OSCODA COUNTY, MI

RECREATION PLAN

Connecting People, Places, and the Outdoors

DRAFT FOR PUBLIC REVIEW

UPDATED 10/4/26

JOINT RECREATION PLAN FOR

Oscoda County, Big Creek Township, Clinton Township, Comins Township, Greenwood Township, and Mentor Township

OUTDOOR ADVENTURE | COMMUNITY CONNECTION | WATER ACCESS | PARKS & FACILITIES | NATURAL SETTING

2027 – 2031

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

PLAN ADOPTION DATES

Oscoda County Board of Commissioners
Charles E. Varner, Jr. (Chair), Tom McCauley (Vice Chair), Linda Jagiello (Commissioner), Ted Handrich (Commissioner), and Joe Breaugh (Commissioner) **Adopted on xx/xx/xx.**

Oscoda County Officials
Michelle Knepp (County Administrator), Libby Marsh-Shephard (Clerk/Register of Deeds), William Kendall (Treasurer)

Big Creek Township Board of Trustees - Adopted on xx/xx/xx.
Randy Booth (Supervisor), Lori Wyman (Clerk), Susan Avery (Treasurer), Erin Ecker (Trustee), Deb Coulon (Trustee)

Clinton Township Board of Trustees - Adopted on xx/xx/xx.
Chris Neff (Supervisor), Kurt Lunning (Clerk), Dawn Larrison (Treasurer), Ann Esch (Trustee), and Violet Kalbfleisch (Trustee)

Comins Township Board of Trustees - Adopted on xx/xx/xx.
Open (Supervisor), Amanda Barajas (Clerk), Kevin Salisbury (Treasurer), Blake Snyder (Trustee), John Kuziel II (Trustee)

Comins Township Planning Commission
Kyle Yoder (Chair), Michelle Knepp (Vice Chair), John McConnell (Secretary), Jerry Kunnath (Member), John Kuziel II (Member)

Greenwood Township Board of Trustees - Adopted on xx/xx/xx.
Fred Lindsey (Supervisor), Amy Lake (Clerk), Diane Bissonette (Treasurer), Annette Chalmers (Trustee), Brandon Watson (Trustee)

Mentor Township Board of Trustees - Adopted on xx/xx/xx.
Scott Lawrence (Supervisor), Stephanie Hall (Clerk), Joan Trim (Treasurer), Sheri Marble (Trustee), Aleasha Fehler (Trustee)

Planning assistance was provided by Northeast Michigan Council of Governments, 80 Livingston Blvd., Suite U-108, P.O. Box 457, Gaylord, MI 49734.

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COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION

This Joint Recreation Plan addresses recreational facilities and characteristics within the boundaries of Oscoda County. The plan will evaluate the surrounding recreational opportunities as well as the socio-economic status of the County and the surrounding area to determine the recreational needs of the population and to plan for improvements that fit those needs. This joint plan includes Oscoda County, Big Creek Township, Clinton Township, Comins Township, Greenwood Township, and Mentor Township, hereafter referred to as "the Townships and County".

