 5' minimum width to permit side-by-side walking and meet accessibility guidelines.

Modified from FHWA Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks



Paved Shoulders



Highlighted Design Considerations

- 4-8' wide depending on volume and speed of adjacent road.
- Provides advantages for all roadway users by providing space for bicyclists, pedestrians, and motor vehicles. Lengthen life span of road and reduce maintenance costs.
- Guidance on optimizing rumble strip design to be more tolerable for bicyclists found in [FHWA Technical Advisory 5040.39](#).

Modified from FHWA Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks



Bike Lane



Highlighted Design Considerations

- Exclusive space for bicyclists (not for pedestrians) located directly adjacent to motor vehicle travel lanes and following the same direction as motor vehicle traffic.
- Pavement markings and optional signs.
- 4' minimum when no curb and gutter is present or 5' minimum when adjacent to a curbface, on-street parking.
- 6.5' wide is preferred to allow for bike passing.
- When space is available, add buffer area to distance the bike lane from adjacent motor vehicle travel.

Modified from FHWA Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks



Separated Bike Lane



Highlighted Design Considerations

- Allocated space exclusively for bicyclists (not for pedestrians) located within or directly adjacent to road and physically separated from motor vehicle traffic. Distinct from sidewalks.
- Offer bicyclists similar riding experience to side paths but with fewer operational and safety concerns.
- Reduces incidence of sidewalk riding and user conflicts.
- One-way: 5-7' wide lane with 3' separation width.

Modified from FHWA Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks



Existing/Proposed Facilities + Priorities

A significant amount of effort was devoted to understanding and documenting the existing and proposed facilities within the region. This Plan and the associated database are considered a first step at capturing the existing nonmotorized conditions and agencies, organizations, and communities plans for facilities in the future. Many agencies, cities, and communities have made substantial investments in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, particularly in the last decade. The system and network are evolving at a rapid pace; therefore, the maps and graphics included in this Plan represent a “snapshot” in time. **It is fully realized the database created during this planning effort will need to be regularly and continually updated to reflect current conditions and plans.**

This section of the Plan is organized as follows:

- State and nationally significant systems
- Definition of regional corridors
- Region-wide conditions, strategies and priorities
- Alphabetically by county - text and map summary of findings related to existing and planned facilities, and priority projects and desired connections.

The maps and text reflect the emerging regional network of nonmotorized facilities that connect communities to one another, to major destinations, and to adjacent counties, regions, and states. The maps and text also reflect results of the work sessions held with the Nonmotorized Plan Core Team and the various outreach efforts and input sessions.

State and Nationally Significant Systems

There are four major pedestrian/bike routes that traverse through the Grand Region and provide connections for communities and counties within the region, to adjacent regions, to adjacent states and beyond. These systems and routes are further described below and they are illustrated on the Grand Region Existing and Proposed Nonmotorized Facilities Map. Priorities, within the context of the Grand Region, have also been noted.

US Bicycle Route 20 and 35

The US Bicycle Route System is a national network of regionally and nationally significant bicycling routes spanning multiple states. The purpose of the US Bicycle Route numbering system is to facilitate travel between states on routes identified as suitable for long-distance cycling and for those comfortable riding with traffic. US Bicycle Routes can include a variety of conditions and traverse various facility types including shared use trails, paved shoulders, no paved shoulders, etc. **US Bicycle Route 20** is an east-west route of just over 300 miles and connects Marine City on the east with Ludington on the west. **US Bicycle Route 35** is a 500-mile route that runs from Indiana through Michigan to Sault Ste. Marie, Canada, generally following the Lake Michigan shoreline and through the eastern Upper Peninsula. While some portions of [US Bicycle Routes 20 and 35](#) are signed, users should not rely solely on signs for navigating the route.



US Bike Route Priorities (in Grand Region)

1. Where USBR route modifications might be considered communities must take a coordinated approach involving MDOT Lansing staff (Josh DeBruyn – DeBruynJ@michigan.gov) and impacted local road agencies early in the process.
2. Consider pavement improvements along the route.
3. Whenever feasible include wide ($\geq 4'$) paved shoulders along the route.
4. Consider additional marking of the route including more frequent confidence markers as well as local wayfinding to amenities and other nonmotorized networks.



North Country National Scenic Trail

The National Park

Service - North

Country National

Scenic Trail is a

4,600-mile long

hiking trail that

crosses seven

northern states

from New York to North Dakota, including traversing through the Grand Region via Barry, Kent, Newaygo, Lake, and Mason Counties. Sections of the North Country Trail vary on bicycle use; users should contact the North Country Trail Association or land management partners for more information.

<https://northcountrytrail.org/>



Michigan's Iron Belle Trail

The MDNR announced the

official name of the Iron Belle

Trail in 2015. The trail (which

has two routes) will traverse

from Belle Isle in Detroit to

Ironwood in the Upper

Peninsula. Proposed by

Governor Snyder in 2012, the trail includes a 1,273-mile hiking route (69% complete) that heads west from Detroit and connects up with the North Country National Scenic Trail. The 791-mile bicycle route (64% complete) utilizes existing multi-use trails and on-road facilities on the east side of the state. The MDNR is leading the effort and partners on the project include MDOT, the Michigan Trails Advisory Council, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, the Michigan Recreation and Parks Association, and the Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance. Projects along the Iron Belle Trail are a high priority for MDNR grant programs. This trail traverses through the Grand Region via Barry, Kent, Newaygo, Lake, and Mason Counties on the North Country National Scenic Trail.



North Country Trail and Iron Belle Trail Priorities (in Grand Region)

While there are a number of detailed plans and discussions underway, the overarching priorities for the NCT and IBT in the Grand Region are:

1. Look for opportunities to move on-road sections to off-road locations.
2. Improved signing and pavement markings for road crossings.
3. Incorporate marking routes through towns – urban trail blaze markings – to assist with wayfinding.
4. Work with Trail Towns to develop/implement Trail Town Master Plans.
5. Permanently protect a corridor for the Trail through easements or acquisitions when opportunities arise.

Regional Corridors

Through analysis of the existing and planned network, and a series of outreach and stakeholder meetings and input, *major* corridors for regional nonmotorized travel are identified in this Plan. These corridors serve as the primary arteries that connect to other more local corridors. They often include major existing and planned systems such as the Musketawa Trail, Paul Henry-Thornapple Trail, Blue Star Trail, Grand River Explorers Trail, and Fred Meijer Millennium Park Trails. At times, the Regional Corridors use parks, rail corridors, greenways along rivers, local community facilities, or routes with yet-to-be determined facility types to provide regional connectivity. Several of these Regional Corridors also serve as the route for state and national interests, such as the US Bike Routes or the North Country Trail/Iron Belle Trail.

Typical Elements of a Regional Corridor

- Connection from one community, county, and/or the region to another.
- Serve as primary “arteries” that connect to other more local corridors.
- Often include significant existing or planned on- or off-road systems.

The following pages identify Regional Corridors within the Grand Region as well as some of the gaps within them. Maps have been created that show these corridors and their relationship to the rest of the network. Readers can also visit MDOT’s Nonmotorized website for larger more detailed versions of the maps at: www.michigan.gov/mdot-biking. The **GIS Database** associated with this project is also available for use. *Contact Cindy Krupp, MDOT for GIS data files (kruppc@michigan.gov).*

This section of the Plan includes summary sheets and associated maps that highlight for the Grand Region as a whole as well as each County:

- Existing + Planned Networks
- Priorities + Desired Connections

This section of the Plan and the associated maps should be considered part of a living document that will need to be updated periodically. MDOT fully anticipates that there will be changes in these corridors over time. Facilities may need upgrading to accommodate more users. Portions of a corridor may change if other routes prove more feasible. Regional Corridors may be added. In several cases, alternate, nearby routes, even though they are not as direct, may be preferred due to lower stress vehicle speeds, volumes, or trucks. They may not necessarily represent actual or planned routes – rather they reflect the desire for connectivity. Priorities and desired connections in each county are at various stages – some are merely in the discussion phase, others have been fully vetted with detailed feasibility studies and cost estimates completed.

Further planning by a variety of agencies and stakeholders may be required to fully vet these systems and routes. Communities are encouraged to coordinate their bicycle and pedestrian planning efforts with this document thus strengthening local, county, and regional efforts.



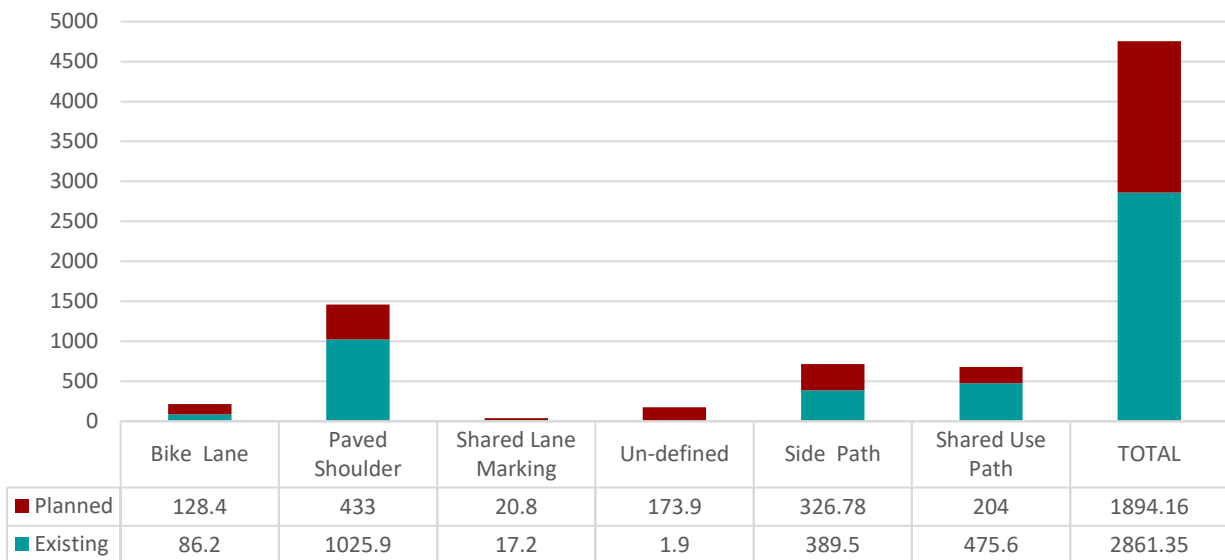
Grand Region As A Whole

Existing + Planned Networks

Population: 1,570,606 (15.8% of State)

The following pages summarize a variety of elements that together begin to capture the overall picture of existing and planned nonmotorized networks in the Grand Region as a whole.

Existing and Planned Facilities in the Grand Region



Source: Grand Region GIS (July 2017)

Crash Facts 2011 – 2015

0.8%

Percent of total **crashes** that involve peds/bikes in region

17.0%

Percent of total **fatalities** that involve peds/bikes in region

10.7%

Percent of **incapacitating injuries** that involve peds/bikes in region

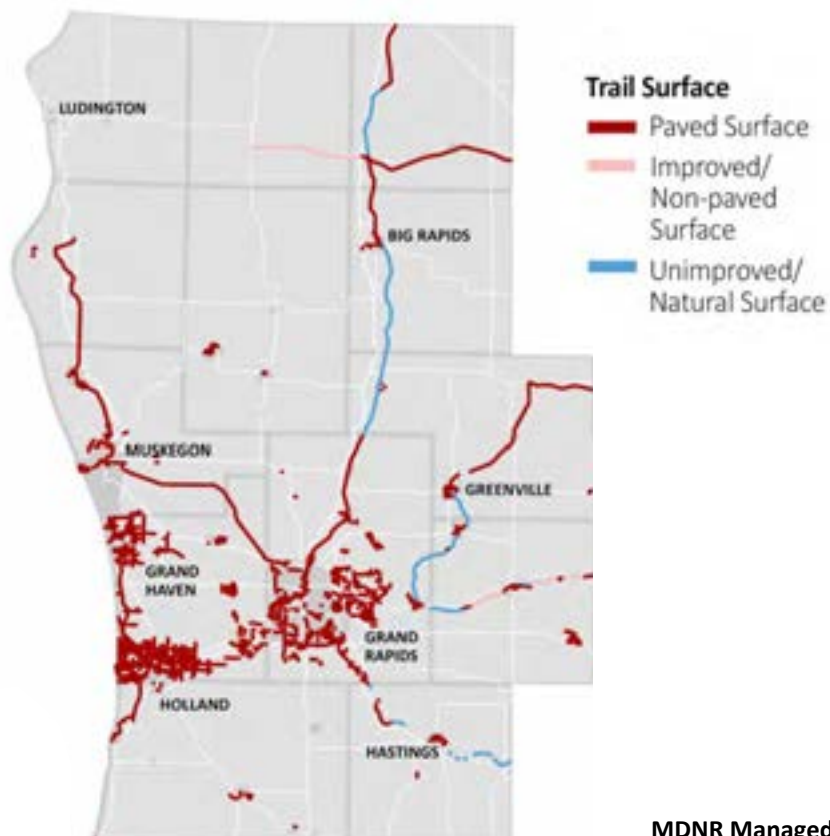
Existing Shared Use Regional Paths/Trails in Grand Region

As illustrated in these graphics (and in the associated GIS database), the Grand Region is home to an incredible network of significant shared use paths/trails – many of which are within converted rail corridors. With more than 865 miles of existing shared use paths and side paths, this 13-county region is arguably one of the leading trail areas in the State of Michigan, if not the country! Seven hundred and ninety-one miles of the network are improved (paved or crushed limestone), while 73.9 miles remain unpaved. Eight of the significant trail corridors are managed by the MDNR: the Fred Meijer White Pine Trail State Park, the William Field Memorial Hart-Montague Trail State Park, the Fred Meijer Barry Junction Trail, the Pere Marquette State Trail, the Musketawa Trail, the Fred Meijer River Valley Trails, and the Fred Meijer CIS Trail.

- | | | |
|----|---|-----------------------------|
| 1 | Beeline Trail | 8 miles, paved |
| 2 | Fred Meijer Berry Junction Trail | 11 miles, paved |
| 3 | Fred Meijer Clinton - Ionia - Shiawassee Rail Trail | 41 miles, surface varies |
| 4 | Fred Meijer Flat River Valley Rail Trail | 22 miles, surface varies |
| 5 | Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail Trail | 16 miles, surface varies |
| 6 | Fred Meijer Heartland Trail | 46 miles, paved |
| 7 | Fred Meijer Kenowa Trail | 12 miles, paved |
| 8 | Fred Meijer Pioneer Trail | 8 miles, paved |
| 9 | Fred Meijer M-6 Trail | 9 miles, paved |
| 10 | Fred Meijer Millennium Park Trails | 20 miles, paved |
| 11 | Fred Meijer Standale Trail | 6 miles, paved |
| 12 | Fred Meijer White Pine Trail State Park | 94 miles, surface varies |
| 13 | Kal-Haven Trail State Park | 35 miles, crushed limestone |
| 14 | Kent Trails | 13 miles, paved |
| 15 | Lakeshore Trail | 20 miles, paved |
| 16 | Laketon Trail | 4 miles, paved |
| 17 | Macatawa Trail | 3 miles, paved |
| 18 | Muskegon Lakeshore Trail | 10 miles, paved |
| 19 | Musketawa Trail | 26 miles, paved |
| 20 | Paul Henry Thornapple Trail | 19 miles, surface varies |
| 21 | Pere Marquette State Trail | 56 miles, surface varies |
| 22 | White Lake Pathway | 3 miles, paved |
| 23 | William Field Memorial Hart-Montague Trail State Park | 22 miles, paved |



Existing Shared Use Path/Trail



MDNR Managed Shared Use Paths/Trails



Trail Towns in the Grand Region

There are a number of “trail towns” within the Grand Region as illustrated here. Middleville, Lowell, and White Cloud have worked with the North Country Trail (NCT) Association to become official NCT Certified Trail Towns. NCT Trail Towns are places the North Country Trail passes that supports hikers with services, promotes the Trail, and embraces the Trail as a resource to be protected and celebrated. Official NCT Trail Towns are partners with the local chapters and the National Park Service to jointly promote the Trail, town, and resources within the community.

In addition to the NCT Trail Towns, several agencies in the Grand Region have developed **Trail Town Plans (in conjunction with the Land Information Access Association (LIAA))** including Ludington, Ottawa County, Park Township, Holland, and South

Certified North Country Trail Towns



Haven. The Trail Town concept is to ensure communities near a trail are better able to maximize the economic potential of trail-based tourism. These communities have participated in a process to find ways they can improve their offerings for trail users.

Fixed Route Transit + First Mile/Last Mile

Fixed Route Transit corridors are where vehicles such as trains and buses run along an established path at preset times and include designated stops. These are typically in high population areas and areas with frequently used origins and destinations that are concentrated along main arteries. While this document is not a Transit Plan for the Grand Region, **it is important for the Region and the communities with public transit systems to plan for and prioritize nonmotorized initiatives, policies and/or infrastructure improvements. These serve to extend the reach, or the first-mile/last-mile legs of these transit networks** and create opportunities for multi-modal trips. One of the challenges for transit agencies can be how to get riders from their front doors to the nearest transit stop (the first-mile or last-mile of their trip). Missing sidewalk segments, poor crosswalks, no bike facilities, lack of signage, etc. can add to hurdles of potential multi-modal users. The same corridors that are attractive for public transit are typically corridors with numerous destinations attractive for bicyclists and pedestrians.

The four major fixed route transit systems (all of which allow for bikes aboard) in the Grand Region are:

- **The Rapid** (including the Silverline Bus Rapid Transit) in the Greater Grand Rapids Area
- **The Macatawa Area Express (MAX)** serving the Holland/Zeeland Area
- **The Muskegon Area Transit System (MATS)** serving the Greater Muskegon Area
- **The Pere Marquette Amtrak** passenger rail connects Chicago and Grand Rapids.

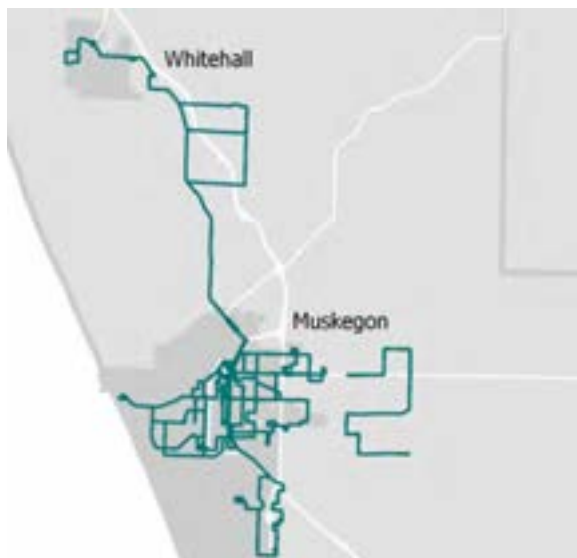
The Rapid System



The MAX System



The MATS



Amtrak Pere Marquette Rail



General recommendations include:

- provide appropriate pedestrian crossings where transit stops are located mid-block
- locate transit stops past crosswalks and on the far side of intersections
- address conflicts between pedestrians, bicyclists, and buses especially at boarding areas
- provide a parallel route for bicyclists if all modes cannot be accommodated within the corridor
- prioritize pedestrian/bicyclist infrastructure improvements within one mile of transit stops to enable riders to get safely to and from destinations
- coordinate with transit providers to provide bicycle racks on fixed route busses, upgrade bicycle rack capacity on high demand routes, and/or provide secure bicycle parking at select stops or transfer stations as appropriate.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Crashes

Over a five-year period (2011-2015), there were 120 fatal crashes involving a bicyclist or pedestrian in the Grand Region. While only 1.5% of all crashes in the Region involved a pedestrian or cyclist, 17% (120 people) of those crashes were fatal, illustrating their vulnerability. Kent (1.9%), Ottawa (1.77%), and Muskegon (1.72%) Counties had the largest percentage of total crashes that involved pedestrians or cyclists. In the same five-year period, Montcalm (23.1%), Ottawa (22.4%), and Kent (21.6%) Counties had the largest percentages of total fatalities that involved a pedestrian or cyclist (out of all fatal crash types).

Pedestrian and Bicycle Crashes in Grand Region (2011-2015)

	% of Total Crashes	% Total Fatal	% Total Incapacitating
Allegan	0.83%	9.1%	6.19%
Barry	0.69%	4.4%	4.17%
Ionia	0.85%	15.2%	7.33%
Kent	1.90%	21.6%	15.89%
Lake	0.58%	0.0%	4.17%
Mason	0.74%	10.0%	11.90%
Mecosta	0.83%	9.7%	8.27%
Montcalm	0.88%	23.1%	8.03%
Muskegon	1.72%	19.5%	10.02%
Newaygo	0.73%	10.5%	6.78%
Oceana	0.31%	10.0%	5.97%
Osceola	0.45%	15.0%	2.70%
Ottawa	1.77%	22.4%	12.05%
MDOT Grand Region	1.5%	17.0%	10.7%
State of Michigan	1.4%	20.2%	12.1%

Source: Michigan Crash Facts



Grand Region

Overarching Nonmotorized Strategies + Priorities

Population: 1,570,606 (15.8% of State)

These overarching strategies and priorities were identified and developed during the planning process. Their inclusion in the Plan does not suggest that MDOT will be the lead agency to implement them as they impact, involve, and are under the jurisdiction of a number of agencies and organizations.

Overarching Nonmotorized Strategies

- In support of the MDOT and Michigan State Police “Toward Zero Deaths” campaign, improve safety to **reduce injuries and fatalities** and to make walking and biking comfortable, inviting, and viable.
- **Promote and encourage** biking and walking as modes of transportation and recreation for people of all ages, abilities, and incomes.
- Foster an environment of **partnerships and collaboration** in order to connect our communities and regions to one another.
- Advance awareness of **Complete Streets Policies** (both within MDOT and at the local level) and various tools and solutions for implementation.

Each of the eight priorities detailed on the following pages work toward fulfilling these four overarching nonmotorized strategies.

In addition to these overarching and region-wide strategies and priorities, the following pages detail more specific priorities and desired connections within each county. An overall, region-wide composite map is included that graphically illustrates the emerging Nonmotorized Regional Corridors, Desired Connections, and Priorities.

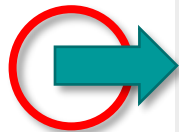


Grand Region

Overarching Nonmotorized Strategies + Priorities

Population: 1,570,606 (15.8% of State)

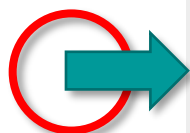
These priorities are region-wide and involve and impact a number of agencies and organizations. They may or may not be MDOT specific priorities. The intent is to document priorities that impact and inform the region as a whole.



Maintenance and Completion of the Regional Network

The Grand Region is home to a significant number of regional shared use path/trail systems that are owned, operated, and maintained by a variety of agencies and organizations such as the White Pine Trail State Park, the Hart-Montague Trail, and the Clinton-Ionia-Shiawassee Rail Trail to name just a few. The region is also home to sections of major national and state significant trails and routes including US Bike Routes 35 and 20, the North Country Trail and Michigan's Iron Belle Trail. It is a priority to **maintain the existing system and complete the gaps in the existing and planned Regional Network**. This includes:

- a. Projects such as **surface improvements (limestone/asphalt) to sections of the unimproved** regional network such as the White Pine Trail State Park, Paul Henry-Thornapple Trail, and Flat River Valley Rail Trail.
- b. **Resurfacing and maintenance** of the regional network, including developing plans for rehabilitation and identifying resources. *(Note: routine maintenance is not TAP/Trust Fund grant eligible)*
- c. **Completion of proposed corridors and connections that will have regional significance** such as the proposed Blue Star Trail in Allegan County, the Interurban Trail in Allegan and Kent Counties, the North Bank Trail and Grand River Explorers Trail in Ottawa County, and the Oxford Trail to Plaster Creek Trail Connector in Grand Rapids (to name a few).
- d. Opportunities to connect nonmotorized facilities with other modes such as the **fixed route transit systems** in the Grand Region.
- e. **Further planning** (and subsequent implementation) **to identify corridors and routes that will have regional significance** and provide for improved connectivity including:
 1. planning efforts in the northwest portion of the region (Mason, Lake, Newaygo, and Oceana Counties)
 2. connectivity and routing of the network as the regional systems traverse through towns and cities
 3. connectivity between existing major networks and destinations. For example, planning for determining how to connect the White Pine Trail State Park to the Heartland Trail, how to connect the Hart-Montague Trail to Lake Michigan, and how to connect the Paul Henry - Thornapple Trail to the Interurban/River to River Trail (to name a few).



Coordinated Marketing of the Regional Network

With the extensive regional nonmotorized network that exists (and even more that is planned) in the Grand Region, there is a desire to work together to determine how to coordinate marketing efforts and **promote the network as a single regional asset**.

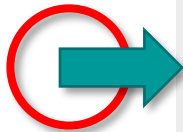


Grand Region

Overarching Nonmotorized Strategies + Priorities

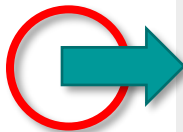
Population: 1,570,606 (15.8% of State)

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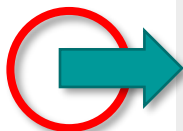
Coordinated + Consistent Wayfinding System for Regional Network

In coordination with a regional marketing effort, it is a priority in the region to work together to determine how to develop a coordinated and consistent wayfinding system for the regional network. This is particularly important where the regional networks traverse through cities and towns and where regional networks cross one another. This should include confidence markers to/from and between the regional network, coordinated emergency markers, and signage that encourages exploration of nearby amenities and destinations. *Signage packages should adhere to MUTCD standards.*



Expand “Driving Change” Education Program

The need for education of both cyclists and motorists was discussed by many stakeholders at all levels throughout the development of this Plan. It is a priority to work together to **determine how the Driving Change Program can be expanded throughout the Region**. In 2014, the City of Grand Rapids secured considerable Federal and local funding to embark on a multi-year project focused on reducing bicycle crashes. The focus of the project was to help people understand the “rules of the road” while fostering respect between motorists and bicycles and make everyone safer. Specific project tasks included research and analysis of bicycle related crashes, development of messaging, and broad community education and awareness through billboards, posters, tv and radio spots, a project website (grdrivingchange.org), training, and much more.



Communication + Support Regarding Nonmotorized Issues

Sharing effective practices (in an on-going manner), as well as encouraging and supporting **education, training, and planning** initiatives is essential to continuing to progress. This includes:

- Incorporating and disseminating new **research and best practices** for crash analysis, safety audits, and counter measures regularly into training programs, design manuals, and policies.
- Regularly communicate to various agency types and organizations what **types of funding** can be used for nonmotorized improvements as well as the expectations of funding agencies.
- Encouraging **local agencies to include nonmotorized planning** in their planning efforts and coordinate those plans with adjacent and impacted agencies.
- Encouraging **cities, MDOT and county road agencies** to improve network systems and safety for bicyclists, including both on- and off-road facilities.
- Working with local agencies and MDOT **to incorporate nonmotorized facilities** where feasible and **assist with designing** those nonmotorized projects where appropriate.

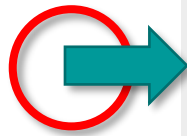


Grand Region

Overarching Nonmotorized Strategies + Priorities

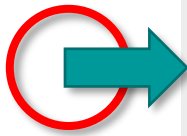
Population: 1,570,606 (15.8% of State)

These priorities are region-wide and involve and impact a number of agencies and organizations. They may or may not be MDOT specific priorities. The intent is to document priorities that impact and inform the region as a whole.



On-going and Long-Term Maintenance of GIS Database

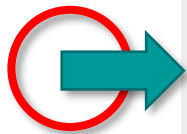
Considerable effort and resources went into development of the GIS database that accompanies this Plan document. The database brings together in a consistent format all of the existing nonmotorized systems as well as the plans of regional, county, and local agencies and organizations. The database is intended to be a tool for all to utilize in efforts to continue to plan, prioritize, fund and implement nonmotorized improvements. The database represents a snap shot in time. Facilities are being built and planned at a steady and continuous rate. It is an important priority that these **facilities and plans are incorporated into the database on a regular basis and that the database is available for use by all stakeholders** to assist with on-going planning, coordination, and measuring progress.



Measure Progress

There are a number of methods the various agencies in the Grand Region will use to measure progress of this Plan over the coming years including:

- The number of miles of facility types that exist and are being planned. This Plan and GIS database serve as a **benchmark** of facilities in the Grand Region.
- Support the **MDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Data Collection and Monitoring Program for Multi-Modal Planning** project (started in 2017) and coordinated efforts to **collect bike/pedestrian counts** to better understand trends, and adjust priorities and resources if needed. These data collection efforts could be used as a base in anticipation of future more specific performance measures.
- Supporting the **Performance Measures of the Driving Change Education Program and the Toward Zero Deaths Safety Campaign**.
- Regular updates and discussion of Plan elements** and progress at MDOT Regional Ped/Bike Committee meetings.



Non-Freeway State Trunklines

- Paved Shoulders**
When work is planned on Non-Freeway State Trunklines (those without curb and gutter), and where appropriate and feasible, shoulders should be at least 4' wide as a minimum.
- Regional Corridor Crossings**
Where planned or significant nonmotorized facilities cross Non-Freeway State Trunklines, appropriate road crossing treatments should be a high priority where feasible. Nonmotorized crossings may include: existing bridge modifications, at grade highway crossings, and/or grade separated nonmotorized facilities such as bridges or tunnels. These modifications will require funding commitments and partnerships, and usually permits from State and Federal agencies.



Allegan County

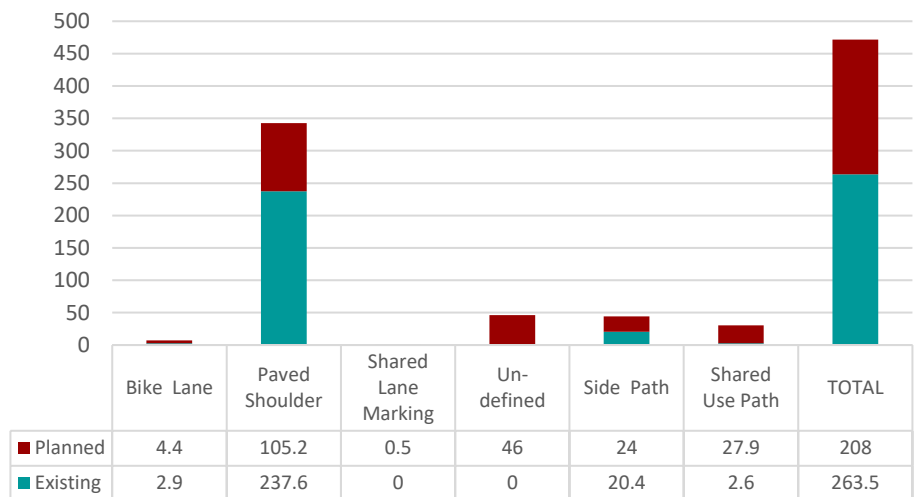
Existing + Planned Networks

Population: 114,625 (7.3% of Region)

Existing + Proposed Nonmotorized Regional Corridors

US Bike Route 35
Bee Line Trail
Blue Star Trail
Interurban Trail
Plainwell – Otsego – Allegan –
Holland

Allegan County Facilities by Type (miles)



'undefined' indicates the source plan was not clear as to what type of facility is being proposed and/or what side of the roadway it is being proposed.

Crash Facts 2011 – 2015

0.8% Percent of total crashes that involve peds/bikes in county

9.1% Percent of total fatalities that involve peds/bikes in county

6.2% Percent of incapacitating injuries that involve peds/bikes in county



Allegan County

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired Connections

Population: 114,625 (7.3% of Region)

See corresponding Proposed Regional Corridors + Priorities Map. Lettering does not signify order of priority but keys to Map.

Also refer to Grand Region Overarching Nonmotorized Strategies + Priorities for details on the region-wide focus.

Additional project development opportunities may present themselves over time. As appropriate, these opportunities should be considered and/or pursued in addition to the priorities listed here.

A

Completion of the **Blue Star Trail** is a high priority in Allegan County. The approximately 20-mile shared use path (primarily within the Blue Star Highway right-of-way) is proposed to traverse the western edge of Allegan County, between South Haven and Holland and connecting the existing Kal-Haven Trail to the Bee Line Trail. The Friends of the Blue Star Trail volunteer organization is active in preparing grant applications, communicating and coordinating with the various local, county, and state agencies involved, establishment of an endowment fund, and hosting the annual Lake Shore Harvest Ride Bike Tour.

B

The proposed **Interurban Trail** is an approximately 40-mile shared use path proposed to connect Kalamazoo to Grand Rapids in or around the route of the former Interurban rail line and passing through numerous towns and townships including Plainwell, Martin and Wayland. A planning/feasibility study – **The River to River Trail Plan** - is slated for completion in 2017.

C

Connecting **Plainwell, Otsego, and Allegan** together and into the Interurban Trail and from Allegan northwest to Holland is a high priority project in the county, although the route remains conceptual. The specific routes surrounding the Plainwell to Otsego connection are being planned by the local entities and includes potential MDNR land along the Kalamazoo River.

D

As the Interurban/River to River Trail develops, **east-west connections** to/from it and other nearby destinations will remain a priority including connecting the **Gun Lake area**, connecting to the **Paul Henry-Thornapple Trail** via Wayland and Middleville, and connecting **The Allegan State Game Area to the Interurban Trail via Hopkins**. Feasibility and further planning is needed.

E

An **east-west connection** between Allegan, Lake Allegan, the Blue Star Trail and US Bike Route 35 is desired via 118th Avenue and Monroe Road.

F

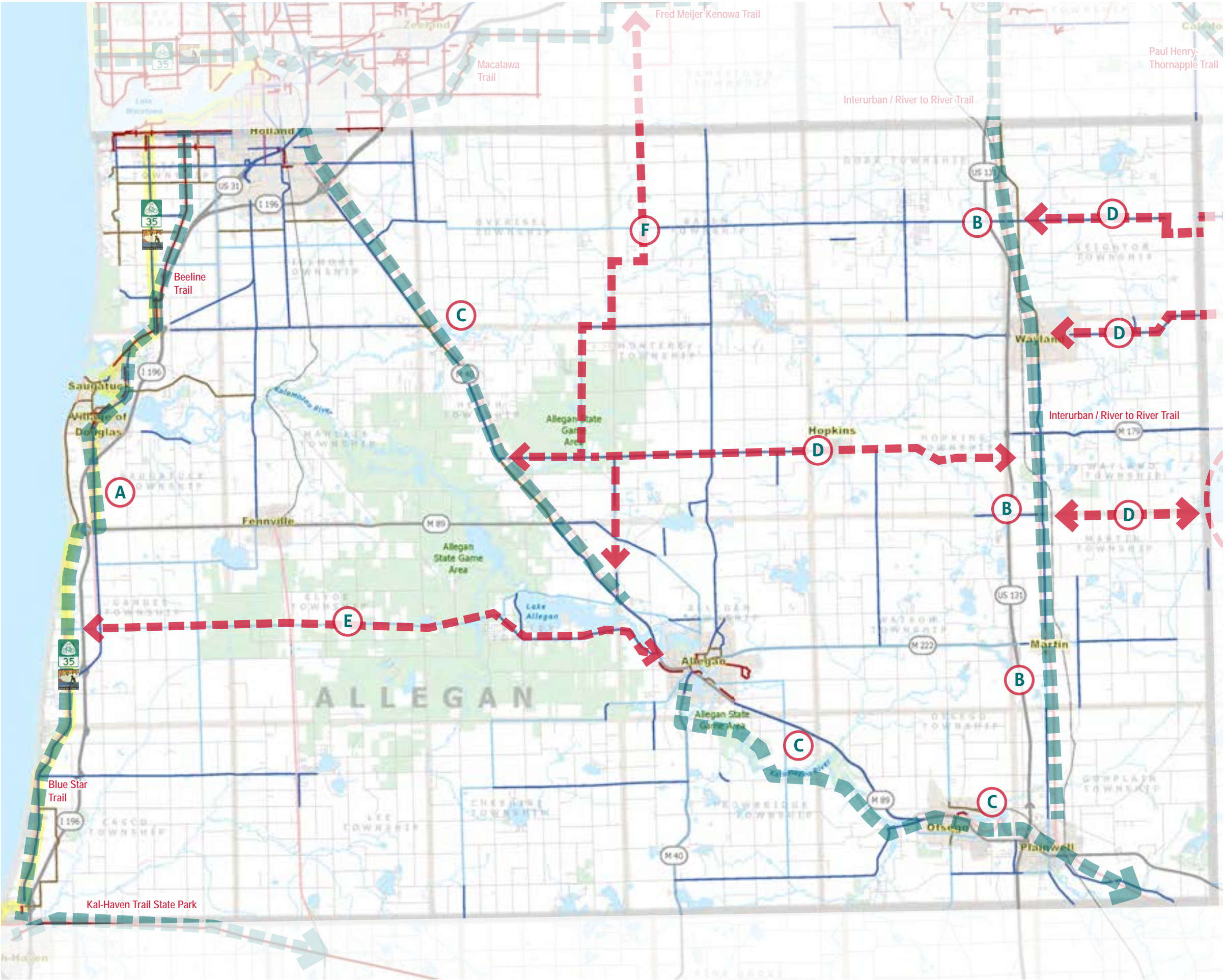
Salem Township is interested in feasibility of **wide paved shoulders** to create north-south connection between Allegan and the Fred Meijer Kenowa Trail along roads without heavy vehicular and truck traffic. Further planning is needed.

Also See:
Priorities for US Bike Routes

ALLEGAN COUNTY

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired Connections Map

August 2017



LEGEND

- | Existing | Planned | |
|----------|---------|--|
| | | Improved Shared Use Path/Sidepath (>8' wide) |
| | | Unimproved Shared Use Path/Sidepath (>8' wide) |
| | | Bike Lane/Paved Shoulder (>4' wide) |
| | | Shared Lane Marking |
| | | Bike Route (Signed or Mapped) |
| | | Undefined Bikeway (Details Unknown) |

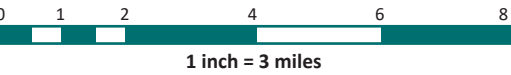
Statewide/National Routes

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| | U.S. Bike Route 35 |
| | U.S. Bike Route 20 |
| | North Lakes Bike Route |
| | North Country Trail |
| | Iron Belle Hiking Trail |

Keys to Text Descriptions of Priorities in Master Plan

Proposed Regional Corridors

Desired Connections





Barry County

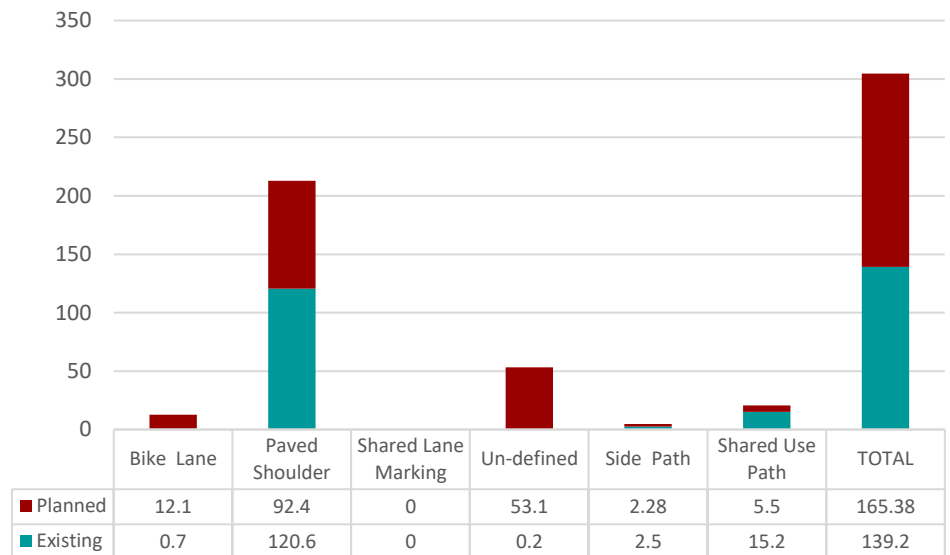
Existing + Planned Networks

Population: 59,314 (3.4% of Region)

Existing + Proposed Nonmotorized Regional Corridors

Paul Henry-Thornapple Trail
North Country Trail
Iron Belle Trail

Barry County Facilities by Type (miles)



'undefined' indicates the source plan was not clear as to what type of facility is being proposed and/or what side of the roadway it is being proposed.

