

INTERIOR TOWNSHIP
ONTONAGON COUNTY, MICHIGAN

Recreation
and
Natural Resource Conservation Plan

2022-2026

Adopted by Interior Township
Resolution #: 012422, January 24, 2022

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 Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway 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.

Recreation Plan Task Force

Wade Boen
Duane Bullock
PJ Fish, Chair
Kenneth Pelkola

Planning Commission

Patsy May, Chair
Duane Bullock
Melanie Pelkola, Liaison to the Board of Trustees

Interior Township Board of Trustees

Joseph O'Sullivan, Supervisor
Marianne Besonen, Clerk
Melanie Pelkola, Treasurer
Paul Besonen, Trustee
Fred Johnson, 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 which is developed herein by the Recreation Plan Task Force of 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 four distinct and highly-rated post-secondary education campuses, Northern Michigan University, Michigan Technological University, Finlandia 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



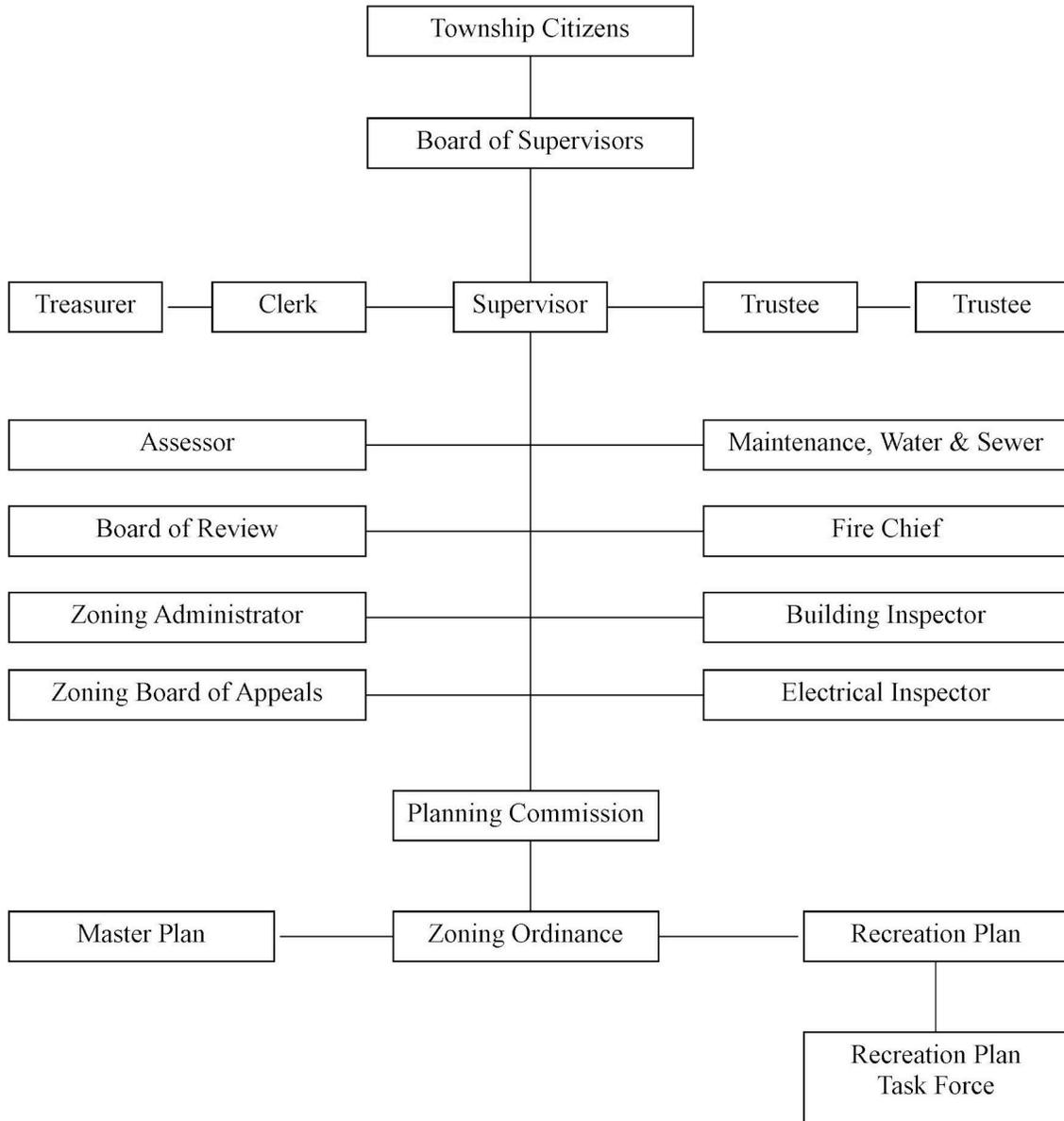
Part 2: ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

