INTERIOR TOWNSHIP
ONTONAGON COUNTY, MICHIGAN

Recreation
and
Natural Resource Conservation Plan

2027-2031

Adopted by Interior Township
Resolution #: 12XX26, December XX, 2026

DRAFT 11/1/26

Acknowledgements

The purpose of this plan is to set forth a recreation strategy for Interior Township, Ontonagon County, State of Michigan, that addresses the forces of change, confronts future challenges, and provides direction for decision-making regarding investment in recreation projects in the Township and Ontonagon County. This plan was 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 Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Plan, is necessary for governmental entities to pursue DNR-administered grants.

Planning Commission
Jeanne Harris, Chair
Mary Koch, Secretary
Melanie Pelkola, Liaison to the Board of Trustees

Interior Township Board of Trustees
Nikki Laitala, Supervisor
Wade Boan, Clerk
Melanie Pelkola, Treasurer
Paul Besonen, Trustee
Kris Peltola, Trustee

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INTRODUCTION

The foregoing recreational plan is developed for Interior Township, Michigan. Our township is in the southern half of Ontonagon County on the western side of the Upper Peninsula. We are contiguous with Haight Township to the West, Stannard Township to the North and West while Watersmeet Township and Gogebic County border Interior Township to the South. On our east side, we border Duncan Township, Houghton County.

The Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Plan developed herein by the Interior Township Planning Commission, focuses on all aspects of recreation within the Township. The plan considers current Township-owned properties and proposed property acquisitions.

Part 1: COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

Interior Township is located along major Highway M-28, 11 miles east of major highway US-45 and 21 miles north of major highway US-2. The township is located in the south end of Ontonagon County and borders Houghton County on the east side. The unincorporated village of Trout Creek is the hub of Interior Township. The summer temperatures range from a high of 80 degrees to a low of 55 degrees while our winter season temperature range from a normal high of 20 degrees to a low of 1 degree. Average snowfall in the winter season is 90 inches.

Trout Creek is a small rural community with its own municipal water and sewage disposal systems. Our water tower was updated with necessary maintenance in 2020. Trout Creek and the outlying areas of Interior Township have a history in farming, logging and sawmill operations and mining. The mines and sawmill operations have long vanished from our township. Farming is active and logging remains an important aspect of the community.

Interior Township is a part of the Ewen-Trout Creek Consolidated School District, a K-12 school system. We are within 100 miles of three distinct and highly rated post-secondary education campuses, Northern Michigan University, Michigan Technological University, and the Gogebic Community College.

The population in Interior Township has declined over the past several decades. The 2020 census number indicates a flattening in the total population of the township over the past decade. Our population is aging and we are primarily made up of older residents. This shift to older-aged residents is a result of the declining local economy forcing our young people and families to move elsewhere for employment.

Table 1: Interior Township Population Trends

	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Under age 18	17.3%	16.8%	15.5%	13.8%	16.00%
Age 18-24	9.1%	8.6%	8.0%	7.6%	8.00%
Age 25-44	19.4%	18.8%	17.1%	16.8%	11.00%
Age 45-64	33.9%	33.0%	34.1%	35.1%	36.00%
Age 65 & Older	20.3%	22.8%	25.3%	26.7%	28.00%
Total Population	528	480	375	370	325

Source: * US Census Bureau
* Interior Township Demographic and Population Statistics as provided by Michigan Township Association