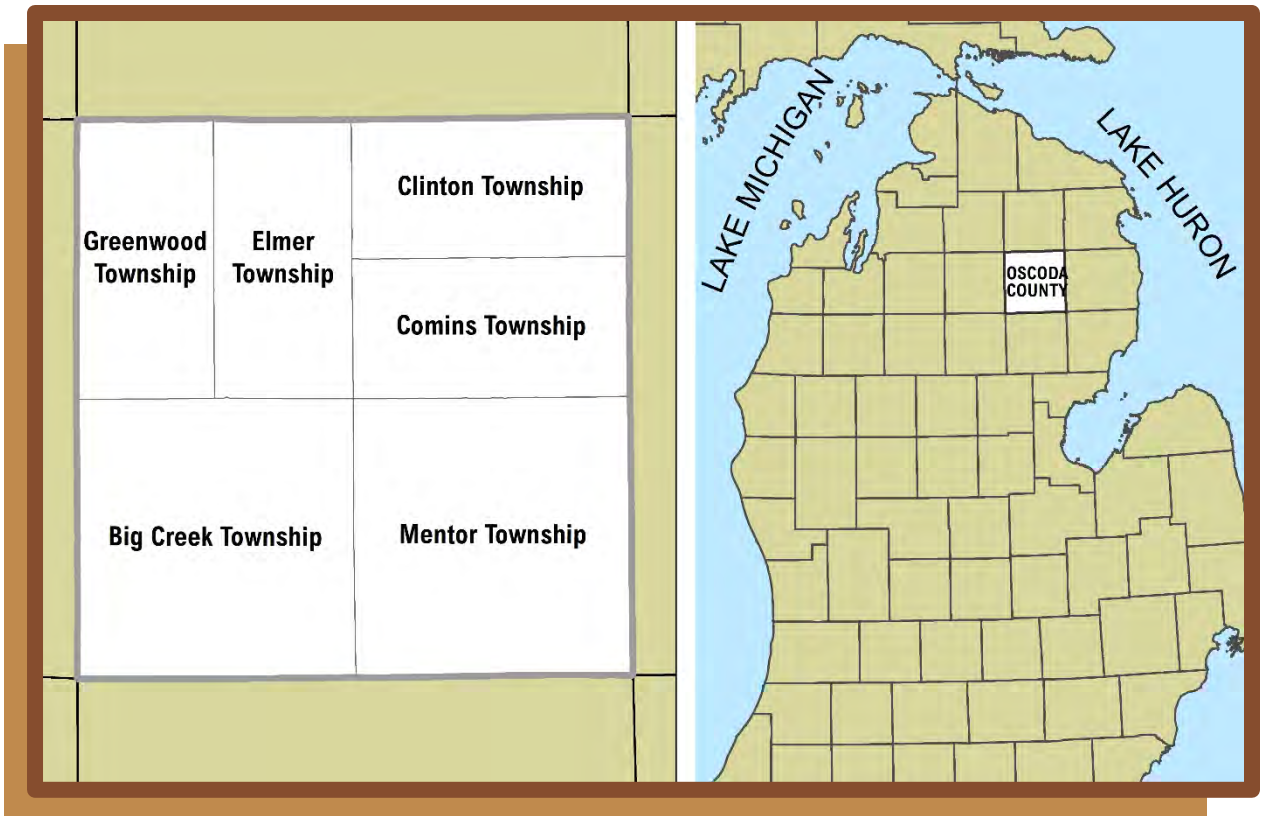
LOCATION AND COMMUNITY HISTORY

Oscoda County is located in the northeastern region of Michigan's Lower Peninsula. The County is approximately 23.7 miles by 23.9 miles and encompasses a total area of 565.7 square miles. It is composed of six townships: Big Creek Township, Clinton Township, Comins Township, Elmer Township, Greenwood Township, and Mentor Township. The County has no incorporated cities or villages. Mio, an unincorporated community and census-designated place centrally located within the County, serves as the County seat.

As with much of Michigan's northern Lower Peninsula, Oscoda County's early settlement and land use were closely tied to farming and logging. Following the Homestead Act of 1862, an influx of settlers of European descent moved into northern Michigan, including Oscoda County. Most of the County's early settlers established homesteads in the southwestern portion of the County. However, thin topsoil and poor farming practices eventually made much of the farmland unproductive, resulting in abandoned and fallow fields. Many of these properties ultimately reverted to government ownership.

Today, more than half of Oscoda County's land is publicly owned, consisting primarily of State and federal properties. The availability of inexpensive land also attracted Mennonite and Amish farmers to the Fairview area beginning around the turn of the twentieth century. Through the use of effective farming and land management practices, these farmers succeeded where many of the County's early agricultural settlers had not. Many of these lands continue to be actively farmed today.

Forestry and logging became established industries in Oscoda County beginning in the 1870s and remain important to the local economy. After most of the region's original timber had been harvested, farming became the area's leading industry. Since the end of World War II, the County has continued to diversify its economy, shifting toward a greater emphasis on tourism while maintaining logging and agriculture as important economic and community assets.