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 attached 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 advising and development of the Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Plan for the Township. The Planning Commission created the Recreation Plan Task Force and charged it with updating the Township's Recreation Plan. The Recreation Plan Task Force consists of Planning Commission representation and public citizens to provide input, ideas and recommendations on needed recreational programs and activities for the benefit of Township residents, their families, senior citizens, persons with disabilities, as well as visitors and travelers. This public citizen's committee is not limited in terms of size or number of members. Please note that members of the Planning Commission and the Recreation Plan Task Force are unpaid volunteers.

Figure 2

Interior Township Organizational Chart



The 2021-2022 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	\$ 4,107.00
Capital Improvements	NONE
Recreation Programming	NONE

The task force determined that specific funding for projects would be strategically part of an individual project plan of action. The task force did also make note that there was a need for the township 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:

- Interior Twp Civic Improvement Committee
- 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 located in another community in our county that is 15 miles away. Our township is represented on the elected school board. 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. The task force determined that the township should seek partnerships with the Ottawa National Forest.

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. This identification of our resources was originally completed by the Regional Development Council for the 2010-2015 Recreation Plan. The task force reviewed this list and updated as needed.

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 a 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.

Accessibility assessment : The museum building needs accessibility as the entrance to the building is two steps over a pretty 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

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 last three years to improve signage regarding the multi-use nature of the trail. The group has also been working with the Ottawa National Forest to create an equestrian campground on Courtney Lake north of Interior Township.

MI-TRALE - Paddlers Division, 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 in 2022. See figure 5 for a picture of the plaque regarding the history of the steam engine.

Part 4: RESOURCE INVENTORY

Township owned property, 27 Acre parcel South of Mill Pond 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 created the Recreation Plan Task Force at its December 2021 meeting. The Recreation Plan Task Force was charged with seeking public opinion and updating the Township Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Plan that expired in December 2021. One member of the Planning Commission volunteered to be on the Recreation Plan Task Force. The Planning Commission had started the process of updating the Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Plan earlier in 2021, ran into timing issues and made the decision to establish a short term task force to complete the plan.

The Recreation Plan Task Force has four members, one representative from the Planning Commission and three community at large members. All members of the Task Force own Interior Township property and live here year-round. Collectively, the task force brings expertise from the following perspectives: farming, forestry, wildfire firefighting, homesteading, county employee, construction/trades, hospitality, recreation and real estate. One member of the task force is a lifelong resident, another has been visiting relatives since he was 10 months old and now a permanent resident for the past nine years. Another member recently moved into the area and the other has been here for the past 7 years. Please note that three of the task force members are retired with one task force member, a stay at home Dad. Geographically, three members live outside of the unincorporated Village of Trout Creek and one lives in Trout Creek.

The Planning Commission began the task of updating/completing a Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Plan for approval in 2022 on March 11, 2021. At that meeting the decision was made that the existing recreation plan was still relevant. The Planning Commission made the decision to focus on seeking public comment and opinion which would drive updates to the Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Plan. Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Plan discussions were part of two Planning Commission meetings which were held May 20, 2021 and August 5, 2021 discussing the thoughts generated during public input meetings for the previous recreation plan. We updated thoughts based upon the current situation. To be honest, our challenges, wants and needs remain the same, to include 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
- 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

Three work sessions were held specifically for the Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Plan. The focus of the June 11, 2021 work session was to finalize the survey to be distributed seeking public opinion/comment on the 2022-2026 Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Plan. The Planning Commission approved the updated survey to be distributed. A copy of the survey is included as Figure 3.