Figure 1


OTTAWA
NATIONAL
FOREST
INTERIOR
TOWNSHIP
MICHIGAN
Trout Creek
OTTAWA
BOND FALLS
FLOWAGE
NATIONAL
FOREST

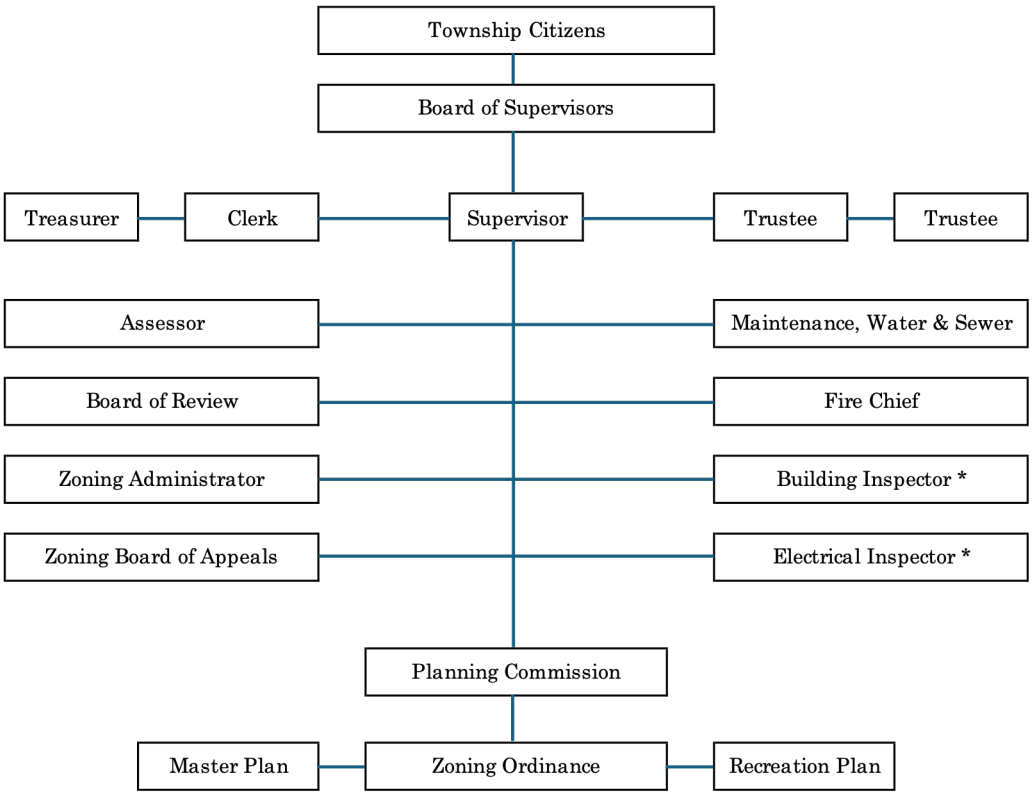
Part 2: ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

Interior Township is governed by an elected Board of Trustees. This Board of Trustees is the authority responsible for all administrative and operational functions of the Township. The following organizational chart indicates the structure of Interior Township staff, employees and volunteers (Figure 2). In reviewing the organizational chart, you will see that the administrative structure of the Township includes the Supervisor, Clerk, Treasurer and two Trustees, all of which are elected positions and receive a monthly stipend. All other employee or staff positions are appointed. All employees of the Township are part-time employees.

The Board of Trustees established a Planning Commission for the Township in 1982 to advise and assist with planning and development issues. The Planning Commission is also charged with the responsibility of development of the Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Plan for the Township. Please note that members of the Planning Commission are unpaid volunteers.

Figure 2

Interior Township Organizational Chart



* These two positions are currently State administered.

The 2026-2027 Budget for the Recreation Plan is listed below. Please note that this funding is millage voted on by the residents of Interior Township.

Operations and Maintenance	$ 4368.74
Capital Improvements	NONE
Recreation Programming	NONE

The Planning Commission determined that any additional available funding for projects would be considered on an individual project need basis. It was also noted that the township needs to be prepared to fund any necessary matching funds for grants applied as well as maintenance required to maintain a project once completed.

Several public volunteer groups have been formed in the Township and County to assist with upkeep and improvement of our recreational facilities and resources. These volunteer groups provide fund-raising activities and serve our community through active participation to not only keep resources in good condition but to take full advantage of local resources. The Planning Commission also recognizes these organizations in an advisory role by including them in the process of updating the recreation plan for Interior Township. These organizations include:

MI-TRALE
Sno Valley Snowmobile Club
American Legion Post 494
The 494 Supporters

Volunteerism in Interior Township is a challenge. Our younger generation has shown little interest in getting involved in the community and many drive an hour or more for work and leisure. Many of our younger generation work away from home, months at a time, making it difficult to stay connected. Interior Township is also made up of many part-time residents who have no connection to the community. As in many communities, it is the same small group that are involved and at some point, these volunteers grow older and/or get burned out. The challenge is finding the right project at the right time to pull the community together.

Our hometown school merged many years ago and the Ewen-Trout Creek Consolidated School is in another community in our county that is 15 miles away. Currently, there is minimal effort to connect with the school from a community perspective.

An additional resource for the township is the Ottawa National Forest (ONF). Although no ranger station is in our township, we do have two ranger stations within our county. The closest ranger station is 6 miles away in a neighboring county.

Part 3: RECREATION INVENTORY

Identifying the primary recreation resources in Interior Township included those facilities currently owned and operated by the Township, the State of Michigan and private businesses.

The Abbott-Fox Park Community Park is owned and maintained by Interior Township. This recreational facility is approximately three acres located next to the Mill Pond Dam and includes a playground, open shelter, water tap, picnic area, fire rings, lighting, historic steam engine, memorial, fishing dock and beach (on pond), and flush toilets. Two DNR grants (1977 & 2011) were utilized to create the existing park.

This community park is designed and intended for use by all township residents and neighboring community residents as well as visitors and travelers. The park is conveniently located along highway M-28 and currently provides fishing opportunities, a picnic area, children's playground area, handicap-accessible restrooms and a small sheltered picnic area. The park is centered around the Mill Pond and is home to a display of an antique historical Corliss Steam Engine which was used to provide power in operating the saw mill which existed in the area many years ago. The park is currently used by residents, travelers, Community Church service, community picnic and private events such as family reunions.