Crash Facts 2011 – 2015

0.7% Percent of total crashes that involve peds/bikes in county

4.4% Percent of total fatalities that involve peds/bikes in county

4.2% Percent of incapacitating injuries that involve peds/bikes in county



Barry County

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired Connections

Population: 59,314 (3.4% of Region)

See corresponding Proposed Regional Corridors + Priorities Map. Lettering does not signify order of priority but keys to Map.

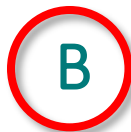
Also refer to Grand Region Overarching Nonmotorized Strategies + Priorities for details on the region-wide focus.

Additional project development opportunities may present themselves over time. As appropriate, these opportunities should be considered and/or pursued in addition to the priorities listed here.

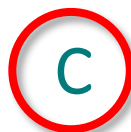


Completion of all **remaining sections of the Paul Henry-Thornapple Trail** between Nashville and Caledonia is a high priority in Barry County. The desire is to complete the remaining sections within the former rail corridor wherever possible and to improve the surface of the trail corridor to a walkable/rideable condition. The following segments are currently being focused on for completion:

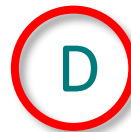
- Two+ mile section between Middleville and the Barry County/Kent County line. Discussions and appraisals have been on-going with a private property owner.
- Completion of the gap that exists between Hastings and Middleville. The route for this connection needs to be determined as multiple private property owners exist.
- Wayfinding and confidence markers to/from the Paul Henry-Thornapple Trail to and from trail heads and amenities is a high priority.



Gun Lake Trail – the desire for a separate facility in and around Gun Lake has been discussed and envisioned for decades. Yankee Springs Township, the Yankee Springs Recreation Area and Gun Lake People Path advocacy group are primary stakeholders. An east-west connection between Gun Lake and the proposed Interurban Trail in Allegan County will also be desirable.

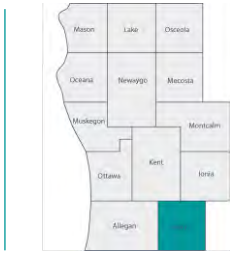


Off-road trail **connection between Hastings and Gun Lake** is desired in and around the M-179 corridor. Yankee Springs Township is leading these discussions.



North-south connections and routes are desired to connect Barry County to Kalamazoo and Calhoun County to the south. This was documented in the 2011 MDOT Southwest Nonmotorized Transportation Plan in greater detail. The particular routes, however, have not been fully vetted, particularly with the Road Commission. This should not diminish the fact that north-south connections are desired by users and advocates. Exact north-south routes have not been determined and need further planning.

Also See:
Priorities for North Country Trail/Iron Belle Trail



Barry County

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired Connections

Population: 59,314 (3.4% of Region)

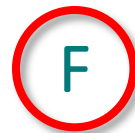
See corresponding Proposed Regional Corridors + Priorities Map. Lettering does not signify order of priority but keys to Map.

Also refer to Grand Region Overarching Nonmotorized Strategies + Priorities for details on the region-wide focus.

Additional project development opportunities may present themselves over time. As appropriate, these opportunities should be considered and/or pursued in addition to the priorities listed here.



The **National 24-hour Challenge** bike ride begins/ends in Middleville and includes three loops that participants complete in a 24-hour period. A priority in the county is to permanently mark the route for year-round use and make road improvements to the route (wide shoulders, improved pavement conditions) over time. This should be coordinated with the Barry-Roubaix route as the Barry-Roubaix is a gravel road race.



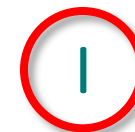
The **Barry-Roubaix** is the largest gravel road race in the world with more than 3,500 racers and takes place each spring (2017 is the 9th year) in Barry County. The race begins/ends in Hastings and includes a 22-mile, 36-mile, and 62-mile routes. It is a priority to maintain the permanent Barry-Roubaix signs (installed in 2016) for year-round use.



Considerable progress has been made, including a 2016 MDOT TAP Commitment, to build shared use paths in and around **the Jordan Lake area**. The Friends of the Jordan Lake Trail are continuing to work toward the completion of the planned network, as well as connectivity to Woodland.



An east-west **connection between Middleville and Wayland** via wide paved shoulders is desirable and will become even more so as the Paul Henry-Thornapple Trail and Interurban Trail/River to River Trail are completed.



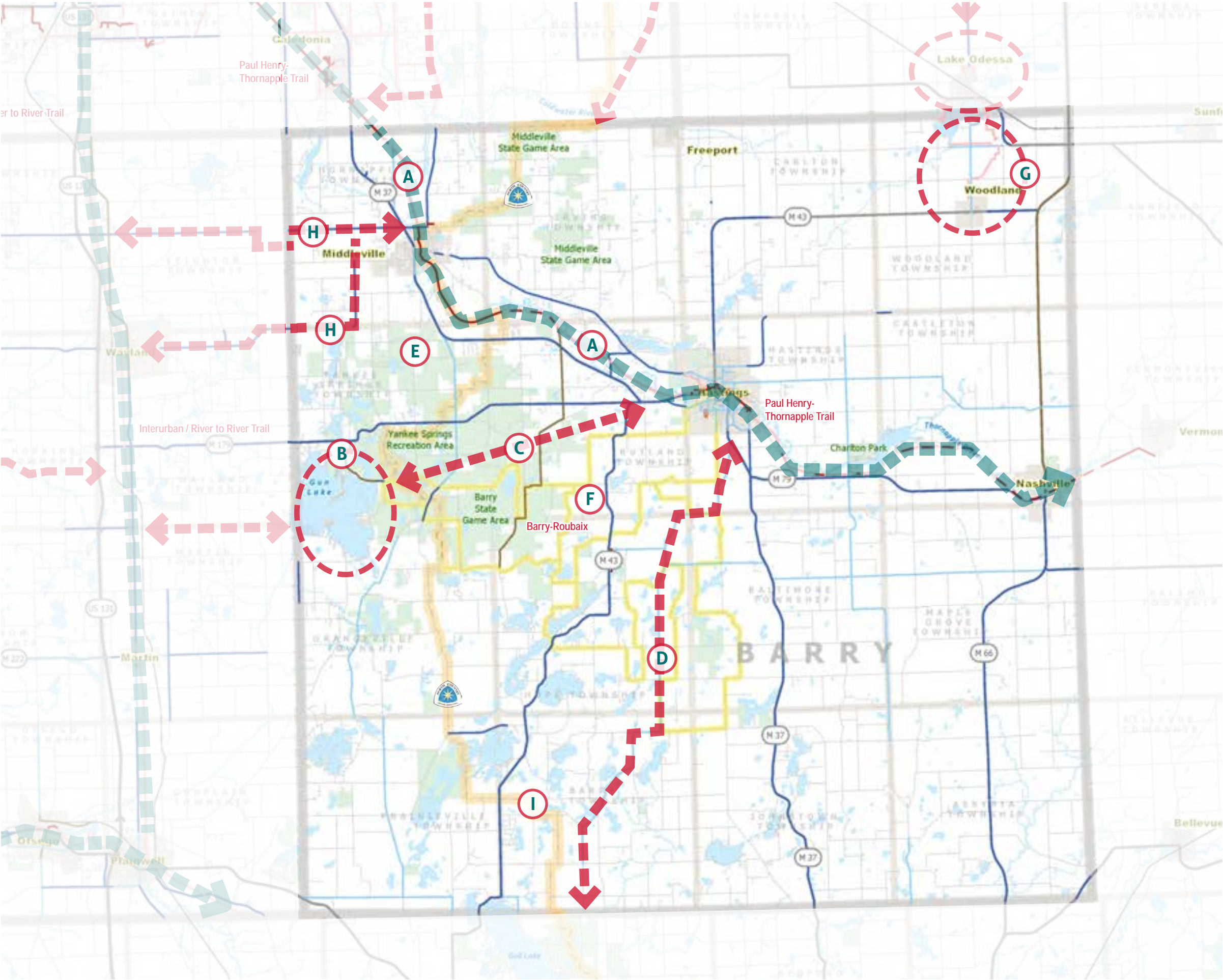
The **North Country Trail** is conducting optimal location review in the south west portion of Barry County to connect the Kellogg Biological Station on Gull Lake to Barry State Game area. The goal is to eliminate road walk where possible.

Also See:
Priorities for North Country Trail/Iron Belle Trail

BARRY COUNTY

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired
Connections Map

August 2017



LEGEND

- | | |
|----------|---------|
| Existing | Planned |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
- Improved Shared Use Path/Sidepath (>8' wide)
 - Unimproved Shared Use Path/Sidepath (>8' wide)
 - Bike Lane/Paved Shoulder (>4' wide)
 - Shared Lane Marking
 - Bike Route (Signed or Mapped)
 - Undefined Bikeway (Details Unknown)

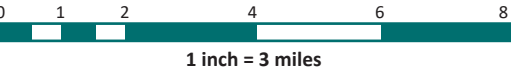
Statewide/National Routes

- U.S. Bike Route 35
- U.S. Bike Route 20
- North Lakes Bike Route
- North Country Trail
- Iron Belle Hiking Trail

Keys to Text Descriptions of Priorities in Master Plan

Proposed Regional Corridors

Desired Connections





Ionia County

Existing + Planned Networks

Population: 64,223 (4.1% of Region)

Existing + Proposed Nonmotorized Regional Corridors

FM CIS Trail
FM Grand River Valley Trail
FM Flat River Valley Trail

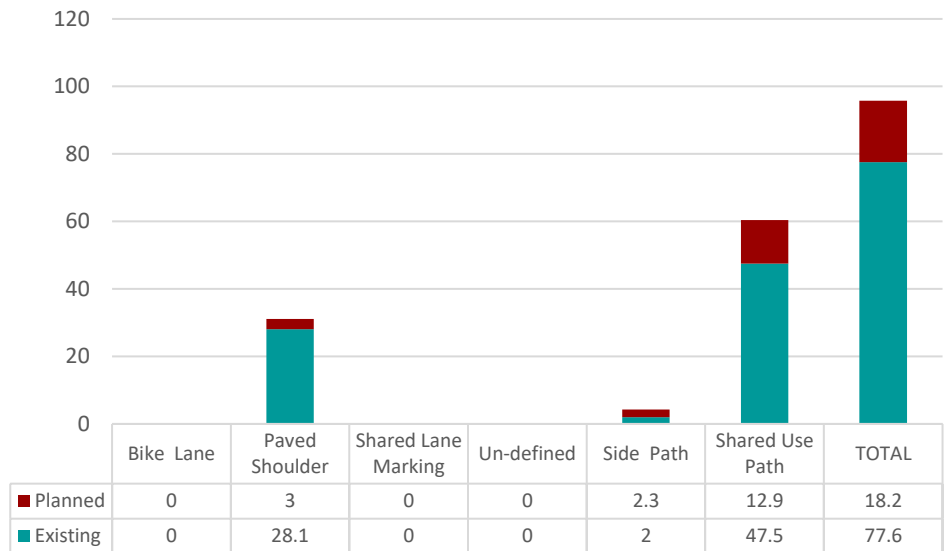
Crash Facts 2011 – 2015

0.9% Percent of total crashes that involve peds/bikes in county

15.2% Percent of total fatalities that involve peds/bikes in county

7.3% Percent of incapacitating injuries that involve peds/bikes in county

Ionia County Facilities by Type (miles)



'undefined' indicates the source plan was not clear as to what type of facility is being proposed and/or what side of the roadway it is being proposed.



Ionia County

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired Connections

Population: 64,223 (4.1% of Region)

See corresponding Proposed Regional Corridors + Priorities Map. Lettering does not signify order of priority but keys to Map.

Also refer to Grand Region Overarching Nonmotorized Strategies + Priorities for details on the region-wide focus.

Additional project development opportunities may present themselves over time. As appropriate, these opportunities should be considered and/or pursued in addition to the priorities listed here.

A

Completion of the **Fred Meijer Flat River Valley Rail Trail between Smyrna and Belding** within the rail corridor and along/near the Flat River is a high priority in Ionia County. It is also a priority to improve the unimproved/natural condition of the **Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail Trail east of Lowell** as well as unimproved natural sections of the **Fred Meijer Flat River Valley Rail Trail**.

B

Developing **coordinated and consistent emergency mile markers** along the Clinton-Ionia-Shiawassee and Grand River Valley Trails is a high priority in the county. This would greatly assist in response times to emergency calls from the trail and would also allow for more efficient dispatch of the appropriate responders (which jurisdiction should be dispatched to assist). This is of particular importance through the long stretches of trail within State Parks and State Game Areas where no landmarks or road crossings exist to help narrow down location of calls.

C

It is a high priority for advocates to establish a trail **connection between the Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail Trail and the facilities in the Ionia Recreation Area/Sessions Lake area**.

D

A conceptual plan to **link Ionia, Muir, Lyons, and Portland** has been envisioned, although alignment and property ownership has not been vetted. Additional planning is needed.

E

Connecting **Ionia Recreation Area and Lake Odessa and Jordan Lake** is a high priority for advocates. Existing wide paved shoulders exist along Jordan Lake Road from Lake Odessa north to Grand River Avenue. Extending the wide paved shoulders north an additional three miles would connect into Ionia State Recreation Area.

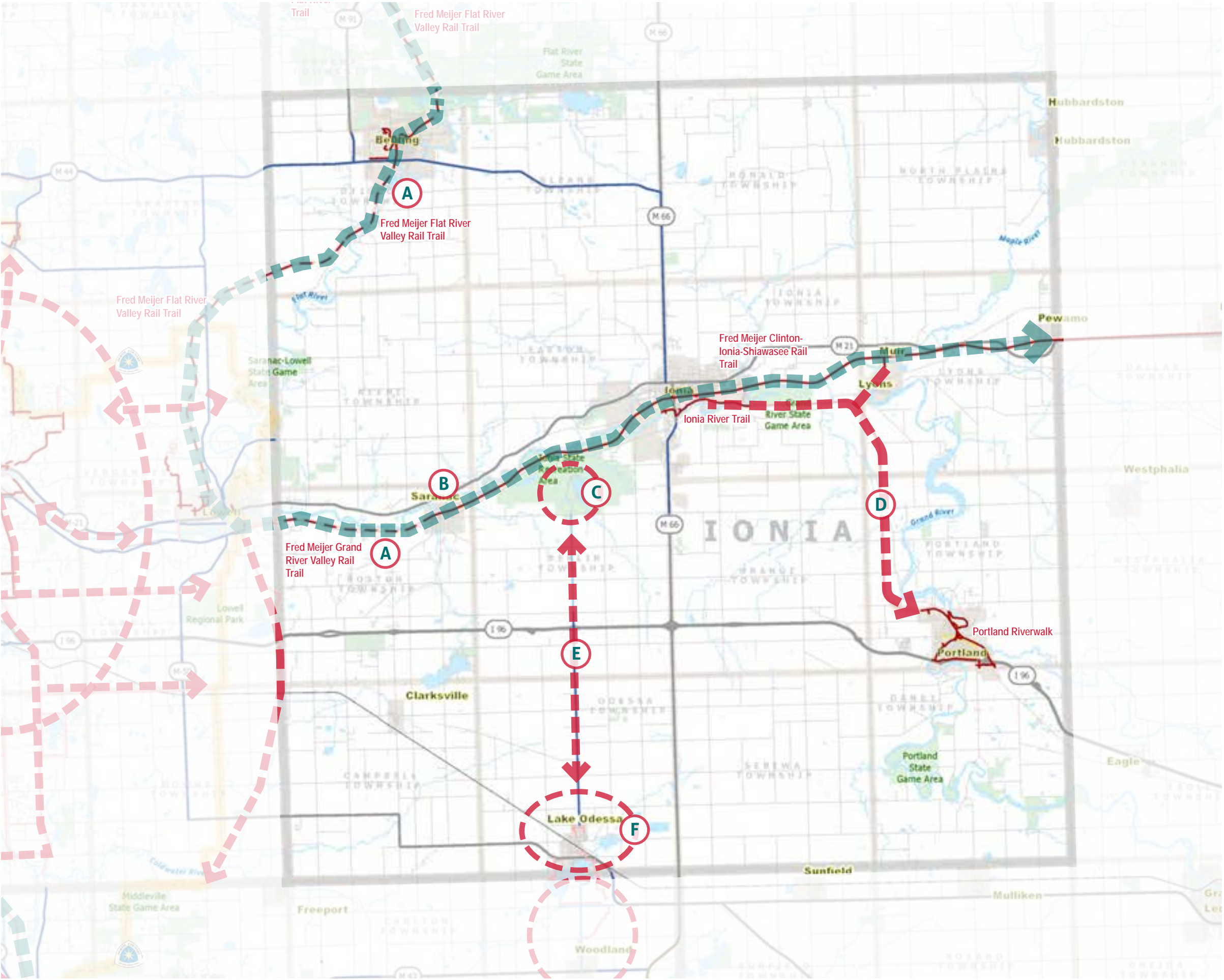
F

Considerable progress has been made, including a recent MDOT TAP commitment, to build shared use paths in and around the Jordan Lake area. The **Friends of the Jordan Lake Trail** are continuing to work toward the completion of the planned network, as well as connectivity to Woodland to the south and advocating for connectivity to the north to Ionia Recreation Area and Ionia.

IONIA COUNTY

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired
Connections Map

August 2017



LEGEND

- | | |
|----------|---------|
| Existing | Planned |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
- Improved Shared Use Path/Sidepath (>8' wide)
Unimproved Shared Use Path/Sidepath (>8' wide)
Bike Lane/Paved Shoulder (>4' wide)
Shared Lane Marking
Bike Route (Signed or Mapped)
Undefined Bikeway (Details Unknown)

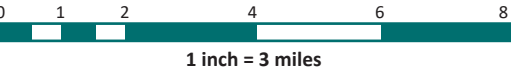
Statewide/National Routes

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| | U.S. Bike Route 35 |
| | U.S. Bike Route 20 |
| | North Lakes Bike Route |
| | North Country Trail |
| | Iron Belle Hiking Trail |

Keys to Text Descriptions of Priorities in Master Plan

Proposed Regional Corridors

Desired Connections





Kent County

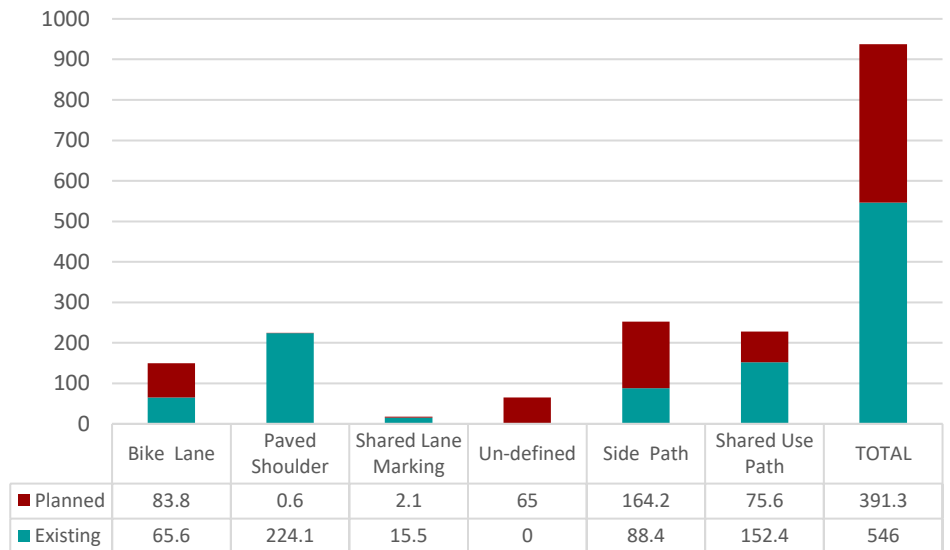
Existing + Planned Networks

Population: 636,369 (40.5% of Region)

Existing + Proposed Nonmotorized Regional Corridors

North Country Trail
 Iron Belle Trail
 FM White Pine Trail
 FM Pioneer Trail
 FM Flat River Valley Rail Trail
 FM Standale Trail
 Grand River Edges Trail
 Kent Trails
 FM Millenium Park Trails
 FM M-6 Trails
 Paul Henry-Thornapple Trail
 Interurban Trail

Kent County Facilities by Type (miles)



'undefined' indicates the source plan was not clear as to what type of facility is being proposed and/or what side of the roadway it is being proposed.

Crash Facts 2011 – 2015

1.9% Percent of total **crashes** that involve peds/bikes in county

21.6% Percent of total **fatalities** that involve peds/bikes in county

15.9% Percent of **incapacitating injuries** that involve peds/bikes in county



Kent County

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired Connections

Population: 636,369 (40.5% of Region)

See corresponding Proposed Regional Corridors + Priorities Map. Lettering does not signify order of priority but keys to Map.

Also refer to Grand Region Overarching Nonmotorized Strategies + Priorities for details on the region-wide focus.

Additional project development opportunities may present themselves over time. As appropriate, these opportunities should be considered and/or pursued in addition to the priorities listed here.



Priorities in/around the **City of Grand Rapids** include:

- a. The City of Grand Rapids approved the [Vital Streets Plan](#) in December 2016. The Plan will be the guide for public investment to deliver quality streets and a logical transportation system that works for all types of travelers. The Plan defines a system of seven street types with each having a set of priority users to be supported.
- b. Completion and extension of a connected network of trails and riverwalk along both sides of the Grand River as noted in the GIS database.
- c. Feasibility of a cross-town trail within/along the Grand Rapids Eastern Railroad corridor that runs south of I-196 from East Beltline (M-37) northwest across the Grand River and to the existing Pioneer and Musketawa Trails. (active/private owned)
- d. Establishing an east-west route across the city via various facility types including a shared use sidepath on the north side of Lake Michigan Drive, to Covell Avenue, to O'Brien Road and into the Oxford Trails, along Wealthy to Cherry Street and Lake Drive to East Grand Rapids, Reeds Lake, and E. Beltline.
- e. Connect Plaster Creek Trail to Walnut Hills Trail in SE portion of the city.
- f. Connect the Oxford Trails to Plaster Creek Trail.
- g. Connect Lookout Park to Newberry Street (down bluff).
- h. Feasibility of two-way cycle track on Lyon Street and Bridge Street.
- i. Feasibility of creating trail connection within utility corridor near Ball Perkins Park including a spur extension of Spencer Street east of Ball Avenue.
- j. Complete the gap in the nonmotorized network along Knapp Street between Dean Lake Avenue and East Beltline.
- k. Improvements and connectivity for ped/bike users on Ionia, Walker/Stocking Avenue north to 3 Mile Road and the Musketawa Trail.
- l. Feasibility of a north-south trail extension/connection along/near the CSX railroad corridor and the Seward Avenue Bikeway.
- m. Conversion of the railroad bridge over the Grand River at Jackson Island is a long-term priority.



Construction of the **Interurban Trail** (an approximately 40-mile shared use trail planned to connect Grand Rapids to Kalamazoo within/along the former rail corridor) within Kent County to connect into the M-6 Trail and south into Allegan County. A planning/feasibility study – **The River to River Trail Plan** is slated for completion in 2017.

Also See:
Priorities for North Country Trail/Iron Belle Trail



Kent County

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired Connections

Population: 636,369 (40.5% of Region)

See corresponding Proposed Regional Corridors + Priorities Map. Lettering does not signify order of priority but keys to Map.

Also refer to Grand Region Overarching Nonmotorized Strategies + Priorities for details on the region-wide focus.

Additional project development opportunities may present themselves over time. As appropriate, these opportunities should be considered and/or pursued in addition to the priorities listed here.

C

Connect the **Fred Meijer Kenowa Trail** to the **Fred Meijer M-6 and Kent Trails**.

D

Improve surface condition of the **Fred Meijer Flat River Valley Rail Trail** north of Lowell.

E

Improve **connectivity of Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail Trail to downtown Lowell** and the **Fred Meijer Flat River Valley Rail Trail**.

F

Provision of a shared use **trail and bridge across the Grand River** in the southwest corner of Lowell to **connect Lowell to Lowell Township** and with the Grand River Riverfront Park and Grand River Drive. Construction is planned for 2018.

G

Ada Township and the Ada Downtown Development Authority have plans to construct a shared use **trail and bridge over the Thornapple River** to connect Fulton Street to the Grand River Nature Preserve and Michael McGraw Park.

H

Plainfield Township passed a trail millage in 2016 with the goal of 30+ miles of nonmotorized facilities connecting the Fred Meijer White Pine State Trail to various parks, to downtown areas, schools, and to improve access to water.

Also See:
Priorities for North Country
Trail/Iron Belle Trail



Kent County

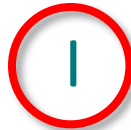
Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired Connections

Population: 636,369 (40.5% of Region)

See corresponding Proposed Regional Corridors + Priorities Map. Lettering does not signify order of priority but keys to Map.

Also refer to Grand Region Overarching Nonmotorized Strategies + Priorities for details on the region-wide focus.

Additional project development opportunities may present themselves over time. As appropriate, these opportunities should be considered and/or pursued in addition to the priorities listed here.



Connecting the **Fred Meijer Standale Trail to the Fred Meijer Pioneer Trail in Walker** – possibly along the 3 Mile Road corridor and Fruit Ridge Avenue (including improvements to the Fruit Ridge bridge over I-96).



Connecting the **Fred Meijer Pioneer Trail to the Fred Meijer White Pine Trail in Walker**.



The **North Country Trail** has several priorities to modify the route in Kent County in order to increase the amount of trail that is off-road. This includes, among other desired connections, working with the City of Cedar Springs and the Rogue River State Game Area to eliminate current road walk between the two areas and improve overall hiker's experience and safety. Refer to overall North Country Trail Priorities on Page 38 of this document.



A nonmotorized bridge and/or ped/bike facilities on the **Forest Hill Avenue bridge over I-96 in Kentwood**. Shared use sidepaths lead up to I-96 on both sides.

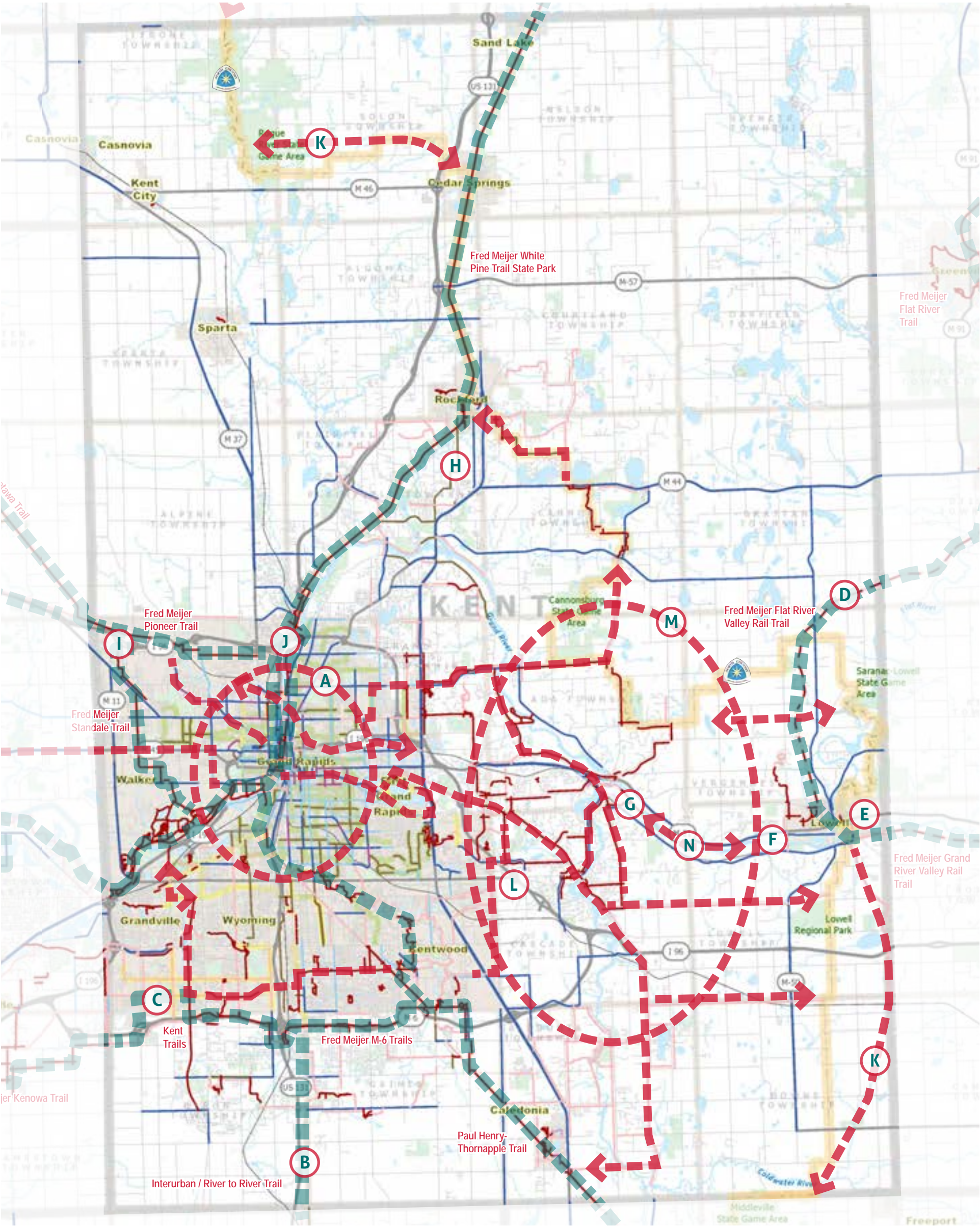


There are multiple east-west routes emerging and being planned between Grand Rapids and Lowell. It is a priority for the various stakeholders and agencies to work toward **determining which of these (1 or more) should be/will become the primary regional corridors** for the eastern portion of Kent County.



Lowell and Ada Townships are working together to determine the feasibility of providing a shared use path/trail between the Grand River Riverfront Park and Ada Park.

Also See:
Priorities for North Country Trail/Iron Belle Trail

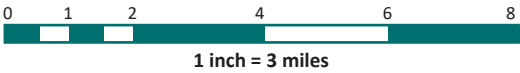


MDOT Grand Region - Regional Nonmotorized Plan

KENT COUNTY

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired
Connections Map

August 2017



LEGEND

Existing	Planned	
		Improved Shared Use Path/Sidepath (>8' wide)
		Unimproved Shared Use Path/Sidepath (>8' wide)
		Bike Lane/Paved Shoulder (>4' wide)
		Shared Lane Marking
		Bike Route (Signed or Mapped)
		Undefined Bikeway (Details Unknown)

Statewide/National Routes	
	U.S. Bike Route 35
	U.S. Bike Route 20
	North Lakes Bike Route
	North Country Trail
	Iron Belle Hiking Trail

	Keys to Text Descriptions of Priorities in Master Plan
	Proposed Regional Corridors
	Desired Connections



Lake County

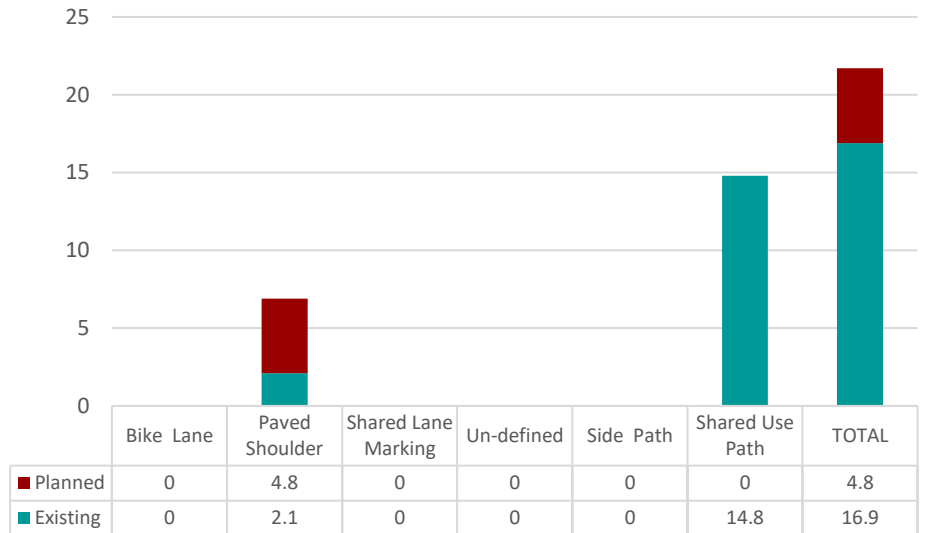
Existing + Planned Networks

Population: 11,424 (0.7% of Region)

Existing + Proposed Nonmotorized Regional Corridors

Pere Marquette State Trail
North Country Trail
Iron Belle Trail
US Bike Route 20

Lake County Facilities by Type (miles)



'undefined' indicates the source plan was not clear as to what type of facility is being proposed and/or what side of the roadway it is being proposed.

Crash Facts 2011 – 2015

0.6% Percent of total crashes that involve peds/bikes in county

0.0% Percent of total fatalities that involve peds/bikes in county

4.2% Percent of incapacitating injuries that involve peds/bikes in county



Lake County

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired Connections

Population: 11,424 (0.7% of Region)

See corresponding Proposed Regional Corridors + Priorities Map. Lettering does not signify order of priority but keys to Map.

Also refer to Grand Region Overarching Nonmotorized Strategies + Priorities for details on the region-wide focus.

Additional project development opportunities may present themselves over time. As appropriate, these opportunities should be considered and/or pursued in addition to the priorities listed here.

A

It is a high priority in the county (and surrounding counties) to do further planning and coordination in order to identify regional connections. The **Leaders in Economic Alliance Development (LEAD)** which includes participants from Mason, Lake, Oceana, and Newaygo, are working in 2017 to develop a plan for nonmotorized connections. A focus is extending/connecting more areas into the North Country Trail, Iron Belle Trail, Pere Marquette State Trail, William Field Memorial Hart-Montague Trail, and the Fred Meijer White Pine Trail.

B

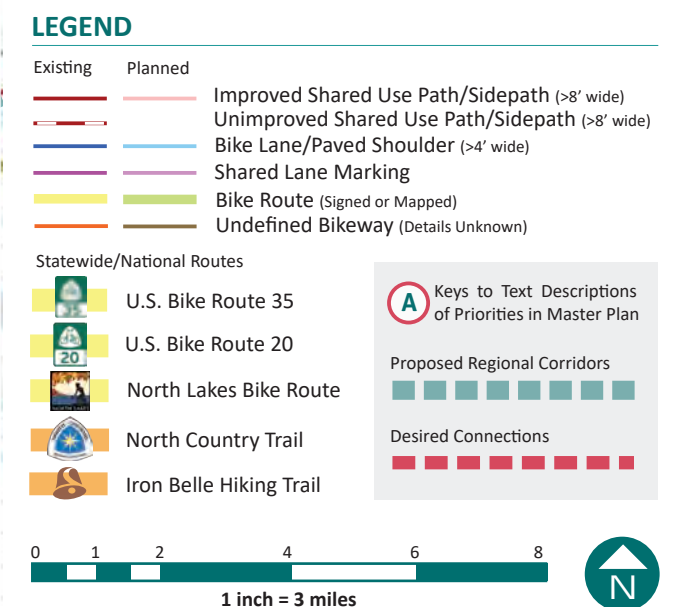
It is a priority in the county to improve **connectivity between W 76th Street and the Pere Marquette State Trail Trailhead in Baldwin**. The Lake County Road Commission is planning this connection in the next several years.

C

Wide paved shoulders are desired around **the Big Star Lake area and W 76th Street** to improve connectivity to and from Big Star Lake, Baldwin, the North Country Trail, and Iron Belle Trail.

Also See:
Priorities for North Country
Trail/Iron Belle Trail and US Bike
Routes

August 2017





Mason County

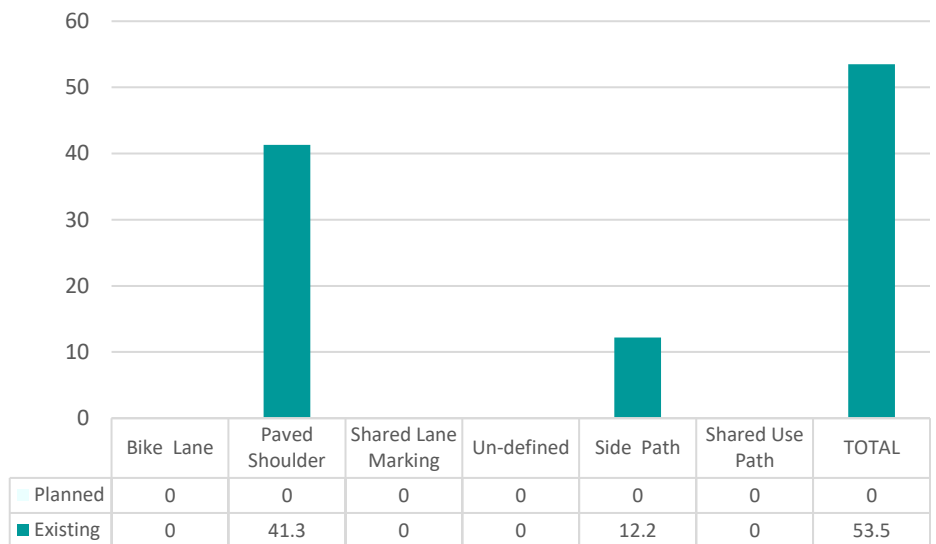
Existing + Planned Networks

Population: 28,783 (1.8% of Region)

Existing + Proposed Nonmotorized Regional Corridors

North Country Trail
Iron Belle Trail
US Bike Route 20
US Bike Route 35

Mason County Facilities by Type (miles)



'undefined' indicates the source plan was not clear as to what type of facility is being proposed and/or what side of the roadway it is being proposed.

Crash Facts 2011 – 2015

0.7% Percent of total crashes that involve peds/bikes in county

10.0% Percent of total fatalities that involve peds/bikes in county

11.9% Percent of incapacitating injuries that involve peds/bikes in county



Mason County

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired Connections

Population: 28,783 (1.8% of Region)

See corresponding Proposed Regional Corridors + Priorities Map. Lettering does not signify order of priority but keys to Map.

Also refer to Grand Region Overarching Nonmotorized Strategies + Priorities for details on the region-wide focus.

Additional project development opportunities may present themselves over time. As appropriate, these opportunities should be considered and/or pursued in addition to the priorities listed here.

A

Improved connectivity **between Scottville and Ludington** is a high priority in Mason County including improvements to the US-10 corridor for all user types. Mason County, the City of Ludington, Pere Marquette Charter Township, and Hamlin Township participated in a *Resilient Ludington* process in 2014. That process included a focus on the US-10/US-31 corridor and recommendations including sidewalks, shared use side paths, crosswalks, wide paved shoulders, access management, lighting, landscaping, etc.

B

The MDNR completed a Management Plan for Ludington State Park in 2016. The plan includes a high priority goal to improve **connectivity between the State Park and downtown Ludington** along the M-116 corridor.

C

It is a high priority in the county (and surrounding counties) to do further planning and coordination in order to identify regional connections. The **Leaders in Economic Alliance Development (LEAD)** which includes participants from Mason, Lake, Oceana, and Newaygo, are working in 2017 to develop a plan for nonmotorized connections. A focus is extending/connecting to the North Country Trail, Iron Belle Trail, and Pere Marquette State Trail to the east and the William Field Memorial Hart-Montague Trail to the south. It is also a priority to connect Ludington and Manistee to the north.

D

A number of bike route users make a **connection between US Bike Route 20 and US Bike Route 35 in Freesoil and Grant Townships** via Free Soil Road, US-31, and West Forest Trail Road. Improvements to this route are desired including particular focus of providing wide paved shoulders on both sides of this section of US -31.

E

As improvements are planned in the future on existing **bridge crossings of the Pere Marquette River**, they should consider the need for pedestrian and bicycle users. The number of north-south connections and routes in the southern portion of Mason County are limited.

F

There is a desire to **sign/use pavement markings to delineate regularly used routes** so they can be more easily used by more people throughout the year (as done by the Barry-Roubaix in Barry County) – i.e. the Make A Difference 100 Mile Ride.

Also See:
Priorities for North Country Trail/Iron Belle Trail and US Bike Routes



Mason County

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired Connections

Population: 28,783 (1.8% of Region)

See corresponding Proposed Regional Corridors + Priorities Map. Lettering does not signify order of priority but keys to Map.

Also refer to Grand Region Overarching Nonmotorized Strategies + Priorities for details on the region-wide focus.

Additional project development opportunities may present themselves over time. As appropriate, these opportunities should be considered and/or pursued in addition to the priorities listed here.