The survey was posted, available to residents and the general public, beginning July 1, 2021 through August 1, 2021. Availability of the survey was included in the township newsletter distributed with the July, 2021 tax bills, posted in the Interior Township Hall and the Trout Creek Post Office. Additionally, the survey was hand distributed to approximately 50 residents/guests/community members who attended the July 25, 2021 Holy Hootenanny sponsored by the Calvary Temple Assembly of God Church. This event attracts many local residents and visitors, notably from Marquette, Ironwood and Wisconsin in addition to Interior Township and Ontonagon County to name a few.

The work sessions on September 9, 2021 and October 7, 2021 focused on discussion as a result of the survey data collected. Our response to the survey was disappointing, resulting in 10 surveys returned. Survey results are listed below.

If we compare the survey results to the survey completed for the 2016-2021 Recreation Plan, answers to the current survey complemented the support that we saw for projects back in 2015, except we didn't have favorable support for a blacktopped multi-purpose sports area, although we still received positive support for an in-town park.

The Planning Commission held a meeting on December 16, 2021 to appoint a Recreation Plan Task Force. The Recreation Plan Task Force were each given copies of the 2016-2021 Recreation Plan and a working draft of the updated Recreation and

Natural Resource Conservation Plan by the Planning Commission. The Task Force met on January 8, 2022 to discuss the recreation plan with a focus on Part 7: Goals and Objectives and Part 8: Action Program. An updated draft of the plan was reviewed by the Task Force prior to a joint meeting on January 10th between the Planning Commission and the Township Board. The document was provided electronically to those with means and hard copies for review of the Recreation Plan. The working Draft was also reposted at both Township Hall and the Trout Creek Post Office.

RESULTS: Interior Township Recreation Plan - Resident Survey

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

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| 1. Support the expansion of the Abbot Fox Community Park? | 8 Y / 0 N / 2 NR |
| Such as: | |
| a. Gain access to 27 acre parcel already owned by Twp | 9 Y / 1 N / 0 NR |
| b. Improved signage? | 7 Y / 1 N / 2 NR |
| c. Four campsites? | 7 Y / 2 N / 1 NR |
| d. Walking trail / X-Country Ski Trail? | 9 Y / 1 N / 0 NR |
| e. Black topped multi-purpose sports area?*1 | 4 Y / 5 N / 0 NR |
| 2. Do you support a trailhead in Trout Creek for the Multi-Purpose trail? | 8 Y / 2 N / 0 NR |
| 3. Do you support creating a community garden in town? | 7 Y / 3 N / 0 NR |
| 4. Do you support a park in Trout Creek proper? | 9 Y / 0 N / 1 NR |
| 5. Would you approve a tax millage to fund these improvements*2 | 7 Y / 2 N / 0 NR |
| 6. Would you volunteer: | |
| a. To serve on a Twp Recreation Committee? | 2 Y / 4 N / 4 NR |
| b. To serve on the Twp Planning Commission | 2 Y / 5 N / 3 NR |
| c. To help with a Twp improvement project? | 4 Y / 3 N / 3 NR |
| d. Labor or Professional Knowledge | 4 Y / 2 N / 4 NR |
| e. Help restart the Annual Pond Fest and/or Country Fair | 4 Y / 3 N / 3 NR |
| 7. Additional comments for the Recreation Plan Task Force to consider? | |
| a. Having served on the Township Board, the Planning Commission, and 20+ years leading the Pond Fest Planning, my energy these days could provide advisership & resource person! Let's restart township clean up & recycling efforts. | |
| b. A pocket park in town would be great. A couple of picnic tables, small swing and basketball backboard. Get rid of old yellow building and put it there. | |
| c. I believe our town needs to focus more on the locals and the youth. There are many kids in town who have nothing to do or no place to get together and play. As one of these parents, I do not want my child up at the pond unsupervised. I would love to see a basketball court put up. Perfect spot in town could be next to the fire hall. Most of the kids in town are too big for | |

the little park at the pond. If something could be put up more in town, I feel it would be easier access for all and we don't have to worry about our kids who are of school age and play basketball. Please think about them for a change and do more for them than a stranger driving by looking for a place to park for the night.