Accessibility assessment : Park has been upgraded with paved paths to the picnic area and the fishing dock. The site was originally built with handicapped accessible restrooms.

The Hazel Sliger Museum is owned by the Township and operated by the Hazel Sliger Museum Committee. The museum is an extensive collection of the heritage of the area. The museum has a new 2020 roof and is currently working on raising funds for building maintenance and establishing regular hours. The museum is currently open on the 4th of July during the Trout Creek Volunteer Fire Department's annual Lawn Mower Parade.

Accessibility assessment : The museum building needs accessibility as the entrance to the building is two steps over a relatively tall threshold.

The Bond Falls recreation area is an approximate 250-acre collaboration between the State of Michigan and private ownership. The State of Michigan Scenic Site area provides accessibility to view Bond Falls to persons with disabilities. The Bond Falls recreation area spans several townships within Ontonagon County. The Interior Township portion of this area includes a flowage, campsites, boat launch and a Commons Park State Picnic area. In addition, the privately owned portion of this area provides a rustic hiking trail to view Bond Falls, a picnic area, swimming area and

primitive campsites. The campsites are spread out around Bond Lake, which is a part of the Hydroelectric System of the Upper Peninsula Power company (UPPCO). Bond Lake also provides fishing opportunities.

Accessibility assessment, The accessibility of the Bond Falls Recreation Area indicates only the State Scenic Site Area was designed to be readily accessible to persons with disabilities. None of the facilities in the privately-owned lands were designed for persons with disabilities.

Agate Falls area is a natural waterfall along the Middle Branch of the Ontonagon River. The falls feature a one-acre roadside park that is owned and operated by MDNR and MDOT. The park includes a Scenic Site State Accessible hiking trail to an Agate Falls viewing deck, a picnic area, and vault toilets. This park was designed primarily as a rest stop for travelers. There is a primitive walking trail to view Agate Falls from below, however, this trail is very difficult to walk and is not recommended for the elderly and is not handicapped accessible.

Accessibility assessment : The accessibility of the Agate Falls area is the roadside park itself with accessible toilets and picnic tables as well as a trail to viewing deck to the falls.

Firefly at Agate Falls, is a privately owned nature retreat located near Agate Falls. The retreat features geodesic dome accommodations, wood-fired hot tubs, a communal sauna, and nature-based wellness amenities designed to help guests connect with the surrounding landscape. Firefly expands lodging and outdoor recreation opportunities in Interior Township and supports nature-based tourism in the area.

Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) owns and maintains a trail on an abandoned railroad grade traveling east-west through Interior Township. This trail has heavy snowmobile and off-road vehicle (ORV) traffic as it is connected to a larger trail system throughout the western Upper Peninsula. There currently is no trailhead located within Interior Township. Ontonagon County has an ordinance for the purpose of authorizing and regulating ORVs on roads in Ontonagon County.

Michigan Trails and Recreation Alliance of Land and the Environment, commonly known as MI-TRALE, is an alliance of multiple trail and outdoor recreation enthusiasts.

MI-TRALE offers more than 500 miles of ATV, ORV, multi-use and horse trails in the western U.P. of Michigan. The mission of MI-TRALE is to advance the safe and responsible use of multi-use trails for both motorized and non-motorized trail

recreationists, by working towards the development, designation and the interconnection of multi-use trails in the Western Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

Sno Valley Riders is a local membership snowmobile club that is responsible for grooming the trail through Interior Township for winter snowmobiling. The mission of the Sno Valley Riders is to stimulate and advance the general welfare and safety of snowmobiling, to serve the interests of snowmobile owners, to improve and enhance trails and to further the welfare of our community.

MI-TRALE - Equestrian Division, has been working over the years to improve signage regarding the multi-use nature of the trail. The group also worked with the Ottawa National Forest to create an equestrian campground on Courtney Lake north of Interior Township.

MI-TRALE – Water Trails of Michigan, is active in identifying paddling opportunities along the Middle Branch and the West Branch of the Ontonagon River.

Current Status for all grant-assisted Parks and Recreation Facilities:

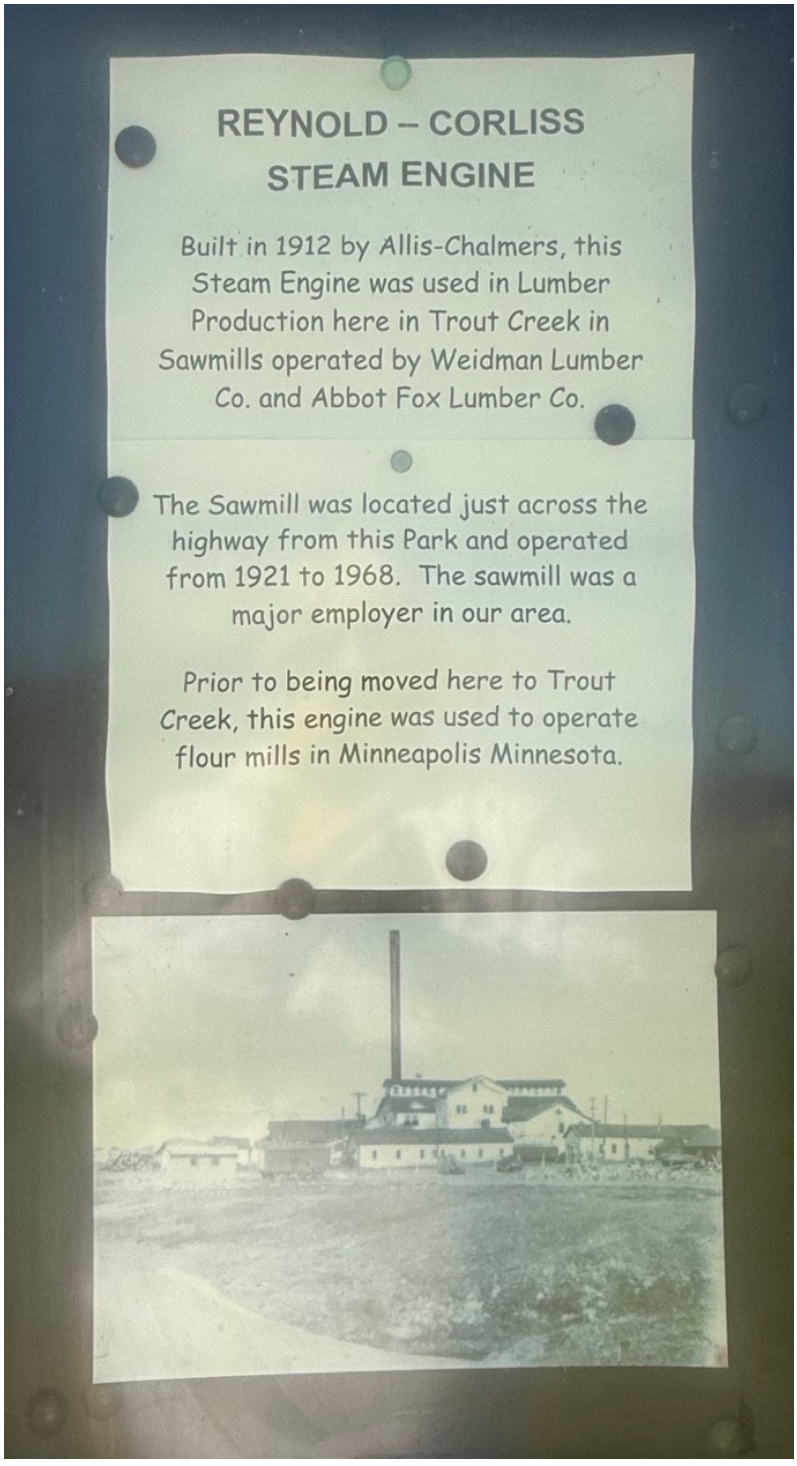
The upgrades to the Abbot Fox Park were completed with a MNRTF grant along with the support of Interior Township, Park Improvement Group, Pond Fest Committee, donations and volunteers. Interior Township plans to upgrade/maintain the cement base as well as paint the steam engine located in the park.

See Figure 4 for a picture of the steam engine and Figure 5 for a picture of the plaque regarding the history of the steam engine.

Figure 4: Photo of Steam Engine located at Abbot Fox Park.



Figure 5: Photo of Steam Engine Signage at Abbot Fox Park



Part 4: RESOURCE INVENTORY

Township owned property, 27 Acre parcel South of Abbot Fox Park.

Township owned property, Section 12 T47N R38W Lot 1, Block 5 of Supervisors Plat No 1. This vacant lot is approximately nine acres of undeveloped land that borders Trout Creek. Owned by the township, the 2010-2015 recreation plan designated the creation of a Backwater Recreation Area Walking trail & foot bridge

Township owned property, along M-28 this 1.75 acres was purchased by the township for future signage along M-28.

Trout Creek Cemetery is owned and maintained by Interior Township. Memorial Day activities are held each year in cooperation with the local American Legion, Post 494 and the 494 Supporters.

Agate Cemetery is owned and maintained by Interior Township. Memorial Day activities are held each year in cooperation with the local American Legion, Post 494 and the 494 Supporters.

Township owned property, South ½ of Lots 1 and 2, Block 1 of Plat of Josephine. The former surplus store is on this property.

Township owned property, North ½ of Lots 1 and 2, Block 1 of Plat of Josephine. Currently a vacant lot that is just north of the former surplus store along Division Street.

Township owned property, Small parcel along Old M-28, assumed that this parcel is the location of former gas tanks.