Greenwood Township
Elmer Township
Clinton Township
Comins Township
Big Creek Township
Mentor Township
LAKE MICHIGAN
LAKE HURON
OSCODA COUNTY

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

RECREATION ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

The Oscoda County Board of Commissioners operates under an administrative structure consisting of a Chair, Vice-Chair, and board members. Commissioners are chosen by qualified voters of the county in at-large elections held every four years. Bylaws adopted by the County determine the order of business and method of conducting regular county business. For most issues that require a vote for determination, a majority of commissioners present is required.

Oscoda County Board of Commissioners: Charles Varner, Jr., (Chairman and District #1 Commissioner), Tom McCauley, (Vice Chairman and District #2 Commissioner), Linda Jagiello (District #3 Commissioner), Ted Handrich (District #4 Commissioner), Joe Breaugh (District #5 Commissioner)

The Oscoda County Parks and Recreation Commission is inactive. Responsibility for approving funding and overseeing recreation-related development is maintained by the Board of Commissioners.

The Oscoda County Park has employed a full-time Park Manager since 1974. Park staff consists of part-time maintenance workers who are responsible for maintaining the County Park.

Oscoda County employs a Maintenance Supervisor, Maintenance Technician, and Custodian who maintain the County Fairgrounds and Smith Lake Park. A County-employed part-time seasonal employee, volunteers, County partner agencies, and non-profit organizations provide supplemental general groundskeeping and maintenance support.

Big Creek Township Board of Trustees: Randy Booth (Supervisor), Lori Wyman (Clerk), Susan Avery (Treasurer), Erin Ecker (Trustee), Deb Coulon (Trustee)

Clinton Township Board of Trustees: Chris Neff (Supervisor), Kurt Lunning (Clerk), Dawn Larrison (Treasurer), Ann Esch (Trustee), and Violet Kalbfleisch (Trustee)

Comins Township Board of Trustees: Open (Supervisor), Amanda Barajas (Clerk), Kevin Salisbury (Treasurer), Blake Snyder (Trustee), John Kuziel II (Trustee)

Comins Township Planning Commission: Kyle Yoder (Chair), Michelle Knepp (Vice Chair), John McConnell (Secretary), Jerry Kunnath (Member), John Kuziel II (Member)

Greenwood Township Board of Trustees: Fred Lindsey (Supervisor), Amy Lake (Clerk), Diane Bissonette (Treasurer), Annette Chalmers (Trustee), Brandon Watson (Trustee)

Mentor Township Board of Trustees: Scott Lawrence (Supervisor), Stephanie Hall (Clerk), Joan Trim (Treasurer), Sheri Marble (Trustee), Aleasha Fehler (Trustee)

Some Townships employ part-time maintenance staff to provide groundskeeping and routine maintenance at parks and recreation facilities. Townships that do not employ maintenance staff may contract with outside service providers to perform these services.

PROGRAMMING AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER AGENCIES & VOLUNTEERS

The County supplies facilities that support a variety of recreational opportunities for the community. It does not run formal recreational programs. Instead, programs are primarily organized by local non-profit organizations, volunteer groups, and educational institutions.

Whenever possible, the County pools resources with other agencies and organizations when undertaking community projects. This has the dual effect of maximizing resources while at the same time benefiting a greater share of the population.

A high level of volunteer support allows a variety of recreational activities to take place in the community throughout the year. Oscoda County partners with local organizations and volunteers to coordinate events such as festivals and family activities that take place in the County's recreational parks and facilities.

The Townships and County have long-standing relationships with a wide variety of local organizations and non-profits to create ongoing partnerships. Some of the partner organizations include, but are not limited to:

- American Legion Post 162
- Audubon Society
- AuSable Valley Snow Groomers
- Comins Eagles
- C.O.O.R. Intermediate School District
- Community Caring Inc.
- Fairview Area Schools
- Fairview Fire Department
- Greenwood Township Fire Department
- Habitat for Humanity NE Michigan
- Luzerne Fire Department
- Luzerne Predator Roundup Association
- McKinley Fire Department
- MI Dept. of Health & Human Services
- Mio American Legion Post 348
- Mio AuSable Schools
- Mio Lions Club
- Mio Masonic Lodge
- Mio Moose Lodge
- NE Michigan Community Service Agency
- Oscoda County Chamber of Commerce
- Oscoda County Council on Aging
- Oscoda County Dirt Club
- Oscoda County EMS
- Oscoda County District Library
- Oscoda County Road Commission
- Oscoda County Sheriff's Office
- Oscoda County Veterans Affairs
- Perry Lake Association
- Steiner Museum
- Tri-Town Fire Department