Pere Marquette Township is working to acquire a significant amount of property (+300 acres) on the **southern side of Pere Marquette Lake** to provide over 900 continuous acres of public land. The public property would stretch from Lake Michigan at Buttersville Park, east to Pere Marquette Highway. Long-term plans include nonmotorized trails as well as possibly moving US Bike Route 35 to avoid Pere Marquette Highway.



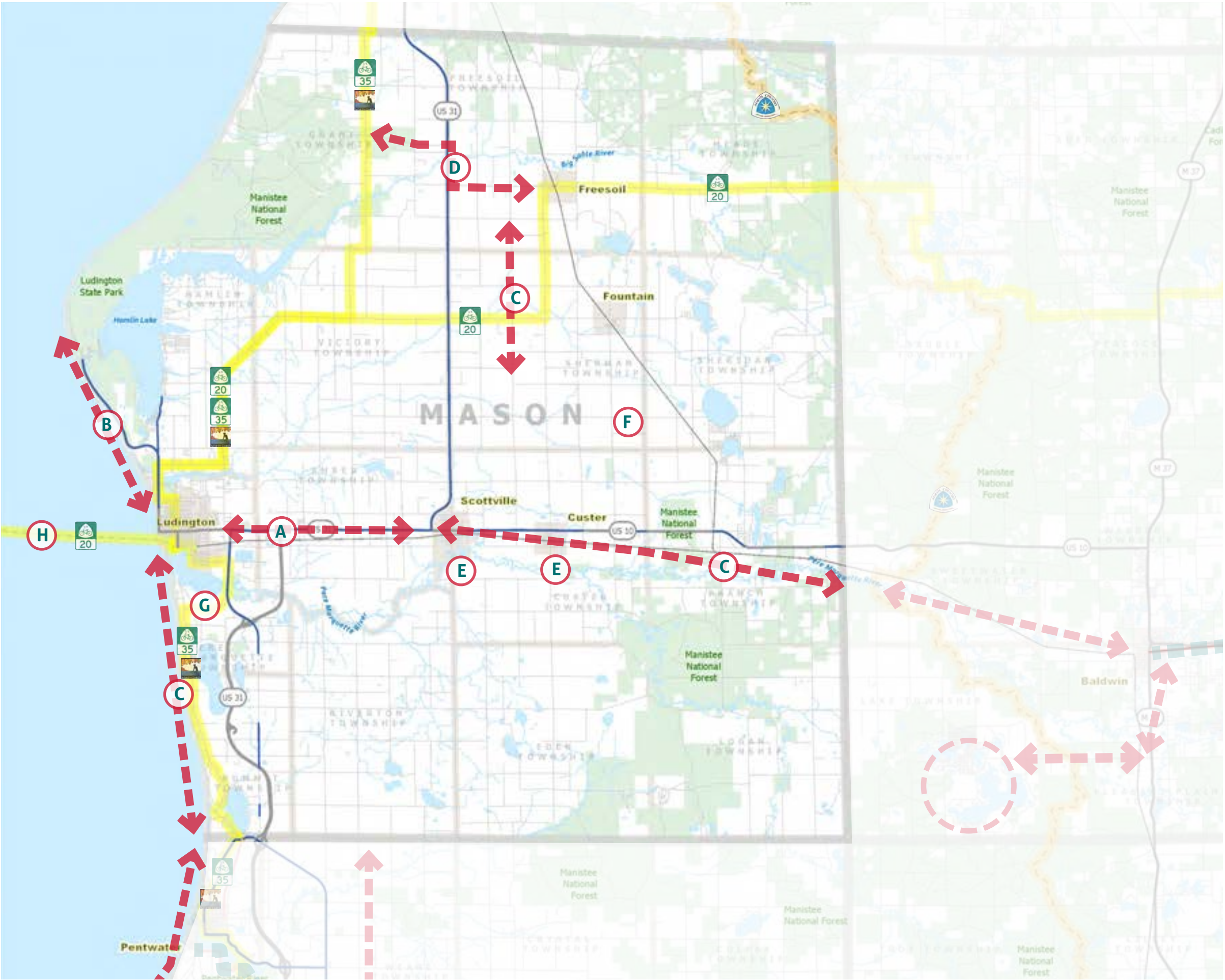
Coordinate with stakeholders in Muskegon County including the Convention and Visitors Bureau to discuss potential marketing of “**loop ride/trip**” for cyclists that would include riding the **Lake Express Ferry** between Muskegon and Milwaukee and the **SS Badger** between Ludington and Manitowoc.

Also See:
Priorities for North Country
Trail/Iron Belle Trail and
US Bike Routes

MASON COUNTY

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired Connections Map

August 2017



LEGEND

- | | | |
|----------|---------|--|
| Existing | Planned | |
| | | Improved Shared Use Path/Sidepath (>8' wide) |
| | | Unimproved Shared Use Path/Sidepath (>8' wide) |
| | | Bike Lane/Paved Shoulder (>4' wide) |
| | | Shared Lane Marking |
| | | Bike Route (Signed or Mapped) |
| | | Undefined Bikeway (Details Unknown) |
- Statewide/National Routes
- U.S. Bike Route 35
 - U.S. Bike Route 20
 - North Lakes Bike Route
 - North Country Trail
 - Iron Belle Hiking Trail
- Keys to Text Descriptions of Priorities in Master Plan
- Proposed Regional Corridors
 - Desired Connections



Mecosta County

Existing + Planned Networks

Population: 43,067 (2.7% of Region)

Existing + Proposed Nonmotorized Regional Corridors

FM White Pine Trail

(additional regional corridors are emerging as efforts to provide east-west connectivity move forward)

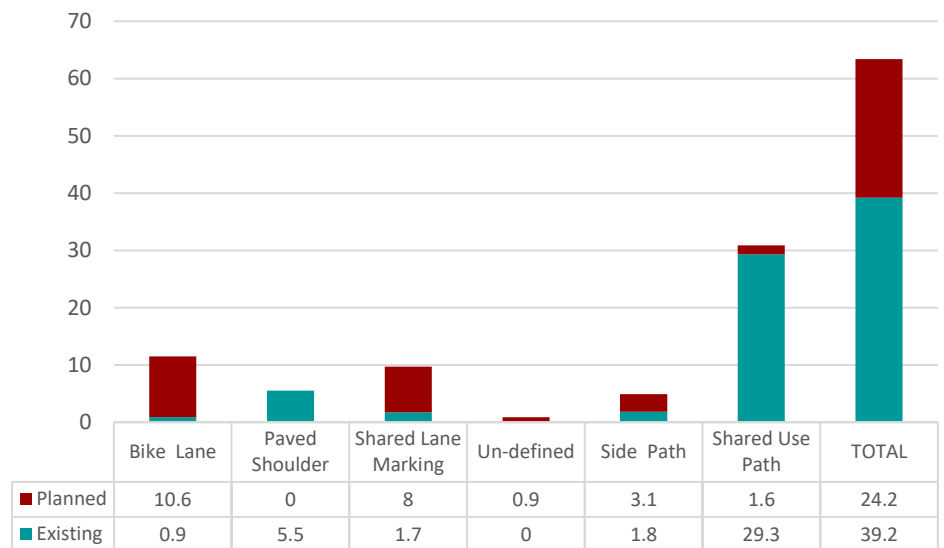
Crash Facts 2011 – 2015

0.8% Percent of total crashes that involve peds/bikes in county

9.7% Percent of total fatalities that involve peds/bikes in county

8.3% Percent of incapacitating injuries that involve peds/bikes in county

Mecosta County Facilities by Type (miles)



'undefined' indicates the source plan was not clear as to what type of facility is being proposed and/or what side of the roadway it is being proposed.



Mecosta County

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired Connections

Population: 43,067 (2.7% of Region)

See corresponding Proposed Regional Corridors + Priorities Map. Lettering does not signify order of priority but keys to Map.

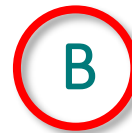
Also refer to Grand Region Overarching Nonmotorized Strategies + Priorities for details on the region-wide focus.

Additional project development opportunities may present themselves over time. As appropriate, these opportunities should be considered and/or pursued in addition to the priorities listed here.

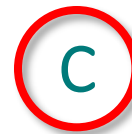


Priorities in the **Big Rapids Area** include:

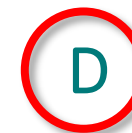
- The Fred Meijer White Pine Trail is on the east side of the Muskegon River while downtown Big Rapids, Ferris State University, and the majority of the population are on the west side of the river. With only two road crossings (M-20/Maple + Baldwin) and one dedicated pedestrian crossing over the Muskegon River, ensuring **nonmotorized connectivity across the river** is essential.
- Establish a **visible, accessible trailhead(s) in Big Rapids for the White Pine State Trail** – possibly in the Northside Riverwalk Park.
- Improved **connectivity and wayfinding** between Ferris State University, the FSU Campus Art Walk, the scenic 4.5-mile Big Rapids Riverwalk, the White Pine State Trail, Muskegon River, and significant public land along the river.
- Renovation of the former train station** – the White Pine State Trail trailhead along M-20/Maple. Owned by the MDNR.
- Improve **bike storage** at Ferris State University.



The **42-mile Dragon Trail** is proposed to loop around Hardy Pond Dam just southwest of Big Rapids in Newaygo and Mecosta County. It is anticipated to be a significant destination in the region and will be managed by the Newaygo and Mecosta County Parks. Construction is planned for 2018-2020. Providing connections between the Dragon Trail, White Pine State Trail, Big Rapids, Standale, and Morley is a high priority which will include crossing US-131.



Exploration of formalized nonmotorized links around the Canadian Lakes Area as well as connecting the **Canadian Lakes area to/from the White Pine Trail and Stanwood**, possibly along the Pierce Road corridor. Morton Township, Canadian Lakes, and Tri-Lakes Area are in planning stages.



There is a desire to further discussions with various stakeholders and agencies to connect the **White Pine State Trail to Mt. Pleasant and the Mid-West Michigan Trail Network** via the Canadian Lakes area, Stanwood, Mecosta, and Rodney. The Mid-West Michigan Trail Network is a proposed north-south trail that will connect the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail and the Pere Marquette Trail. No route has been determined. Additional planning is needed to further exploration. Morton Township is in planning stages and investigating the feasibility of utilizing a former rail corridor that ran between Big Rapids, Rodney, Mecosta, Remus, and beyond.



Mecosta County

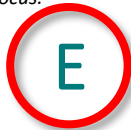
Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired Connections

Population: 43,067 (2.7% of Region)

See corresponding Proposed Regional Corridors + Priorities Map. Lettering does not signify order of priority but keys to Map.

Also refer to Grand Region Overarching Nonmotorized Strategies + Priorities for details on the region-wide focus.

Additional project development opportunities may present themselves over time. As appropriate, these opportunities should be considered and/or pursued in addition to the priorities listed here.



There is a desire to provide **east-west connectivity between Big Rapids and the Hungerford Lake** mountain bike trails area.



Osceola, Mecosta, and Montcalm Counties have a number of **Amish** communities. Wide paved shoulders along primary routes and corridors can provide a number of benefits including improved conditions for pedestrians, cyclists, and buggies. In areas with heavy buggy use, 6-8' wide paved shoulders should be considered. Buggy use has been noted on the Fred Meijer White Pine State Trail, particularly in the Stanwood/Morley area.

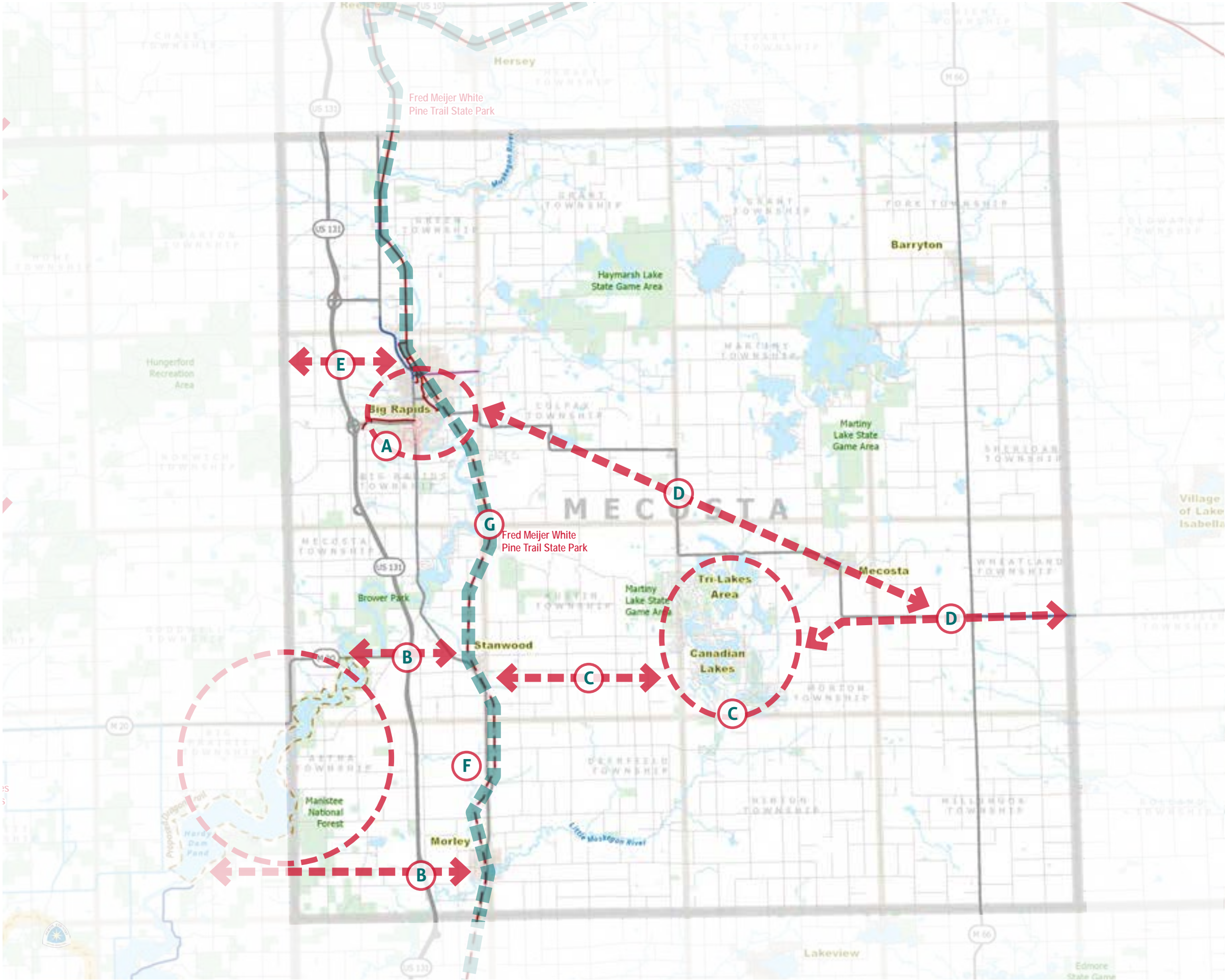


It is a priority to improve the 29.2-mile, unimproved/natural condition of the **Fred Meijer White Pine Trail State Park** south of Big Rapids. (16.8 miles are within Mecosta County)

MECOSTA COUNTY

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired Connections Map

August 2017



LEGEND

- | Existing | Planned | |
|----------|---------|--|
| | | Improved Shared Use Path/Sidepath (>8' wide) |
| | | Unimproved Shared Use Path/Sidepath (>8' wide) |
| | | Bike Lane/Paved Shoulder (>4' wide) |
| | | Shared Lane Marking |
| | | Bike Route (Signed or Mapped) |
| | | Undefined Bikeway (Details Unknown) |

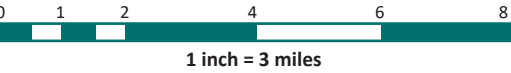
Statewide/National Routes

- U.S. Bike Route 35
- U.S. Bike Route 20
- North Lakes Bike Route
- North Country Trail
- Iron Belle Hiking Trail

Keys to Text Descriptions of Priorities in Master Plan

Proposed Regional Corridors

Desired Connections





Montcalm County

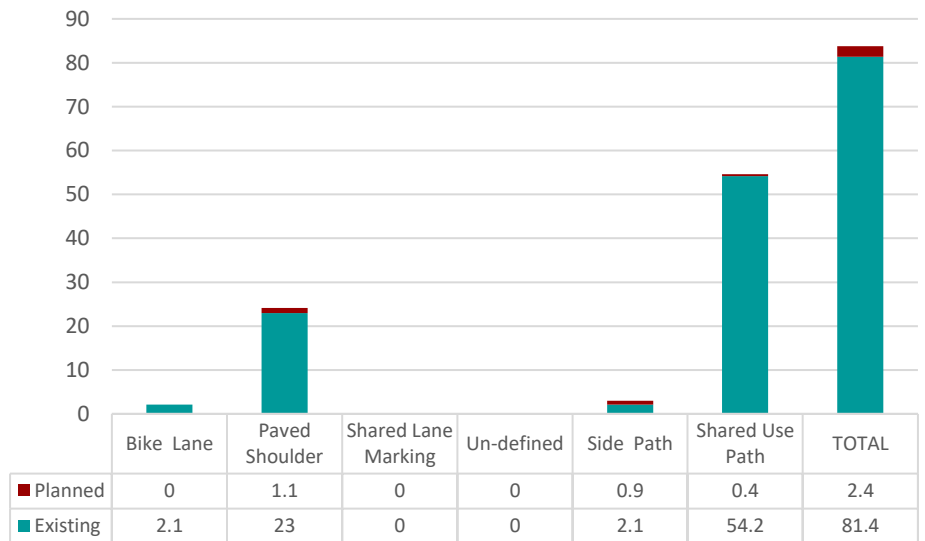
Existing + Planned Networks

Population: 62,945 (4.0% of Region)

Existing + Proposed Nonmotorized Regional Corridors

FM White Pine Trail
FM Heartland Trail
FM Flat River Valley Rail Trail

Montcalm County Facilities by Type (miles)



'undefined' indicates the source plan was not clear as to what type of facility is being proposed and/or what side of the roadway it is being proposed.

Crash Facts 2011 – 2015

0.9% Percent of total crashes that involve peds/bikes in county

23.1% Percent of total fatalities that involve peds/bikes in county

8.0% Percent of incapacitating injuries that involve peds/bikes in county



Montcalm County

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired Connections

Population: 62,945 (4.0% of Region)

See corresponding Proposed Regional Corridors + Priorities Map. Lettering does not signify order of priority but keys to Map.

Also refer to Grand Region Overarching Nonmotorized Strategies + Priorities for details on the region-wide focus.

Additional project development opportunities may present themselves over time. As appropriate, these opportunities should be considered and/or pursued in addition to the priorities listed here.

A

Improve the unimproved/natural condition of the **Fred Meijer Flat River Valley Rail Trail** between Belding and Greenville (approximately 5.6 miles).

B

Improve the unimproved/natural condition of the **Fred Meijer White Pine Trail** between Sand Lake and Big Rapids (approximately 29.2- miles in total; 12.4 miles of which is in Montcalm County).

C

Planning is needed to determine desire/feasibility to **connect east to west** in Montcalm County to connect the Fred Meijer White Pine State Trail to the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail.

D

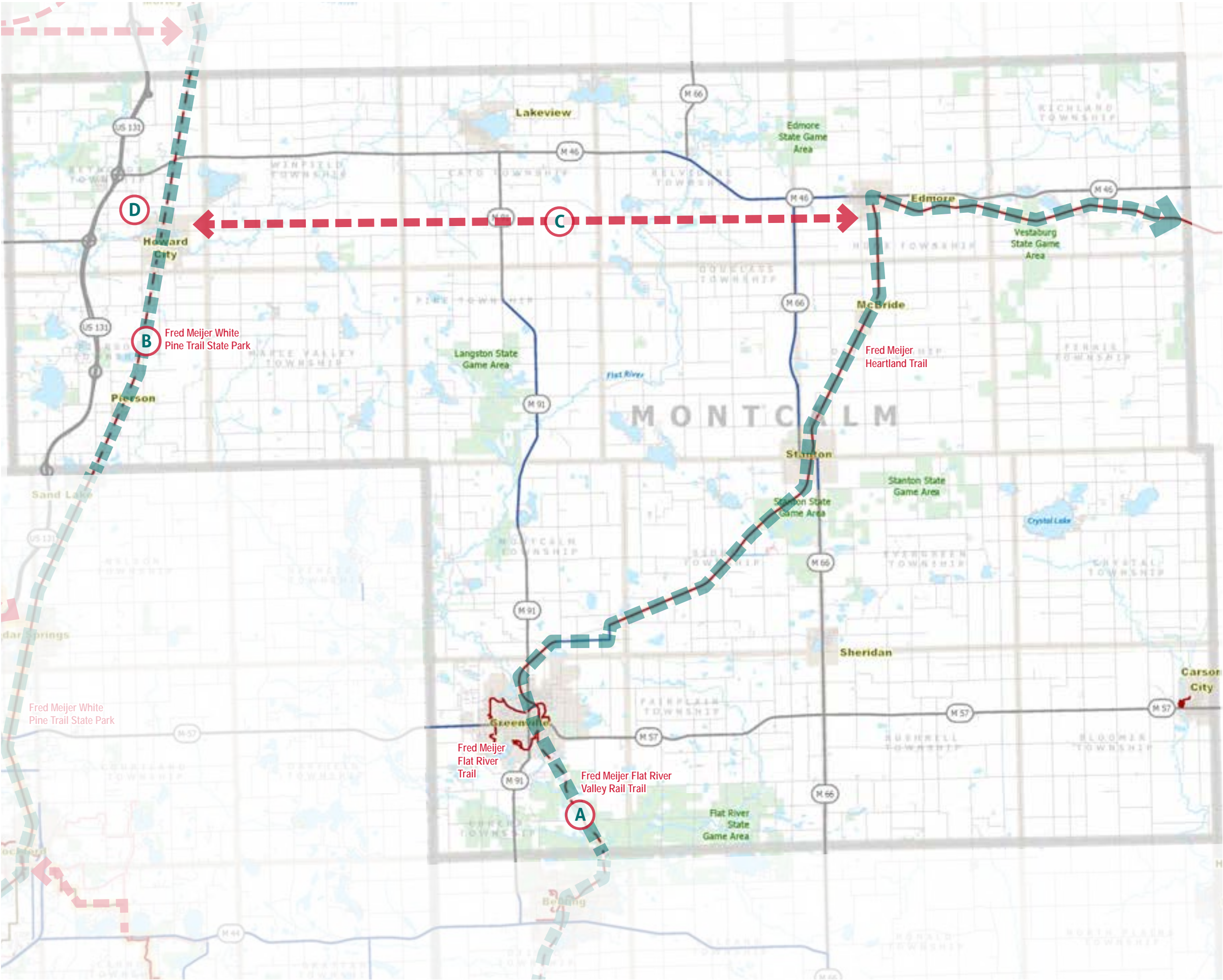
Osceola, Mecosta, and Montcalm Counties have a number of **Amish** communities. Wide paved shoulders along primary routes and corridors can provide a number of benefits including improved conditions for pedestrians, cyclists, and buggies. In areas with heavy buggy use, 6-8' wide paved shoulders should be considered. Buggy use has been noted on the Fred Meijer White Pine State Trail.

MDOT Grand Region - Regional Nonmotorized Plan

MONTCALM COUNTY

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired
Connections Map

August 2017



LEGEND

Existing	Planned	
		Improved Shared Use Path/Sidepath (>8' wide)
		Unimproved Shared Use Path/Sidepath (>8' wide)
		Bike Lane/Paved Shoulder (>4' wide)
		Shared Lane Marking
		Bike Route (Signed or Mapped)
		Undefined Bikeway (Details Unknown)

Statewide/National Routes

	U.S. Bike Route 35
	U.S. Bike Route 20
	North Lakes Bike Route
	North Country Trail
	Iron Belle Hiking Trail

Keys to Text Descriptions of Priorities in Master Plan

Proposed Regional Corridors

Desired Connections

0 1 2 4 6 8

1 inch = 3 miles



Muskegon County

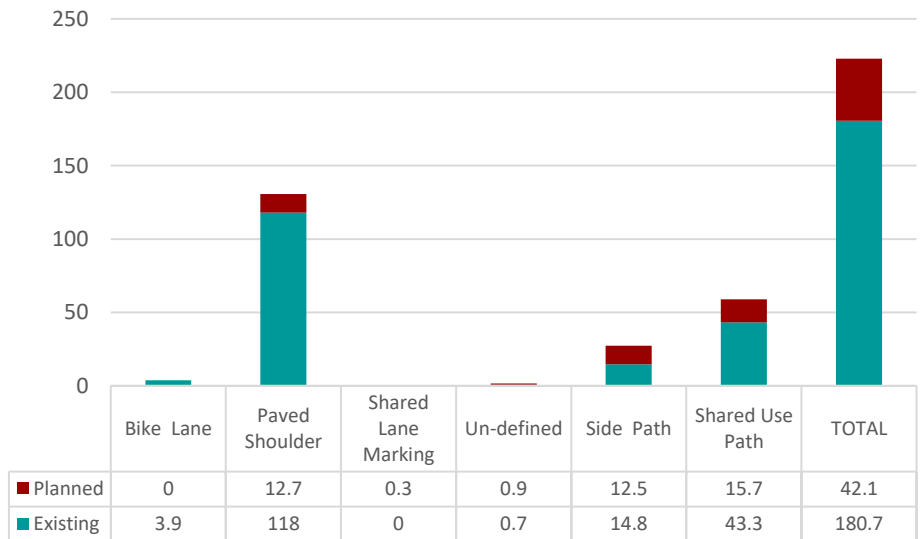
Existing + Planned Networks

Population: 172,790 (11.0% of Region)

Existing + Proposed Nonmotorized Regional Corridors

US Bike Route 35
WF Hart-Montague Trail
FM Berry Junction Trail
White Lake Pathway
Muskegon Lakeshore Trail
Laketon Trail
Musketawa Trail

Muskegon County Facilities by Type (miles)



'undefined' indicates the source plan was not clear as to what type of facility is being proposed and/or what side of the roadway it is being proposed.

Crash Facts 2011 – 2015

1.7% Percent of total crashes that involve peds/bikes in county

19.5% Percent of total fatalities that involve peds/bikes in county

10.0% Percent of incapacitating injuries that involve peds/bikes in county



Muskegon County

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired Connections

Population: 172,790 (11.0% of Region)

See corresponding Proposed Regional Corridors + Priorities Map. Lettering does not signify order of priority but keys to Map.

Also refer to Grand Region Overarching Nonmotorized Strategies + Priorities for details on the region-wide focus.

Additional project development opportunities may present themselves over time. As appropriate, these opportunities should be considered and/or pursued in addition to the priorities listed here.

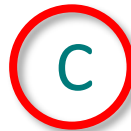


Priorities in/around the **Muskegon and North Muskegon Area** include:

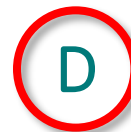
- Provide a connection between the **Musketawa Trail and Lake Michigan** and the **Muskegon Lakeshore Trail** and **Laketon Trail**. Short but challenging gap remains in area of Shoreline Drive and Seaway Drive. Also determine feasibility of providing improvements along Sherman Boulevard (on- and off-road improvements).
- Capitalize on the numerous **bicyclists that ride the Lake Express Ferry** between Milwaukee and Muskegon. Also, coordinate with stakeholders in Mason County/Ludington to discuss potential marketing of “**loop ride/trip**” for cyclists that would include riding the **Lake Express Ferry** between Muskegon and Milwaukee and the **SS Badger** between Ludington and Manitowoc.
- Provide a north-south **connection between Mona Lake and the Laketon Trail**, via Roberts St, Vulcan St, E Broadway Ave, S Getty, Summit Ave, Hoyt, and Seaway Drive.
- Pedestrian and bicycle **improvements along M-120/Holton Road** to connect a number of destinations including the High School and new youth sports park. Extension of the side path along M-120 that crosses beneath US-31.



The **Musketawa Trail** is in need of repairs, with particular condition issues noted by participants in the development of this document in the sections just east of Muskegon.



Fruitport Township desires connections to and from the Musketawa Trail to the north and Spring Lake Trails to the south. Planning is needed to further this effort.



Shared use paths are desired to provide **connections to Lake Michigan and PJ Hoffmaster State Park** in Norton Shores.

Also See:
Priorities for US Bike Routes



Muskegon County

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired Connections

Population: 172,790 (11.0% of Region)

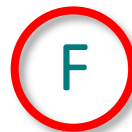
See corresponding Proposed Regional Corridors + Priorities Map. Lettering does not signify order of priority but keys to Map.

Also refer to Grand Region Overarching Nonmotorized Strategies + Priorities for details on the region-wide focus.

Additional project development opportunities may present themselves over time. As appropriate, these opportunities should be considered and/or pursued in addition to the priorities listed here.



Blue Lake Township is developing a Recreation Plan in 2017 that will include proposed nonmotorized routes and wide paved shoulders to improve connections to the William Field Memorial Hart-Montague Trail, Montague, Whitehall, and the Muskegon Area.



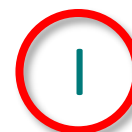
A priority in the Montague and White River area is to extend a shared use path to connect Montague and the **William Field Memorial Hart-Montague Trail to Medbery Park** and Lake Michigan.



In the **Laketon and Fruitland Township** areas, there is a desire to provide connections to and from the Fred Meijer Berry Junction Trail to Duck Lake State Park, Pioneer County Park, Muskegon State Park, and the Lake Michigan shoreline. Planning is needed to further this effort and determine feasibility.



There is conceptual discussion regarding the feasibility of providing a “rail with trail” connection **between Fremont and the Muskegon Area** via the rail corridor.



Safe and improved **east-west connection across US-31** at/near Holton Whitehall Road is desired.

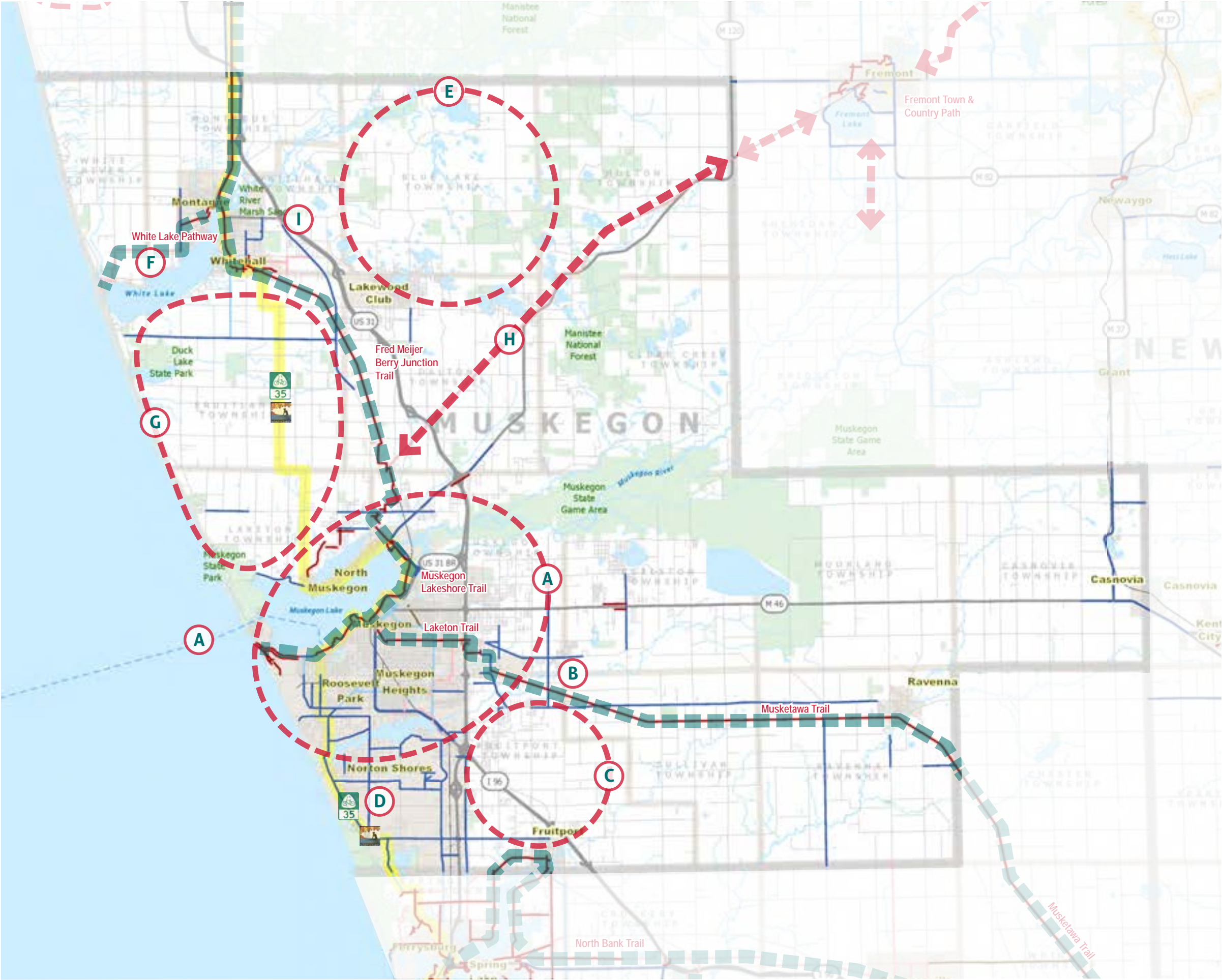
Also See:
Priorities for US Bike Routes

MDOT Grand Region - Regional Nonmotorized Plan

MUSKEGON COUNTY

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired
Connections Map

August 2017



LEGEND

Existing	Planned

Improved Shared Use Path/Sidepath (>8' wide)
Unimproved Shared Use Path/Sidepath (>8' wide)
Bike Lane/Paved Shoulder (>4' wide)
Shared Lane Marking
Bike Route (Signed or Mapped)
Undefined Bikeway (Details Unknown)

Statewide/National Routes

	U.S. Bike Route 35
	U.S. Bike Route 20
	North Lakes Bike Route
	North Country Trail
	Iron Belle Hiking Trail

Keys to Text Descriptions of Priorities in Master Plan

Proposed Regional Corridors

Desired Connections





Newaygo County

Existing + Planned Networks

Population: 47,948 (3.1% of Region)

Existing + Proposed Nonmotorized Regional Corridors

North Country Trail
Iron Belle Trail

(additional regional corridors are emerging as The Edge Pathways and Leaders in Economic Alliance Development efforts move forward)

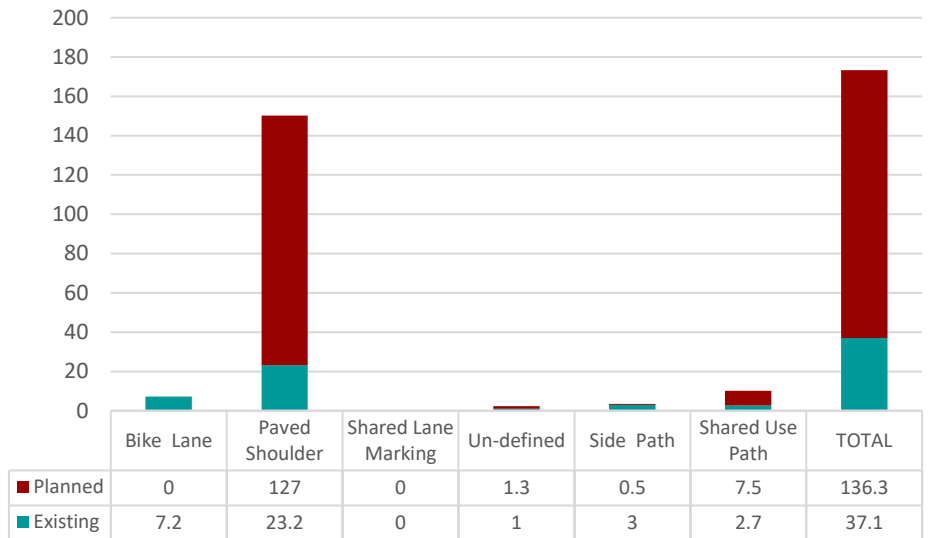
Crash Facts 2011 – 2015

0.7% Percent of total crashes that involve peds/bikes in county

10.5% Percent of total fatalities that involve peds/bikes in county

6.8% Percent of incapacitating injuries that involve peds/bikes in county

Newaygo County Facilities by Type (miles)



'undefined' indicates the source plan was not clear as to what type of facility is being proposed and/or what side of the roadway it is being proposed.



Newaygo County

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired Connections

Population: 47,948 (3.1% of Region)

See corresponding Proposed Regional Corridors + Priorities Map. Lettering does not signify order of priority but keys to Map.

Also refer to Grand Region Overarching Nonmotorized Strategies + Priorities for details on the region-wide focus.

Additional project development opportunities may present themselves over time. As appropriate, these opportunities should be considered and/or pursued in addition to the priorities listed here.

A

The **42-mile Dragon Trail** is proposed to loop around Hardy Pond Dam just southwest of Big Rapids in Newaygo and Mecosta County. It is anticipated to be a significant destination in the region and will be managed by the Newaygo and Mecosta County Parks. Construction is planned for 2018-2020. Providing connections between the Dragon Trail, White Pine State Trail, White Cloud, the Croton to Hardy Dam Trail, Newaygo, Fremont, and the North Country Trail/Iron Belle Trail is also a high priority.

B

Fremont and White Cloud are interested in further exploring the feasibility of connecting **Fremont and White Cloud** via a former railroad corridor and into the Fremont Town & Country Path network. **White Cloud** is working with LIAA, North Country Trail Association, and the Huron-Manistee National Forest to complete their NCT Trail Town handbook.

C

The Edge – Newaygo County Pathways is working on implementing a nonmotorized vision to connect various destinations in Fremont, Grant, Hesperia, Newaygo, White Cloud, and the surrounding townships together with a combination of wide paved shoulders, shared use trails, side paths, and bike lanes. (The Edge Plan is illustrated as proposed paved shoulders in Newaygo County.) As planning and discussions continue, routing may change although the overall goal of connectivity remains.

D

It is a high priority in the county (and surrounding counties) to do further planning and coordination in order to identify regional connections. The **Leaders in Economic Alliance Development (LEAD)** which includes participants from Mason, Lake, Oceana and Newaygo, are working in 2017 to develop a plan for nonmotorized connections in the four-county area. A focus is extending/connecting more areas into the North Country Trail, Iron Belle Trail, Pere Marquette State Trail, William Field Memorial Hart Montague Trail and the Fred Meijer White Pine State Trail.

E

There is conceptual discussion regarding the feasibility of providing a “rail with trail” connection between **Fremont and the Muskegon Area** via the rail corridor. This input was documented at the Outreach Meeting held in Muskegon.

F

There is a desire to connect **Fremont with a proposed Refuge Skills Course** in Sheridan Township.