- d. Community garden
- e. Maintain a website for township. Actively push township to sell properties that it owns that won't contribute to township future expansion (I.E. Surplus Store lot)

*1 One respondent answered "Maybe".

*2 One respondent answered "Depends"/

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, 2021 tax bills. Additionally, the survey was hand distributed to approximately 50 residents/guests/community members who attended the July 25, 2021 Holy Hootenanny sponsored by the Calvary Temple Assembly of God Church. This event attracts many local residents and visitors, notably from Marquette, Ironwood and Wisconsin in addition to Interior Township and Ontonagon County to name a few.
2. Recreation Plan posted in Township Hall Lobby and in the Trout Creek Post Office on December 16, 2021 with Notice of Public Hearing scheduled for Saturday, January 22, 2022 at 10:00am in Township Hall.
3. Recreation Plan emailed to Task Force members asking them to share with interested parties to gain additional public comment. Over 20 local residents, land owners and interested parties were emailed. As of January 20th, one response.
4. Recreation Plan emailed to Planning Commission members asking them to share with interested parties to gain additional public comment.
5. The Recreation Plan was emailed to the secretary of The 494 Supporters with a request to share with their membership email list. This list has approximately 70 members of the 494 Supporters. The group is composed of full-time and part-time residents, land owners and interested parties.

Figure 3:

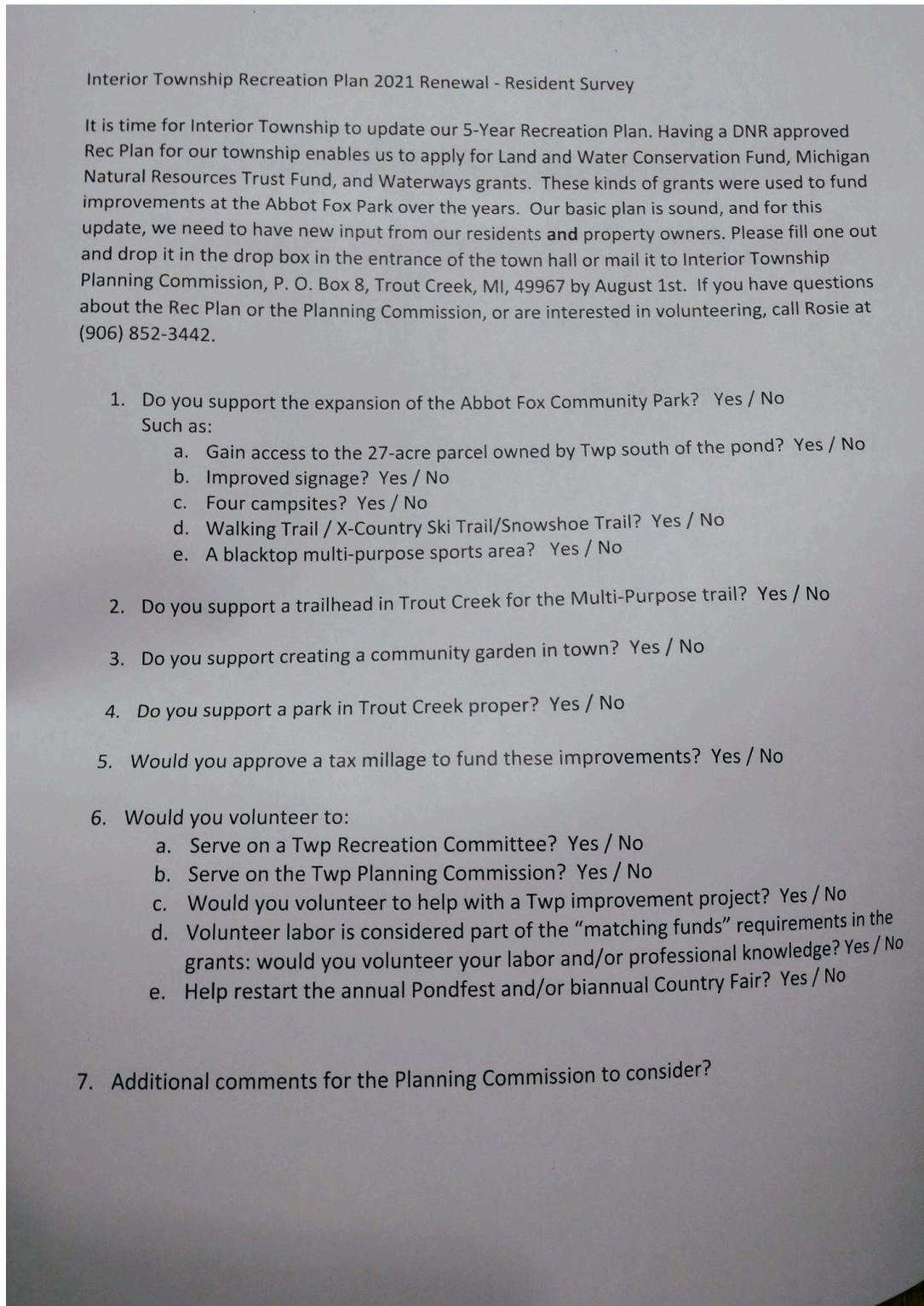


Figure 4:

Posting Date: December 17, 2021

NOTICE – PUBLIC HEARING

Interior Township

2022-2026 5-YEAR RECREATION PLAN

The Planning Commission of Interior Township Board has developed a five year recreation plan. Residents of the Township are encouraged to take this opportunity to review and comment on the plan prior to the board's approval.

A copy of the plan can be seen in the Lobby at the Township Hall with 24 hour access and also the Trout Creek Post Office. An electronic copy can be requested by calling the Township @ 906-852-3415 or emailing your request to interiortownship@yahoo.com.

The Planning Commission will be meeting on Saturday, January 22, 2022, at 10:00am, at the Township Hall to provide residents of the planning area an opportunity to express opinions, ask questions, and discuss all aspects of the Interior Township 5-year Recreation Plan. Your questions and comments may also be emailed to interiortownship@yahoo.com.

This Recreation Plan has been developed as a guideline for improving recreation and enhancing natural resource conservation for the local Interior Township area.

***Planning Commission
Interior Township
Trout Creek, Michigan 49967***

Figure 5: Published notice, Ontonagon Herald, January 12, 2022 Edition, page 7.



Figure 6:

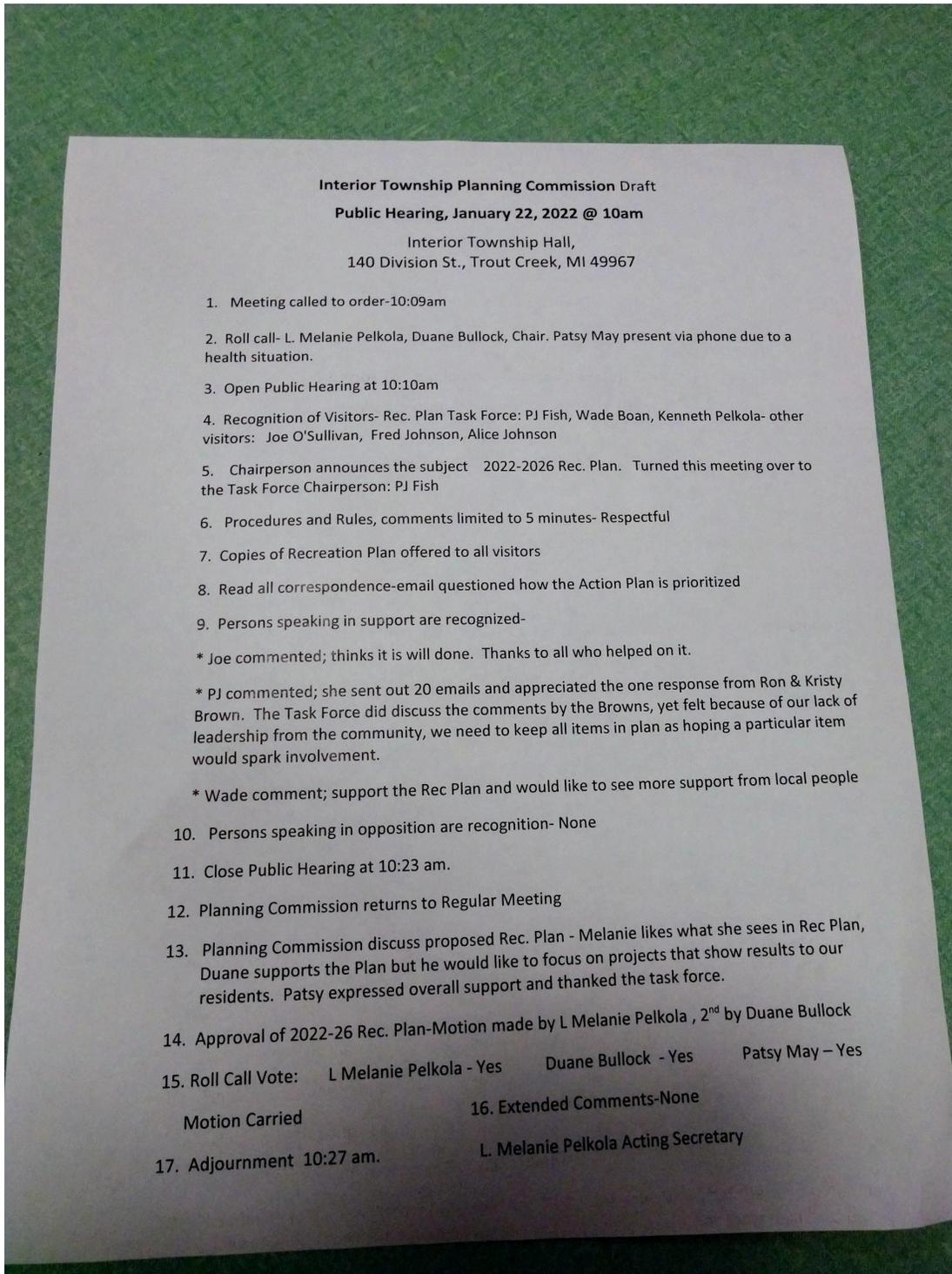


Figure 7: **DRAFT** of Interior Twp Special Board Meeting to approve the Recreation Plan

Interior Township
Draft Special Meeting
Interior Township Town Hall
January 24, 2022

Meeting was opened at 6 :27 pm by Trustee Fred Johnson
The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Members Present were, Clerk Mariann Besonen, Trustee Fred Johnson, Treasurer Melanie Pelkola. Absent: Trustee Paul Besonen & Supervisor Joseph Sullivan

New Business

Discussion on Recreation Plan-Resolution 012422. Planning Commission had a Public Hearing on Saturday, January 22. Motion made M. Besonen to accept Resolution #012422 to accept the recreation as presented, seconded by F. Johnson. Roll Call: Ayes: M. Besonen, F. Johnson, M. Pelkola. Nays: Absent: P. Besonen & Joseph O’Sullivan. Motion Carried and Resolution adopted this 24th day of January 2022.

Public Comments

None (No Comments)

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned by F. Johnson at 6:39 pm.

Mariann Besonen, Township Clerk

Figure 8:

RESOLUTION SUBMITTING TOWNSHIP'S PROPOSITION

Township of Interior
County of Ontonagon, State of Michigan
Resolution # 012422

For Interior Township, Ontonagon County, Michigan Recreation Plan 2022-2026

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has undertaken a planning process to determine the recreation and natural resource conservation needs and desires of its residents during a five year period covering the years 2022-2026, and

WHEREAS, the Interior Township Board has entered into this planning process in collaboration with the Planning Commission, and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission began the process of developing an Interior Township Recreation Plan in accordance with the most recent guidelines developed by the Department of Natural Resources and made available to local communities, and