PARTNERSHIPS WITH SCHOOLS

Fairview Area Schools

THUNDERBOLTS MIO-AUSABLE

The Townships and County are not officially associated with the Fairview Area Schools or the Mio AuSable school systems or their recreational facilities. However, the Townships and County work to maintain close relationships with all schools.

RECREATIONAL PROGRAMMING

The Townships and County do not directly provide any recreational programming. However, partnering agencies sometimes utilize the Township- or County-owned recreational facilities to offer various recreational programs and activities.

FEATURED EVENTS & RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Big Creek Township, Mentor Township, and Elmer Township

- Christmas / Santa community activities
- Easter Egg Drop
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Halloween Road Rally
- Luzerne Labor Day Celebration
- McKinley Fun Days
- Mio 4th of July Parade, Courthouse Lawn Activities & Fireworks
- Mio Canoe Races / First Dam Canoe Race
- Mio Independence Day Parade
- Mio Lions Club Kids Free Fishing Day
- Mio Lions Club Senior Fishing Day
- Red, White & Blue Collar Festival
- Thanksgiving community dinner/events
- Veterans Day events

Clinton Township

- Comins 4th of July Celebration
- July Fun Fest & Fireworks
- October Pumpkin Fest

Comins Township

- Au Sable Valley Triathlon
- AuSable Valley Engine & Tractor Show
- Boney Park Picnic & Music Night
- Christmas in Fairview
- Fairview Community Caring Festival
- Harvest Festival at Boney Park
- Heritage Days & Logging Expo
- Nor-East'r Music & Art Festival
- Northern Michigan Relief Sale Project Connect
- Recreation Shop Yard Sale
- Steiner Museum Pancake Breakfast
- SummerFest at Wellspring Lutheran Services

RECREATIONAL BUDGET

The current Oscoda County budget for parks and recreation is divided between three funds: the County Fairgrounds, Smith Lake Park, and Oscoda County Park. The County Park and County Fairgrounds are currently self-sufficient recreational areas that receive no general fund money. Sources of funds for the parks and recreation functions in the County include the County general fund, grants, and donations.

OSCOLA COUNTY RECREATION BUDGET			
County Fairgrounds	**2024 Actual**	**2025 Actual**	**2026 Approved**
Revenues	$ 13,781.63	$ 30,191.62	$ 15,000.00
Expenses	$ 16,084.49	$ 16,704.51	$ 25,509.00
Net revenue over (under) Expenses	$ (2,303.49)	$ 13,487.11	$ (10,509.00)
Smith Lake Park	**2024 Actual**	**2025 Actual**	**2026 Approved**
Revenues (Transfer from General Fund)	$ 6,100.00	$ 4,560.00	$ 6,470.10
Expenses	$ 4,996.77	$ 4,705.97	$ 6,470.10
Net Revenue over (under) Expenses	$ 1,103.23	$ (145.97)	$ 0.00
Oscoda County Park	**2024 Actual**	**2025 Actual**	**2026 Approved**
Revenues	$ 175,493.57	$ 170,196.24	$ 168,800.00
Expenses	$ 155,172.97	$ 134,801.98	$ 160,104.73
Net Revenue over (under) Expenses	$ 20,320.60	$ 35,394.26	$ 8,695.27
BIG CREEK TOWNSHIP RECREATION BUDGET			
Appropriations	**2023-2024 Actual**	**2024-2025 Actual**	**2025-2026 Approved**
Revenues	$ 0.00	$ 0.00	$ 0.00
Expenses	$ 15,858.00	$ 23,811.00	$ 27,200.00
Capital Improvements – Comstock Park	$ 10,000.00	$ 6,542.00	$ 0.00
Capital Improvements – Luzerne River Park	$ 0.00	$ 1,736.00	$ 2,500.00
Capital Improvements – Mio Park	$ 353,030.00	$ 55,792.00	$ 375,000.00
Transfer Out	$ 0.00	$ 145,576.00	$ 0.00
Net of Revenues/Appropriations	$ (378,888.00)	$ (233,457.00)	$ (404,700.00)
Beginning Balance	$ 38,095.00	$ 12,096.00	$ 30,216.00
Ending Fund Balance	$ (340,793.00)	$ (221,361.00)	$ (374,484.00)