Also See:
Priorities for North Country Trail/Iron Belle Trail



Newaygo County

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired Connections

Population: 47,948 (3.1% of Region)

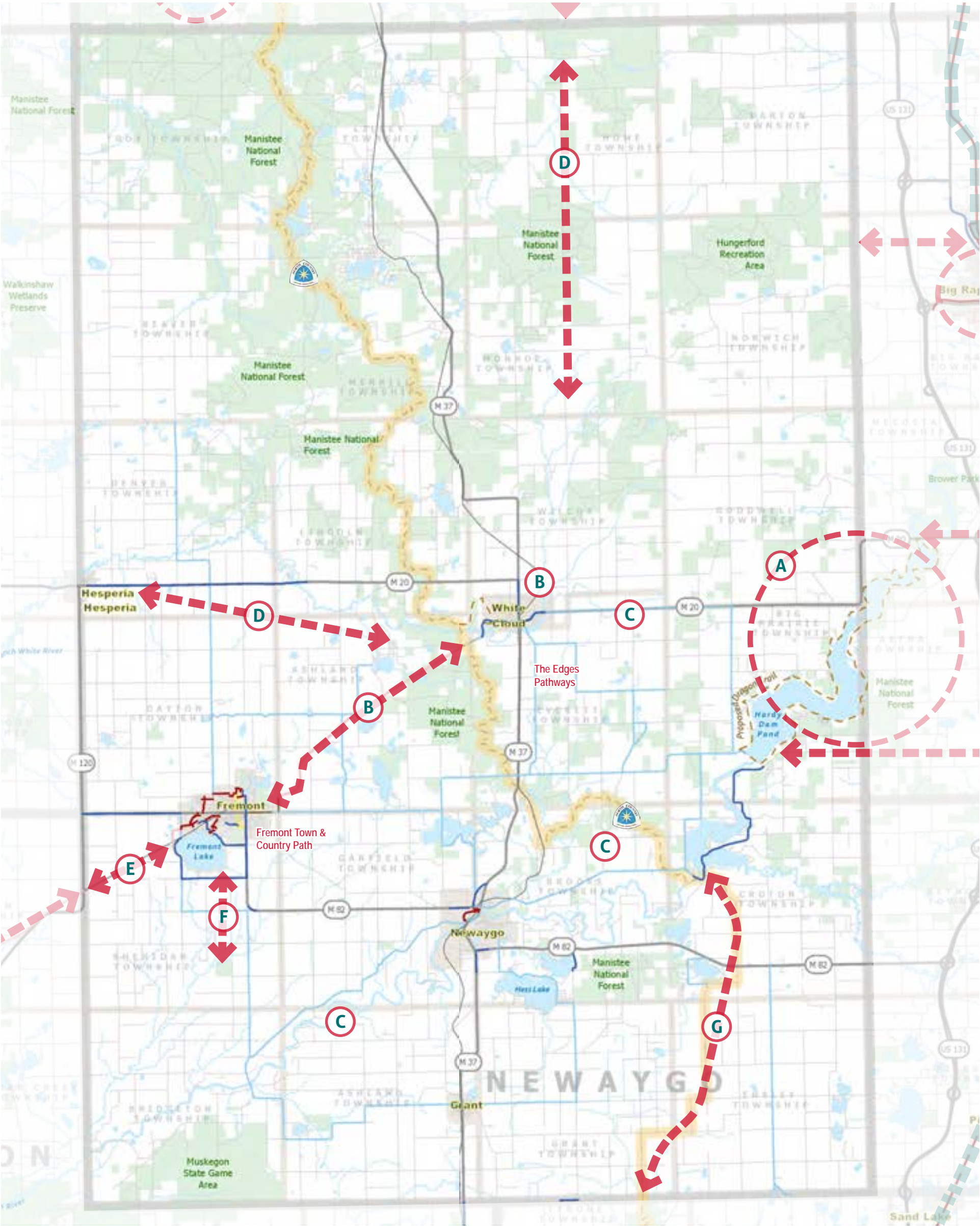
See corresponding Proposed Regional Corridors + Priorities Map. Lettering does not signify order of priority but keys to Map.

Also refer to Grand Region Overarching Nonmotorized Strategies + Priorities for details on the region-wide focus.

Additional project development opportunities may present themselves over time. As appropriate, these opportunities should be considered and/or pursued in addition to the priorities listed here.



A priority for the North Country Trail Association is to establish off-road trails and improve current road walk for the North Country Trail between the Rogue River State Game Area and Croton Dam.



MDOT Grand Region - Regional Nonmotorized Plan

NEWAYGO COUNTY

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired
Connections Map

August 2017

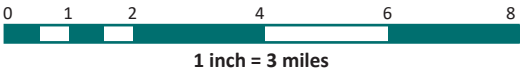


LEGEND

- | Existing | Planned | |
|----------|---------|--|
| | | Improved Shared Use Path/Sidepath (>8' wide) |
| | | Unimproved Shared Use Path/Sidepath (>8' wide) |
| | | Bike Lane/Paved Shoulder (>4' wide) |
| | | Shared Lane Marking |
| | | Bike Route (Signed or Mapped) |
| | | Undefined Bikeway (Details Unknown) |

- Statewide/National Routes
- U.S. Bike Route 35
 - U.S. Bike Route 20
 - North Lakes Bike Route
 - North Country Trail
 - Iron Belle Hiking Trail

- Keys to Text Descriptions of Priorities in Master Plan
- Proposed Regional Corridors
- Desired Connections





Oceana County

Existing + Planned Networks

Population: 26,105 (1.7% of Region)

Existing + Proposed Nonmotorized Regional Corridors

US Bike Route 35
WF Hart-Montague Trail

(additional regional corridors are emerging as the Leaders in Economic Alliance Development efforts and efforts to improve connectivity to Lake Michigan move forward)

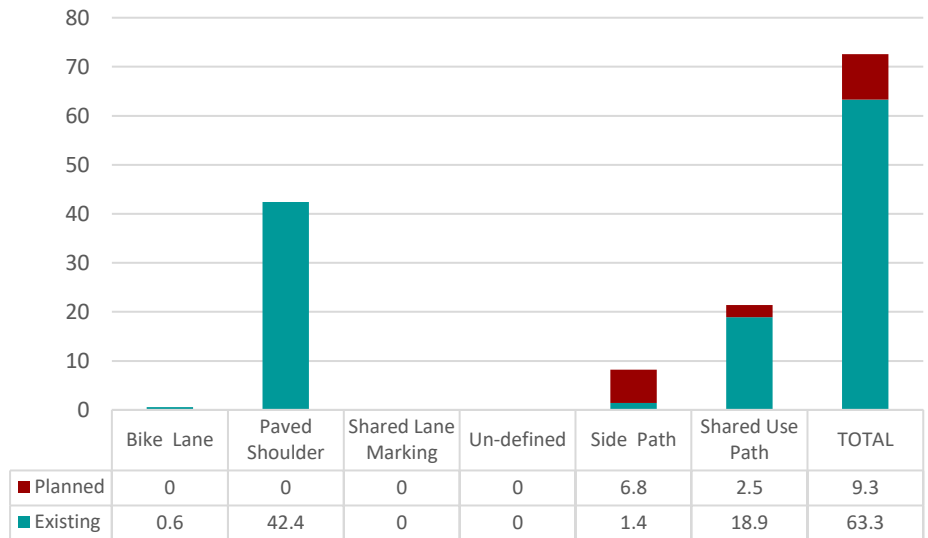
Crash Facts 2011 – 2015

0.3% Percent of total crashes that involve peds/bikes in county

10.0% Percent of total fatalities that involve peds/bikes in county

6.0% Percent of incapacitating injuries that involve peds/bikes in county

Oceana County Facilities by Type (miles)



'undefined' indicates the source plan was not clear as to what type of facility is being proposed and/or what side of the roadway it is being proposed.



Oceana County

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired Connections

Population: 26,105 (1.7% of Region)

See corresponding Proposed Regional Corridors + Priorities Map. Lettering does not signify order of priority but keys to Map.

Also refer to Grand Region Overarching Nonmotorized Strategies + Priorities for details on the region-wide focus.

Additional project development opportunities may present themselves over time. As appropriate, these opportunities should be considered and/or pursued in addition to the priorities listed here.

A

Providing a 5+ mile, shared use path **connection between Pentwater and Hart** is a priority in Oceana County. The proposed Pentwater-Hart Trail route is along Wayne Road, 72nd Avenue, and Tyler Road would connect the two business districts and also provide a connection to the William Field Memorial Hart-Montague Trail. Planning and coordination is in progress.

B

There is a desire to provide connections between the **William Field Memorial Hart-Montague Trail and Lake Michigan**. Additional planning is needed to discuss, determine support and feasibility. Provide connections to Scenic Drive (B15), Webster, connecting to Cedar Point County Park, Silver Lake State Park, Stony Lake, as well as Muskegon County to the south and Mason County to the north.

C

There is a desire to provide connectivity between Shelby and the **William Field Memorial Hart-Montague Trail west to Scenic Drive** (possibly via the Shelby Road corridor). US 31 provides a significant barrier for pedestrian and bicycle movement.

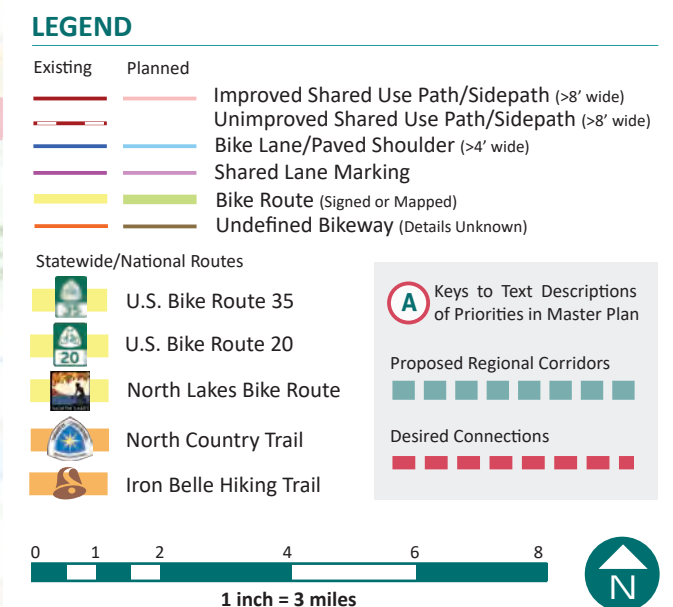
D

It is a high priority in the county (and surrounding counties) to do further planning and coordination in order to identify regional connections. The **Leaders in Economic Alliance Development (LEAD)** which includes participants from Mason, Lake, Oceana, and Newaygo, are working in 2017 to develop a plan for nonmotorized connections. A focus is extending/connecting more areas into the North Country Trail, Iron Belle Trail, Pere Marquette State Trail, William Field Memorial Hart-Montague Trail and the Fred Meijer White Pine State Trail.

Also See:
Priorities for US Bike Routes

OCEANA COUNTY

August 2017





Osceola County

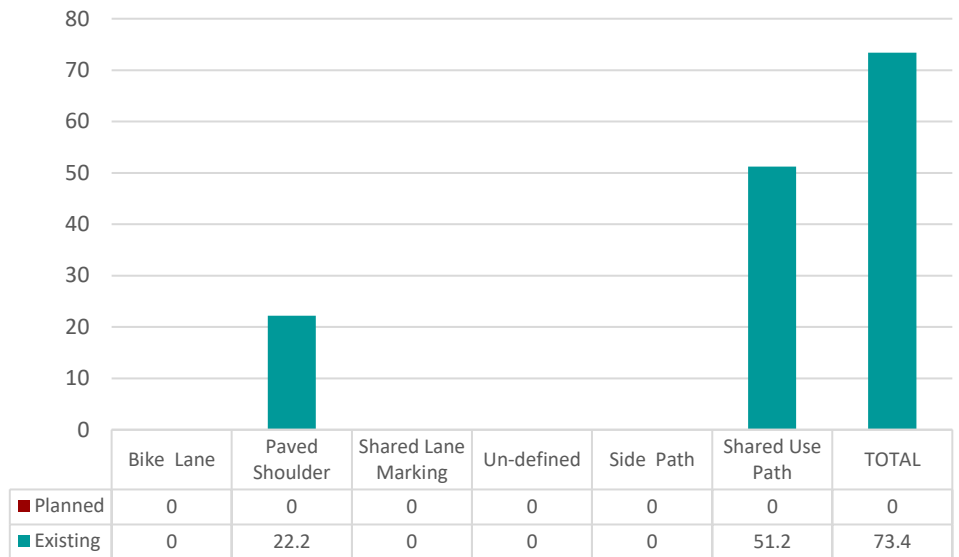
Existing + Planned Networks

Population: 23,058 (1.5% of Region)

Existing + Proposed Nonmotorized Regional Corridors

US Bike Route 20
FM White Pine Trail
Pere Marquette State Trail

Osceola County Facilities by Type (miles)



'undefined' indicates the source plan was not clear as to what type of facility is being proposed and/or what side of the roadway it is being proposed.

Crash Facts 2011 – 2015

0.5% Percent of total **crashes** that involve peds/bikes in county

15.0% Percent of total **fatalities** that involve peds/bikes in county

2.7% Percent of **incapacitating injuries** that involve peds/bikes in county



Osceola County

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired Connections

Population: 23,058 (1.5% of Region)

See corresponding Proposed Regional Corridors + Priorities Map. Lettering does not signify order of priority but keys to Map.

Also refer to Grand Region Overarching Nonmotorized Strategies + Priorities for details on the region-wide focus.

Additional project development opportunities may present themselves over time. As appropriate, these opportunities should be considered and/or pursued in addition to the priorities listed here.

A

It is a priority and planned project in Osceola County to **pave the approximately 10.4-mile section of Fred Meijer White Pine Trail** between Reed City and LeRoy. Significant infrastructure improvements are needed as well including bridge and culvert replacements/repairs.

B

As is a regional priority for the entire Grand Region, coordinated **wayfinding improvements and confidence markers** are a high priority in Osceola County, particularly where **US Bike Route 20 and the White Pine State Trail intersect** in and around LeRoy and where **the White Pine State Trail and Pere Marquette Trail intersect** in Reed City. The desire is to provide signage and markers to direct users to and from these various systems as well as to the various destinations and amenities in the area.

C

Osceola and Mecosta County have a number of **Amish** communities. Wide paved shoulders along primary routes and corridors can provide a number of benefits including improved conditions for pedestrians, cyclists, and buggies. In areas with heavy buggy use, 6-8' wide paved shoulders should be considered.

D

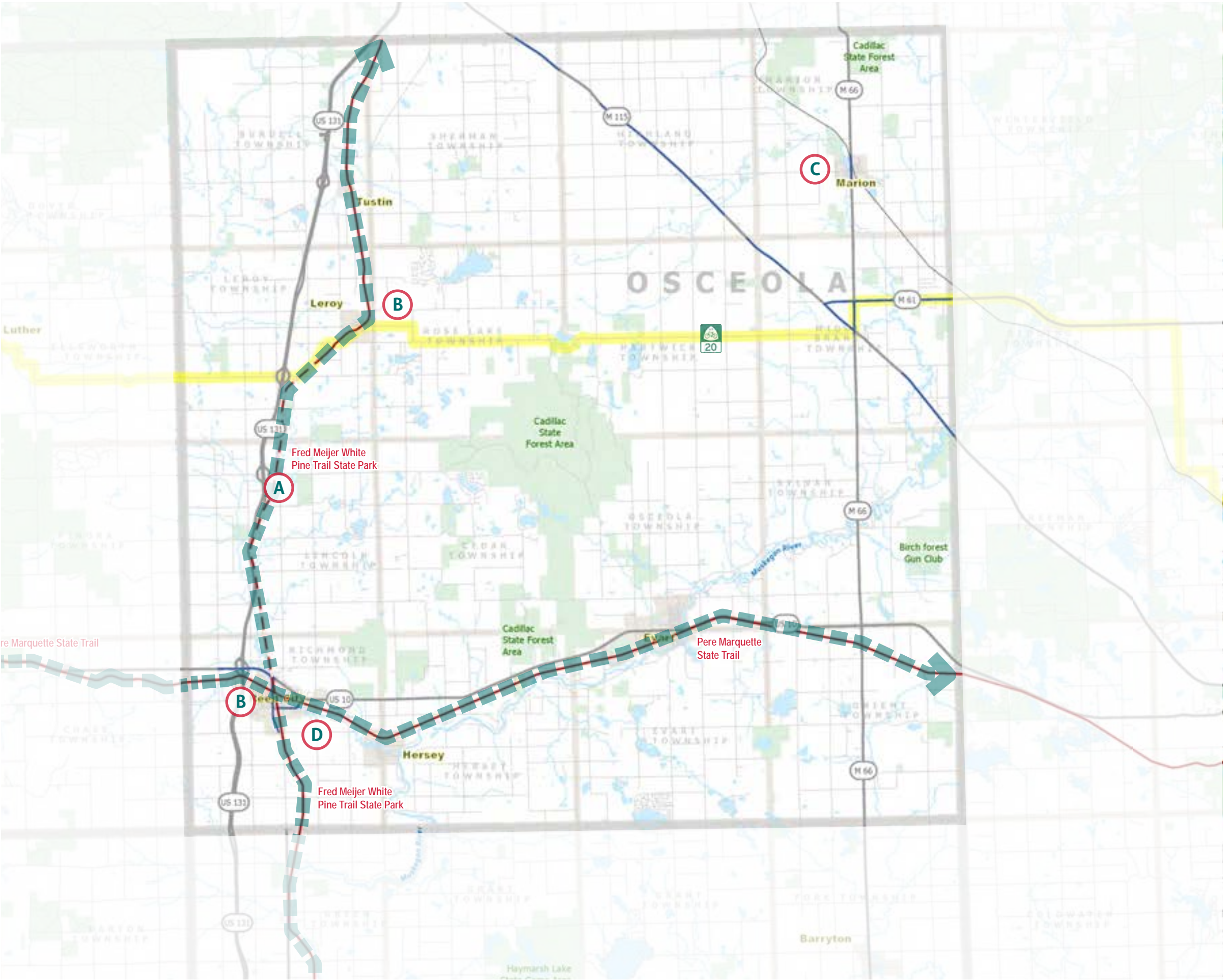
Road crossing improvements along the Pere Marquette Trail and the White Pine State Trail are a high priority, particularly in and around the Reed City area where the trails cross higher speed and higher volume roads such as **BR 10, Old 131, and US 10**.

Also See:
Priorities for US Bike Routes

OSCEOLA COUNTY

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired Connections Map

August 2017



LEGEND

- | Existing | Planned | |
|----------|---------|--|
| | | Improved Shared Use Path/Sidepath (>8' wide) |
| | | Unimproved Shared Use Path/Sidepath (>8' wide) |
| | | Bike Lane/Paved Shoulder (>4' wide) |
| | | Shared Lane Marking |
| | | Bike Route (Signed or Mapped) |
| | | Undefined Bikeway (Details Unknown) |

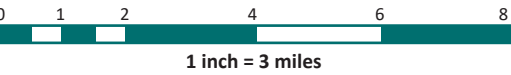
Statewide/National Routes

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| | U.S. Bike Route 35 |
| | U.S. Bike Route 20 |
| | North Lakes Bike Route |
| | North Country Trail |
| | Iron Belle Hiking Trail |

Keys to Text Descriptions of Priorities in Master Plan

Proposed Regional Corridors

Desired Connections





Ottawa County

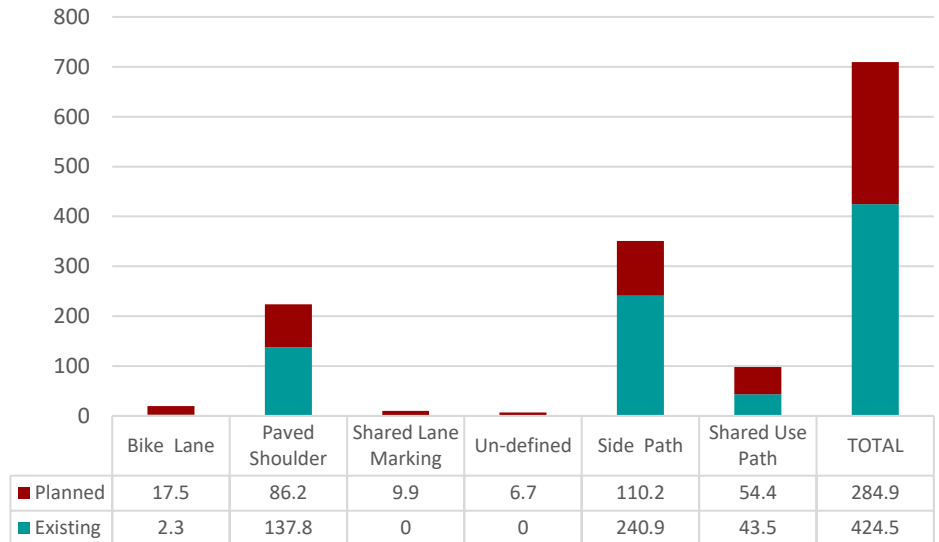
Existing + Planned Networks

Population: 279,955 (17.8% of Region)

Existing + Proposed Nonmotorized Regional Corridors

US Bike Route 35
North Bank Trail
Grand River Explorers Trail
Spoonville Trail
Musketawa Trail
Lakeshore Trail
FM Kenowa Trail
Macatawa Trail
Macatawa River Greenway

Ottawa County Facilities by Type (miles)



'undefined' indicates the source plan was not clear as to what type of facility is being proposed and/or what side of the roadway it is being proposed.

Crash Facts 2011 – 2015

1.8% Percent of total **crashes** that involve peds/bikes in county

22.4% Percent of total **fatalities** that involve peds/bikes in county

12.1% Percent of **incapacitating injuries** that involve peds/bikes in county



Ottawa County

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired Connections

Population: 279,955 (17.8% of Region)

See corresponding Proposed Regional Corridors + Priorities Map. Lettering does not signify order of priority but keys to Map.

Also refer to Grand Region Overarching Nonmotorized Strategies + Priorities for details on the region-wide focus.

Additional project development opportunities may present themselves over time. As appropriate, these opportunities should be considered and/or pursued in addition to the priorities listed here.

A

The completion of the **Spoonville Trail** which will connect the proposed North Bank Trail to the proposed Grand River Explorers Trail across the Grand River via the new M231 bridge is nearing completion. It is a priority to complete the final segment near Leonard and 112th Streets. This section was awarded MDNR Trust Fund dollars in late 2016.

B

Ottawa County is leading the planning for the 30-mile **Grand River Explorers Trail** which is planned to traverse along the south side of the Grand River, across Ottawa County from Grand Haven to Grand Rapids. The County Parks Department has set a goal to have the trail substantially finished by 2021 and connecting major resources and destinations such as Millennium Park, Grand Valley State University, Grand Ravines Park, Eastmanville Bayou, Bass River Recreation Area, and the Grand Haven lighthouse.

C

The **North Bank Trail** is proposed to cross Ottawa County and connect Spring Lake to Grand Rapids and the Fred Meijer Pioneer Trail. The North Bank Trail would traverse Crockery Township, Polkton Township, Coopersville, and Wright Township. The portion from Coopersville to Grand Rapids is proposed within a rail corridor that has a dinner train and occasional freight use.

D

It is a priority to improve east-west nonmotorized **access across US-31**. One such location is **Croswell Street** in Port Sheldon Township. An improved crossing condition would allow for connectivity to the side path along Croswell that connects into the Lakeshore Trail.

E

The **intersection of Lakewood Boulevard and N River Avenue as well as Douglas Avenue and River Avenue** (just north of Holland and the Macatawa River) is a high priority intersection for improvements for all users. They are important connections, high crash areas, and challenging for walking and biking.

F

The **I-196/Byron Road interchange**, east of Zeeland, has been noted as a significant barrier for connectivity and nonmotorized accessibility to/from the Fred Meijer Kenowa Trail.

Also See:
Priorities for US Bike Routes



Ottawa County

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired Connections

Population: 279,955 (17.8% of Region)

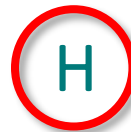
See corresponding Proposed Regional
Corridors + Priorities Map. Lettering
does not signify order of priority but
keys to Map.

Also refer to Grand Region Overarching
Nonmotorized Strategies + Priorities for
details on the region-wide focus.

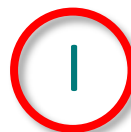
Additional project
development
opportunities may
present themselves
over time. As
appropriate, these
opportunities should
be considered
and/or pursued in
addition to the
priorities listed here.



It is a priority in Ottawa County to implement 4' wide paved shoulders along **Lakeshore Drive from New Holland to 168th Street** (2018-2021). In addition, Ottawa County plans to evaluate opportunities to include 4' wide **paved shoulders** along **Leonard Road** from 148th Ave. to 24th Ave (2018-2023), although topographical challenges exist.



There is considerable momentum and support in Ottawa County for planning and implementing nonmotorized facilities, as well as advocacy and education related to pedestrians and bicyclists. This is illustrated with the completion of the **Macatawa Area Coordinating Council Nonmotorized Plan (2014) which highlights a number of proposed "regional" routes in the MACC Area**, the efforts being led by **Ottawa County**, including the updating of their Plan in 2017, the **City of Holland's work on updating their Bike/Ped Transportation Plan** with a focus on completing an east-west route/facility, the recent formations of advocacy groups including **Pedal Holland and the Lakeshore Cycling Coalition**, and the **passing of trail/nonmotorized millages** in several Ottawa County communities in 2016 including Crockery Township and Grand Haven Township.



The completion of the planned **Macatawa River Greenway** (a 10-mile corridor) is a priority in Ottawa County to connect Holland Township and the City of Holland, with Zeeland Township and into the Fred Meijer Kenowa Trail. Improving facilities along **Chicago Drive and 8th Street corridor** are important connections to the Macatawa River Greenway as well as the Holland Energy Park.

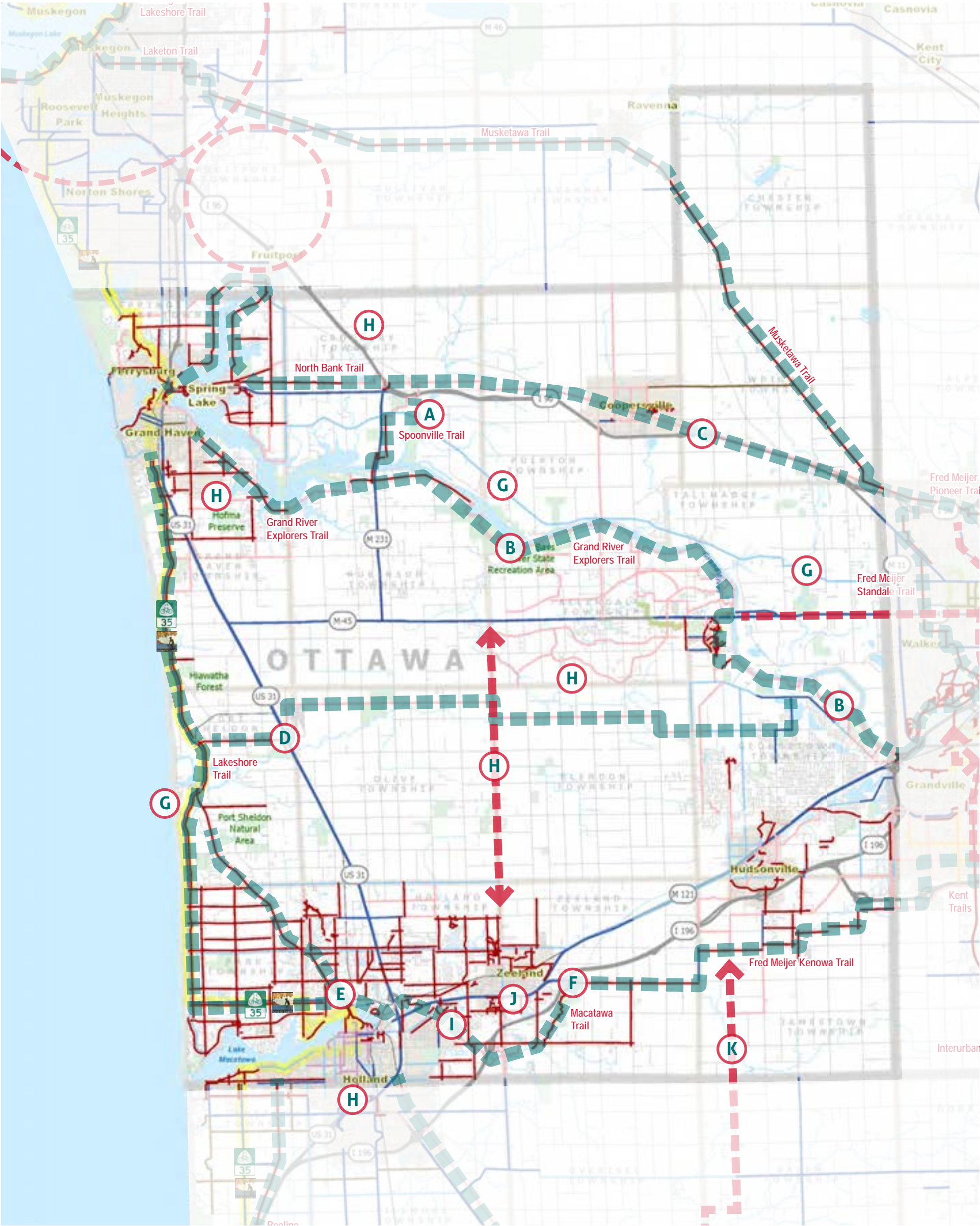


A priority in **Zeeland** is for a nonmotorized **overpass or underpass** at Chicago Drive and State 96th.



Salem Township (in Allegan County) is interested in feasibility of **wide paved shoulders** to create north-south connection between Allegan and the Fred Meijer Kenowa Trail along roads without heavy vehicular and truck traffic. Further planning is needed.

Also See:
Priorities for US Bike Routes

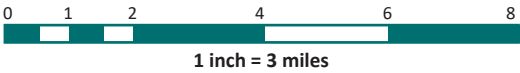


MDOT Grand Region - Regional Nonmotorized Plan

OTTAWA COUNTY

Nonmotorized Priorities + Desired
Connections Map

August 2017



LEGEND

Existing	Planned	
		Improved Shared Use Path/Sidepath (>8' wide)
		Unimproved Shared Use Path/Sidepath (>8' wide)
		Bike Lane/Paved Shoulder (>4' wide)
		Shared Lane Marking
		Bike Route (Signed or Mapped)
		Undefined Bikeway (Details Unknown)

Statewide/National Routes	
	U.S. Bike Route 35
	U.S. Bike Route 20
	North Lakes Bike Route
	North Country Trail
	Iron Belle Hiking Trail

	Keys to Text Descriptions of Priorities in Master Plan
	Proposed Regional Corridors
	Desired Connections

APPENDIX: Highlighted MDOT Guidance

MDOT has developed additional guidance and considerations for staff and partnering agencies to reference when planning and designing nonmotorized projects within MDOT right-of-way.

Considerations for projects located within MDOT right-of-way

As a nonmotorized project that is within or crosses MDOT right-of-way moves forward, there are a number of considerations that must be addressed prior to a permit being issued including the following:

- Identification of affected MDOT slopes, grades, retaining wall, and other structures
- Nonmotorized routing options
- Wetland, floodplains, and streams impacted by the proposed crossings, and related permit issues
- Tree removals
- Impacts to threatened or endangered species
- Impacts to built and natural environment
- Required clearances over, under, and adjacent to MDOT facilities
- ADA issues for the nonmotorized user
- Safety and security issues for nonmotorized users
- Utility impacts
- Drainage impacts
- Traffic safety issues for both nonmotorized and highway traffic
- Maintenance plans and associated funding commitments from agencies responsible for maintenance and future rehabilitation activities
- Impact on future plans for the highway corridor

Guidelines for Nonmotorized Facilities Along State Trunkline Highways

Constructing nonmotorized facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists along a state trunkline highway will need to consider a number of variables and impacts, depending on the facility type, location (urban or rural), traffic volumes, and other contextual elements. In most cases, construction of nonmotorized facilities will require a permit from MDOT, prior to construction; and the permit conditions will be identified on a case by case basis.

In general, most nonmotorized facilities will be constructed by a local agency and will require a commitment to on-going maintenance and rehabilitation. Funding will be provided by the local agency with jurisdiction over the nonmotorized facility; however, there may be opportunities to partner with MDOT with nonmotorized facility construction on a new or replaced roadway or bridge. The nonmotorized facility route will also need to be included in a community or regional nonmotorized plan. The safety of all system users is the primary consideration before allowing a nonmotorized facility on or near a state trunkline.

A. **TRUNKLINE BRIDGES**

Widths of nonmotorized facilities are typically based off AASHTO's Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities. Any additional width for nonmotorized facilities on bridges, beyond the current standards or guidelines, will need funding identified.

Bridge Design Guides & Shoulder Width for New or Replaced Bridges

- Nonmotorized facilities are not allowed on limited access freeway bridges.
- Shoulders on Non-Freeway corridors and bridges will be constructed based on current design guidelines.

Nonmotorized/Pedestrian Facility Requirements

- A raised sidewalk may be allowed on bridges with speeds below design guidelines.
- Nonmotorized facilities shall be separated from traffic using a concrete barrier, or other approved comparable technique, for speeds greater than 40mph.

Bridge Length & Clear Zone Distance

- Nonmotorized facilities can be located behind bridge piers, with filler walls between piers, appropriate slope treatments or retaining walls.
- When replacing a bridge spanning a roadway, generally the face of MDOT's new bridge abutments will be placed outside the clear zone. The clear zone is measured from the edge of the outside traveled lane. All min/max distances are based on roadway side slopes, number of lanes, ADT and related factors.

Grade Separated Nonmotorized Facilities:

- Separate nonmotorized facilities may be constructed over or under a state trunkline, either as a bridge or a tunnel, following MDOT and AASHTO guidelines, and with MDOT design approvals. Permits from other regulatory agencies will be the responsibility of the nonmotorized facility owner.
- Widths of nonmotorized facilities are typically based off AASHTO's Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities.
- A permit from MDOT is required, prior to construction; and the permit conditions will be identified on a case by case basis; MDOT shall review all structural and environmental impacts, in coordination with other regulatory agencies, prior to issuing a permit.
- All construction and on-going rehabilitation and maintenance costs will be the responsibility of the agency with jurisdiction over the nonmotorized facility; an approved maintenance agreement with MDOT will also be required.

B. TRUNKLINE ROADWAYS

- A permit from MDOT is required for all proposed nonmotorized facilities, prior to construction; and the permit conditions will be identified on a case by case basis; MDOT shall review all structural and environmental impacts, in coordination with other regulatory agencies, prior to issuing a permit
- Permits from other regulatory agencies will be the responsibility of the nonmotorized facility owner
- Nonmotorized facilities are not allowed on limited access freeways. With limited

exceptions, nonmotorized facilities may be allowed as close as practicable to the Limited Access Right-of-Way (LA-ROW) fence or property line, within LAROW or adjacent to LAROW, if no reasonable alternative is available.

- Thorough review and evaluation of nonmotorized facility proposals, adjacent to MDOT LA-ROW or within MDOT LA-ROW, will be performed and considered on a case by case basis, and will require MDOT and FHWA approvals.
- Shoulders along rural trunklines may be used for nonmotorized travel, but generally will not be signed.
- Signed nonmotorized shoulders along trunklines will require local participation, designation in a nonmotorized plan and will be constructed to the appropriate and current AASHTO guidelines
- Road Diets or 4 to 3 lane conversions with nonmotorized facilities added may be allowed on surface trunklines, generally limited to urban areas, consistent with MDOT policies, practices and guidelines; this will include consideration of the efficient and safe operation of all traffic on the roadway.
- This concept usually includes a pilot program period with changes to pavement markings, and no permanent physical modifications to the roadway.

Requesting Shared Use Paths within Limited Access Right-of-Way

MDOT manages the operation and use of Limited Access Right-of-Way (LAROW). A LAROW is highway with access limited to intersections – driveways are generally not allowed. Approval and location of a shared use path/trail within LAROW is subject to the approval of not just MDOT, but also the FHWA. **A key first step is to contact your local MDOT TSC to begin discussing the idea and process early in the planning phase.**

MDOT developed a three-page document in January 2017 to provide guidance to MDOT staff and

stakeholders that describes a variety of considerations including items such as:

- A two-step application process to allow the applicant to receive a preliminary response from MDOT and FHWA without having to invest significant resources in developing plans that would not be permitted.
- Demonstrate no feasible alternative.
- Designed per MDOT, AASHTO specifications.
- Agree to assume all financial and operational responsibility and all associated improvements.
- Have an approved master plan identifying the proposed path/trail and preliminary access points.
- Show connectivity to/between other paths.
- Have adopted resolutions from all impacted local and county governments in support of the shared use path/trail.
- Draft Operation and Maintenance Plan agreement between MDOT and applicant.

There are a number of other considerations if planning a shared use path within LAROW and early consultation with the local MDOT TSC staff is critical.

APPENDIX: Resources List

This Plan references and provides links to a number of resources. These resources have been listed here to serve as a quick reference for Plan users/readers.

RESOURCE LINKS

Grand Region Nonmotorized Plan Project Website www.walkbike.info/grand-region

Grand Region Existing Nonmotorized Plans and Resources <http://walkbike.info/grand-region/doc-map/>

Federal or National Studies, Research, Policies + Resources

[FHWA Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Resources, Research and Encouragement](#)

[USDOT Policy Statement on Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodation Regulations and Recommendations \(2010\)](#)

[AASHTO: Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities 2012](#)

[\(NACTO\) Urban Bikeway Design Guide](#)

[FHWA 2013 Guidance Memo](#)

Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) [Designing Urban Walkable Thoroughfares](#)

[FHWA Separated Bike Lane Planning and Design Guide \(2015\)](#)

[FHWA Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks \(2016\)](#)

[FHWA Guidance on Optimizing Rumble Strip Design](#)

Michigan and MDOT Laws, Studies, Research + Projects

[MDOT's Bicycling in Michigan website](#)

[Michigan's Iron Belle Trail](#)

[Michigan Public Act 135 of 2010 \(Complete Streets\)](#)

[Michigan Complete Streets Website](#)

[MDOT Context Sensitive Solutions \(CSS\)](#)

[2014 Community and Economic Benefits of Bicycling in Michigan](#)

[Best Design Practices for Walking and Bicycling in Michigan](#)

[MDOT Guidance for Trunkline Main Streets \(2016\)](#)

[Michigan Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices \(MMUTCD\)](#)

Regional Resources

[Grand Rapids Driving Change Education Campaign](#)

[West Michigan Regional Prosperity Alliance](#)

Funding Resources

[Federal Highway Administration's Bicycle and Pedestrian Funding](#)

[Safe Routes to School Program](#)

[Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality \(CMAQ\)](#)

[Michigan Transportation Alternatives Program](#)

[USDA Rural Development Community Facilities Program](#)

[Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund \(MNRTF\)](#)

[Land and Water Conservation Fund \(LWCF\)](#)

[Recreation Passport Grants](#)

APPENDIX B

MASON COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter 3

FUTURE LAND USE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents information on future land use in the context of existing land use in Mason County. It begins by describing existing community character (for a more complete description of existing land use, see the Mason County Data Book, Chapter 4 and 5). It then discusses key issues and key policies intended to respond to those issues (Part A dealing with townships under county zoning and Part B for townships, cities and villages not under county zoning). Finally, this chapter describes how different land use categories are proposed to be managed in the future.

EXISTING COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Mason County is characterized by large areas of farmland and forest. Along the Lake Michigan shoreline, there are extensive bluff and dune areas. Pristine rivers and streams flow through the county from east to west and empty into Lake Michigan. There are many small lakes, and large Hamlin Lake sits behind a dam and the dunes at Ludington State Park. Small wetlands dot the landscape. Many other wetlands in the agricultural areas were drained long ago. Most of the privately owned shoreline of Lake Michigan and the inland lakes is developed with cottages, seasonal and year-around homes. The City of Ludington is a deep water small port city, where tourists and industry both co-exist. Ludington's waterfront is largely dedicated to deep water facilities (including the pier complex for the Ludington to Manitowoc, Wisconsin ferry) and industry, but is converting to marinas, parks and water-related condominiums. Highway corridors are also important. US-31 is a freeway that comes from Muskegon to US-10 just east of Ludington. US-10 extends from the port at Ludington nearly due east to the county line and beyond to Clare and Bay City. It has become an important commercial corridor near the interchange. The US-10/US-31 corridor east of the interchange is rapidly developing, generally in a scattered and low intensity pattern. US-31 splits from US-10 at Scottville and extends north to the county line and the City of Manistee a short distance farther. Scottville is a small city in the center of the county and there are three rural villages, Custer, Fountain and Free Soil. There are 15 townships and one, Pere Marquette, is a charter township.

The diversity of landscapes in Mason County is highly prized by those that live and visit here. Orchards and farm fields, beaches and dunes, forests and wetlands, rivers and lakes provide a rich tablet for the eye to behold in the changing seasons. The small towns combined with a complete complement of retail and urban service options add to the variety of living, shopping, working and recreating opportunities. But changes to the landscape and to the job base have begun to threaten confidence that these prized characteristics will remain intact for enjoyment by future generations. This Plan proposes measures to restore confidence in a sustainable future.

KEY ISSUES FOR THE FUTURE

Mason County faces a number of issues related to current trends and its vision for the future. Two issues are much more important than the rest and guide key policies in this Plan. They are discussed below.

Economic Base in Land Resources and Industry

Mason County's economy is based on agriculture, tourism and industry. Industry is suffering and there are land use trends working against sustained agriculture and tourism. The county needs to provide a means for new industry to become established, while at the same time, protecting agriculture and tourism.

About all a county can do to provide for new industry is to work with its cities, villages and townships to ensure an adequate supply of land that is well-served by all-weather roads, railroad, shipping and air service, and has public sewer and water to industrial sites. Of course the land must be suitably zoned and located so as to not undermine the integrity of adjacent land uses. The county can also participate in job retention and marketing activities to promote the benefit of siting in the county. Once these measures are taken, it will be a high quality of life for industry owners and workers that attract them to the area: good schools, medical care, arts, culture and recreation are chief among these amenities. Mason County has all these amenities and by valuing and sustaining them, it can attract new jobs for a prosperous future.