Township owned property, Small Parcel along Old M-28, combination of three smaller parcels, located roughly on the South side of Old M-28 where Loop Road would extend to if it did extend. Thought to be the location of the former railroad refueling station.

Part 5: DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

The Interior Township Planning Commission began the task of updating/completing a Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Plan for approval in 2027 on March 13, 2025. At that meeting the decision was made that the existing recreation plan was still relevant. The Planning Commission decided to focus on seeking public comment and opinion, which would drive updates to the Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Plan. Planning Commission members were tasked with reviewing an example of the prior survey/questionnaire, along with the current recreation plan, and bring any comments, concerns and suggestions to the next meeting.

Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Plan discussions were part of two Planning Commission meetings which were held May 8, 2025 and July 10, 2025. The Commission worked to prepare a public survey that was mailed out with the Township's newsletter and summer tax statements in July 2025. A copy of the survey is included as Figure 3. 450 surveys were sent out with tax statements. Also, the survey was posted at the entrance of Interior Township Hall, the Trout Creek Post Office and The White Door General Store in Trout Creek. Additionally, the survey was distributed at the annual 4th of July parade in Trout Creek. The parade attracts many local residents as well as visitors from neighboring communities. One survey had been received by the July 10, 2025 meeting. It was decided the Commission would review any surveys received at the next meeting.

The next Planning Commission meeting, on October 14, 2025, focused on discussion as a result of the survey data collected. Our response to the survey was disappointing, resulting in nine surveys returned. The results of the survey are on page 16.

Reviewing previous recreation plan survey-generated thoughts, along with current input, our challenges, wants and needs remain the same, included in the list below.

- Challenge of matching funds
- Volunteers
- Partnerships
- Expand Recreation Opportunities
- Trailhead in Interior Twp
- Focus on Equestrian roads
- Geocache.com
- Focus on history
- Signage – update and/or new
- Dispersed camping for Equestrian
- Cross Country Ski trails
- Museum

- Park reservations
- Website
- Trail etiquette
- 40 AC NFS adjacent to Twp land (NFS stands for National Forest Service)
- Cross Country trails - partnerships

On January 15, 2026 (the first meeting of 2026) the surveys were discussed again, and it was suggested a timeframe for plan approval to be formulated at the next Planning Commission meeting in March.

At the March 12, 2026 Planning Commission meeting, a Recreation Plan timeline for steps to be taken - including revisions, reviews, hearing process and final approval by the end of 2026 - was created.

The next two Planning Commission meetings, on May 14, 2026, and July 8, 2026, consisted of page-by-page reviews of the current Recreation Plan to make any updates, revisions or changes as needed to Parts 1-4, and then Parts 5-8 respectively.

The October 7, 2026, Planning Commission meeting was reserved for a final review of the 2027-2031 Interior Township Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Plan, before the 30-day Public Review period scheduled for November 2, 2026-December 1, 2026. A Public Notice for availability of the draft plan for public review was posted. A notice of Public Hearing (to be held Thursday, December 3, 2026, at 5:00 pm) was published in the Ontonagon Herald on Wednesday, November 25, 2026.

RESULTS: Interior Township Recreation Plan – Public Survey for 2026 Plan Renewal

Results of the survey are listed below. (Y=Yes / N=No and NR=No Response). Actual survey included as Figure 3.

1. Would you volunteer for any of the following items currently identified within our Plan:
   a. Chair or participate on a Recreation Plan Task force which is not limited to but may consist of things such as:
      - Updating the website regarding hospitality and visitor information; 1Y / 1N / 7NR
      - Social media campaigning; 2Y / 1N / 6NR
      - Restarting the annual Pond Fest or Country Fair; 2Y / 1N / 6NR
      - Maintaining and expanding Abbot Fox Community Park (including gaining access to a 27-acre parcel located South of the pond which is owned by the township; improved signage; creating several campsites; add walking, skiing, snowshoeing trails; adding a multi-purpose sport area; etc.); 5Y / 1N / 3NR
      - Promoting “stay-cationing”; 1Y / 1N / 7NR
      - Creating a community garden or a small park area in town; 3Y / 1N / 5NR
      - Developing trail heads throughout including snowmobiling and x-country skiing. 2Y / 1N / 6NR

   b. Join the Planning Commission? 0Y / 2N / 7NR
   c. Would you volunteer your labor or professional knowledge toward projects? And if so, please explain. 6Y / 1N / 2NR
2. Do you support the current Plan ideas as mentioned above? 3Y / 0N / 6NR
   Please include which ones along with why or why not. (see #6 comments)
3. Do you have any suggestions, ideas or things you would like to see added to the Plan?
4. Do you have the knowledge and experience to search and/or write for grants on behalf of the Township, or do you know of such an individual? 0Y / 4N / 5NR
5. Are you a full-time resident, seasonal resident, strictly a property owner or other?
   Eight (8) responded “full-time”, one responded, “somewhere in the middle” also an email with suggestions were received by a property owner/part-timer.