Township Recreational Budgets - The Townships do not have separate recreational funds identified in their annual budgets. Any recreational expenditures for Clinton Township, Comins Township, Greenwood Township, or Mentor Township are subject to approval by the Township Board of Trustees and would be paid from the Township general fund. Sources of funds for the parks and recreation functions in the Township include the County general fund, grants, and donations.

RECREATION INVENTORY

An inventory of recreation facilities available in Oscoda County, including Big Creek Township, Clinton Township, Comins Township, Greenwood Township, and Mentor Township, was completed. The inventory includes County-owned and Township-owned facilities, as well as other publicly and privately owned facilities. County-owned and Township-owned facilities were evaluated for barrier-free accessibility.

ACCESSIBILITY

Creating a parks and recreation system that is safe, accessible, and usable to all individuals, including those with disabilities, is essential. An ADA compliance assessment of Oscoda County parks and facilities was conducted in June 2026, consisting of a visual inspection regarding access and circulation of the park and recreation facilities. This assessment considered the accessibility of both the park and facility itself, as appropriate, as well as the access route. The barrier-free accessibility information and sources of assistance provided in the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Recreation Plan guidelines document should be consulted when making this assessment. As noted in the inventory listing described later in this chapter, the park and recreation facilities do not meet all criteria for accessibility. Oscoda County is dedicated to continuing its efforts towards improving accessibility at each of its parks when improvements are made. This includes accessible parking, paths, restrooms, activity areas, amenities, and signage. A grading system has been developed by the DNR to easily identify those parks and facilities that are most and least accessible and usable, based on ADA guidelines. The accessibility grading system used during the assessment includes a five-point system as shown here.

DNR Accessibility Grading System
1 - None of the facilities meet accessibility guidelines.
2 - Some facilities meet accessibility guidelines.
3 - Most facilities meet accessibility guidelines.
4 - The entire park meets accessibility guidelines.
5 - The entire park was developed using the principles of universal design.

INVENTORY METHOD & CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

The methods used to compile this recreational inventory include verification and compilation of information from previous Recreation Plans, site visits to each facility, and compilation of information provided by County and Township officials and committee members. Compiled information was compared to existing information to ensure consistency and/or accuracy.

Each recreation area and facility was classified according to the following DNR definitions and descriptions of typical characteristics.

Mini-Park / Pocket Park - Very small park serving a limited residential area, generally intended for short-duration recreation, informal play, seating, landscaping, or gathering.

Neighborhood Park - Local park primarily serving nearby residents. Typical facilities include playgrounds, open lawn, picnic areas, small sports fields, and walking paths.

Community Park - Larger park serving several neighborhoods. Usually provides a wider variety of active and passive recreation, such as sports fields, larger playgrounds, picnic areas, trails, courts, and natural areas.

District / Regional Park - Large-scale recreation area serving multiple communities or a substantial geographic area. May include major athletic complexes, extensive trail systems, beaches, waterfronts, natural areas, campgrounds, or specialized facilities.

Special-Use Recreation Area - Site designed around one primary recreation activity or attraction, such as a skate park, disc golf course, swimming beach, dog park, golf course, shooting facility, or specialized sports complex.

Linear Park / Greenway - Recreation land organized primarily around a corridor, such as a trail, riverfront, utility corridor, greenway, or connected open-space system used for walking, bicycling, paddling, or ecological connections.

Natural Area/Preserve - Land where protection of natural resources is a primary purpose, while allowing compatible recreation such as hiking, wildlife/nature study, fishing, or paddling.