Protecting the environment is key to the survival of agriculture and tourism and to sustaining a high quality of life. Those environmental elements that should be protected include surface and groundwater, wetlands, shorelines, forests, productive farmland and habitat for threatened and endangered species. Mason County will need to be aware of the thresholds of the effects of unplanned development on the environment. The county will need to make sure that scattered residential and commercial development does not tip the county over the thresholds that seriously weaken its agriculture and tourism economies.

People are retiring at a younger age than the previous generation and many are moving north, looking to places such as Mason County as a retirement location. Many of them demand services they formerly enjoyed that are not currently available, thus putting pressure on budgets that are already under pressure from inflationary, and rising worker benefit costs. With this influx comes many challenges, from increased traffic to increased pressure on agricultural lands, forest lands, lakes and streams. For example, in Mason County today, recreational land is often selling for more money per acre than average agricultural land.

Agriculture is important in Mason County, but is facing sustainability problems. The conversion of agricultural land to residential use threatens the future of both the agricultural economic sector and the rural character that residents and tourists enjoy. As non-farm residences are built in farming areas, it becomes more difficult for farming operations to continue as non-farm residents often complain about noise, dust, odor, fertilizers, pesticides, fungicides and many of the farm practices necessary on a modern farm.

Photo 3-1
Cottage on Big Sable



Photo by Ron Carter

Mason County is blessed with highly diverse agriculture and tourism. Agriculture includes orchards, row crops, livestock, Christmas trees, hops, blueberries and confined animal feeding operations. Tourism activities and attractions include camping, boating, historic sites, snowmobiling, hunting, fishing, and going to the beach. There are many motels, restaurants, a State Park, National Forest lands, a full compliment of retail stores, festivals, the county fair, the ferry to Wisconsin and primary and secondary homes on lakes and in the woods. This diversity is healthy, necessary for the economy, and the environment needs to be protected in order to maintain that diversity.

Maximize Existing Public Investments in Infrastructure—the Ludington to Scottville Corridor

The US-10/US-31 corridor is developing rapidly and is shifting the center of retail and service business from downtown Ludington to the freeway interchange of US-10 and US-31. Commercial and industrial uses are scattered all the way to Scottville.

Local communities and MDOT have already invested heavily in the corridor. There are several thousand acres of undeveloped land that should be built upon over time, in order to make efficient use of the existing investment in public sewer, water and the five lanes of US-10/US-31 itself. Building on the undeveloped land in the corridor will take development pressure off of rural land. This protects the agriculture and agri-tourism economies of the County, and protects the quality of life of those already living in rural areas. In addition to making good use of existing infrastructure, it delays the need for infrastructure investment elsewhere. It also improves opportunities for affordable housing as higher density is feasible.

Yet, there are reasons to be concerned about new development on the corridor. First, if it robs jobs and sales from existing businesses in Ludington or Scottville, then there is no net gain to citizens, only more empty storefronts in the two cities in the county. Second, if it happens too fast, or at too low a density it will underutilize the infrastructure

investment if stores close from lack of a market or others can not be built because too much land is used to serve too few. Third, the corridor serves as one of the main entryways into the county and the City of Ludington, and some citizens are already concerned that its visual character presently reflects poorly on the community's sense of place. New development should be more carefully designed with an eye to an improved aesthetic. Fourth, if the design and layout is not carefully done, and if new parallel roads are not constructed as recommended in Chapter Five, then traffic safety and congestion will become problems as the corridor develops.

Encouraging a compact growth pattern for the corridor that includes residential, commercial, and industrial development in appropriate locations will be essential to the efficient provision of public services and sustainability of corridor businesses. While this Plan recommends a general arrangement of industrial and commercial development on the south side of US-10/US-31, commercial on the north side, and residential development north of the commercial, the over-arching purpose is job development with nearby affordable housing in neighborhood oriented clusters. This must occur in staged increments only as the market permits and only after all measures to properly build out Ludington and Scottville are taken.

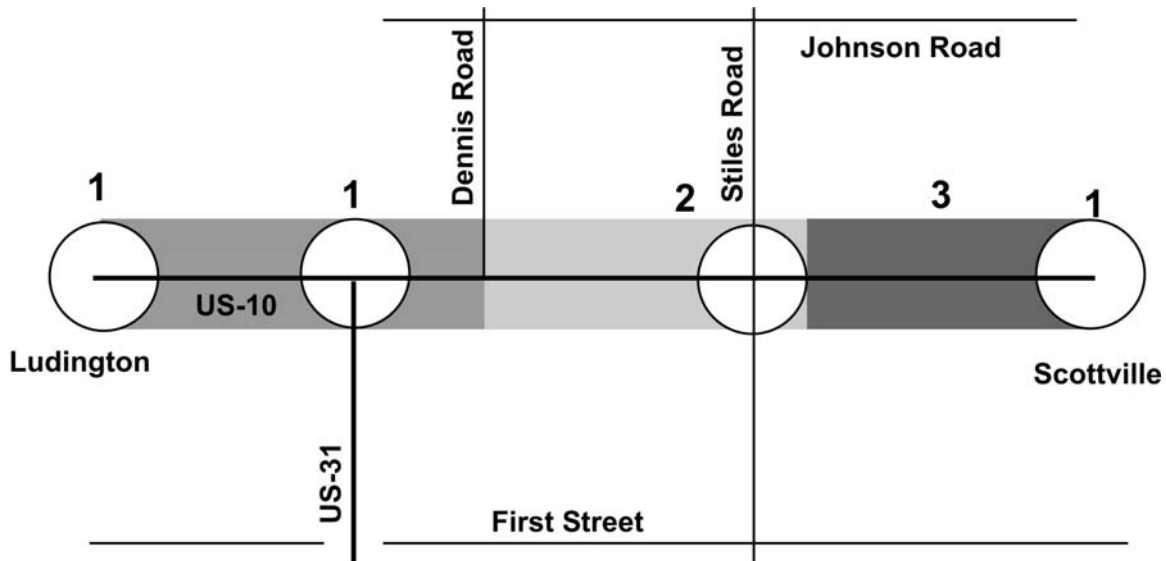
KEY LAND USE POLICIES—PART A

This section describes key land use policies in Mason County in townships subject to county zoning. It is intended to provide an overview of the direction the county intends for land use change in the future. Map 3-1 illustrates those key policies.

In general, the intent is to concentrate future development along the US-10/US-31 corridor from the interchange to Scottville, while preserving rural lands and natural features elsewhere. Development of the US-10/US-31 corridor would take place in stages (see Figure 3-1), with the first stage (from present up to about 20 years into the future) focusing first on Ludington and Scottville, and then development in the center part of the corridor. A node at the freeway interchange of US-10 and US-31 would continue to be devoted to “Big Box Retail” development. In the second stage (after about 20 years), new development would center around the intersection of Stiles Road and US-10/US-31. In a final stage (30 or more years from the present), development of the corridor from Stiles Road east to Scottville would take place. Job centers in the villages of Custer, Free Soil and Fountain are also encouraged, within defined community service areas once both public sewer and water are available.

These time frames are based on rates of change in 2012. If change accelerates, then less time will pass before a stage is complete and vice versa. The biggest impediment to successful implementation of this policy is developers who do not use the developable part of property (i.e. avoid all wetlands) intensively enough. That will result in prematurely using up the scarcest resource in the county—undeveloped land served (or servable) by both public sewer and water. It will also push development into the rural areas of the county which should be preserved for their renewable natural resource value.

**Figure 3-1
Staged Development**



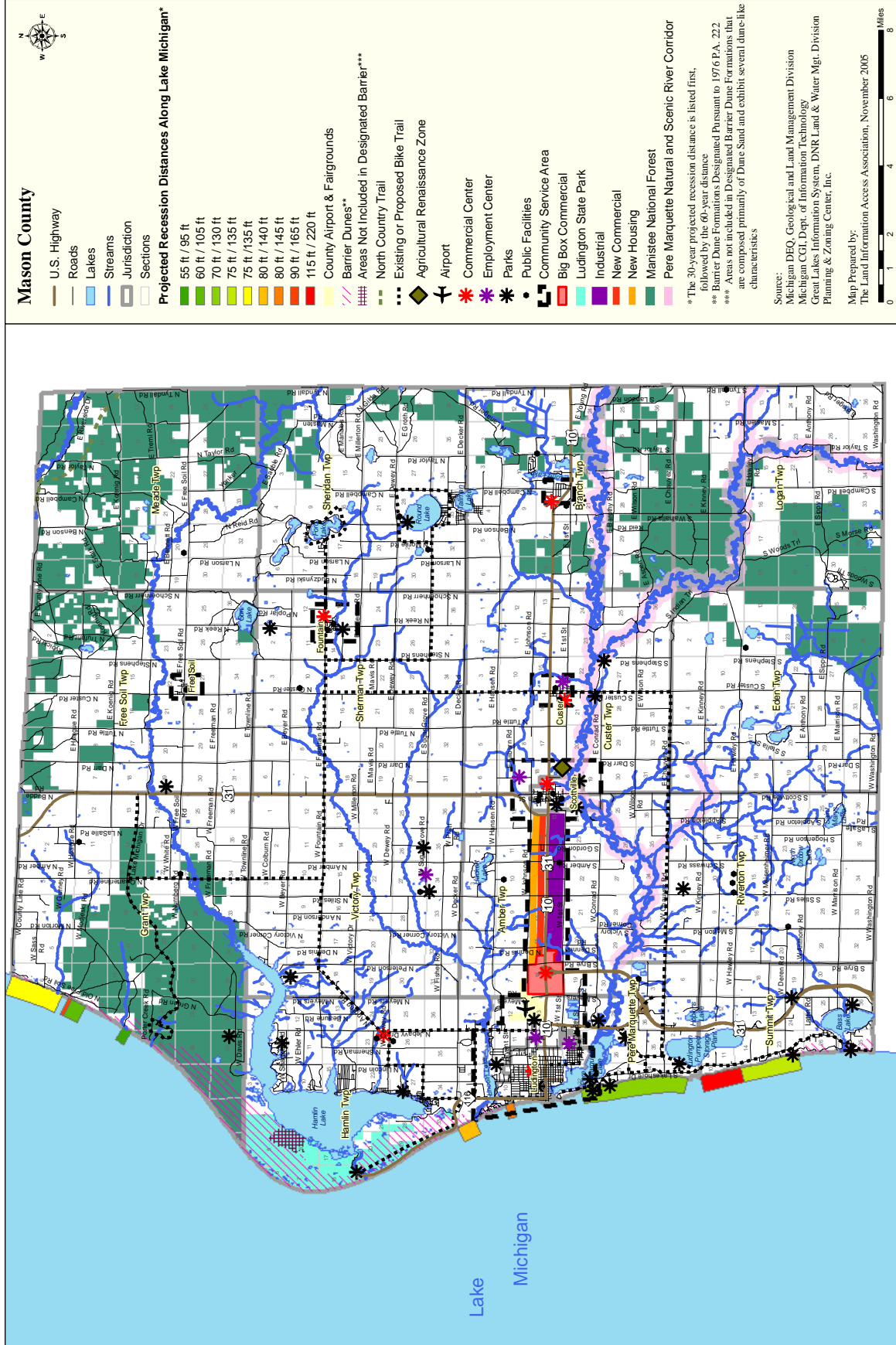
US-10/US-31 Corridor

The US-10/US-31 corridor from the freeway interchange to Scottville should be the focus of future development in order to take pressure off of rural areas and make the corridor an employment center. There will be a mix of uses, including commercial, industrial and residential in order to improve economic vitality and make maximum use of the investment the county has already made in existing public infrastructure. The highway will provide excellent access and the construction of new parallel roads as well as an efficient layout of commercial and industrial properties can help reduce congestion and traffic accidents. Attractive building, sign design, and landscaping will improve visual character. North of the highway commercial development, mixed office, small commercial and both medium density (4 dwelling units/acre) and high density (8-12 dwelling units/acre) housing will provide for walkability and convenience to work and shopping.

The corridor will extend about one half mile north of the highway to Johnson Road and one half mile south of the highway to First Street. Commercial development will be the designated land use in the first $\frac{1}{4}$ mile on both the north and south side of the highway. There can be some mixing of industrial and office uses in this area as this is already a characteristic. In the next band south, down to First Street, the primary use will be industrial in order to take advantage of the railroad. Commercial establishments with a large number of employees may locate in the industrial area on the south side of the highway.

The US-10/US-31 corridor development area will require zoning changes in order to provide for mixed use development, changed designation of zoning districts and to address the appearance of the corridor. The area south of the highway in the corridor is presently zoned commercial, with only a small area zoned industrial. The industrially zoned area of the corridor needs to be much larger. See Chapter 4, Zoning Plan for more information.

Map 3-1 Key Mason County Land Use Policies



Eventually the development of this corridor will extend all the way east to Scottville. However, in the first stage, new residential, commercial, and industrial development will only extend to Dennis Road.

Currently, the US-10 corridor east of Scottville has commercial and higher density residential zoning along the south side of the highway all the way to Custer. There should not be any commercial or high density residential zoning between Scottville and Custer except for the first one half mile east of Scottville and about one quarter mile west of Custer on the north side of the highway. This is because of the lack of public sewer and water, and the presence of both utilities plus a five-lane road west of Scottville.

Big Box Commercial Designated Area

The area around the US-10/US-31 interchange will be designated as “Big Box Commercial.” This is where establishments known as “Big Box Stores” should be encouraged to locate (such as the Meijer, Home Depot, Lowes and WalMart that are already there). This location will provide better access for the larger stores, and will allow for a mix of other types of commercial, industrial and residential uses farther east along the corridor, where a variety of smaller businesses are located, and where the transportation and site impacts of “big box” stores could be more difficult to manage. There is a need for new connecting roads in this area as described in Chapter Five.

Protection of Important Natural Features

In order to protect water quality and sensitive environments in Mason County, careful development approaches will need to be used along rivers, streams, lakes, floodplains, wetlands and dunes. A continuing educational effort will be needed regarding the value of natural features and regulatory and volunteer methods to protect those resources.

Wetlands, Rivers and Streams

Of particular concern are wetlands, rivers and streams. These are shown on Map 3-2, Floodplains and Wetlands. Very few of the floodplains in the county have been mapped through the FEMA National Flood Insurance Program. The FEMA maps help identify areas that should not be built upon in order to limit the potential for property damage and to limit the potential increase in flooding due to floodplain development. Local units of government must request FEMA to produce the maps. Floodplain areas not mapped by FEMA should be identified and development limited in those areas. Map 3-2 provides clues to where some of the floodplains are for which FEMA floodplain maps have not yet been requested. These clues include river segments with multiple stream channels or frequent switchbacks and bends. As of 2013, FEMA has been updating the floodplain maps which should be adopted by 2014.

Wetlands shown on Map 3-2 were identified by the National Wetlands Inventory. Wetlands exist across most of Mason County, which means that development will have to be designed very carefully in order to protect valuable wetland functions. Wetland functions include stormwater storage and cleansing, groundwater recharge, spawning area for fish, nesting habitat for birds and other animals, and natural scenery.

Map 3-2 shows the location of rivers and streams in Mason County, most of which are of very high quality, supporting desirable species of game fish. Rivers and streams should be protected by setting development back from shorelines, providing vegetative filter

strips, directing stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces away from surface water and preventing sediment, toxic chemicals and warmed water from entering the water.

Map 3-1, Key Policies, indicates streams that have protective greenbelt zoning provisions. The Pere Marquette River is designated as a state Natural River, and as a federal Scenic River. These designations mandate certain provisions to help retain the naturalness of the shoreline and to help protect river water quality. Those provisions include deeper setbacks for buildings, greater minimum lot widths, limitations on the size of signs, deeper setbacks for septic systems, a natural vegetation buffer strip, limitations on the clearing of shoreline vegetation and control of access to the river. The county will support enforcement of those provisions in order to protect this economic and quality of life asset.

High Risk Erosion Areas

Map 3-1 indicates where the state has identified Lake Michigan shoreline at high risk for erosion. The map legend indicates the projected rate of recession (erosion of shoreline bluffs in a landward direction), with shoreline segments identified by green bands likely to experience comparatively slower rates than the segments identified by yellow and red bands. The recession rate is expressed by two numbers, with the first representing the distance of projected recession over a 30 year period, and the second number the rate projected over a 60 year period. Development of shoreline properties should not be permitted within the projected recession area. Other measures, such as planting or retaining vegetation on dunes and bluffs, and directing the runoff from impervious surfaces away from the top of bluffs should be required. This will require careful coordination with the DEQ which administers high risk erosion area regulations.

Barrier Dunes

Map 3-2 shows the location of designated barrier dunes. These were originally identified as part of PA 222 of 1976. The "Critical Dune Area" portion of the law was separated out as Part 353 of the Michigan Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, PA 451 of 1994 and retained the title of "Sand Dune Protection and Management", which is administered by the DEQ's Land & Water Management Division. The mining regulation became Part 637 with the title "Sand Dune Mining", and is administered by the DEQ's Geological Survey Division.

There are designated critical dune areas along the shore from the City of Ludington north into Grant Township. Much of this area is in public ownership, either Ludington State Park or the Manistee National Forest. In those areas that are privately owned, the county and local units of government should work closely with the MDEQ and MDNR to ensure that development or mining activities proceed in a manner that will ensure the sustainability of the shoreline dune environment.

Photo 3-2
Mason County Dunes



Photo by Robert Garrett

Public Facilities

The locations of existing public facilities are shown on Map 3-1. While some communities plan improvements to existing facilities (see the Mason County Data Book, Chapter 7, Public Facilities and Physical Services), there are no known plans for the construction of new facilities in the near future. All proposed new public facilities in the county by any governmental entity should be reviewed by the County Planning Commission for consistency with this Plan.

Recreation

Recreation is an important part of the tourism economic sector and of the quality of life for residents of Mason County. Map 3-1 shows the locations of parks, Ludington State Park, Manistee National Forest, the North Country Trail, and existing or proposed bike and snowmobile trails. Completing the proposed bike trail routes and providing for pedestrian and bike connections from residential areas to other points of attraction will be important in making the county more attractive for new businesses and residents. It will also help promote an active and healthy lifestyle for county residents.

Rural Areas

It is the policy of the county that the use of rural lands be devoted to agricultural and forest production and the occasional non-farm residence. Privately owned rural areas are shown in white on the Key Policies Map (Map 3-1). Two changes are needed to see this policy become effective. One, the permitted zoning density on existing agricultural and forest lands should be changed from one dwelling unit per acre, to something substantially less; in the area of one dwelling unit per 40 acres would be best. This is known as a quarter-quarter system. The maximum lot size for each dwelling unit would be 2 acres (unless the District Health Department required more because of soil conditions for the septic system). Thus a farmer with 120 acres would be permitted 3 dwellings on 2-acre lots. This protects large amounts of farm and forest land for long-term farming and forest management. If a landowner desired a higher density, they would have to pursue rezoning to a zone which allowed a higher density. This change

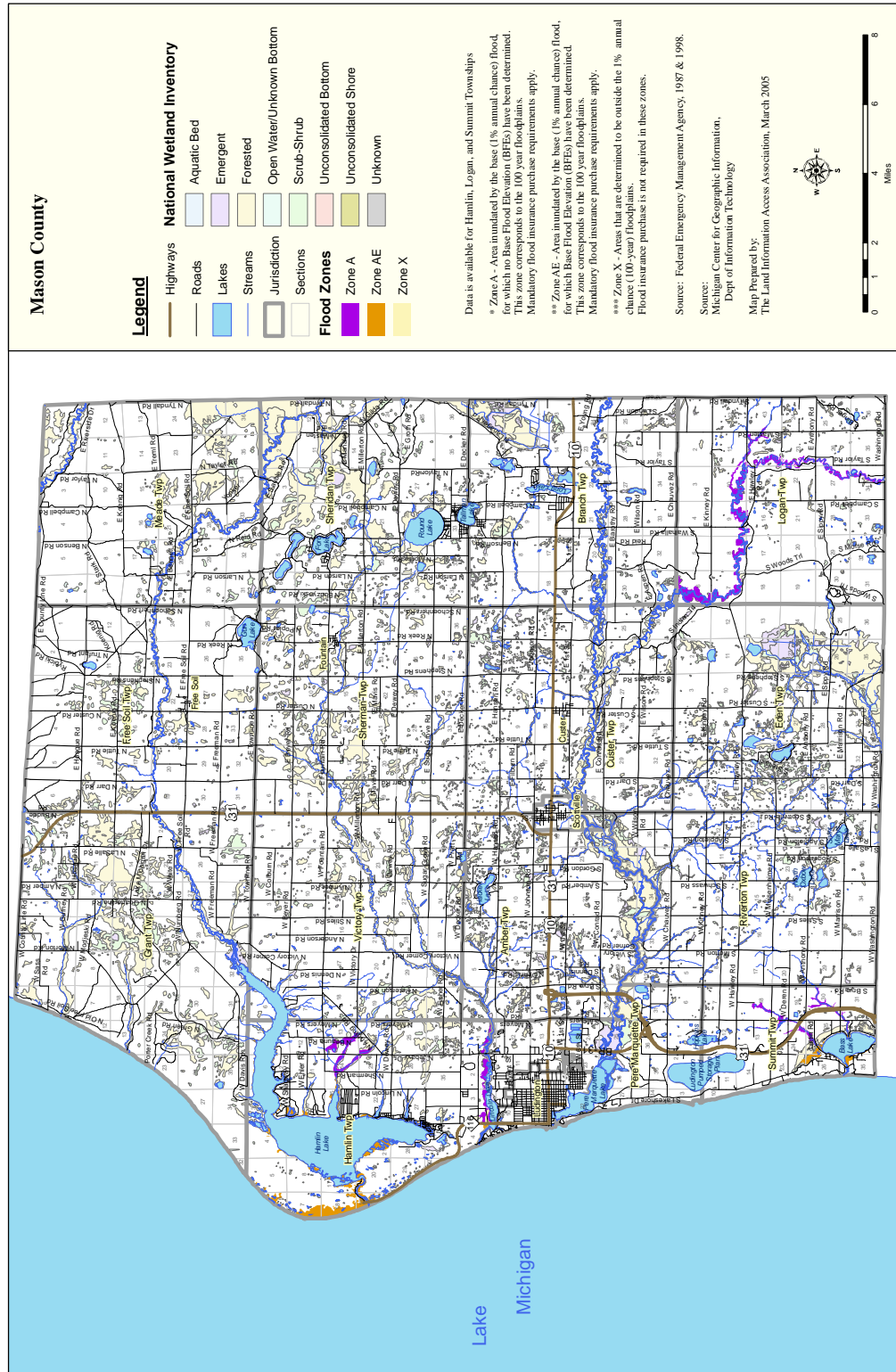
would allow farmers to score higher on the state or federal purchase of development rights (PDR) programs. These are long-term preservation programs where government pays farmers for the development rights to farmland. However, there are other options that should be considered if there is insufficient political support for moving to the quarter-quarter system. These other options are described later in this chapter. Second, the county should explore creating its own PDR program and a transfer of development rights (TDR) program as well. Development rights programs require new ordinance provisions. A TDR program requires the identification of “sending zones” and “receiving zones.” In Mason County, sending zones would be identified in agricultural areas where soils are especially suited for farming and where they may be under imminent threat of conversion from agriculture to other uses. Receiving zones would be set up where more concentrated development is desired, such as in the area designated for medium and high density residential along the US-10/US-31 corridor.

Photo 3-3
**Rural Areas Should be Devoted Primarily
to Agriculture and Forestry**



Photo by Robert Garrett

Map 3-2 Floodplains and Wetlands



KEY LAND USE POLICIES—PART B

This section describes key policies toward land use in townships, cities and villages in Mason County that are not subject to county zoning. It is intended to provide an overview of the direction the county intends for land use change in the future, and how those communities not subject to county zoning can participate in preparing for a common future with other communities in the county. Map 3-1 illustrates key policies.

In general, the intent is to concentrate future development in specific areas while preserving important natural resources, agriculture, forestry and rural character. Development areas include the US-10/US-31 corridor from the interchange to Scottville and in the existing cities and villages when public sewer and water are provided.

Not all of the important Lake Michigan shoreline, inland lakes, rivers and streams in Mason County are under county zoning. Important stretches are in Grant, Hamlin and Pere Marquette Townships, as well as in the City of Ludington, all of which have their own zoning. It is important to coordinate protection of important environmental features across all contiguous jurisdictions, as nature does not respect jurisdiction boundaries.

Community Service Areas

The Key Policies Map (Map 3-1) shows the outline of proposed community service areas around existing cities and villages. Inside these lines is where future commercial or high density development should occur, but only when public sewer and water are provided. The purpose of community service areas is to help communities manage the timing and location of growth so that community services can be provided efficiently and cost-effectively. In order for communities to provide affordable public sewer and water, there will need to be a sufficient number of and concentration of hook-ups to homes and businesses and participation by the development community. The Community Services Area lines shown on Map 3-1 indicate the proposed limits of community service areas over at least the next twenty years. As time passes, an evaluation of growth trends can be used to guide decision making on whether the area designated for community services should be expanded or contracted, and in what directions.

Protection of Important Natural Features

Although more highly developed, the three townships, two cities and three villages not under county zoning have extensive wetlands, rivers, streams and lakeshores. The protective greenbelt zoning for rivers and streams in townships under county zoning should also be adopted by those communities that do not have it. Wetlands and floodplain ordinances should also be adopted. Protection of lands at high risk of erosion along Lake Michigan and protection of designated sand dunes should continue to be coordinated with the DEQ.

MANAGEMENT OF LAND USE IN THE FUTURE

Introduction

This section describes how land is presently used within Mason County and discusses how land is proposed to be used in the future by land use type. The discussion of future land use includes the general distribution, location, and extent of the uses of land for agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, recreational, and other land uses. The categories listed here correlate closely to the zoning districts in the Mason County Zoning Ordinance. As in the Mason County Zoning Ordinance, the residential land use category is divided into several residential land use types according to general characteristics, purpose, location and density. Generalized existing land use is shown in the Mason County Data Book on Maps 4-4 (1978 aerial photograph data) and 4-5 (2001 satellite data). Future land use is illustrated in this chapter on the Future Land Use Map, Map 3-3. The legend uses standard colors for the land uses depicted. At some point the colors on the county zoning map should be changed to the same colors as on this map. Additionally, local governments in the county are urged to use the same colors on local future land use plans and zoning maps.

Land and Water Resource Conservation

Agricultural

Agricultural land makes up about one-quarter of the land in Mason County. Much of the designated agricultural land use is comprised of prime farmland soils (as is and if drained), and farmland of local importance. This district is designed to maintain the economic viability and character of productive farmland and to allow for agri-tourism practices necessary for education and promotion of Michigan-made products.

Most of this district generally matches the areas of prime soils in the county. However, these soils and registered lands in the P.A. 116 Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program may be fragmented within this district. Agriculture is planned as the primary use for at least the next twenty years. If farmers remain committed to farming, then agriculture will be the primary use for much longer. Within this district, all non-farm related residential development including premature, scattered or sprawling strip residential development will be discouraged.

Forty acres should be considered to establish residential density using the quarter-quarter system. Each new dwelling would be on a parcel no more than 2 acres in size unless more area is required by the septic system requirements imposed by the Health Department. This preserves much more land for farming. In order to permit more housing on a parcel, the land would have to be rezoned. Large landowners would be encouraged to cluster permitted units in a small area instead of scatter them throughout a site.

However, other options should also be considered if there is inadequate support for the quarter-quarter system. These options in descending order on the table below do a poorer job of protecting farmland while increasing the number of new residences in the rural area. More residences not only increase pressure on farmers to get out of farming (through complaints and rising property values—hence taxes), they also raise demands for public services—hence taxes over time. They also pose challenges for compatibility between districts and may require a transition zone between areas where farmers commit to long term agriculture and areas of rural large lot zoning.

Other Options to Consider

Technique	Comment
Quarter-Quarter Zoning as proposed above with one dwelling unit per quarter-quarter section (or 40 acres) being the base permitted density. Existing lots less than 40 acres in size would be nonconforming and could be used for residential purposes, but if zoned agricultural, could not be divided further.	Very effective at farmland preservation for as long as farmers want to farm. If farmers want to develop they must seek a rezoning. A variation is to establish zoning standards to guide the district options which would be approvable when a rezoning is requested. For example, if farmers on adjoining lands are committed to long term farming, then the next lowest density would be selected. If surrounding lands are at a common density, such as one dwelling unit (DU) per 10 acres, then that density should be selected. If surrounding land is at a variety of densities, such as 1DU per 10 acres, 1 DU per 5 acres, and 1 DU per 2 acres, then the lowest compatible density should be selected (perhaps part of the farm at one density and the rest at another).
Quarter-Quarter Zoning as proposed above, but only farmers that petition to be rezoned into this district would be so rezoned. This requires a second agricultural zone as well, usually with a one DU/20 acre standard.	This eliminates the political problem, but it may not result in many protected acres. The benefit to farmers would be the higher score to participate in the state PDR program, or in an exclusive agricultural district tax benefit, if that legislation ever passes.
Quarter-Quarter Zoning as described above, but allowing two dwelling units per quarter-quarter section instead of one. The rest would be the same as above.	More residences in agricultural areas slowly undermines long term farming, so this technique is not as good as standard quarter-quarter zoning. It would still need standards to guide rezoning.
Twenty acre minimum lot size in the agricultural district (1 dwelling unit per 20 acres).	Not nearly as effective at saving farmland as quarter-quarter and over time results in 32 dwelling units/square mile which will create a long term public service burden at some future point. Plus, it is much harder for committed farmers to purchase additional farmland, as the land value is higher for residences.
Such other techniques as still protect considerable farmland while keeping the total number of residences per square mile low. These may be combinations of the above, or variations not even mentioned.	If density in the agricultural area is lowered below one DU/20 acres, virtually no farmland will be protected as the minimum unit size for most agricultural operations is 40 acres.

Forestry

Forest cover comprises about 51% of Mason County. This land use includes a mixture of private timber operations, private seasonal recreational holdings, and large lot, low density residential development. As indicated by the name, this land use is primarily wooded. The intent of this district is to assure the continued harvest of forest products and opportunities for forest recreational activities for at least the next twenty years. Land in this district neither requires nor is planned to receive intensive county services such as a high level of road maintenance, transit or public sewer and water service. Within this district, only very low density residential development using the same quarter-quarter method as in the agricultural district. Clustering of permitted units would be encouraged so as to leave very large areas undisturbed.

The lands placed under the Forest District in the zoning ordinance should be carefully examined to ensure the land is presently used for and well suited for long term forest management. Both Norman Township and Stronach Townships to the north of Meade have 40 acre minimum lot sizes on private land in the National Forest. Norman Township sent back comments on the draft Plan saying forty acre minimum lot size zoning in the Mason County Forestry District was consistent with their plan and zoning ordinance. Forty acres is the usual minimum parcel size for economic forest management.

Proposed Transition Zone

If the quarter-quarter zoning or some higher density is ultimately approved in the agricultural areas, then a transition zone with a density in the one dwelling per 10 acre range may be necessary to serve as a buffer around farmland committed to long term agricultural use. However, any density greater than one dwelling per 10 acres will exceed the capacity of gravel roads and put great demand on the Road Commission to pave those roads. Paving will only increase demand for more dwellings in agricultural and forestry areas, so great care should be exercised before establishing a transition zone, or establishing any density greater than one dwelling per 10 acres.

Greenbelt District

This overlay district applies to relatively large, contiguous environmentally sensitive areas within Mason County, along rivers and streams to a depth of 300' on each side. This land use category reflects the desire to maintain the environmental quality of ecological systems not yet severely degraded by intensive development. Segments of the Manistee River, Big Sauble River, Lincoln River and the north and south branches of the Lincoln River are prominent among the rivers and streams included. While residential lots of a minimum of ½ acre are permitted in this district, provisions such as a native vegetation strip, limitations on construction within the floodplain, and setback requirements for septic systems are also included. While the greenbelt zoning district provides specific standards, on site evaluation of development proposals will remain important.

Natural River District: Pere Marquette Natural and Scenic River Corridor

The Pere Marquette River from the Pere Marquette Highway bridge east to the county line, and including several branches are designated as both a Natural River by the State of Michigan, and a Scenic River by the Federal government. The Natural River designation requires increased setbacks and lot widths, a natural vegetation strip with limited vegetation clearing, limits on signs, and other provisions for a corridor extending 400' landward from each side of the river. The Federal Scenic River designation extends

approximately ¼ mile inland from the centerline of the river on each side. Scenic rivers are those rivers or river segments that are free of impoundments, with shorelines or watersheds still largely primitive and shorelines largely undeveloped, but accessible in places by roads. Scenic rivers are managed to help prevent damage due to overuse or misuse of the shoreline.

Natural river regulations may be enforced by the federal or state governments, as well as by county and local governments. Public access should continue to be provided, but the impact of those access sites should be minimized and periodically evaluated. Treatments to eradicate Lamprey Eels are permitted. Educational opportunities about the importance of the natural and scenic river designations and appropriate management of the rivers should be provided.

Public and Conservancy Land Uses—Manistee National Forest and Ludington State Park

These lands provide for recreational opportunities and the preservation of environmentally sensitive areas. This designation includes lands in the Manistee National Forest, Ludington State Park, other Michigan Department of Natural Resources lands, local parks and any land conservancy properties. To date, the efforts of land conservancies in Mason County have been primarily focused on providing expertise for the management of ecosystems, rather than on acquisition of land for long-term preservation.

Photo 3-4
Ludington State Park

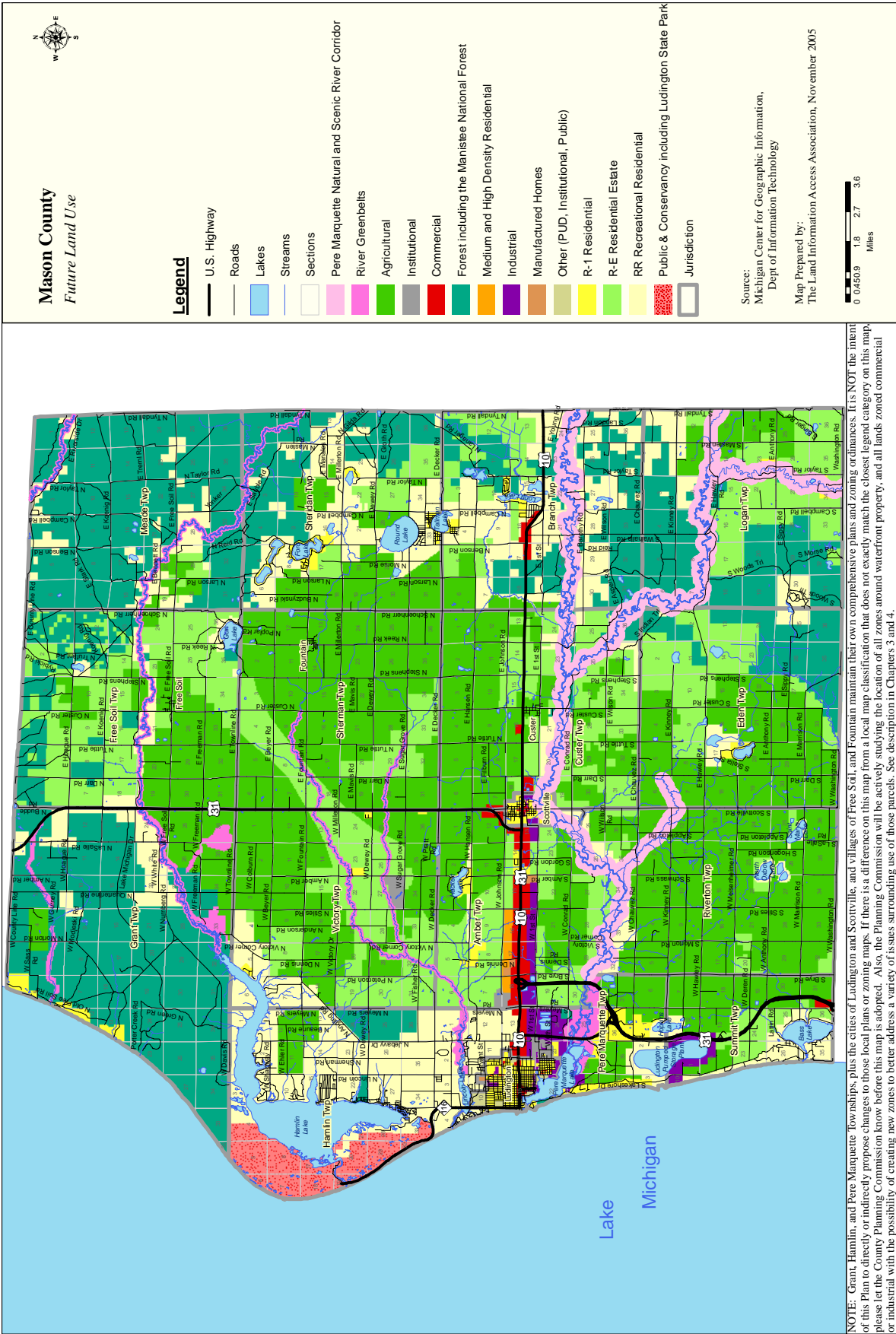


Photo by Robert Garrett

The county and local units of government should actively participate in discussions on the management of these lands in order to help promote citizen interests and ensure the continued benefit of these largely public lands. Sensitive environments such as wetlands, floodplains, sand dunes and areas of threatened or endangered species not already in public ownership should be protected by the acquisition of those lands by public entities or private conservancies where possible.

Local educational opportunities regarding sustainable management of public and conservancy lands should be encouraged, including guidance on appropriate management of private lands adjacent to public and conservancy lands.

Map 3-3
Mason County Future Land Use



Urban and Built Lands

Lands that are built upon comprise only 3.8% of Mason County. These include residential, commercial and industrial development. While only a small percentage of the area of the entire county, they have a significant visual and environmental affect. The discussion that follows describes how residential, commercial and industrial land uses should be managed in the future in order to insure that urban land uses have a positive affect on the county.

Rural Estates Residential

This land use district is intended to provide land for residential growth of a rural character in areas that are presently without public sewer and water and likely to remain without such services. It is also intended to permit continued agriculture, and to serve as a transition from agricultural uses to residential uses. The Rural Estates Residential district is spread throughout the county, but generally is not on prime agricultural lands. This district accommodates low density single family development on large lots where there may also be large gardens, limited farming, horses and other livestock managed by the gentleman or gentlewoman farmer. Residential development is presently permitted on lots of one acre or more. Conservation subdivisions and clustering should be encouraged within this land use as a means of preserving open space, and where feasible, the continuation of farming. Farms within this district are encouraged to continue in farming, and non-farm residents should be provided educational opportunities regarding the dust, noise, smells and chemical use that are part of normal farming operations, and the importance of farming to the local economy.

Recreational Residential

This land use district is intended to provide for the orderly development of areas bordering on or adjacent to publicly owned recreation lands and/or undeveloped portions of inland lakes of the county. Most of the areas of this district occur in large blocks, such as in Hamlin Township, as well as among National Forest lands in the eastern part of the county, and in small tracts bordering inland lakes and rivers. Activities relating to recreational pursuits occur within or adjacent to this district and provide for such services as hotels and motels, boat liveries and community commercial service. Public sewer and water do not exist in these areas and county services are minimal. In some instances lake boards or associations have been created to represent riparian land owners within this land use district. Owners of these parcels should be encouraged to practice stewardship of the natural resources adjacent to their properties. This means protecting lake water quality by limiting imperviousness, limiting the use of fertilizers and pesticides, providing a vegetation strip along lakeshores and riverbanks and making sure sediments do not enter surface waters. Private land owners adjacent to public lands can also practice stewardship by ensuring that fires do not spread to forest lands, junk is not deposited on public lands, and clearing of vegetation is limited. Land owners in this district should be provided educational opportunities on lake stewardship and forest land management practices.

- Presently this district is being “asked” to do too much and it isn’t working very well to meet either landowner needs or natural resource protection needs in many places. One problem is that the district has a 1/3 acre minimum lot size requirement, but many waterfront lots are already much smaller. Continue to monitor the policy adopted in the Zoning Ordinance that lessens setbacks in the RR district based on the width of the lot.