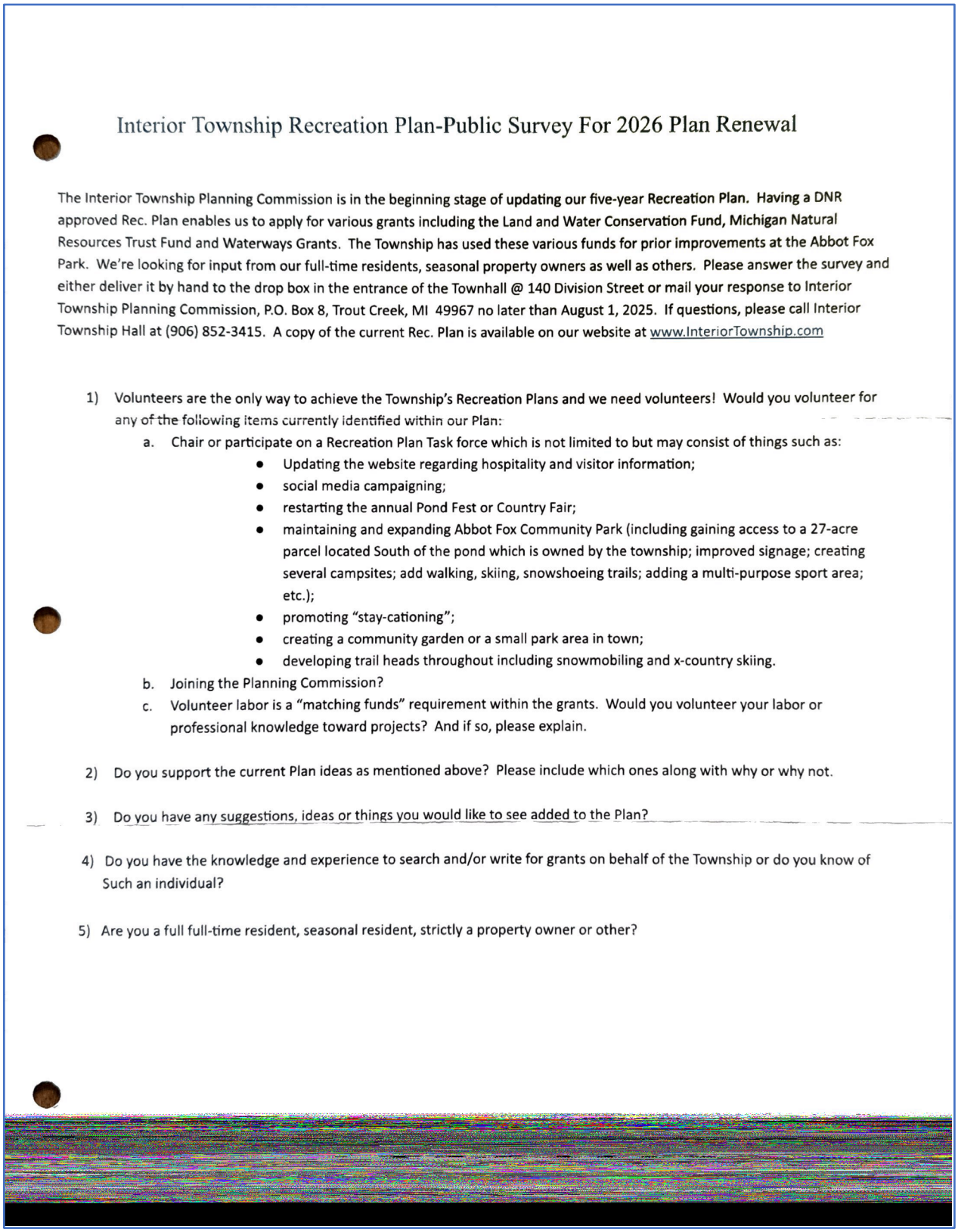
6. Comments included on the returned surveys include:
   a. I would like anything that promotes business in the town. Maybe updating the park with adult equipment or creating a farmers’ market at the park.
   b. Hiking and skiing trails would be a good addition to the township.
   c. A snowmobiling trail head doesn’t seem appropriate for town. Also, maintenance costs for some Plan ideas are of concern.
   d. One responder supports park expansion and also wonders if there’s room for trail parking in town.
   e. One responder supports expansion of Abbot Fox Park, as well as a community garden or small park area in town.

f. In Addition: a separate email response was received from a property owner/part-time resident commenting that Abbott Park and the frontage on M-28 are Trout Creek's best assets. He proposed some ideas that would be beneficial to both residents and people outside the community, including Outdoor Movie Nights at the park, Music in the Park, Seasonal Festivals (pumpkin carving, chili cook-off, bonfire, etc.), a Farmer/Artist's Market, and even a Food Truck event. Also mentioned was improving signage at the park, and gaining an easement to the extended property could open up a lot of possibilities.