Open Space / Conservation Area - Undeveloped or minimally developed land retained for natural-resource protection, scenic value, environmental functions, or passive recreation.

Waterfront / Beach Area - Recreation property associated with a lake, river, or other water body, typically providing swimming, fishing, boating, shoreline access, picnicking, or waterfront trails.

Campground - Property providing overnight recreation accommodation, ranging from primitive campsites to developed sites with utilities, restrooms, showers, and other support facilities.

Boating Access / Launch Area - Public access to a lake or river for launching boats or other watercraft. May include ramps, docks, parking, fishing access, restrooms, and related facilities.

Trail / Trail System - Linear recreation facility or connected network designed for walking, hiking, bicycling, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, equestrian use, or ORV use.

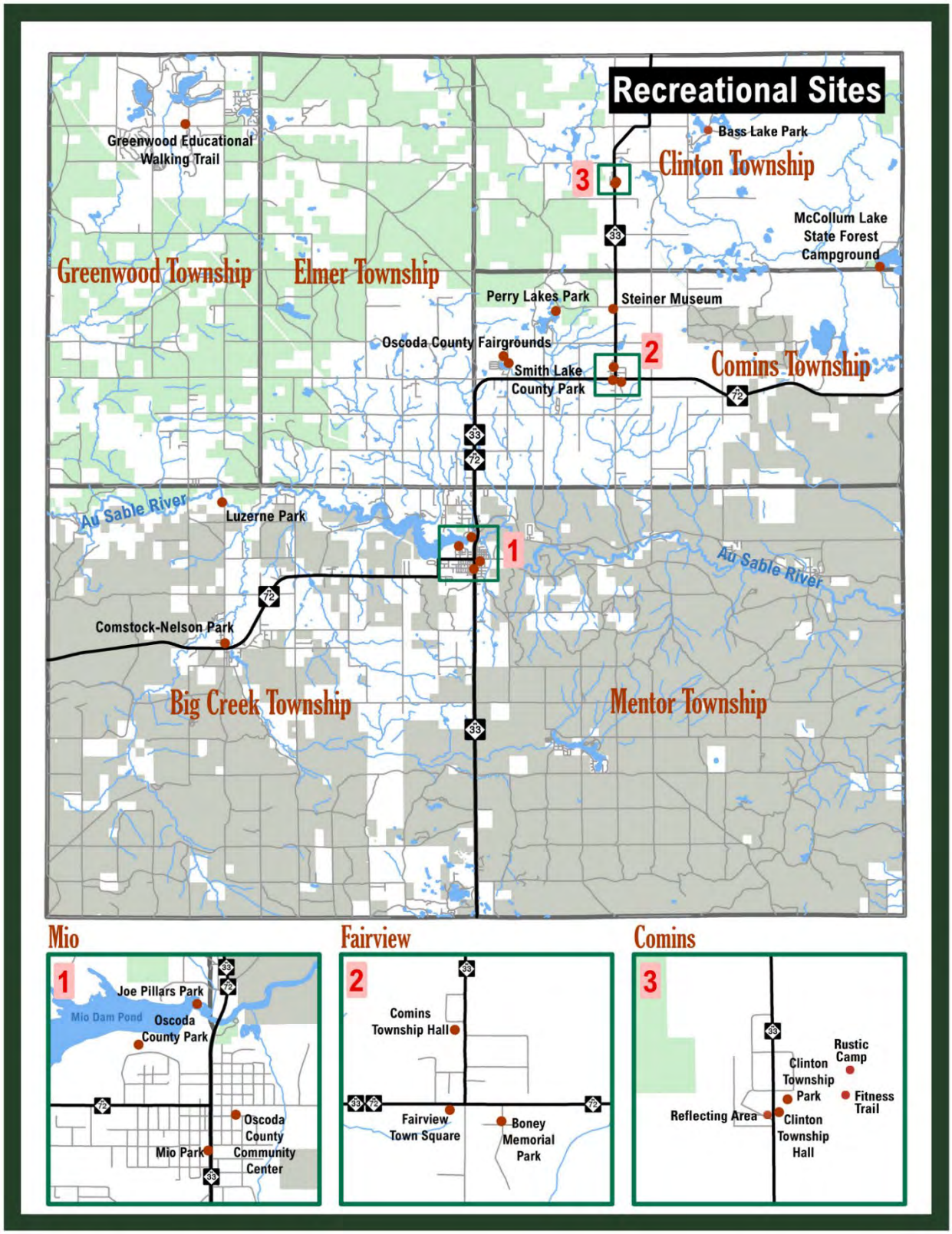
Sports / Athletic Complex - Concentrated area containing multiple organized sports facilities or related spectator/support facilities.