R-1 Residential

This district is intended to provide for medium density single-family residential development. Lot sizes of ¼ acre are permitted in areas where public sewer and water are available. Larger lot sizes are necessary in places where public sewer and water are not available, and lot size is determined by the ability to adequately provide for both an on-site well and a septic system. This district is limited in area in the county, and is located along US-31 and along the Lake Michigan shore in Pere Marquette Township, along the Lake Michigan shoreline in Grant Township, along Hanson Road in Amber Township and in scattered locations in the eastern part of the county. It should be the minimum district density for new development south of Johnson Road, east of the US-10/US-31 freeway interchange and west of Stiles Road.

Manufactured Home Parks

There are manufactured homes in manufactured home parks (also called mobile home parks) in Mason County and on individual parcels. Two manufactured home parks are provided for as a future land use in the US-10/US-31 development corridor. One is on the south side of the highway by Amber Road and the other is on the north side, adjacent to and just north of Meijers. In addition to existing mobile home parks in Pere Marquette Township, they are expected to be adequate for the provision of manufactured home parks for the near future. It is important that manufactured home parks be located where there is adequate sewer and water service, and all-weather roads adequate for the traffic load. That makes them an eligible land use along the US-10/US-31 development corridor.

Medium to High Density Residential

This district is intended to provide for single-family homes with a density greater than four units per acre and preferably 8-12 units per acre. This density is usually associated with small lot subdivisions, condominium development, mobile home parks and multi-family housing. These areas need to be close to job centers, shopping and other activities. High density residential is only available where there is public sewer and water available, and will help support publicly-provided infrastructure. For the near future, the only new areas of high density residential will be in Ludington, Scottville and along and north of the commercial area on the north side of the US-10/US-31 corridor between Ludington and Stiles Road. High density residential as infill where parts of this district are not already developed at maximum density would be an effective use of existing infrastructure. This district should also include sidewalks and bike trails that connect to schools, shopping, offices, industries, parks and civic facilities. Bike and walking paths should also connect into rural areas of the county.

Commercial

This land use district includes areas of concentrated commercial development along with areas planned for future permanent commercial activities. The intent is for this district to encourage retail, business and service uses to be concentrated within areas that allow for high volumes of traffic flow, are provided with public sewer and water, contiguous and adjacent to similar land use activities.

The primary areas of commercial land use are along the US-10/US-31 corridor from Ludington to Scottville. Other commercial areas include the US-31 corridor immediately north of Scottville, but not any farther north along US-31; the first half mile east of Scottville along and on the south side of the US-10 corridor; along and on the north side

of the US-10 corridor west of Custer; along a half mile segment of the US-10 corridor in Branch Township and in a few other isolated locations.

All commercial areas should be designed in order to contribute to a high-quality visual character of Mason County. They should also employ access management principles as detailed in the Mason County US-10/US-31 Corridor Access Management Plan.

Industrial

This district includes both existing areas of, and desired areas for industrial development. It provides for manufacturing, as well as assembling and fabrication activities in a manner that will minimize the effects on abutting land use districts. Industrial districts are intended to be located in areas that typically provide full public services such as public sewer and water, or where they can be easily extended. It is also the intent to provide sufficient space and traffic flow for industrial activities, and buffering from less intensive land uses or environmentally sensitive areas.

Photo 3-5
Mason County Industry



Photo by Robert Garrett

The industrial land use district includes existing industrial businesses both in the industrial park in Ludington and those in other areas, such as in Pere Marquette Charter Township. It includes the area both south and north surrounding the Ludington Pump Storage Facility. It also includes a new industrial area along and to the south of the US-10/US-31 corridor between Ludington and Scottville. This is an area served by both railroad and highway. Because drainage is a problem in this corridor, special attention must be paid to on-site storage of stormwater. Other small industrial areas will also exist in Scottville, Custer and other villages. Because of the wide variation in industrial uses a distinction should be made between “heavy” and “light” industrial districts. This will require rezoning some parcels. See Chapter Four for more information.

Industrial sites should be designed to have a positive visual character, to protect sensitive environments and to have buffers with less intensive uses, such as residential.

Analysis of Plans and Ordinances of Adjoining Jurisdictions

How one community develops at its borders affects the communities on the other side of that border and vice versa. It is important for Mason County to understand the potential affect of adjacent community plans and ordinances while developing its own plan. The proposed arrangement of future land uses described in this chapter and the policies proposed to support that arrangement are compatible with existing plans in adjoining jurisdictions. Zoning in jurisdictions within Mason County were evaluated to ensure consistency along county borders.

APPENDIX C

GRANT HISTORY



GRANT HISTORY

Grantee

Mason County - Mason County

Project No. CM00-198 **Project County:** Mason **Project Year:** 2000
Project title: Regional Ice Arena
Project Status: Grant Closed **Grant Amount:** \$750,000.00

Scope Item

Ice Rink Building with Refrigeration

Project Description: Construction of indoor ice arena at West Shore Community College. Facility will contain a regulation hockey rink, seating for 350 people, restrooms, four locker rooms, concession stand, staff office, and Zamboni room.

Project No. TF10-061 **Project County:** Mason **Project Year:** 2010
Project title: Mason County Fairgrounds Development
Project Status: Grant Closed **Grant Amount:** \$320,000.00

Scope Item

Entrance sign
Fencing
Landscaping
Lighting
Nature trail w/ interpretive signage
Road improvements
Site work

Project Description: Development to include nature trail, improved entrance, new signage, fencing, lighting, landscaping and paving.

Project No. TF11-056 **Project County:** Mason **Project Year:** 2011
Project title: Mason County Campground Entrance Improvements
Project Status: Grant Closed **Grant Amount:** \$129,600.00

Scope Item



GRANT HISTORY

Grantee

Mason County - Mason County

- Campground entrance
- Concrete walk
- MNRTF sign
- Site amenities
- Site preparation
- Site restoration and seeding
- Utility connections
- Welcome center building

Project Description: Development to include replacement of outdated entry station with new Welcome Center building, site entrance drive, parking/pull-off area and new entrance gates and signage.

Total number of projects: 3

Total Amount of Grant Given \$1,199,600.00

APPENDIX D

SURVEY RESULTS

MASON COUNTY SHARE YOUR OPINION

Mason County is updating their Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The County is asking park users to share their opinion to help shape the future of parks and recreation in Mason County!

The survey should take you no more than ten minutes to complete.
Your input is greatly appreciated!



TAKE THE SURVEY AT:
www.masoncountyparksurvey.com





MASON COUNTY
MICHIGAN

SHARE YOUR OPINION!

Mason County wants your opinion to help us decide
our parks and recreation priorities for the next five
years!

TAKE THE SURVEY BY SCANNING THE QR CODE:



GO TO:

www.masoncountyparksurvey.com



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MICHIGAN

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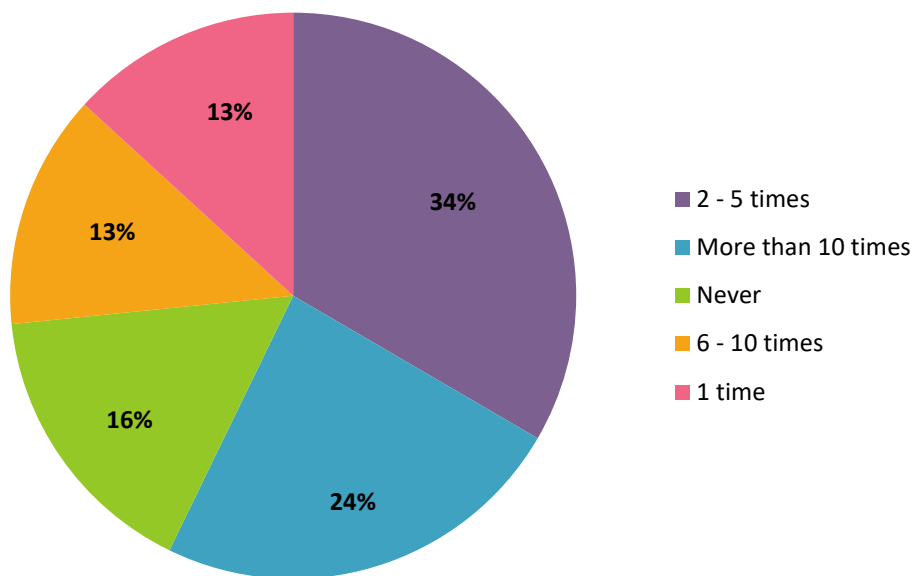
GO TO:

www.masoncountyparksurvey.com

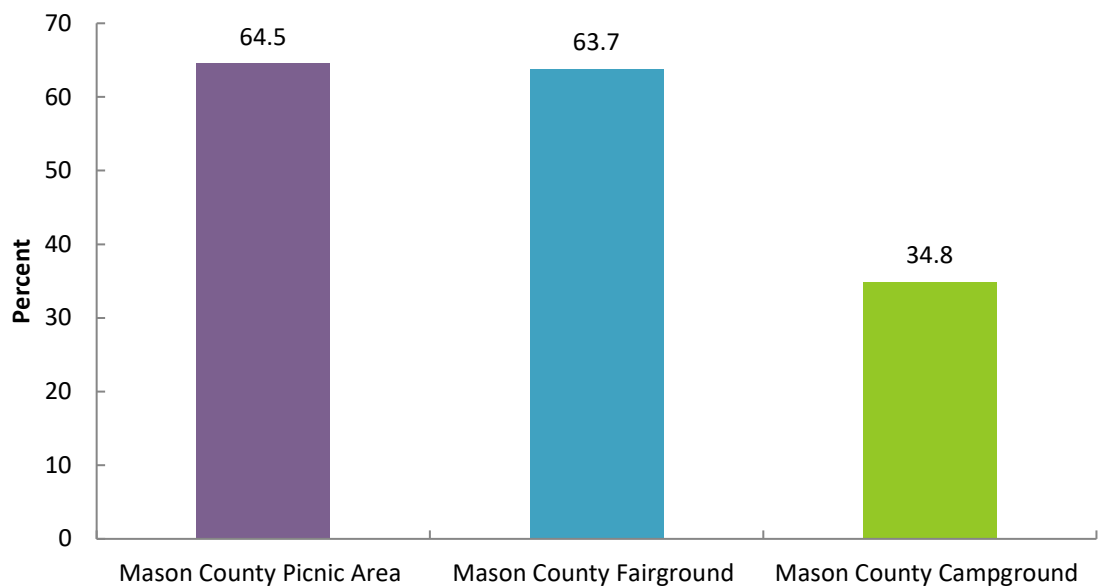
Mason County Parks and Recreation Survey

Complete Responses 472 | Partial Responses 6 | Grand Total 48

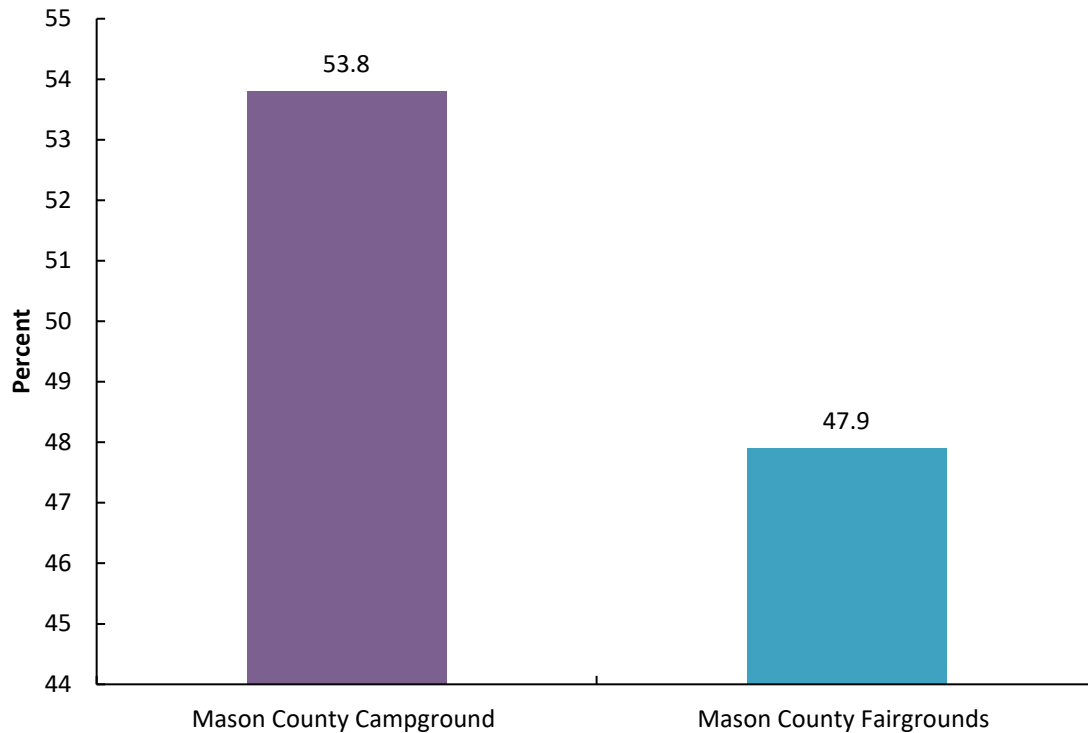
1.How many times have you or your family used a Mason County Park in the past year?



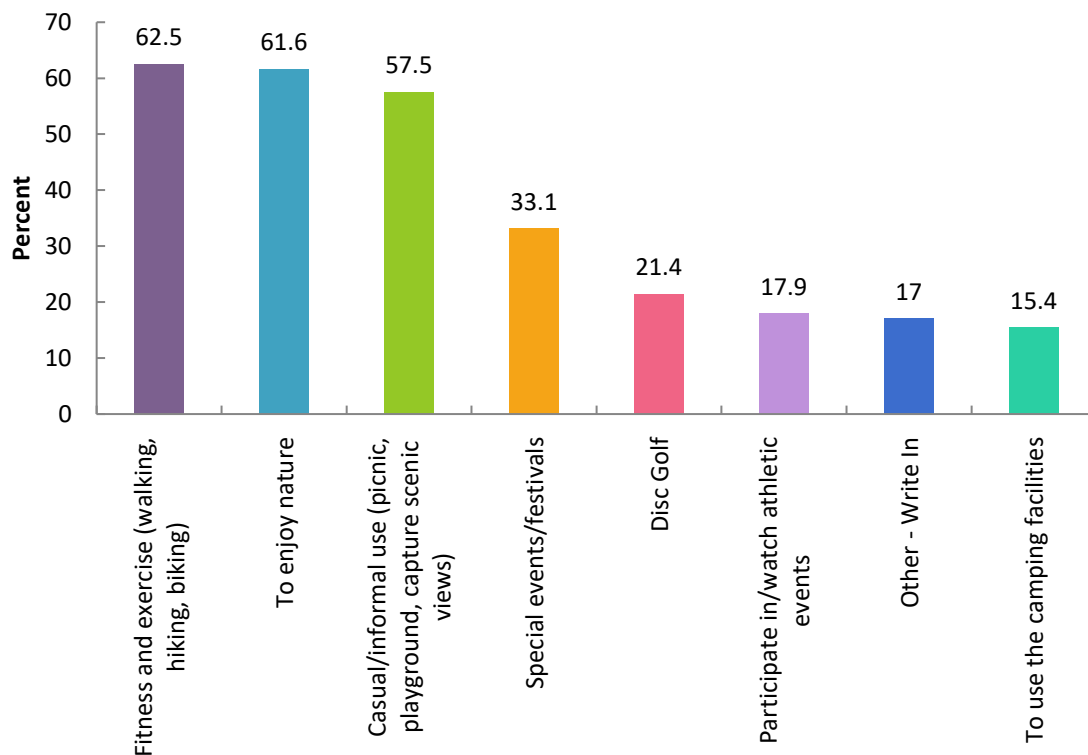
2.Which of the following Mason County parks have you visited in the past year? Please check all that apply.



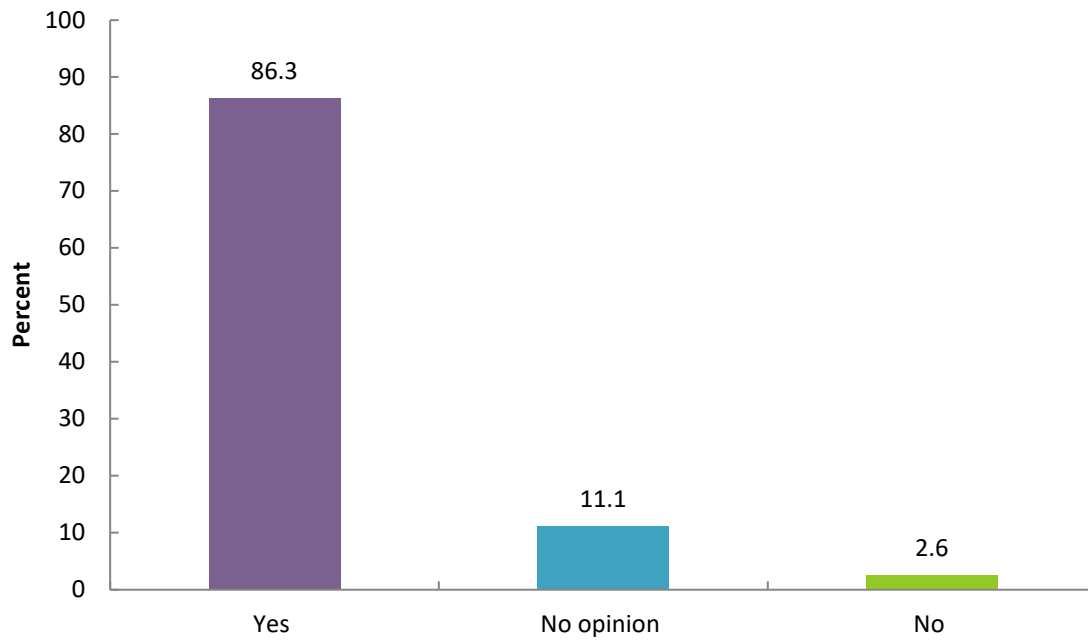
3. Please indicate if you have camped in any of the following Mason County Parks during the past year. Check all that apply.



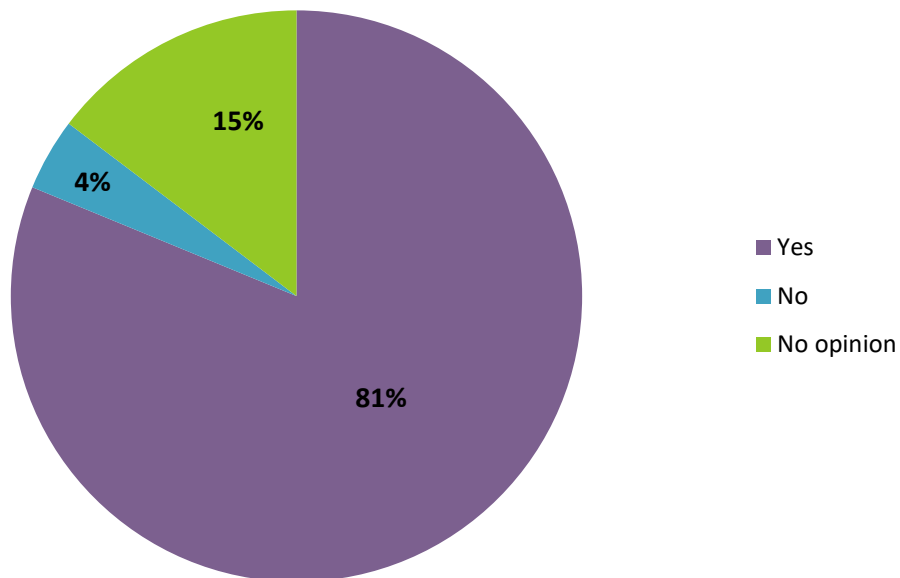
4. Why do you and/or your family visit Mason County Parks. Check all that apply.



5.If the County had the opportunity to acquire a waterfront parcel of Lake Michigan, an inland lake, river frontage or inland property would you support establishing a new park in one of these areas?



6.Would you support the development of a multi-use trail at the Inman Road Property in Pere Marquette Township?



7. Do you have any other specific ideas or suggestions for improving the Inman Road Property in Pere Marquette Township?

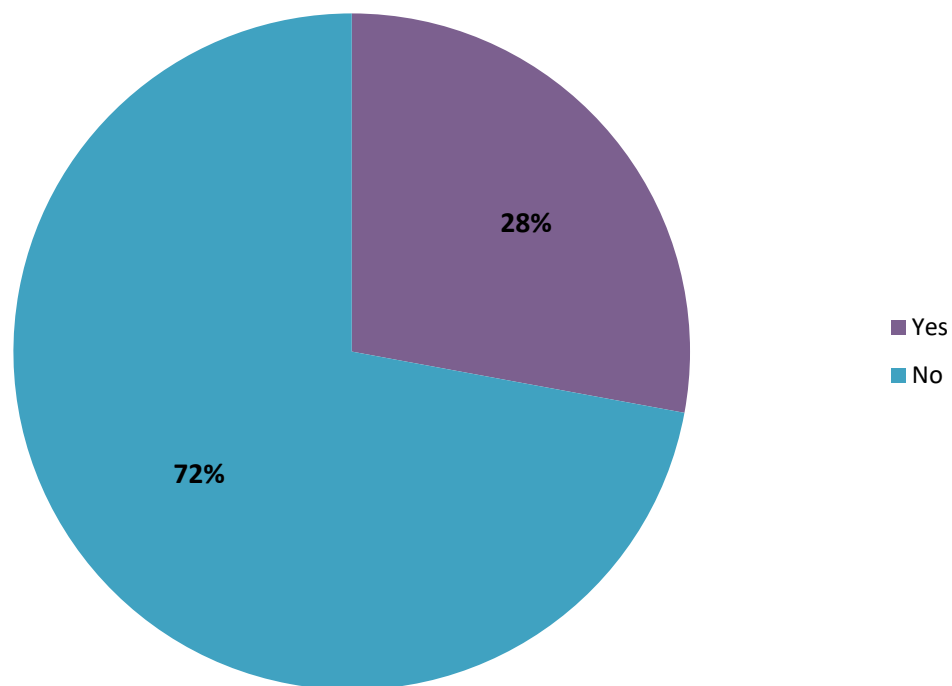
Response
Biking/walking trail connected later to other parks, e.g., path from Mason County Picnic area/Campground to Inman Road to PM Township's Pere Marquette development to Buttersville Park to White Pine Village loop.
make a bike trail
Talk to Mason County Disc Golf Organization and put a new disc golf course on the property.
Keep as natural as possible. Thank you.
I'm not familiar with this area. But it would be nice if we had more paved biking areas for people to enjoy with either walking or biking. In addition it would be great to have more cross-country skiing options in the county.
Disc Golf Course RC Crawler Course Mountain Biking Trails?
As long as my taxes are not increased for these properties the county can improve them. I would not support a tax levy for these properties.
Put in adult playground/exercise equipment.
Another disc golf course possibly, hiking or biking trails
Of really, I haven't seen it.
Mountain Bike trails
Create a dog free picnic area.
bike trails, trail running
Disc golf
hiking
It's important to keep sensitive native plant areas protected. Possibly walking trails with signage identifying the plants and types of birds seen in the area .
Hiking trails, swim areas, playgrounds for kids to get out and enjoy nature - water access to put in a paddleboard or kayak
It serves mainly people living in Ludington area. How many trails are available already?
Open it to ORVs
Rustic camping or rustic cabins with walking trails.
Dog Park. Bike trail. Hiking trail.
I love the idea of a hiking/biking trail on the property.
Hiking and disc golf
I want hiking trails with restrooms. That I can take my dog on. I want to help eradicate invasive trees and shrubs. If you organized events. I would try to come
I understand from reading Steve Begnoche's comments in the LDN that the Inman Road property is loaded with autumn olive. I would support a county-wide plan to eradicate ALL autumn olive starting with the Inman Road property.
Native plantings
Building another disc golf course Mason county will help prove the area is the spot to come play and visit
It is big enough that rustic campsites could be sited if portable toilets were placed and serviced.
I would like to see established trails... If not paved, then maybe mulched over like I've seen at some trails in North Carolina for running. I would like to see an established trail system everywhere. So people can stay on a track and not hike off trail.
Sand volleyball courts!
Pump track for bikes
Please do not develop bike trails. Native plants. Interpretive trails for hiking and walking. Dog friendly.
People like hammocking. I think there should be sets of 6x6" timber buried in various shady areas for people set up their own hammocks. I'm referring to the nylon parachute material type hammocks that use their own straps to attach to tree trunks. It would be even better if there were something over the top of the timbers to serve as an umbrella/weather protection.
While I think a trail through it would be nice, I worry it would be way too much work to remove the autumn olive AND keep it at bay. If it ends up just being a trail through Autumn Olive, I would say not to bother with it.
Zip Lines

BBQ grills Pavillions Picnic areas
We need more options outside of the downtown Ludington, PM Township area. The rest of Mason County is under served.
Hi! survey.alchemer.com Did you know that it is possible to send message utterly legit? We propose a new method of sending request through feedback forms. Such forms are located on many sites. When such business offers are sent, no personal data is used, and messages are sent to forms specifically designed to receive messages and appeals. also, messages sent through communication Forms do not get into spam because such messages are considered important. We offer you to test our service for free. We will send up to 50,000 messages for you. The cost of sending one million messages is 49 USD. This offer is created automatically. Please use the contact details below to contact us. Contact us. Telegram - @FeedbackMessages Skype live:contactform_18 WhatsApp - 375259112693 We only use chat.
Shooting range
No, but I look forward to having trails there!
I didn't know about all of the opportunities at these locations. Better advertising of amenities would be a good idea. Where are they currently promoted?
Bike trail, pavilions, tennis courts, baseball fields, nature learning center
I'm not even sure where this property is.
Camping
Some type of cycling trail.
I'd like to say is that I'd like all of these properties to be handicap acceptable. Where the elderly can use their walkers and wheelchairs at them. They shouldn't be limited because they need a walker or a wheelchair that would be just too unfair.
Remove invasive species as much as possible.
Love the idea of a multi-use trail!
Advertise its a local thing
Expand County Park to rural areas of Mason County.
non motorized boat launch
More accessible for fishing.
Honestly haven't visited it yet....sledding? Snowshoeing?
Create a bluebird nest box trail.
Bike trail
We have never been there so we can' Comment
Based on the proximity of the Inman Property to the Pere Marquette Conservation Park, I would recommend balancing uses and user types between the two parks. If the Conservation Park will have multi-use trails, then allow the trail system at the Inman Road Property to remain more rustic hiking paths, or vice versa. If bikes are allowed in Conservation Park, then consider the Inman Property as hiking only. There is also a high level of deer pressure throughout the Buttersville peninsula, as evidenced by the lack of understory growth in forests, high visual deer counts and landowner complaints. Consider opening the Inman Property to archery hunting. This could be done by a lottery system or establishing an annual "lease" per section of the park where the County chooses to allow hunting. Likewise, certain date ranges (as long as within the State's archery season) could be selected as open for hunting on the property.
Nature trails
Horse trails
I know nothing about the property, so communication about it could be a good start.
The county could be the unique and for thinking by focusing on developing new country parks reaching the needs of seniors and physically challenged of all years
Aren't there towers on this property that are fenced in?
Hiking /biking trails with benches scattered about for us older folks.
A designated winter recreation area/trail, ie x-country skiing & snowshoeing.
Start removing autumn/Russian olive.
rustic camping
How about a dog park. The one by Lincoln Lake is always too busy for my dog. Need a fenced place where the dogs can run free. Port Huron had one we visited. Was divided into four by fences and that way you could run your dog alone
I have not seen the property but imagine it to be hilly. I like mountain bike trails and hiking trails that may be good for that area.
Consider park and trail design for users of all abilities - wheelchair users, vision-restricted, etc.

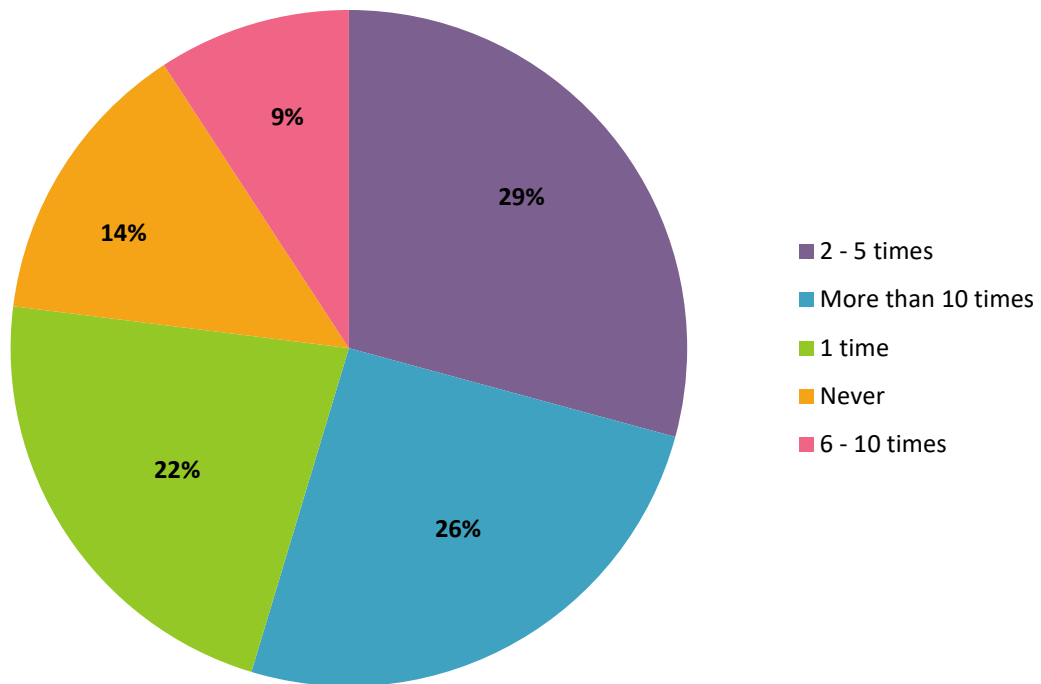
Establish two or three deer-hunting stands that are available for use by paid lottery. It's trophy deer country and would generate revenue for the parks department to purchase waterfront parcels.
Horse trails included in the multi use
Encourage yearround use, to include camping
I only answered no to question 6 because I am worried about multi-use trails allowing mountain bikes on them. Allowing mountain bikes on them usually means that they become single use mountain bike trails since they take over the use and it becomes dangerous to hike on them. Mountain bikers are often rude to hikers and other users.
Would love more Mt Bike Fat tire trails 😊
Developer mountain bike and walking trails.
Trails, especially mountain biking has become very popular and we don't have many in Mason county.
Mtn biking and trail biking is the most popular activity and is growing .
Non-motorized use only
Crest cycling trails
Bike trails and hiking trails
Bike trails
Bike and walking trails
Singletrack bicycle trails
We travel every weekend to hike/bike/ski within 2 hours of Ludington - and more local options would always be nice to have and would bring people from surrounding areas to our town! We prefer non motorized activities, as we see the pollution caused by motorized activities.
multi use trail would be great for cross country skiing.
Purpose built walking, hiking, and mountain bike trails with trailhead and facilities. Birdwatching areas.
Cross-country skiing, off-road vehicles, bike trail
Non-motorized, please.
County Golf Course
Just don't overdevelop it
Family use, workout stations, playground
A gate and managed access to prevent hunting, dumping, drug use, and other illegal activities.
Make it a picnic area with safe and clear access to the water for kayaks and canoes, even if it's only a path to carry them down to the water. A walking trail meandering through it would allow opportunities for birdwatching, a short hike, etc. for residents who live on the northern end of the county. Rustic campsites would be nice but could cause the area to become overused and abused.
Dog park, ORV trail, shooting range, ropes course, cabins, large group camping/cabin, kayak launch, fitness station trail or sledding/tubing hill.
Trail system for hiking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing would be nice. Can't really hike the disc park trails in nice weather while golfers are on the course. Also would need to be dog friendly.
Parking?
Paved biking trail
Make sure gates are open for public use
Is it fishable? Definitely a dock to fish from if so.
Not at this time
50 amp service and maybe concrete pads.
Expand the existing campground to include this property
Mountain biking
Rustic camping
Horseback Riding / Camping with horses aloud
The gate should have more signage regarding coming into the park. The gate guard just looks at you without a wave and I have often wondered what they are looking for as far as decals. The decals that are looked at are on the back of the car so why have a gate guard ?
walking trails, snowmobile trails picnic area, fishing area water access
Does multi use include motorized vehicles? If yes, would not support.
open it to horse riding
A multi-use trail system would be great. Maybe even separate trails for bikes and pedestrians?
Single track xc mountain biking
Horse trail riding

Exercise stations mixed with walking trails
Path for handicapped to use.
I would like to see parks with horse camping availability.
Not really because I am not exactly sure what parcel it is and what it's potential might be.
Not really because I am not exactly sure what parcel it is and what it's potential might be. More campsites?
Bike trails, other than mountain bike style
Have an area to use radio controlled cars/trucks.
R/C track for cars and 4/4 trucks
groomed cross country ski trail
allow free parking and picnic tables/grill
Nonmotorized use only.
Nonmotorized trails, please.

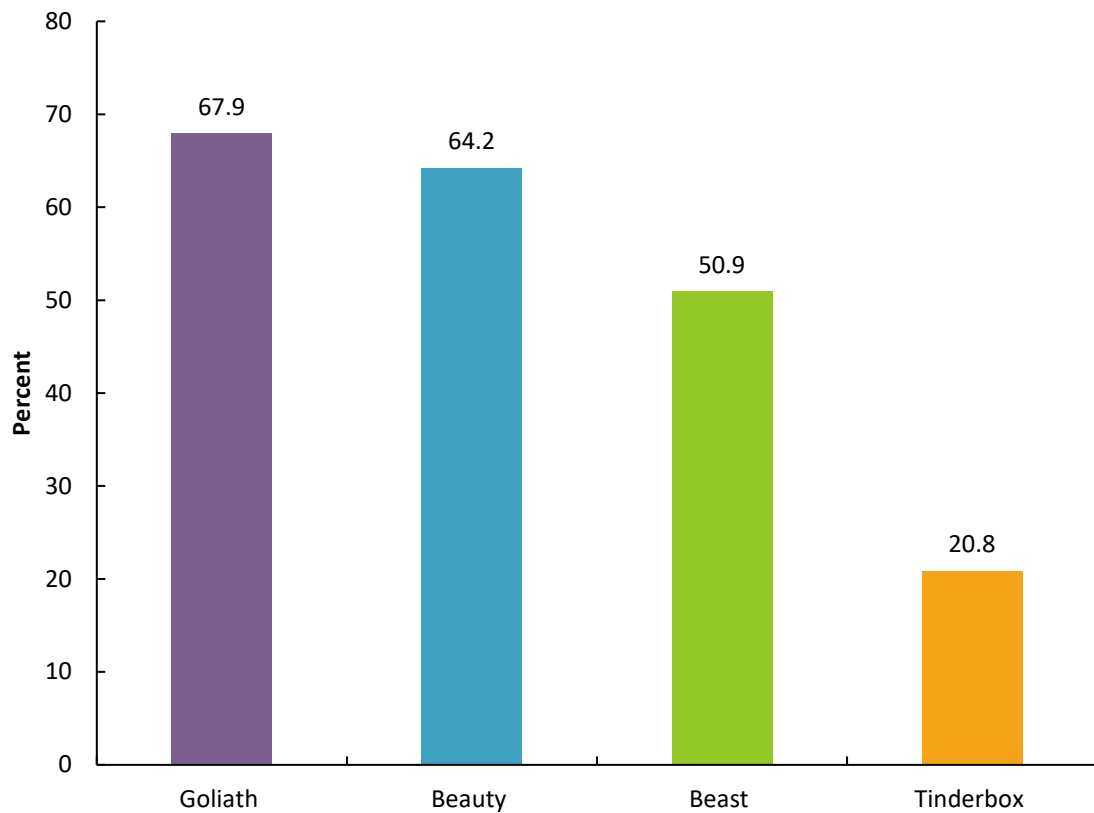
8. Have you ever used any of the three-disc golf courses located at the Mason County Picnic Area or at the Mason Campground "Tinderbox"?



9.How many times in the past year have you used one of the disc golf courses located at the Mason County Picnic Area or Mason Campground?



11.Which disc golf course do you use? Please check all that apply.



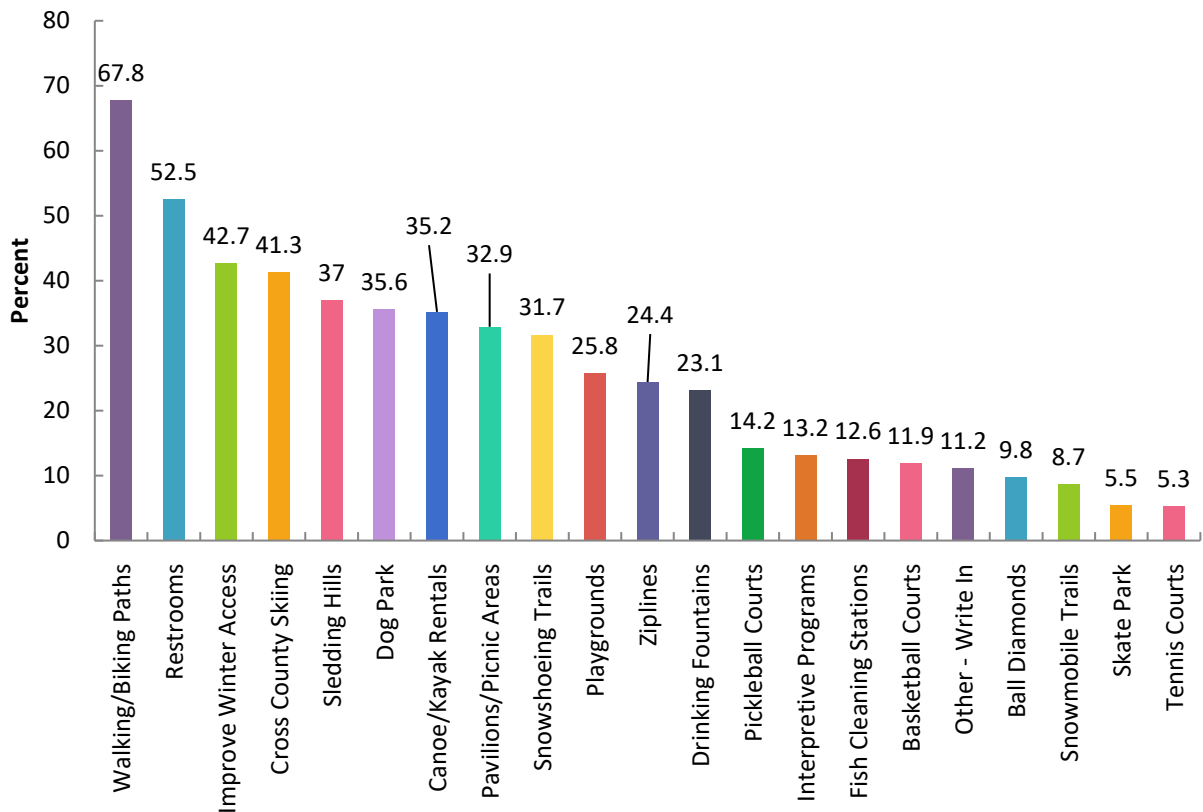
12. Do you have any specific ideas or suggestions for improving the disc golf courses?