As we had concerns about getting public input, the following strategies were implemented.

1. The survey was posted in the Interior Township Hall and the Trout Creek Post Office. Notice of the survey was included in the township newsletter distributed with the July 2025 tax bills. Additionally, the survey was hand distributed to approximately 50 residents/guests/community members who attended the July 4, 2025, Lawnmower Parade, sponsored by the Interior Township Volunteer Fire Department. This event attracts many local residents as well as visitors from neighboring communities.
2. Recreation Plan posted in Township Hall Lobby and in the Trout Creek Post Office on November 2, 2026, with Notice of Public Hearing scheduled for Thursday, December 3, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. in Township Hall.
3. Recreation Plan emailed to Planning Commission members asking them to share with interested parties to gain additional public comment.
4. The Recreation Plan was emailed to the secretary of the 494 Supporters with a request to share with their membership. This list has approximately 70 members of the 494 Supporters. The group is composed of full-time and part-time residents, landowners and interested parties.

Figure 3:



Interior Township Recreation Plan-Public Survey For 2026 Plan Renewal

The Interior Township Planning Commission is in the beginning stage of updating our five-year Recreation Plan. Having a DNR approved Rec. Plan enables us to apply for various grants including the Land and Water Conservation Fund, Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund and Waterways Grants. The Township has used these various funds for prior improvements at the Abbot Fox Park. We're looking for input from our full-time residents, seasonal property owners as well as others. Please answer the survey and either deliver it by hand to the drop box in the entrance of the Townhall @ 140 Division Street or mail your response to Interior Township Planning Commission, P.O. Box 8, Trout Creek, MI 49967 no later than August 1, 2025. If questions, please call Interior Township Hall at (906) 852-3415. A copy of the current Rec. Plan is available on our website at www.InteriorTownship.com

1) Volunteers are the only way to achieve the Township's Recreation Plans and we need volunteers! Would you volunteer for any of the following items currently identified within our Plan:
   a. Chair or participate on a Recreation Plan Task force which is not limited to but may consist of things such as:
      - Updating the website regarding hospitality and visitor information;
      - social media campaigning;
      - restarting the annual Pond Fest or Country Fair;
      - maintaining and expanding Abbot Fox Community Park (including gaining access to a 27-acre parcel located South of the pond which is owned by the township; improved signage; creating several campsites; add walking, skiing, snowshoeing trails; adding a multi-purpose sport area; etc.);
      - promoting "stay-cationing";
      - creating a community garden or a small park area in town;
      - developing trail heads throughout including snowmobiling and x-country skiing.
   b. Joining the Planning Commission?
   c. Volunteer labor is a "matching funds" requirement within the grants. Would you volunteer your labor or professional knowledge toward projects? And if so, please explain.

2) Do you support the current Plan ideas as mentioned above? Please include which ones along with why or why not.

3) Do you have any suggestions, ideas or things you would like to see added to the Plan?

4) Do you have the knowledge and experience to search and/or write for grants on behalf of the Township or do you know of Such an individual?

5) Are you a full full-time resident, seasonal resident, strictly a property owner or other?

Part 6: DESCRIPTION OF THE PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

Public Input was an important part of the process for the updating the Interior Township Recreation Plan. The Planning Commission actively shared the recreation plan action program and welcomed comments from individual community members.

The Planning Commission reviewed the DNR guidelines for the Development of Community Parks and Recreation Plans and created the following plan of action for updating the Recreation Plan for Interior Township. The action plan proposed a public meeting after a 30-day posting of a Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Plan Draft. Thursday, December 3, 2026, beginning at 5:00 p.m. was chosen to ensure all residents, out of area property owners and interested parties could provide input. As part of the posting, we offered to provide electronic copies of the draft plan to interested parties.

A final draft copy was shared with the Planning Commission at its October 7, 2026, meeting. As DNR guidelines require a 30-day review period, the Planning Commission posted the Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Plan DRAFT at Township Hall and the Trout Creek Post Office as of November 2, 2026. The Planning Commission decided to put a public notice in the Ontonagon Herald in the November 25th weekly edition, announcing the public meeting, and to meet the end of year approval timeline for the Recreation Plan.

Once the 2027-2031 Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Plan was adopted by the Planning Commission, the Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Plan was sent to the Interior Township Board for the creation of an adopting resolution at its December 14, 2026, meeting. The guidelines do call for a copy of the adopted plan to be sent to Ontonagon County and Regional Planning (Western Upper Peninsula Planning & Development), no approval needed (for their files). The 2027-2031 Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Plan for Interior Township could then be submitted to DNR in early 2027.

Part 7: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Seek and consider all public input in developing a sound and sensible Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Plan. Increase specific outreach so response truly dictates wants/needs.