School Recreation Property - School-owned land and facilities available for community recreation, such as playgrounds, athletic fields, courts, tracks, gyms, or walking areas.

Indoor Recreation Facility - Building-based recreation facility such as a community center, recreation center, senior center, gymnasium, aquatic center, ice arena, fitness facility, or multipurpose facility.

Civic / Public Space - Publicly accessible plazas, civic greens, gathering spaces, squares, or similar properties that provide recreation, social, cultural, or community-gathering opportunities.

OSCODA COUNTY RECREATION MAP



BIG CREEK TOWNSHIP

Comstock-Nelson Park

This 3.5-acre community park is located at 2173 Deeter Road in Luzerne and has an accessibility rating of 4. Comstock Park was first established in 1989 when Big Creek Township received ½ acre of donated land. The Township purchased an additional three acres in 1992. The park has picnic tables, a play structure, a tennis court, a covered pavilion with picnic tables, horseshoe pits, a fenced dog park, and a restroom building.

BIG CREEK TOWNSHIP

Joe Pillars Park

Managed by Big Creek Township in partnership with Consumers Energy, this fishing access site with an accessibility rating of 4 is located below Mio Dam off of Pond Road. It is just under 1 acre and can be accessed from the west side of M33.

Completed in 2016, this park features a handicap-accessible fishing dock on the AuSable River, ample parking, an ADA accessible wide gravel path that leads to the dock, benches, and a restroom.

BIG CREEK TOWNSHIP

Luzerne River Park

Located east of 489 S, off Big Creek and Deeter Road, this 12.9-acre community park and campground with a day-use area and river access has an accessibility rating of 2. Luzerne River Park contains nine campsites with electric, four primitive campsites, a canoe slide, playground equipment, vault toilets, and Au Sable River boat launch access.

BIG CREEK TOWNSHIP

Mio Park

This newly developed 1-acre neighborhood park is located in the heart of Mio at 404 Morenci Avenue. The park is also accessible from Deyarmond Avenue. With an accessibility rating of 4, Mio Park offers a covered pavilion with indoor restrooms, a playground area, and two picnic tables. Park amenities to be added at a future date include items such as landscaping, fencing, benches, additional picnic shelters and play structures, and lighting.

BIG CREEK TOWNSHIP

Oscoda County Park (County Owned)

This 104-acre campground and day-use area located at 1110 Jaysmith Drive has an accessibility rating of 3. The day-use area features parking, a picnic pavilion, tables, benches, a sewage pump-out station, a scenic overlook, a playground, horseshoes, volleyball, basketball, tetherball, and a sandbox. The campground offers 152 sites, including 65 modern and 87 rustic sites. Modern restrooms with showers and barrier-free vault toilets serving the rustic campground and day-use area are available.

CLINTON TOWNSHIP

Clinton Township Hall and Park

The Township hall and park are located at 4232 N. Abbe Road in Comins. Spread across 50 acres of land, this civic space and community park has an accessibility rating of 3. The Clinton Township Park includes a large play structure, covered pavilion, basketball court, two volleyball courts, a pickleball court, a ball field, grandstand, concession building, and a restroom. The park provides a rustic campground with four sites, a nature trail, and outdoor exercise equipment.

CLINTON TOWNSHIP

Reflecting Area

This less than one-acre mini park is located at 4211 Abbe Road on the corner of Chester Avenue in Comins. The reflecting area provides a quiet landscaped setting with a gazebo, a renovated railroad caboose reflecting the community's heritage as the end of the rail line, and a commemorative statue of the founder, Ferd Stutesman.