Response
gate stay open in the summer, closes to early
The Mason County Disc Golf Organization does all the grass cutting, brush cutting and general course maintenance. I would love new tee pads on the course but they are expensive. It would be great if the Mason County courses got new tee pads because it makes course so much better.
No. Ludington is an absolute disc golf Mecca and I'm lucky to live so close.
Repair / redesign of beauty such a great beginner friendly course that is very missed by many.
New tee pads
Help from county to maintain the course. Example would be mowing.
I think the disc golf areas in the county are great. It's a great sport and it does bring people into the county from other areas. It would be fun for the community to have those who know the sport possibly hold an event for those of us who do not know the sport.
Mason County Dusc Golf courses aren't wonderful.
Yes, and I've discussed many of them with the Mason County Disc Golf Organization.
I personally am not a disc golfer but i think its a great activity to get outside and enjoy nature- especially any mason county parks!
Improve the tee pads for courses to a standard size
The prior question said check all that apply but is only setup to accept a single answer.
Improve the tee pads. Love the new baskets
No, since I have never used it.
It wouldnt let me select all the courses. But i play every single one frequently
Make it more fun. Kinda of like a miniature golf course.
Play them all, but it won't let me choose them. Build up the tees. They wash out & get muddy.
No, I think they're great, besides needing Beauty to be cleaned up and opened again
I am the trails, I don't ay disc golf
The courses also provide trails in the winter for x country skiing
Bring it back. We appreciate everyone involved. It was such a tragedy not being able to use this course for the state tournament. We support the community.
A standard T pad length
ban the alcohol
Maintain trails and allow for the courses to remain in mason county parks
Survey the courses for native plant species, then rope off those areas. Signage about the plants and their importance would help educate others. Remove invasive plant species.
I like to walk around the disc golf course because there are several native plants there. Unfortunately many have been damaged due to people walking off the course to retrieve their discs. The birding is also excellent there!
It's a great outdoor year round activity! For all ages in the family!
The previous question only allows me to select one option, even though it says select all that apply.
Better parking for Tinderbox.
More regular maintenance of tee boxes would help the experience.
Please restore Beauty
No. Just glad we have them cause it is a nice outdoor activity for ppl
Bring back beauty, the service out there isnt as good to record league scores. would be nice to have a place to submit scores
Restoring beauty to its former glory after terrible thunderstorm blew down trees
Some stations were hard to find.
Continue with updates and safety projects
No but my children have abd I support disc golfing
No, the latest improvements are great; Flight trajectory/net location, new nets, etc.
Having a porta potty year round, or most of the year would be a good thing.
Goliath was hard to follow
An accessible course would be fantastic
Better teepads

As a avid club member i feel as though the mason county disc golf organization works well with the community and county to maintain and provide a safe and clean place to play. I would love to see more courses added to mason county, but we have some of the best disc golf in the sate.
Hi! survey.alchemer.com Did you know that it is possible to send message utterly legit? We propose a new method of sending request through feedback forms. Such forms are located on many sites. When such business offers are sent, no personal data is used, and messages are sent to forms specifically designed to receive messages and appeals. also, messages sent through communication Forms do not get into spam because such messages are considered important. We offer you to test our service for free. We will send up to 50,000 messages for you. The cost of sending one million messages is 49 USD. This offer is created automatically. Please use the contact details below to contact us. Contact us. Telegram - @FeedbackMessages Skype live:contactform_18 WhatsApp - 375259112693 We only use chat.
Last time I was there, tress were down everywhere due to storms. Please clear out the trails!
These courses rule. We play every year for a summer friend tournament. There are a few alternate holes that are quite tight, so maybe some cleanup on those. Specifically, might be alternate c on beast, runs along the road outside the park and you throw over and big pricker ravine. We typically skip this hole as it seems like major lost disc potential. Possible to open up additional lines here or make it more forgiving?
My husband and I use the disc golf courses to hike, we don't play disc golf
I do not play disc golf but am very sad of the loss of the course on Jebavy Drive. Teens have so little constructive activities in the town area that this is a total shame on Ludington residents. It was very convenient for town teens that do not drive. I support these free activities for Mason county residents.
I don't play disc golf but am a strong supporter of this activity in Mason County. I am very impressed with the people who are managing and participating in this activity. A great asset to Mason County.
Not really because I do not do the disc golf.
Increase awareness
Advertise its existence. More benches
It has been a while since I've access the disc golf courses so perhaps this no longer applies- but more trash receptacles along the path to prevent littering.
Relocate trails outside the high quality forest and place interpretive signs regarding the flora and fauna.
We have watched tournaments there
No, not interested in this sport
Better signage at the Lakeshore Drive parking area.
Dont promote
Reduce potential conflict points with other park users.
No, I hope to try them in 2022.
offer "learn to disc golf" events
Disc "rental" vending type machine that dispenses low cost, beginner disc. Use a local logo to encourage business advertisers and reduce cost.
More signs and directions to the parking area
I know that disc golf is popular and it is used and appreciated.
Could we make them dula use with meandering hiking and biking trails ?
I was not aware that the Tinderbox course existed. Goliath, Beauty, and Beast are some of the best courses in the country.
We do not play disc golf, but we support outdoor activities.
I don't like the game
With very casual use (and not with extreme competitiveness) sometimes hard to navigate the holes
New up to standard Tee pads. Benches. Eradication of invasive species (autumn olive). Wifi access.
Have never played disc golf but have hiked on all of the courses off season. Better signage for the snowshoe trail would be nice. I've tried to follow it in it's entirety but always end up finding my own way :)
Eradicate the Russian Olive before it takes over the entire park.
Just make sure it's marked well enough to make it easy to follow. Maybe some brush clean-up. I throw in a buck whenever I play
It would be cool to see better marked pathways to indicate the trails to the next t-pad

Not interested in Disk Golf
Still new to disc golf, so no ideas at this time.
I do not disc golf but know others who thoroughly enjoy it.

13.What additional facilities/amenities would you like to see added to Mason County parks and recreation area? Please check all that apply.



Other Write In

- Anything that supports or promotes bicycling road or mountain bike
- Side by side trails
- Adult playground/exercise equipment.
- Bathrooms/Porta-potty
- Bike Lanes / Paths
- Canoe launch where possible
- Cell tower.. no service
- Colors! Seriously, i think stuff should be painted something other than municipal brown/beige. Stop and take a look at how brown the county is. really look.
- Covered arena
- Covered riding arena at fairgrounds to protect from inclement weather
- Covering tennis courts in the winter\
- Fairgrounds covered arena
- Fire pits at designated places on trails
- Guided bird watching
- Guided nature/birding walks for families
- Handicapped Accessible Trails
- Horseback Riding Trails, Camping with horses.
- Ice Skating Rink
- Interpretive signs
- Keep it natural
- Kids water activities- splash pad?

- Limited Deer Hunting opportunities. ie handicap hunts
- More Disc Golf Courses
- More bathroom facilities at the fairgrounds and a covered arena for shows
- More parking for disc golf
- Mountain Bike Trails
- Multi use single track for biking/running/hiking
- Sand volleyball Courts!!!
- Swimming pool for everyone
- Trails for horseback riding
- Venues that allow alcohol for weddings & events
- bicycling activities
- Horse Trails
- orv access
- please don't make these area for tourists! residential areas like this should be geared more for mason county residences
- soccer fields

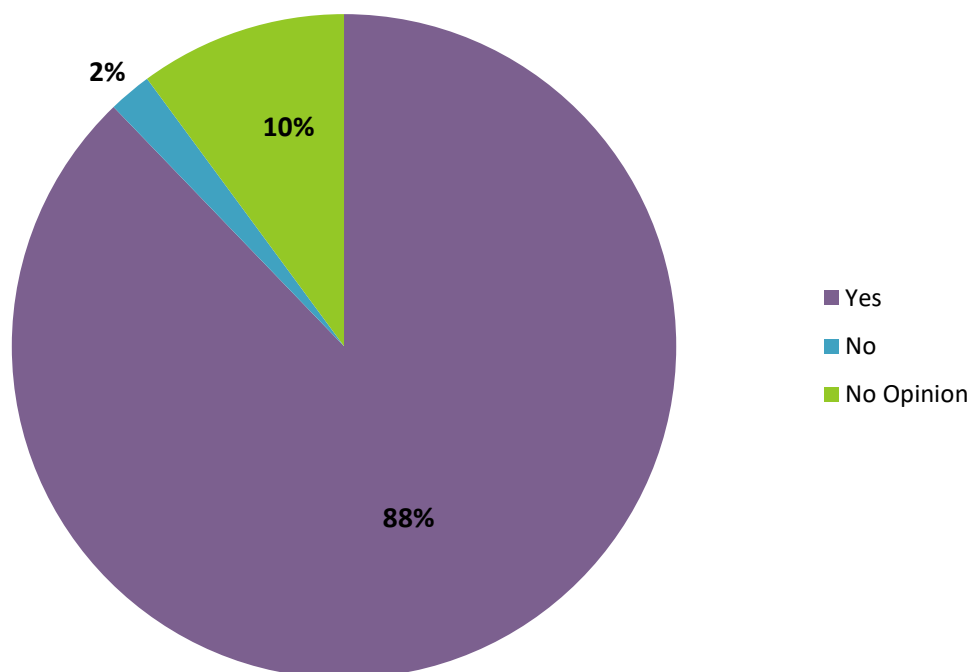
14.Please evaluate the following aspects of Mason County parks and recreation areas.

	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor	Don't Know	Responses
Variety of Facilities/Amenities							
Count	59	168	149	23	4	52	455
Row %	13.0	36.9%	32.7%	5.1%	0.9%	11.4%	
Maintenance and Appearance							
Count	80	190	114	13	3	56	456
Row %	17.5%	41.7%	25.0%	2.9%	0.7%	13.3%	
Safety and Security							
Count	92	157	110	21	1	72	453
Row %	20.3%	34.7%	24.3%	4.6%	0.2%	15.9%	
Water Accessibility (if applicable)							
Count	30	112	111	58	7	123	441
Row %	6.8%	25.4%	25.2%	13.2%	1.6%	27.9%	
Programming in the Parks							
Count	15	59	104	59	17	193	447
Row %	3.4%	13.2%	23.3%	13.2%	3.8%	43.2%	

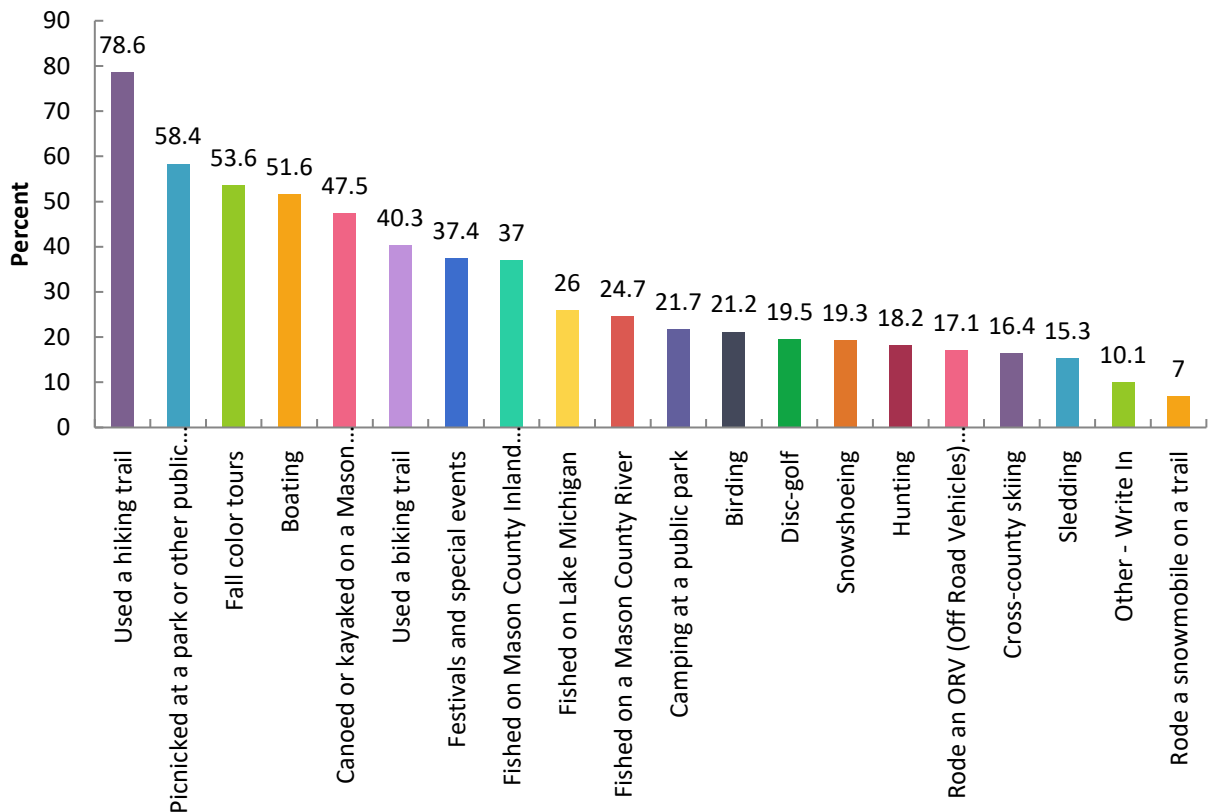
15. Please explain why you selected poor/very poor on the previous question.

- I have lived here my whole life and never knew of any of these places aside from the fairgrounds, any programming. I didn't know we had a parks and rec department for the county. It only seems like the city of Ludington and the state park do any promoting, development or communication with the community.
- They're not well kept.
- County parks have been neglected and vandalized over the years. Minimal cleaning and maintenance of facilities by employees.

16. Do you support additional non-motorized trails in the County, with potential regional connection to Pentwater-Hart Bicycle Trail, Hart-Montague Rail Trail and linking Ludington to Scottville.



17.I have participated in the following recreational activities in Mason County in the past year. Check all that apply.

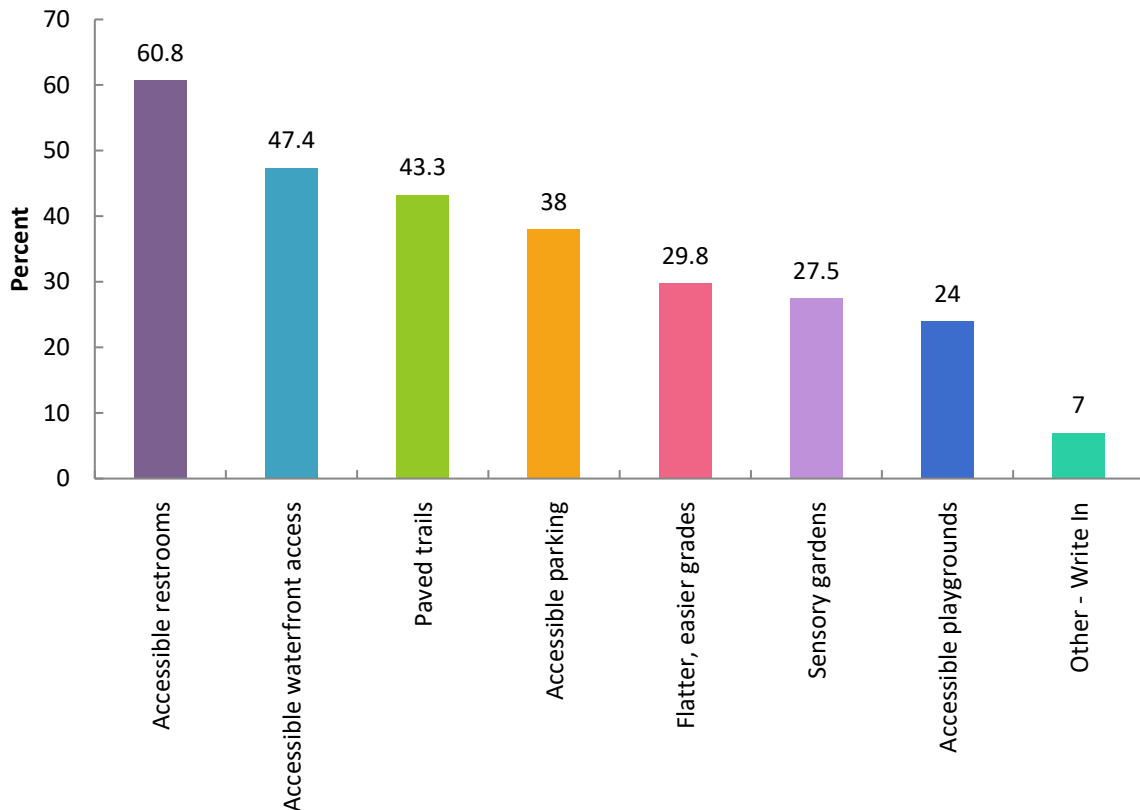


Other Write in (all mentioned one more multiple times)

- Horse Show
- Horseback Riding
- All of these question pertain to just this year. I have used many of them during my lifetime but have now aged out of several of the activities that I use to engage in.
- Biking
- Canoeed Mason County inland lakes.
- Dog walking
- Equestrian events
- Geocaching
- Halloween Events@ campgrounds
- Hiking, walking, scenic views
- Horse events at the fairgrounds
- Kayaked inland lake
- Mushroomed
- Kids used the playground at the picnic area.
- Numerous horse shows
- Running, paddle boarding
- Photography, mushroom hunting
- Splash pad, playgrounds
- Stargazing
- Used Handicapped Accessible Trails

- WE often leave Mason County to snowmobile in other near by areas. While snowmobiling we spend our winter resources on gas, food, snacks, lodging in other counties because there are not enough options for us in Mason County.
- mtn biking
- pickle ball, Lake Michigan beaches, trail cycling Manistee National Forest and School Forest trails

18.If you or a family member benefits from accessible facilities, please indicate which of the following are needed in the Mason County Parks. Check all that apply. If this question does not apply to you, please skip to the next question.



Other Write in (all mentioned one more multiple times)

- Accessible disc golf
- Benches along longer trails.
- Covered facility to ride at fairgrounds
- Free to Mason County tax payers
- Low visibility
- Marked hiking/snowshoeing trails
- Snowmobiling & ORV
- The park across from Bortells is awesome. Would love more like that
- Ways to the water
- Wheelchair accessible use in all areas.

19.What do you like best about Mason County parks and recreational areas?

Response
Nature, lots of woods, quiet, beauty
Nature areas
Plenty to do in the area
The Disc Golf courses are nationally famous. I love the courses and hope Beauty is re-created after all the trees are cleared.
The disc golf and the very well manicured fairways all thanks the the MCDGO volunteers
Public use of natural space
I love all of the disc golf courses, they are beautiful.
The disc golf
We live in a beautiful county and the parks show this off.
Nature
Some of the nicest disc golf courses in Michigan.
The disc golf
Nature and wildlife
Disc golf
Great disc golf with views!
Easy access
Free and clean
Disc golf
I love the natural aspects, but would love to see adult playground/exercise equipment.
Variety (hiking/ kayaking/swimming/disc golf)
Disc Golf
The Discgolf courses are the best!
The beautiful views and disc golf courses.
Natural settings
I enjoy the views of Lake Michigan from the county park near the project
Don't like stepping in dog poop in every park and dogs jumping on my family
Disc golf.
Disc golf
Disc Golf
The disc golf is some of the best in Michigan
Never knew about them. Been in the county 8 years and first I learned about them.
that they exist
picnic areas
Disc golf for families
The trees and nature.
They are natural ares
Open space. Nature.
The availability of out for activities & open spaces, wooded areas etc
Hiking, kids playgrounds
Well designed with space to park. Appreciate restroom facilities year around.
To get outside and enjoy nature.
The disc golf courses are great!
All of it. We have been enjoying the various parks and area for over twenty years.
Campground
We are fairly new to Mason Co, and are pretty ignorant about the county parks and what they have to offer.
Great family atmosphere!
Disc golf courses are really good - best around
They are there to preserve nature let's do that. Let's try to stop the invasive autumn olives etc
They are very clean and maintained. I have never had a issue at the parks.
The people that we have met year after year. The friendly and helpful staff. Location, Ludington is a great area.
Simplicity

Nice and clean well kept always easy to find a quiet place to relax very friendly people who use parks
Clean. Easy to find
They are quiet and tidy.
It's nice to get away from the hustle and bustle but do it locally... And appreciate the little gem that we have here in Michigan. Let's keep it clean and neat. Not trashed. We've got good topography here. And we need to get more folks outdoors for exercise. But have a safe time doing it. Some areas have no cell phone reception and that's not good if someone gets into trouble or has an emergency.
Well maintained and beautiful
They are very accessible.
Well maintained and kept as natural as possible
Walking trails. Disability access at the lake Michigan beaches. Dog friendly.
Great use of land
Clean and convenient
Nature
That they are available to all
Generally well maintained, The disc golf courses
As a typical working poor person, i appreciate any effort to maintain commons. I appreciate access to the pretty areas, as it seems those with lots of money tend to buy up all the beautiful areas.
That they add to the variety of nature-inspired experiences to dilute the heavy summer use of outdoor Mason County.
Natural beauty
That we have them
That they are close to home
Free cost
Amazing disc golf, great amenities
Variety of experiences to explore
Clean, Quite, Good staff
Disc golf
Nice open spaces, good for getting away from busy summer areas
Non-existent crowd
The beautiful campground at pump storage.
Trees and water features
The opportunity to enjoy the place we live.
You don't have to fight the crowds that are found in more popular recreation areas. These are "hidden gems" for locals!
Free of charge to hike
The beauty of our county; the quiet of the countryside.
We are blessed with such natural beauty, I love the areas that do NOT have cement and is a natural experience. No piped in music especially during festivals.
They offer people a lot of opportunity to enjoy the outdoors in a lot of different ways.
Family friendly
They are well maintained, not too busy, and well spaced out.
Well managed facilities.
Proximity to water
Just being able to get out in nature and enjoy being active.
Nature, being able to do family functions outside with more room than being inside.
The different experiences available.
That they are well maintained.
no fee
easily accessible
easily accessible
I enjoy having a variety of ways to engage in outdoor activities- walking, biking, picnic areas, playgrounds for my children.
Outdoor areas close to downtown.
They provide residents and visitors a lot of access to the beautiful environment in this county.
Fishing access.

Not as busy as other parks
They're simple & beautiful
Clean, safe
Time with family, a way to occupy kids.
The disc golf courses are very nice and well maintained.
peace , quiet ,and the beauty of nature
Trees
It's hard to pick a best we like many things
The parks offer a variety of resources, from big facilities and services like the campground and picnic area, to small, simple and rustic, like the Sable River Access site. This is appropriate for the use and area of each Park. They don't all need to be developed with facilities. Our parks meet a need while allowing recreation and protecting resources, without going over the top of development.
Not crowded. Close by. Not overly develop.
Still have some rugged trails
Mason County parks and recreational areas are located in the best county of the state!
N/A
Area in general. Accessible
Hamlin Lake
They are clean!
Location , They are in my area.
Fairgrounds are beautiful and would really benefit from a covered arena and bring in more guest.
Less people
Variety of horse shows at fairgrounds.
This group has the vision to keep moving into the future for improvements.
The hiking opportunities
The natural feel of the picnic area and its scenic values. The trail is enjoyable, too.
The beauty !
Free!!!
The beauty & versatility of the parks. Always something to do or see!
walking
They are properly maintained and constantly being upgraded.
No Opinion
Affordable
Available, nature, free
I love camping in our area, maybe more camping sites. Mason County is very popular for camping and sometimes it's very hard to get a site, especially close to the holidays
Safety
Beautiful views and cool temps near the lake
Clean, accessible
Sable River access, views at pumped storage picnic area.
Close to home
Seem to be well maintained and taken care of.
Nature's living room
Exploring/Hiking
I'm realizing that I'm not particularly familiar with Mason County parks and rec areas. We spend most of our time at the State Park but would be interested in other outdoor areas so we need to make an effort to familiarize ourselves. How do you promote county rec areas?
The beauty of all nature!
Everything is so clean
Always clean and if there is workers they are always friendly
Closeness to our home.
The amazing views, the water, mason county 🍷
Nature
Accessibility
Ease of access. Groomed fat bike trails in the Ludington School Forest.
That they are close to where I live.
hiking and biking trails

Public access and location
Variety. Ease of access.
close to residence
The beauty
The available walking
Some availability.
Great parks, well maintained, we need more trails
Scenery
Having access to outdoor activities close to home.
Easy parking access.
The areas natural beauty.
I like the variety that we have.
Being able to access at any point
Ability to connect with nature and exercise
Convenient location, beautiful outdoors, an alternative to the State Park (which is awesome but nice to have other choices).
Having the area to pass along to future generations
They are well-kept, clean, nice. They feel family-friendly and are not dangerous.
Natural appearance
The access to our beautiful area is well received. Even as a casual frisbee golfer, I am proud that there is recognition of the area from out of towners in terms of frisbee golf
We just moved here last year, so I've only gone to the fair grounds and some trails in Ludington State Park.
The variety of nature/topography, water frontage, and affordable camping cabins.
Accessible year round even if not officially open. Love to be able to walk our dog at disc park, campground or fairgrounds during winter months.
Accessible
Easy accessibility
Natural beauty of the area.
Peaceful, free
playgrounds, fishing, nature, and hills for sledding.
That they are available and close to home.
My family and I just enjoy doing something outside of home
their natural beauty
The beauty of our county.
Access to the Big Sable River. Nice views from below pumped storage facility.
Closer to home
They are free
Mason County is my home, so having something to enjoy close to home is great. I firmly believe that adding in more trails and activities for your county grown individuals is a great idea!
Didn't know there are any
The beauty of the nature
Free, public, nature & recreational spaces.
Free
Trail accessibility
Cleanliness
Well kept and maintained
They are maintained and the park looks good any time during the year.
It is a beautiful County overflowing with fun filled natural resources. I would like to see a bridged hiking, biking, ORV trail connect the north and south side of Mason County at the PM River area. (Any power line easements? freeway easement?)
The amount of horse shows we are able to attend 25 minutes from home is a huge draw. Having the Quarter horse shows this close and not having to travel to Midland or Lansing is a plus. But this past year weather played a huge role in the Quarter horse shows, ruining show clothes,tack, classes being dropped, etc. A covered arena would have alleviated those issues. I have a strong feeling MQHA may pull out of Ludington due to lack of resources (covered/indoor arenas) when other Fairgrounds offer these amenities. It would be a shame to lose the money it brings to the area. Restaurants, stores, hotels, all benefit from these shows not just the fairgrounds...

Horse shows close to home
easy free access
Available to all and are preserving natural areas.
natural surroundings
The parks are large enough that you don't have people on top of you the entire time you are trying to enjoy nature and the surrounding area.
The beauty
They are beautiful!
Less populated, quiet, kept natural.
I love the fairgrounds. It's easy to access and attracts many horse shows.
Clean, friendly, accessible
No
High quality horse stalls and arenas at the fairgrounds.
The walking trail and green spaces at Mason County Picnic Area
Variety of locations
They are not crowded
The location is outstanding. Capitalize on that and make people WANT to come to the area more.
Mason Co campground and picnic area. Picnic area is safe, quiet and scenic and a good place for a walk that is not overly strenuous. It also has inspiring views. Great place to stage a road bike ride to Pentwater and east. Campground amenities are very good. Hard to get a site sometimes but it's like that everywhere these days.
Mason Co campground and picnic area. Picnic area is safe, quiet and scenic and a good place for a walk that is not overly strenuous. It also has inspiring views. Great place to stage a road bike ride to Pentwater and east. Campground amenities are very good. Hard to get a site sometimes but it's like that everywhere these days.
Beauty and solitude of the campground. Well maintained by friendly staff.
No charge and easy access
Free
Location to water and town.
Location to town
Campingbike trails for all type of bikes trails for hiking
The fact there are at least some available!

20.What is one thing you would do to improve Mason County parks and recreation areas?

Response
Build out non-motorized connections and other activities besides frisbee golf.
Have more camping areas.
Put more Bike trails in.
More Disc Golf Courses.
Updated restrooms at the picnic area and more help maintain/ mowing of such areas around pavilion
Beautify and make accessible while keeping natural and non-motorized.
I would love to see a sledding area or something to improve upon the winter months.
Support the development of private recreational businesses and opportunities. Also support development on the East side of the County. Seems all recreation related to County is only on West side of County, limiting access to all County residents.
I don't know if I can stay one. But I would like them to be accessible, good restroom facilities, sufficient parking and well marked trails.
Build playgrounds that are fun for older children . Groomed cross country ski trails
Remove more autumn olive.
More stairs up the hills, or a lift for sledding.
Pick up garbage and help clean bathrooms
Keep your tax paying customers aware of all facilities by mail
Provide funding to township parks that provide access to water.
More disc golf courses, kayak access, huge improvements to disc golf courses

Add in adult playground/exercise equipment.
Cell service & restrooms
Possible. Coordinating with PM two parks to link trails, activities
Make dog owner quit using retractable leashes. 6 ft leads only
Add more hiking/walking paths.
More regular grounds maintenance to maintain trails and disc golf course. Keeping grass and brush manageable.
Trim the disc golf course and standard tees
Advertise them more.
ban the alcohol and enforce the rules about dogs
I would love to see a sledding hill for all members of the family to enjoy.
Winter accessibility
More interpretive signage, programming.
Restroom updates. More dog parks accessible to waterfront
Be cautious about what to put in sensitive areas. Example: Bike trails and disc golf should be put in areas where it doesn't harm nature. Those areas should be left for hiking.
Have more areas that are kid friendly - focus more on our kids
The EAST side of Mason County is lacking in parks. I mostly have to drive 30 plus minutes to use a park etc. It would be great to have a park in Custer, Fountain or Free Soil. I know a lot of people in the area would enjoy that. Tax dollars should support ALL local residents not just those in Ludington!
Encourage more people to use them.
I think the eastern part of the county should be given MUCH more consideration. It is almost always forgotten. And by eastern, I mean from Custer to Branch.
More information about land people can use. Like the disc golf area is not just for disc golfers. People can also walk and bird watch in the area.
More staffing.
More and more people are working remotely. A stronger WiFi would be greatly appreciated in the campground.
By putting 50 amp in all the Mason County Campground sites for RV's
I love signs that tell me what I am seeing. I guess you call them interpretive trails. Also ones I can walk my dog on.
Upgrade electrical.
Water access
Better awareness that they exist
Keep disc golf courses mowed more
Cell towers, WiFi, established trails/groomed trails, dog friendly areas.
Sand volleyball courts
Winter programming
Remove the bike trails from Cartier park
Restrooms and water access
Volunteer
Year round rest rooms, Porta potty. Removal of Autumn Olive and Oriental Bittersweet.
I would paint some buildings a more vibrant color. I understand that colors are typically chosen by committee, which yields in most cases some shade of gray, brown, or beige. Whoever reads this: Take a drive around and actually look at the colors of the county and city structures. Brown, brown, beige. Remember that beautiful love Ludington mural in the empty lot where the bowling alley was? I would see people taking pictures in front of that mural constantly. Contact the school art teachers. I'm sure they'd be over the moon when asked to get a group of young painters to decorate a wall here and there. Please, add some color! The people like colors!
More
Access to drinking water...just a spigot is fine, and restroom. Portable potties are fine. I would not invest in flush toilets because of maintenance and vandalism issues. A structure with pit toilets would great...like what is at Magoon Creek.
Swimming pools for all. Cleaner and More public access's to inland lakes.
Dog parks. so many people travel with their pet dogs and find few places to take them.
Better signage
More of them.

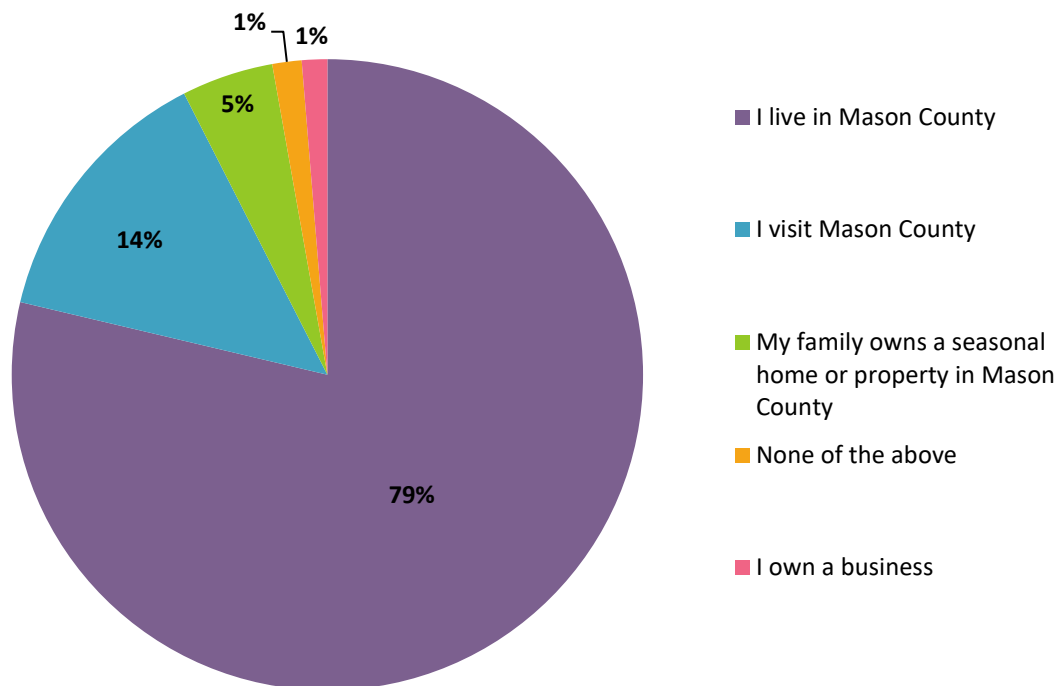
Unsure
Additional trash cans on disc golf courses.
Easier to find a list of what is available.
Acquire more area with longer more challenging trails
Paved sites at the campground.
Have more trails
Awareness. I didn't know about the Inman Road location. And I've used the Sauble River access point for kayaking but didn't know it was county owned.
Wheelchair accessible
More trails
Possibly add some horseback-riding trails in one or more park.
One thing that I think is extremely important is to make sure all areas are FREE to the tax payers of Mason county. We pay taxes for these areas and by right should be able to use them for FREE. Out of county visitors should be paying for the area. It would be very easy to send a sticker (something like the Ludington State Park does) that goes on your vehicle or drivers license. Why should we, as taxpayers, pay the burden of development, upkeep, maintaining, repairing recreation areas that tourist use and abuse (not all). A Horse trail and horse camping area would be nice.
I was not aware of the Inman Road or the Sable River properties so I'm not even sure what is available here. So signage would be a big help. Maybe there are already signs there and I just have not seen them.
As I'm getting older I'm fighting balance issues and if the trails and paths were even or paved it would be helpful, and would probably help people who are in wheelchairs too
I haven't spent any time at the park on the Sable River. Looking forward to that.
Connect biking trails to other existing and planned trails.
More paths, cleaner, safer
Additional walking trails
Make sure the handicap have a way to enjoy the county parks and that they can enjoy them like normal people.
Create more trails.
Connectivity to other recreation areas.
Better awareness. I didn't know about the Inman Road property until this survey
restrooms
Year-round rest rooms.
was a picnic area by the pump station. Would like to see more access on the Sable River, as well as walk in access on the PM river.
More flat, paved walking trails that are maintained in the winter to promote outdoor exercise.
Dog parks. More areas for all age and interest groups.
publicity
Better dockage
More access in wintertime, or off peak times.....more sledding and winter activity promoted
Relocate disc golf trails outside the high quality forest which has been trampled to death at the expense of native flora, including rare species.
More publicity how their amenities
Covered arena at fairgrounds to ride Opportunity to trail ride horses on public land in mason county
More restrooms and playgrounds.
More communication with the community, more community involvement, increased transparency. The community should know who represents the parks and rec department and what they are doing to represent and serve the community. The City of Ludington and the state park shouldn't be the only entities building a community around outdoor recreation opportunities and growth
Paved trail between ludington and scottville
bike trails for both mountain bikes and regular camping area just for bikes who visit our area and/or passing through
Maintain the grounds
Better communication on what is available and where
Marketing. People don't always realize that these areas are available, how to access them or when they can be utilized if they have seasonal closures. I am an avid outdoor enthusiast and work with

many landowners around the County, but was unaware that the County owned the Inman Property and it is open for public use.
More hiking trails.
Reminders to the community they are available. Hold special events at the locations to attract more tourism.
Senior accessible
I would add a covered arena to the fairgrounds.
More picnic areas & restrooms, covered rest/seat areas
Covered Pavillion show horses
Signs
Replace the South Bayou Bridges on Hamlin Lake before they fall down. These bridges not only facilitate vehicle travel on lakeshore drive and Neil Road they are essential for watercraft to navigate from the boat launch to Hamlin Lake. This is critical infrastructure in desperate need of repair.
More showers at the fairgrounds
Cover the arena at fairgrounds
In door riding arena at the fairgrounds
Beech volleyball
Horse shows to be user friendly during inclement weather.
Fairground / covered Arenas would be a huge improvement for the horse show Community! Design it that you can store use it as storage for winter. Large vehicles and large boats be a money maker for the winter time.
Covered indoor at fairgrounds
Covered show pen at fairgrounds
Dedicated trails that are not simultaneously used by the disk golfers. More waterfront parks with areas to sit & enjoy water views.
Consider adding a waterfront parcel such as the state owned Peter Pan parcel even if it would be only a scenic overlook and picnic area or canoe/kajak access to rivers in the mostly private center area of the county. Consider adding interpretive programming and/or events. Connect park via a trail to the new PM Township Conservation Park and look for other opportunities to cooperate with other local governments on recreation needs.
End seasonal camp sites at buttersville...we camped there for years and now all the good sites are seasonal and so random through the park.....all the good sites are always taken for seasonal...!! Seasonal sites were always on the back side ..
Better aesthetics and grooming
Better marketing & information available.
more walking trails
Hosting more events to attract more individuals.
No Opinion
Let mass transit have access to parks
Let people know more about them-Facebook? Partner with Chamber of commerce or articles in Mason County press
Bike paths connecting the parks and to the other trails like hart montague and to pentwater.
Develop a take-out downstream of the U.S. 31 access (and maintain the river between).
Better trails
Extend winter usage
More family friendly free or low cost activities. Areas to hike, bike, snowshoe, sled, fish, playground (or "loose parts" style play areas) etc.
1. More biking trails would be appreciated! 2. Snowmobile rental and trails would be cool!
Not sure
Not sure
Encourage additional programs, adult kickball, senior or over 50 hockey (something gor once golf is over)
Accessibility
More hiking / biking trails.
Promote
Non-motorized access to new PM park the AVOIDS Business 31 and instead passes through/near the Dow Brine ponds.