WHEREAS, residents of the Interior Township were provided with a well-advertised opportunity during the development of the draft plan to express opinions, ask questions, and discuss all aspects of the recreation and natural resource conservation plan, and

WHEREAS, the public was given a well-advertised opportunity and reasonable accommodations to review the final draft plan for a period of at least 30 days, and

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held on January 22, 2022 at the Interior Township Hall to provide an opportunity for all residents of the planning area to express opinions, ask questions, and discuss all aspects of the Interior Township Recreation Plan 2022-2026, and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has developed the plan as a guideline for improving recreation and enhancing natural resource conservation for the Interior Township, and

WHEREAS, after the public hearing, the Planning Commission voted to adopt said Interior Township Recreation Plan 2022-2026.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Interior Township Board hereby adopts the Interior Township Recreation Plan 2022-2026.

Yeas: M. Besonen, F. Johnson, M. Pelkola

Nays: None

Absent: P. Besonen, J. O'Sullivan

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.



Township Clerk, Township of Interior

I hereby certify that the attached is a true and complete copy of a resolution adopted by the Township Board of the Township of Interior, County of Ontonagon, State of Michigan, at a Special meeting held on the January 24, 2022, and that said meeting was conducted pursuant to Act No. 267, Public Acts of Michigan, 1976, and that the minutes of said meeting were kept and will be or have been made available as required by said Act.



Township Clerk, Township of Interior

Figure 9: Copy of Correspondence to Regional Planning

Interior Township, Ontonagon County, Michigan
P.O. Box 8, Trout Creek, MI 49967

January 25, 2022

Mr. Jerry Wuorenmaa
Western Upper Peninsula Planning and Development Region
P.O. Box 365
Houghton, MI 49931

Dear Mr. Wuorenmaa ,

Attached is an electronic copy of the 2022-2026 Interior Township Recreation Plan, adopted via resolution by the Interior Township Board on January 24, 2022.

Please contact the Township at 906.852.3415 with any questions.

Sincerely,

Patsy May

Patsy May
2021 Chair
Planning Commission
Interior Township

Figure 10: Copy of Correspondence to Ontonagon County

Interior Township, Ontonagon County, Michigan
P.O. Box 8, Trout Creek, MI 49967

January 25, 2022

Stacy Preiss
Clerk, Ontonagon County
725 Greenland Rd.
Ontonagon, MI. 49953

Dear Ms. Preiss,

Attached is an electronic copy of the 2022-2026 Interior Township Recreation Plan, adopted via resolution by the Interior Township Board on January 24, 2022. The Township is sending the Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Plan directly to you as Ontonagon County does not currently have a Planning Commission or a Recreation Department.