2. Provide opportunities that sufficiently meet the recreational needs of township residents (full and part-time), as well as visitors and travelers.

3. Promote community awareness of all recreational opportunities.

4. Provide diverse recreational opportunities to satisfy all age groups and levels of ability with attention to accessibility while minimizing environmental impacts and being cost effective.

Part 8. ACTION PROGRAM

Discussion was focused on what our priorities should be to our community. One of the challenges of this plan is that we included more action items than what we would ever be able to accomplish in the next five years. The Planning Committee felt that we should include all five action items as our interest is in advancing each of these items in some way over the next five years.

The Planning Committee acknowledged the Abbot Fox Community Park as the beacon to our community for residents, travelers and visitors. For many of our travelers and visitors it is their introduction to our community whether a quick stop, lunch or attending an event at the park. For residents, the park does offer much but is also in a location that is not conducive to higher traffic by community members. The Planning Committee decided that our focus must first be on what is needed and wanted by the community, taking into account our opportunities to showcase our community to travelers and visitors.

Our next step was to look at the long-range opportunities for our community and not only identify those that fit with the culture and heritage of our Township, but to prioritize them in relation to resident opinion and practicality. The Committee focused on specific projects that move us forward toward our long-term objectives.

Specific community realities include age of population, funding sources as well as the rural environment. In considering the age of our residents, we are challenged to provide recreational pursuits to attract and keep young families as well as appeal to the older population. Accessibility is a must for all pursuits as this area is a haven for retirees.

The Planning Commission has worked diligently to develop a recreation plan that reflects the interest of our residents from a creativity and environmental theme taking into considerations the realities of our community. Our current research and community input confirmed that updating the 2022-2026 Recreation Plan was relevant and appropriate. Many opinions have been expressed and ideas presented. As a result, our collaborative recreation plan reflects a sensible, realistic, cost effective and attainable plan.

Action Program
Interior Township, Ontonagon County, Michigan

Long-term Action Programs with specific benchmarks for community action.

1. Create a Recreation Committee, authorized by Interior Township

a. Develop duties for Recreation Committee
    i. Twp recreational properties and activities
    ii. Maintenance of facilities
    iii. Funding Management
b. Communication and Promotion to residents and visitors
    i. Define outreach efforts to residents, truly getting specific feedback.
        1. Survey residents to see if they would support an in-town community park.
    ii. Continue maintenance and promotion of the Interior Township website, to continue to allow for interaction between the township and public
        1. Recreation activities/opportunities for residents and visitors
        2. Link to websites for information for residents and visitors
        3. Visitor information
        4. Social Media campaign
        5. Promote Staycation to full and part-time residents

2. Develop in town park
    a. Analyze Twp owned property for park development, possibly the three lots on Division Street which includes the old Surplus Store.
        i. Multi-purpose sports area.
        ii. Picnic area
        iii. Play structure
    b. Establish Community Garden / Build Hoop House
        i. Identify the plot of land. (Twp owned or private land)
        ii. Solicit residents for interest
        iii. Explore hoop house construction

3. Develop trail head in Interior Township for multi-purpose trail
    a. Partner with MI-TRALE and Sno Riders Snowmobile Club
        i. Analyze parking availability for resident and visitor users
            1. Side by side parking in downtown area near museum
            2. Identify parking for larger trailers hauling ATVs, Snowmobiles and Horses
        ii. Support signage on trail
4. Develop Cross Country ski trails

a. Rough out the approximate 3-mile trail North of Trout Creek, 5-mile Rd. area
    i. Written agreements with private property owners
    ii. Develop partnership with Kenton Ranger Station for trail head on Ottawa National Forest property
b. Develop partnerships with Kenton Ranger Station to groom the trail with their equipment/volunteers

5. Expand Abbot Fox Community Park
    a. Dredge Mill Pond
        i. Maintain access for disabled to catch fish from the fishing deck.
        ii. Create habitat attracting waterfowl, possibly accessible trails leading to an observation deck at the rear of the park
        iii. Keep the depth of the water deep enough for trout to survive.
    b. Develop nature trail within current Abbot Fox Community Park with expansion opportunities into 27-acre parcel owned by Twp and 40 acres National Forest property located South of park
        i. Map out path within the current Abbot Fox Park boundaries as a short walking trail and cross-country ski trail
        ii. Expand trail to the South onto 27 acres already owned by twp.
        iii. Acquisition of parcel contiguous with both the Upper Pond of Abbot Fox Community Park and 27-acre parcel owned by township with consideration of Mill Pond Road access.
        iv. Partner with Ottawa National Forest (ONF) for development of 40 acres owned by the ONF that is contiguous to the South border of the 27-acre parcel
        v. Build 4 campsites at Abbot Fox Community Park (Under 5 sites are not governed by DEQ and local campground rules) Rustic sites with access to bathrooms and well from approximately May to October.