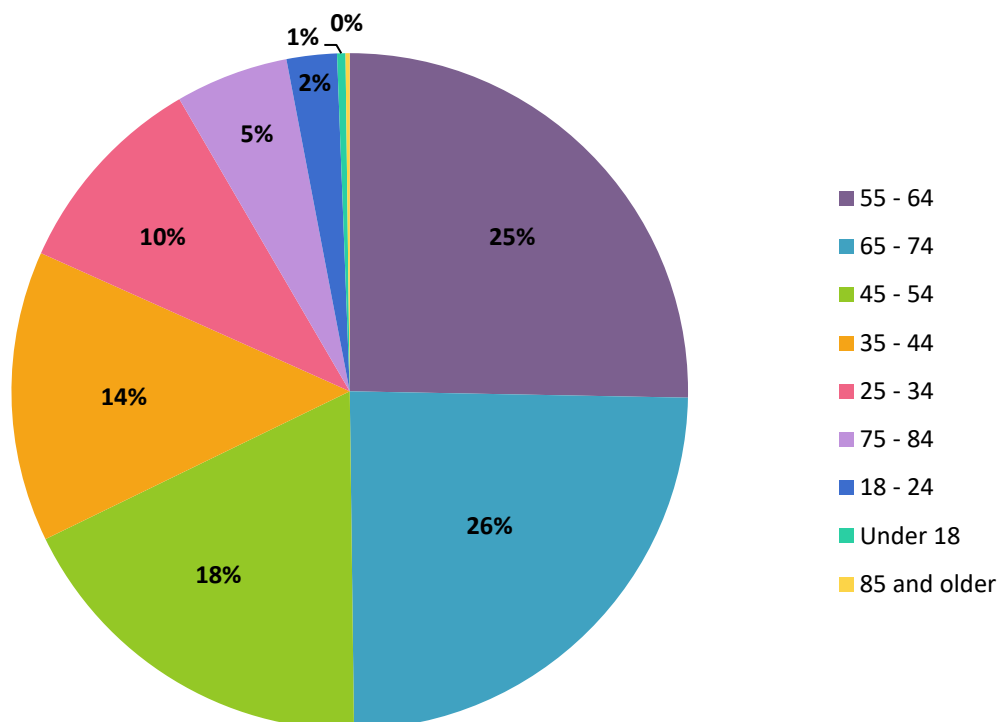
maybe parking and port johns
Non-motorized access to the new PM Twp park on Iris Road that avoids Business 31 and passes through/near the old Dow brine ponds west of 31 and the Twin Bridges.
More facilities
publicize them more. I didn't even know some of these existed.
More access and picnic areas
Biking, cross country ski trails, pickleball courts.
Trail connectivity to adjacent municipalities including north to Manistee
More trails for hikes and bikes
More trails
Expand hiking, biking and xc ski trails. We prefer non motorized activities, as we see the pollution caused by motorized activities.
We need more interactive equipment to support health and exercise. Adult play ground type of equipment. I have been to Norway and Brazil and they both have them.
More biking opportunities. More places to walk, hike, and run in nature with trailheads and facilities.
More multipurpose trails
More variety of recreational activities
I answered NO to the question about Lake Michigan frontage because I expect it will be expensive and we have other access such as the city beach, state park beach and Summit park beach. I use these locations often and if they were to become restricted, I would support a county lake front park.
We truly need to have our county more bike friendly. Please consider linking Ludington to the Hart bike trail. We would get a lot more tourists who enjoy biking if you did that. We don't have safe roads to bike on here in Mason county and we desperately need something.
Please add non-motorized access on Iris Road through/near the old Dow ponds west of PM Highway to give pedestrians and cyclists a safe space off the highway.
More non-motorized paved paths to get around Ludington, access to all the schools, and connection to the Hart/Montague trail and the Baldwin trail.
More hiking trails.
More security at campground
Multi-use - winter activities (other than ice fishing)
Dog leash enforcement.
Water access for swimming, either in pools or lakes
Bike trails from Hamlin area to Ludington.
Dog friendly
Ad trails to Inman road property.
More lake accessible campsites.
Don't overdevelop things. Keep it simple, quiet and casual. Blend development into nature and habitat.
More hiking and biking trails
You say Mason county what about township parks. Wilson Hill is the only place on Hamlin Lake to launch a boat. We like Victory Park but you can't launch a deep hull boat . The pontoon yes but not the boat . The state park road is to narrow to hall a boat down.
Bike paths, please
Bike trails and cross country ski trails
sometimes the grass is not maintained also the picnic tabels begin to rot and are not taken cre of.
Have more hiking trails.
Better upkeep
Biking trail from ludington to Pentwater and from ludington to the state park
Paved biking trails.... Our area has virtually none, whereas other counties our size have many wonderful trails. Our area is sorely lacking these.
more marked hiking trails
Safer biking trails. Biking has become so popular in recent years and Mason County has not been able to keep up with the need for safe biking trails.
Acquire additional water access along area rivers to promote paddling. Acquire Lake Michigan frontage.
Advertise their existence.
Bike trail, more trails outside of state park, etc

Publicize
-I would like to see a bike trail from Custer to Ludington.
Better cell signal in case of emergencies, more trash/recycling receptacles
Closer parking near to recreational areas.
Mountain biking options
Add more seating areas to rest along trails for the elderly to rest.
Covered Equestrian arena
Allow horses on certain trails and camp sights.
Front Gate signage and more smiles
Possibly more event planning, get the schools involved in using the facilities. Develop unused space in front of the Airport chamber building and add to successes of Mason County Fairgrounds, Hurrah for growth but Too bad about the Mexican Restaurant getting the space next to Fairgrounds.
Put in a covered arena at the Fairgrounds
Leave portions of wild habitat
Put a covered arena
more divers activities to participate in
Keep them natural!
add horseback riding trails
Restroom facilities.
Upkeep
Maintained public restrooms. More snowmobile and ORV trails.
I'd like to see a covered arena for the fairgrounds. The arenas are great quality but when it rains, it can be a little rough.
Continue upgrades at the fairgrounds for horse events. Covered arena?
install a covered riding arena at Fairgrounds. Also build new bathrooms/showers at fairgrounds
Covered arena at the fairgrounds
Develop more accessible trails
Competent and responsive maintenance of land and facilities. Any and all improvements need to have sustainability in mind.
make them handicapped accessible
The fair grounds really need updating. If you had an indoor pavilion to show all animals in all year in all weather, you would draw thousands more visitors per year. It would add revenue to ALL businesses in the area.
Covered arena at the fairgrounds to keep the AQHA shows in our area spending money in our community
I'm for anything that supports bicycling so a connection to existing bike paths would be nice. It would also be nice to have more campsite capacity.
I'm for anything that supports bicycling so a connection to existing bike paths would be nice. It would also be nice to have more campsite capacity.
More camping cabins.
Bike trails
More water access and facilities like boat launches and fish cleaning tables
Better restrooms,
Make them more accessible
Would really like to see the bicycle-trail connections north to south and west to east (beyond Scottville to Reed City).
Connecting all area bike trails.

21.What statement best describes your role in Mason County

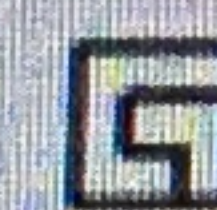


22.What is your age



APPENDIX E

ADOPTION DOCUMENTS



Mason County Campground, Disc Golf Courses, and Picnic Area

@masoncountycampground · ★ 4.7 24 reviews · Campground

Send Email

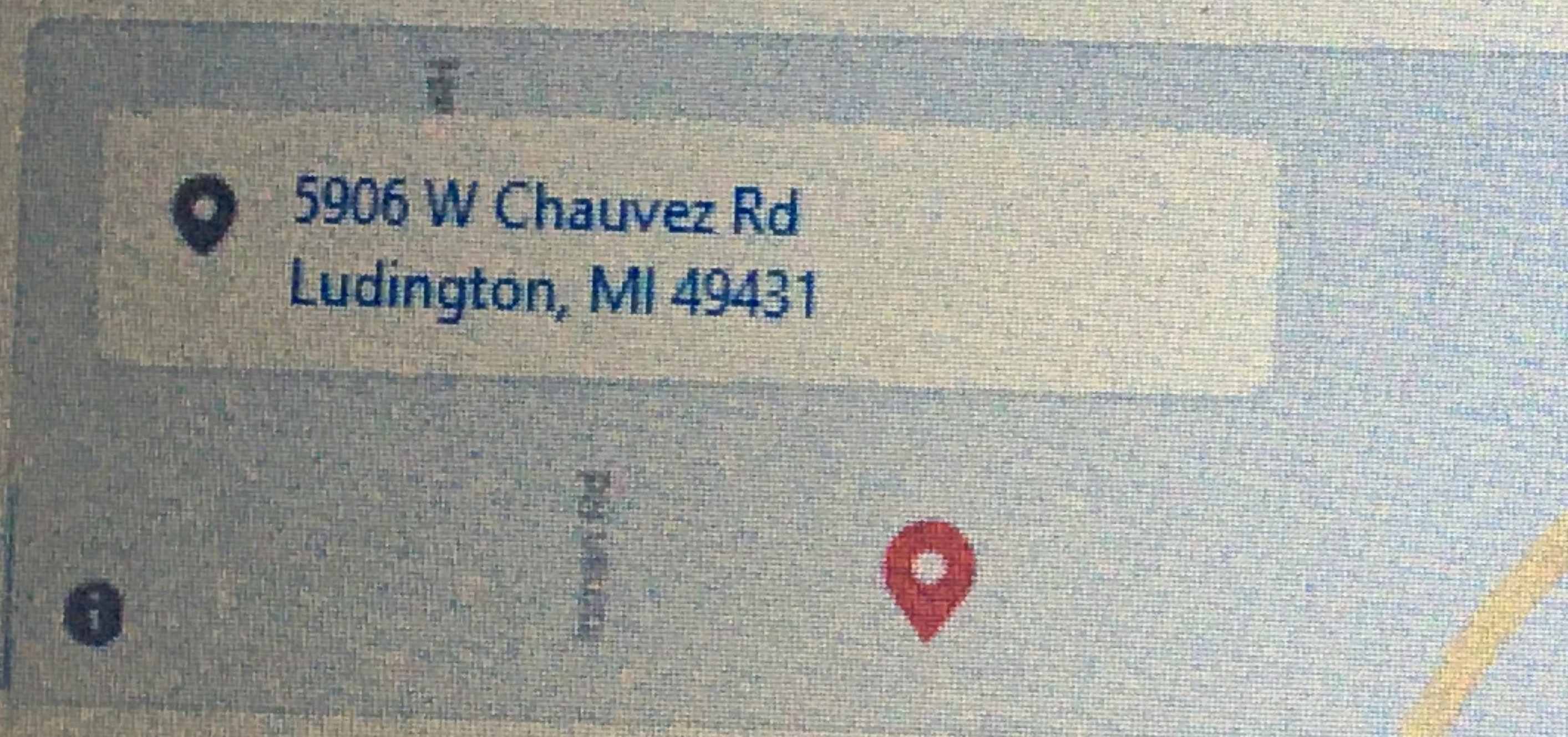
Home Reviews Photos Videos More ▾

Like



About

See all



Mason County Campgrounds is located a few miles south of Ludington and sits in a beautifully secluded and well maintained location.

1,425 people like this

1,495 people follow this

1,853 people checked in here

<http://www.masoncounty.net/departments/parks-recreation/campground.html>

+1 231-845-7609



Mason County Campground, Disc Golf Courses, and Picnic Area

Yesterday at 10:55 AM ·

Parks & Recreation Commission

MASON COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Please click the link below for the Five Year Recreation Plan Update Draft for Public Review... See more



ACROBAT.ADOBE.COM

Adobe Acrobat - Mason County Draft_7.12.22_compressed.pdf

Click or tap to view this file.

1

Like

Comment

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63°F



1:32 PM

7/16/2022

Mason County Recreation Plan draft released, hearing set

Jul 15, 2022 Updated Jul 15, 2022



The draft of the Mason County Recreation Plan for 2023-2027 is available for public review online at <https://www.masoncounty.net>, according to a press release.



A print copy of the plan is available for review at the Mason County Drain Commission office, 102 E. Fifth St., Scottville, and both branches of the Mason County District Library, 217 East Ludington Ave., Ludington and 204 East State St., Scottville.



A public hearing to receive comments on the proposed draft is scheduled for 5 p.m., Aug. 15 at the pavilion of the Mason County Picnic Area, 6301 W. Chauvez Road, Pere Marquette Township, the release stated.

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Carlotta Tiered Maxi Dress in Tomato Red
FINAL SALE - M / Tomato Red

STATE OF MICHIGAN

§§

County of Mason

**Mason County
Notice of Meeting**

Notice is hereby given that the Mason County Parks Commission shall conduct a public meeting on August 15, 2022, at 5 p.m. at the Mason County Picnic Area Pavilion, 6301 W. Chauvez Road, Pere Marquette Township, Ludington, MI 49431, for the purpose of receiving comments on the proposed draft of the Mason County Recreation Plan, 2023-2027.

The plan evaluates existing recreation opportunities, reviews public opinion regarding recreation, establishes recreational goals, and proposes a five-year schedule of improvements and other related items that the County wishes to pursue. The County Parks Commission is interested in receiving input from residents of all areas of the county and from people with disabilities. A PDF copy of the plan is available for review online at <https://www.masoncounty.net> (look under Departments/Parks Commission) and will be available for public inspection at the Mason County Drain Office, 102 E. Fifth Street, Scottville, MI 49454, and at Mason County District Library branches located at 217 East Ludington Avenue, Ludington, MI 49431 and 204 East State Street, Scottville, MI 49454.

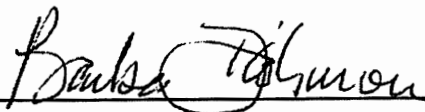
If you are interested in submitting comments regarding the Draft Plan, please email comments to Dan Rohde, Mason County Parks Commission Secretary, drohde@masoncounty.net, no later than August 12, 2022.

All comments, written and oral, will be noted for the record.
2 7 15 30

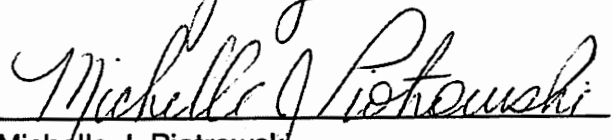
Banks Dishmon, being first duly sworn, says that he is the VP/CRO of the Ludington Daily News, a daily newspaper printed and circulated in said county of Mason, and that annexed hereto is a copy of a certain notice taken from said newspaper, in which the notice was published on the following dates, to wit:

July 15, 2022

July 29, 2022


(Banks Dishmon, VP/CRO)

Subscribed and sworn to before me this
29th day of July A.D 2022


Michelle J. Piotrowski

Notary Public for Mason County, acting in
Mason County

Commission Expires: 12-18-2026



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Parks & Recreation

- ▶ Parks & Recreation Commission
- ▶ Campground
- ▶ Picnic Area
- ▶ Disc Golf
- ▶ Snowshoeing

Administrator

Airport

Animal Control

Building

Clerk

Drain Commissioner

Emergency Management

Equalization

Friend of the Court

Medical Examiner

MSU Extension

Probation-Parole

Prosecuting Attorney

Public Works

Register of Deeds

Sheriff

Surveyor

Treasurer

Zoning

Veterans Service Office

Parks & Recreation Commission

MASON COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

**Please click the link below for the Five Year Recreation
Plan Update Draft for Public Review**

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:7ddb1db4-cd4a-4489-880f-ddb281fc9756>

A Public Meeting regarding the plan draft will be held on August 15, 2022 at 5:00 pm at the Mason County Picnic Area Pavilion.

[Click here for Current Weather](#)



Minutes of the regular meeting of the **Mason County Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting** held on **Monday, August 15th, 2022** at the Mason County Picnic Area Pravilon beginning at 5:00 p.m.

Members Present:

Jeffrey Schwass,
Steve Begnoche,
Daniel Rohde
Michael Shaw
Michael Genter
Brian Koblinski

Members Absent:

Mike Ingison.
Wayne Andersen
Gary Castonia
Charity Johnston

Others Present:

Park Manager - Deb Roberts
Spicer Group - Cynthia Todd
Annette Quillon
Jeremy Wagner
Caleb Peters
Sheri Keilman

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Begnoche at 5:00 p.m. and Roll Call was completed.

Review of June 20th, 2022 Minutes

Motion to accept with corrections by Genter

2nd by Schwass

Motion Carried

Treasurers Report

Attached

Noted by Kolblinski Contracted Services is at 0%

Motion to accept by Genter

2nd by Schwass

Motion carried

Public Hearing

Opened at 5:09 PM

Annette Quillon spoke

She would like to see some recreational activities that are indoors that could be used during the winter months like a Community Center

Jeremy Wager spoke

Mr. Wagner asked about the long term plans of the Inman property. He lives on the property to the north and has concerns about a possible bike path on the old Haul Road that runs next to his house. He also asked if the property could be gated.

Mark Krankel emailed

While reviewing the 5 Year Plan Draft he noticed the idea of a possible dog park at the Inman Rd property. He is opposed to the idea of a dog park and instead suggested an out door fitness park.

Cynthia Todd (Spicer Group) Overview of Plan

The plan is simply ideas and only ideas. It was generated for the 478 surveys that were returned. It is only ideas to allow administrative structure for the future.

The plan will require a resolution to be adopted at the Oct. 17th Parks and Rec meeting before being presented to the Board of Commissioners for their approval.

The resolution will need to be accompanied by approved minutes of the Parks and Rec and approved minutes of the Board of Commissioners.

A motion to close the public hearing at 5:33PM

Motion by Shaw

2nd by Genter

New Business

- Five-year-plan will be on the agenda for a vote to adopt at the Oct 17th meeting
- New Grant Committee formed
 - Genter
 - Schwass
 - Koblinski
 - Begnoche

Old Business

- Tinderbox disc golf pilot plan presented by Schwass
 - Rules to kept simple
 - All campground rules apply to the Tinderbox Course
 - No events to be held from the campground opening to the closing dates
 - Off season event rental fees will be Tourney - \$50.00 League - \$50.00
 - Leave no Trace, Pack it in and Pack it out
 - Motion to Adopt pilot plan by Koblinski
 - 2nd by Shaw
 - Carried

- Twisted Sticks although approved by Consumers and FERC will no longer be built
- Disc Golf WiFi presented by Schwass
Starlink could provide at a cost of \$2,800.00 but didn't provide a price breakdown
Campground payment plan was rejected by the Prosecuting Attorney. Begnoche will follow up to see what changes are needed.

Park Manager Report

- Tiling in pavilion restroom at a cost of \$5650.00
Campground bath house tile repair at a cost of \$1980.00
Motion by Genter
2nd by Schwass
Carried
- Engineering for additional 50-amp sites not to exceed \$1200.00
- Autumn Olive removal from Inman Rd to Chavez Rd by Peterson and Son for a cost of \$5100.00
Motion by Shaw
2nd by Schwass
Carried
Finish storm water gutters on the pavilion by Lee Rassmussen at a cost of \$1268.00
Motion by Genter 2nd by Koblinski
Carried

With no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Begnoche adjourned the meeting at 6:15 PM

Respectfully,
Daniel Rohde, Secretary
Mason County Drain Commissioner

November 1, 2022

The regular meeting of the Mason County Board of Commissioners was held at 9:00 a.m. in the Mason County Airport Conference Room.

The meeting was called to order by Chair J. Andersen

Roll call was taken. Present: N. Krieger, G. Castonia, J. Hartley, L. Squires,
S. Hull, J. Andersen, R. Bacon.
Absent: NONE

Invocation was given by R. Bacon. Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America followed.

Motion by R. Bacon and seconded by S. Hull to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Motion by R. Bacon and seconded by N. Krieger to approve the minutes of the October 11, 2022 Regular meeting. Motion carried.

Correspondence: Chair Andersen read a resolution that was received regarding the cap in place with changes of the no-fault insurance.

Public comment: Bill Kerans, Scottville Senior Center, publically noted that he had lost a wager regarding his beloved Sparties and was subject to wearing the Wolverine clothing he had on.

Jim Kelly, Michigan State University Extension Office, electronically sent the quarterly report as it had embedded links in the document. In addition, physical copies were passed out. No electronic copy or physical copy was provided to the Clerk for the main records. Mr. Kelly reviewed the quarterly report [AH1].

Reports: Dan Rohde, Mason County Drain Commissioner, reviewed in detail the 2022 Special Assessment Levy and Annual Reports. Noted also was that today was his anniversary of 22 years with the County. He wished to thank his staff for the work they have provided and continue to do. Questions were asked regarding assets being down \$1.6 million and if this was a depreciation of equipment. No answer was known at this time. It was thought to be a typo. Additionally, it was noted that all lake levels were down due to the lack of rain this summer.

Dani McGarry, Director, Mason-Lake Conservation District reviewed the Conservation Districts 2022 Fiscal Year Summary Report in detail. Highlights included wild parsnips are growing in Victory and Custer Townships, which create a health issue and the District is working hard to eradicate them. Ms. McGarry touched on the Septic System Relief program that was previously brought before the Finance, Personnel & Rules Committee noting that EGLE (Environment, Great Lakes & Energy) has not provided any updates on the funding and how to use at this time. She will continue to monitor this and respond back as appropriate. Questions were asked regarding moss, lichens, and fungus on trees/homes throughout the County. Chair Andersen thanked Ms. McGarry for her work in the Conservation District as she feels she does not get the appreciation she deserves.

Commissioner Krieger noted that District #10 Health Board has a new Mental Health Program for schools which provides on-line access to providers.

Motion by N. Krieger and seconded by G. Castonia to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, the Mason County Parks and Recreation Commission has undertaken a five-year Recreation Plan which describes the physical features, existing recreation facilities, and the desired actions to be taken to improve and maintain recreation facilities during the period between 2023 and 2027; and

WHEREAS, public input was received via an online survey that was available in the Winter of 2022, to provide an opportunity for citizens to share ideas, express opinions, regarding the future of parks and recreation in Mason County, July 15, 2022 through August 15, 2022, at the Mason County Building, Mason County District Library branches in Ludington and Scottville and at www.masoncounty.net; and

WHEREAS, a public meeting was held on August 15, 2022 at 5 p.m. in the pavilion of the Mason County picnic area, 6501 West Chauvez Road, Ludington to provide an opportunity for citizens to express opinions, ask questions, and discuss all aspects of the Recreation Plan; and

WHEREAS, Mason County has developed the Recreation Plan for the benefit of the entire community and wishes to adopt the plan as a document to assist in meeting the recreation needs of the community.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, on this day that the Mason County Board of Commissioners adopts the 2023-2027 Recreation Plan.

Moved for your approval.

Yeas: 7 Nays: 0 Absent: 0



1. The first part of the document is a letter from the President of the United States to the Congress, dated January 1, 1862.

2. The second part is a report from the Secretary of the Treasury, dated January 1, 1862.

3. The third part is a report from the Secretary of the Interior, dated January 1, 1862.

4. The fourth part is a report from the Secretary of the Navy, dated January 1, 1862.

5. The fifth part is a report from the Secretary of the War, dated January 1, 1862.

6. The sixth part is a report from the Secretary of the State, dated January 1, 1862.

7. The seventh part is a report from the Secretary of the Army, dated January 1, 1862.

8. The eighth part is a report from the Secretary of the Marine Corps, dated January 1, 1862.

9. The ninth part is a report from the Secretary of the Coast and Geodetic Survey, dated January 1, 1862.

10. The tenth part is a report from the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, dated January 1, 1862.

11. The eleventh part is a report from the Secretary of the United States Geological Survey, dated January 1, 1862.

12. The twelfth part is a report from the Secretary of the United States Fish Commission, dated January 1, 1862.

13. The thirteenth part is a report from the Secretary of the United States Commission of Fish and Fisheries, dated January 1, 1862.

14. The fourteenth part is a report from the Secretary of the United States Commission of Fish and Fisheries, dated January 1, 1862.

15. The fifteenth part is a report from the Secretary of the United States Commission of Fish and Fisheries, dated January 1, 1862.

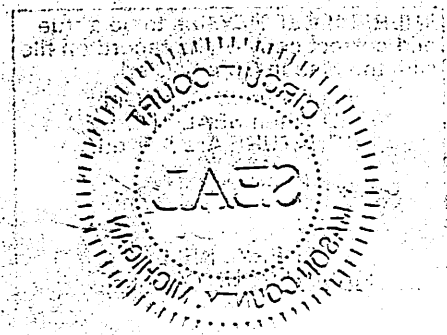
16. The sixteenth part is a report from the Secretary of the United States Commission of Fish and Fisheries, dated January 1, 1862.

17. The seventeenth part is a report from the Secretary of the United States Commission of Fish and Fisheries, dated January 1, 1862.

18. The eighteenth part is a report from the Secretary of the United States Commission of Fish and Fisheries, dated January 1, 1862.

19. The nineteenth part is a report from the Secretary of the United States Commission of Fish and Fisheries, dated January 1, 1862.

20. The twentieth part is a report from the Secretary of the United States Commission of Fish and Fisheries, dated January 1, 1862.



November 1, 2022

Roll Call vote:

AYES: Krieger, Castonia, Hartley, Squires, Hull, Bacon, Andersen
NAYS: None

I, Cheryl Kelly, County Clerk, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and original copy of a resolution adopted by the Mason County Board of Commissioners at a meeting thereof held on November 1, 2022 at 9.00 a.m.

County Clerk

Motion by N. Krieger and seconded by S. Hull to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, it is necessary to appoint John O'Connor as Airport Manager and authorize him to exercise complete authority of the Rules and Regulations pertaining to the Mason County Airport and to take such action as may be required in the interest of safety to the public and to aircraft and pilots or as authorized under the Michigan Aeronautics Code section 259.86 b and c; and

WHEREAS, the Buildings, Planning, Drains, and Airport Committee is recommending the approval of the attached Aeronautical Facility and Manager License Application 2023.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the County of Mason approves the attached Aeronautical Facility and Manager License Application 2023 and further directs its Chair to sign the application on its behalf.

Moved for your approval.

Motion carried. (Signed) N. Krieger.

Motion by Public Safety and Courts Committee Chair G. Castonia and seconded by L. Squires to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, the Mason County Board of Commissioners, Ludington High School, Mason County Eastern Schools, and Pere Marquette Charter Township have agreed to fund a School Resource Officer; and

WHEREAS, the Public Safety & Courts Committee is recommending authorizing Sheriff Cole to start the hiring process for this officer.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the County of Mason authorizes Sheriff Cole to hire a School Resource Officer with a starting date of January 3, 2023.

Moved for your approval.

Question regarding how long the School Resource Office would be employed came about. The current offer is for a three-year position per Chair Andersen.

Motion carried. (Signed) G. Castonia.

Motion by Public Safety and Courts Committee Chair G. Castonia and seconded by J. Hartley to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, the Mason County Board of Commissioners, Ludington High School, Mason County Eastern Schools, and Pere Marquette Charter Township have agreed to fund a School Resource Officer; and

WHEREAS, the Public Safety & Courts Committee is recommending approving the attached agreement with Pere Marquette Charter Township related to services that this officer will be providing to the township.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the County of Mason approves the attached agreement with Pere Marquette Charter Township and authorizes Board Chair Andersen and Sheriff Cole to sign it on behalf of the County.

Moved for your approval.

Motion carried. (Signed) G. Castonia.

Motion by J. Hartley and seconded by N. Krieger to approve the following resolution:

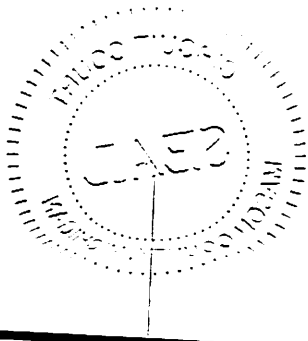
HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, the Mason County Board of Commissioners has authorized Sheriff Cole to replace a number of vehicles; and

WHEREAS, Probate Judge Nellis is requesting that one of those vehicles be transferred to the Juvenile Probation Office; and

WHEREAS, the Public Safety & Courts Committee is recommending approval of this transfer of this vehicle and that it be available to other offices at the courthouse; and

WHEREAS, the Public Safety & Courts Committee is recommending that the Ford Fusion currently being used by other offices be sold.



THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the County of Mason approves the transfer of a vehicle from the Sheriff's Office to the Juvenile Probation Office to be available for use by all the courthouse offices and authorizes County Administrator Knizacky to sell the Ford Fusion.

Moved for your approval.

Motion carried. (Signed) J. Hartley.

Motion by J. Hartley and seconded by G. Castonia to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, Animal Control Officer Colbrook has requested the purchase of cat cages for the Animal Control Office; and

WHEREAS, the Public Safety and Courts Committee is recommending the purchase of the cages out of funds in the Equipment Replacement Fund.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the County of Mason, approves the purchase of cat cages for the Animal Control Office; funds to come from the Equipment Replacement Fund.

Moved for your approval.

Motion carried. (Signed) J. Hartley.

Motion by L. Squires and seconded by J. Hartley to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, Sheriff Cole is requesting authorization to repair the underwater recovery vehicle with funds from the Equipment Replacement Fund; and

WHEREAS, Public Safety and Courts Committee is recommending approval of using funds from the Equipment Replacement Fund to repair this equipment.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the County of Mason approves using funds from the Equipment Replacement Fund to repair the underwater recovery vehicle.

Moved for your approval.

Commissioner Krieger inquired if the Sheriff's Office knew the underwater device was broken at the time it was approved to be taken into possession? If so, the device should be returned to Ottawa County and not be fixed. He wished to express that he feels safety is very important to our divers at all times, but that the principal here is having received a free device and then having to turn around and spend tax dollars to get it fixed. Public Safety and Courts Committee Commissioners voiced their opinions regarding why they felt the need to have the device fixed.

Ayes: Castonia, Hartley, Squires, Hull, Bacon, Andersen.

Nays: Krieger.

Motion carried. (Signed) L. Squires.

Motion by L. Squires and seconded by J. Hartley to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, Mason County Emergency Management Coordinator Reimink is requesting seventy-seven and a half (77.5) additional hours for her part-time clerical position to perform duties related to the FY 2022-23 Hazardous Material Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) Grant; and

WHEREAS, the Public Safety and Courts Committee is recommending the approval of seventy-seven and a half (77.5) additional hours for the part-time employee.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the County of Mason approves seventy-seven and a half (77.5) additional hours for the part-time Emergency Management employee for 2023; salary consistent with the part-time position salary schedule.

Moved for your approval.

Motion carried. (Signed) L. Squires.

Motion by Buildings, Planning, Drains, and Airport Committee Chair S. Hull and seconded by R. Bacon to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

The Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee has audited the County's claims dated

October 13, 2022 totaling \$454,506.19; and

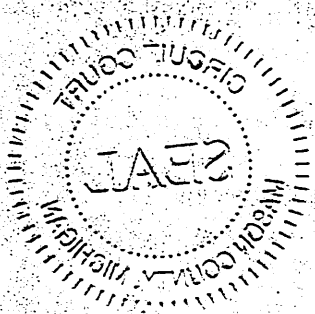
October 27, 2022 totaling \$716,098.45; and

The Finance, Personnel, and Rules Committee found these claims to be in order and asks the Board to approve these claims.

Moved for your approval.

Motion carried. (Signed) J. Andersen, R. Bacon, S. Hull.

Motion by Buildings, Planning, Drains, and Airport Committee Chair S. Hull and seconded by N. Krieger to approve the following resolution:



HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, Michigan State University Extension has proposed the attached Agreement for Extension Services to facilitate the staffing and services of the extension office in the County of Mason; and

WHEREAS, the Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee is recommending that the Board approve it.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the County of Mason approves the attached Agreement for Extension Services to facilitate the staffing and services of the extension office in the County of Mason and further directs the Board Chair to sign said agreement on their behalf.

Moved for your approval.

Motion carried. (Signed) S. Hull.

Motion by Buildings, Planning, Drains, and Airport Committee Chair S. Hull and seconded by J. Hartley to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, Mason County Drain Commissioner Dan Rohde has reviewed the 2022 Special Assessment Levy Report for the various special assessment districts for the Board.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the County of Mason approves the attached Special Assessment Levy Report for the various special assessment districts under the jurisdiction of the Mason County Drain Commissioner and the Mason County Board of Public Works; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the supporting special assessment tax rolls be levied and collected on the 2022 winter tax bills as provided by Michigan law.

Moved for your approval.

Motion carried. (Signed) S. Hull.

Motion by R. Bacon and seconded by S. Hull to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, the Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee is recommending that the Board of Commissioners approve the attached Program Guidelines for the Mason County Housing Program.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the County of Mason approves the attached Program Guidelines for the Mason County Housing Program.

Moved for your approval.

Motion carried. (Signed) R. Bacon.

Commissioner Squires left the meeting at 9:59 a.m. and returned at 10:02 a.m. He was not present during the reading of the above resolution nor when the vote was taken.

Commissioner Hartley inquired if there was someone who assists individuals applying for the Housing Program grant through the County and was informed by Administrator Knizacky that a third party administrator will assist applicants.

Motion by Board Chair J. Andersen and seconded by S. Hull to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, the Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee has reviewed the transfers for November 1, 2022.

THEREFORE, we, your Finance, Personnel, & Rules Committee, request your approval of the following transfers:

Road Patrol	\$181,950.00
Jail Operations	\$162,000.00
Public Improvement	\$463,956.00
Airport Improvement	\$ 62,000.00
Airport Operations	\$ 38,200.00
Workers Compensation	\$ 10,000.00

Moved for your approval.

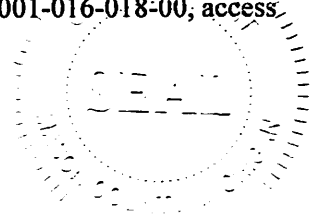
Motion carried. (Signed) J. Andersen.

Motion by Board Chair J. Andersen and seconded by R. Bacon to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, Barz Investments, LLC has requested a rezoning from Commercial (C-2) to Industrial (I) for 90SPLIT 85 SPLIT 1986 PARCEL 'A' DESC AS--COMM AT W 1/4 COR, TH S 00 DEG 58'45"E ALG W SEC LINE 1608.77 FT, TH N 89 DEG 59'45"E 274.54 FT, TH N 00 DEG 58'45"W 1596.75 FT, TH N 87 DEG 29'57"W 275.01 FT TO POB. SEC 16 T18N R17W 32 10.12 A. M/L., parcel 001-016-018-00, access 3179 W US-10.; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission is recommending approval of this request.



THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the County of Mason approves the request to rezone 90SPLIT 85 SPLIT 1986 PARCEL 'A' DESC AS--COMM AT W 1/4 COR, TH S 00 DEG 58'45"E ALG W SEC LINE 1608.77 FT, TH N 89 DEG 59'45"E 274.54 FT, TH N 00 DEG 58'45"W 1596.75 FT, TH N 87 DEG 29'57"W 275.01 FT TO POB. SEC 16 T18N R17W 32 10.12 A. M/L., parcel 001-016-018-00, access 3179 W US-10 from Commercial (C-2) to Industrial (I).

Moved for your approval.

Motion carried. (Signed) J. Andersen.

Motion by Board Chair J. Andersen and seconded by N. Krieger to approve the following resolution:

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners made the decision to eliminate two positions in the Maintenance Department and to use contracting to offset some of the workload; and

WHEREAS, snow removal from the sidewalks at the Mason County Courthouse is an area where contracting can be effectively utilized; and

WHEREAS, the Buildings, Planning, Drains, and Airport Committee is recommending approval of the attached proposal for snow removal from the sidewalks of various County locations from Cooper's Lawn Care.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the County of Mason approves the attached proposal for snow removal from the sidewalks of various County locations.

Moved for your approval.

Motion carried. (Signed) J. Andersen.

Treasurer Kmetz noted he would email the Treasurer's report out once it was complete. He noted that demolition and clean-up is in progress on the lot in Tallman Lake area, and it will soon to be back on the tax rolls. Chair Andersen noted that she was contacted by a property owner and they appreciated all of the work being done to clean up the area.

Clerk Kelly noted that she will email the Clerk's report once it is available. The office is continuing to work on the November Election and she encouraged everyone to remember to vote. Additional training sessions for elections inspectors were completed in the last month. The Courts are continuing to keep the office busy and the Apex software, she hopes, will be in before the end of the year. There has been an issue with obtaining materials due to the pandemic. She also announced that Accounts Payable Deputy Pam Wagner will be retiring with her last day in the office being December 30, 2022.

Administrator Knizacky wished to address the question that Commissioner Hartley had on the Drain report noting that it was a typo and that the actual amount should have been \$3,920,575.21.

He further informed the Board that a final walk through was done on the Courthouse roofing project and it looks good. Four change orders were processed totaling only \$206.00. Due to the age of the building and the difficulty of the work, to only have four change orders was great. And finally, he informed the Board that he was able to find a contact that is interested in operating the County Broadband should the County move in that direction. He will make arrangements to have this on the work session scheduled for November 22, 2022.

Public comment: Dani McGarry noted that the Mason-Lake Conservation District has hired seven new people, of which only three are able to live in the County due to the housing shortage and nothing able to be rented. Chair Andersen noted that the County is participating in a housing study to address the needs.

Commissioner Squires wished to thank the Board personally with regards to the establishment of the School Resource Office. He hopes that Mason County never has to deal with an incident and wished to thank Chair Andersen and Administrator Knizacky for their work involved with this.

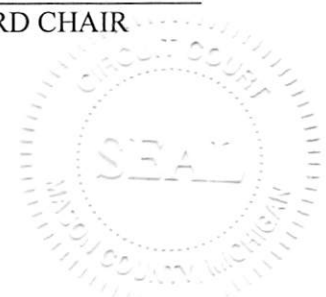
Chair Andersen noted the next work session will be November 22, 2022 at 7 p.m. Topics of discussion will be: Broadband and the Senior Services Position.

There was no other business:

With no other business the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 A.M.


CHERYL KELLY, COUNTY CLERK

JANET S. ANDERSEN, BOARD CHAIR



the same time, the Commission is aware of the fact that the Commission is not a court of law and it is not its function to pass judgment on the merits of the case. The Commission is only concerned with the facts of the case and the law applicable to the case.

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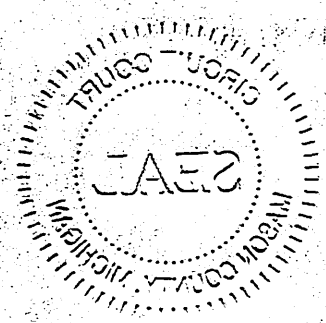
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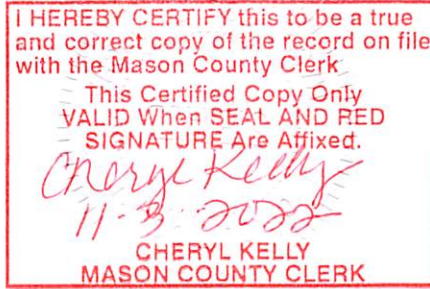
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Mason County Board of Commissioners

Mason County Airport
5300 W. US 10, Ludington, Michigan 49431
(P) (231) 843-7999 • (F) (231) 843-1972
www.masoncounty.net

Motion by N. Krieger and seconded by G. Castonia to approve the following resolution:

Janet S. Andersen
Chair

HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS

Steven Hull
Vice Chair

WHEREAS, the Mason County Parks and Recreation Commission has undertaken a five-year Recreation Plan which describes the physical features, existing recreation facilities, and the desired actions to be taken to improve and maintain recreation facilities during the period between 2023 and 2027; and

Cheryl Kelly
County Clerk

WHEREAS, public input was received via an online survey that was available in the Winter of 2022, to provide an opportunity for citizens to share ideas, express opinions, regarding the future of parks and recreation in Mason County, July 15, 2022 through August 15, 2022, at the Mason County Building, Mason County District Library branches in Ludington and Scottville and at www.masoncounty.net; and

Fabian L. Knizacky
Administrator

WHEREAS, a public meeting was held on August 15, 2022 at 5 p.m. in the pavilion of the Mason County picnic area, 6501 West Chauvez Road, Ludington to provide an opportunity for citizens to express opinions, ask questions, and discuss all aspects of the Recreation Plan; and

Nick Krieger
District 1

WHEREAS, Mason County has developed the Recreation Plan for the benefit of the entire community and wishes to adopt the plan as a document to assist in meeting the recreation needs of the community.

Gary Castonia
District 2

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, on this day that the Mason County Board of Commissioners adopts the 2023-2027 Recreation Plan.

Jody Hartley
District 3

Moved for your approval.

Lewis G. Squires, D.C.
District 4

Yeas: 7 Nays: 0 Absent: 0

Steven Hull
District 5

Roll Call vote:

Janet S. Andersen
District 6

AYES: Krieger, Castonia, Hartley, Squires, Hull, Bacon, Andersen
NAYS: None

Ron Bacon
District 7

I, Cheryl Kelly, County Clerk, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and original copy of a resolution adopted by the Mason County Board of Commissioners at a meeting thereof held on November 1, 2022 at 9.00 a.m.


County Clerk

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT RECREATION PLAN

WHEREAS, Mason County has undertaken a five-year Recreation Plan which describes the physical features, existing recreation facilities, and the desired actions to be taken to improve and maintain recreation facilities during the period between 2023 and 2027 and,

WHEREAS, public input was received via an online survey that was available in the Winter of 2022, to provide an opportunity for citizens to share ideas, express opinions, regarding the future of parks and recreation in Mason County, July 15, 2022 through August 15, 2022, at the Mason County Building, Mason County District Library branches in Ludington and Scottville and at www.masoncounty.net, and

WHEREAS, a public meeting was held on August 15, at 5 p.m. in the pavilion of the Mason County picnic area, 6501 West Chauvez Road, Ludington to provide an opportunity for citizens to express opinions, ask questions, and discuss all aspects of the Recreation Plan,

and

WHEREAS, Mason County has developed the Recreation Plan for the benefit of the entire community and wishes to adopt the plan as a document to assist in meeting the recreation needs of the community, and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mason County Board of Commissioners adopts the Mason County 2023 –2027 Recreation Plan

(Yeas eight Nays: zero Absent: two)

I, Daniel J. Rohde, Secretary, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and original copy of a resolution adopted by Mason County Parks and Recreation Commission at a Meeting thereof held on October 17th, 2022 at 3 pm.


Secretary

January 16, 2023

West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission
316 Morris Avenue
Suite 340
Muskegon, MI 49440

RE: Mason County Recreation Plan

To Whom It May Concern:

Please find enclosed the recently adopted Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the Mason County Parks and Recreation. The plan is being sent in accordance with the Michigan Departments of Natural Resources requirements for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plans. If you have any questions regarding the Plan, feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Cynthia A. Todd".

Cynthia A. Todd, PLA
Director of Planning

SPICER GROUP, INC.
230 S. Washington Avenue
Saginaw, MI 48607
Phone: (989) 921-8940
cynthia.todd@spicergroup.com

130765SG2023 – Mason County Recreation Plan

January 16, 2023

Mason County Planning Commission
102 E 5th Street
Scottville, MI 49454

RE: Mason County Recreation Plan

To Whom It May Concern:

Please find enclosed the recently adopted Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the Mason County Parks and Recreation. The plan is being sent in accordance with the Michigan Departments of Natural Resources requirements for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plans. If you have any questions regarding the Plan, feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

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Cynthia A. Todd, PLA
Director of Planning

SPICER GROUP, INC.
230 S. Washington Avenue
Saginaw, MI 48607
Phone: (989) 921-8940
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