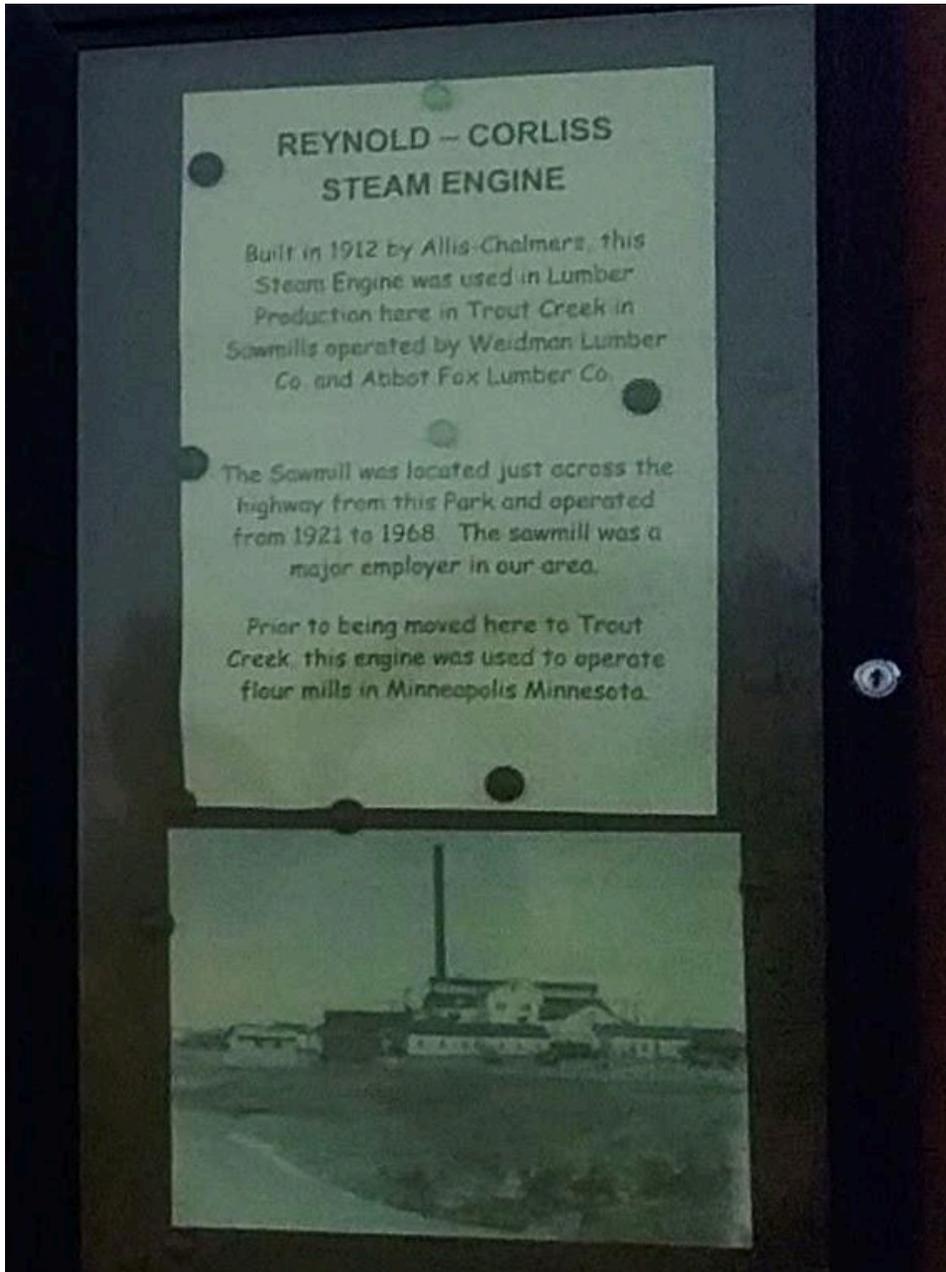
Please contact the Township at 906.852.3415 with any questions.

Sincerely,



Patsy May
2021 Chair
Planning Commission
Interior Township

Figure 11: Picture of Steam Engine Signage at Abbot Fox Park



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 and members of the Recreation Plan Task Force actively shared the recreation plan action program and welcomed comments from individual community members.

The Planning Commission and the Recreation Plan Task Force members were given and reviewed the DNR guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway 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. Saturday, January 22, 2022, beginning at 10:00am 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 draft copy was shared with the Planning Commission at its December 16, 2021 meeting. As DNR guidelines require a 30-day review period, the task force posted the Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Plan DRAFT at Township Hall and the Trout Creek Post Office as of December 17, 2021. The Task Force decided to put in a public notice in the Ontonagon Herald after the first of the year in the January 12th weekly edition so that it did not get lost in holiday hustle and bustle.

Once the 2022-2026 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 January 24, 2022 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 Economic (no approval needed, for their files). (The 2022-2026 Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Plan for Interior Township could then be submitted to DNR in early 2022.)

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 task force 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 task force 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 task force 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 Recreation Plan Task Force 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 and the Recreation Plan Task Force have 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 2016-2021 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. Push for Interior Township website which would 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
 - iii. Social Media campaign
 - iv. 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 ATVss, 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. Improved access for disabled to catch fish from the fishing deck as the current area under the fishing deck is weedy
 - 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 so all of Trout Creek will have a place to catch fish
 - b. Develop nature trail within current Abbot Fox Community Park with expansion opportunities into 27 acre parcel owned by Twp and 40 acre 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 acre 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.