CLINTON TOWNSHIP

Bass Lake Park

Located on Saddleback Lake Road along the southern edge of Bass Lake, this 1.5-acre open space/conservation park has an accessibility rating of 1. The waterfront beach area sits at the bottom of a hill and provides two picnic tables for lakeside picnicking and scenic views.

CLINTON TOWNSHIP

McCollum Lake Campground

Located at 3520 McCollum Lake Road in Curran, this 37.5-acre rustic campground and boat launch has an accessibility rating of 3. The campground offers 20 rustic camping sites. Three sites are walk-in for tent-only camping, and 11 sites will accommodate larger 40' trailers. There are vault toilets, potable water, a small swimming beach, a boat launch, and a fishing dock. This campground is owned by the DNR and managed by Clinton Township.

COMINS TOWNSHIP

Boney Memorial Park

Located at 1386 Maple Drive in Fairview, this 15.5-acre community park has an accessibility rating of 3. Park facilities include a softball field, shuffleboard, tennis courts, horseshoes, a basketball court, playground, baseball diamond, a covered pavilion, and a miniature golf course.

COMINS TOWNSHIP

Comins Township Hall

Located at 1651 N. Abbe Road in Fairview, this civic space sits on 1 acre and has an accessibility rating of 3. With seating capacity for 200, the Comins Township Hall is available for rent to residents, businesses, and non-profit organizations. Non-resident rentals are also available for an additional fee. A small park is located at the rear of the Township Hall, providing children's play equipment, seating, and a covered picnic shelter.

COMINS TOWNSHIP

Fairview Town Square

Located on E. Miller Road in the heart of Fairview, this civic/public space sits on 1.32 acres and has an accessibility rating of 3. This small public gathering space features a covered picnic shelter, benches, picnic tables, and a lending library. Adjacent undeveloped land offers opportunities for future expansion and additional amenities.

COMINS TOWNSHIP

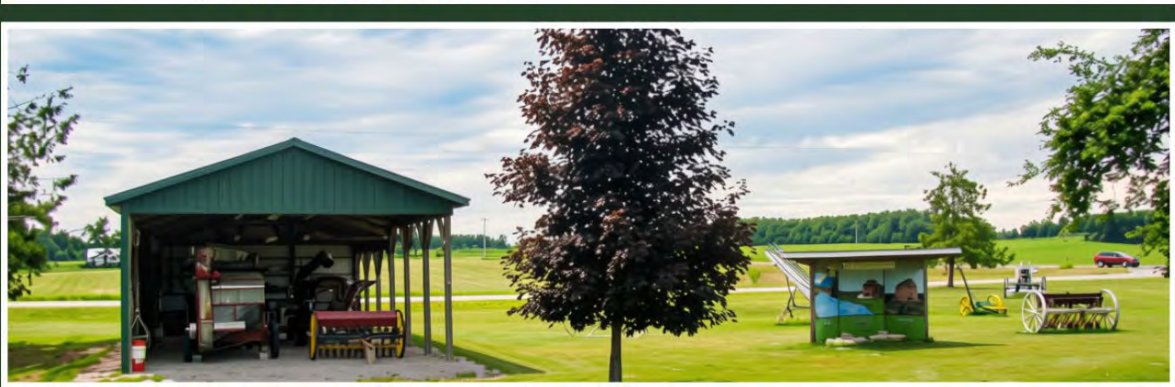
Perry Lake Park

Located at the northeast corner of Perry Lake off Reber Road, this 2.5-acre community park has an accessibility rating of 2. Perry Lake Park provides picnic tables, a swimming area, fishing access, and a covered pavilion.

COMINS TOWNSHIP

Steiner Museum

Located at 1980 Reber Road in Fairview, this special-use recreation area sits on 2.3 acres and has an accessibility rating of 4. The Steiner Museum in Oscoda County preserves and shares the history of the local community through exhibits featuring historic artifacts, photographs, tools, and memorabilia. Amenities include the original Fairview School House, a 6,000 sq. ft. museum, and the Museum Annex that houses large artifacts such as a logging sleigh and farming implements.



COMINS TOWNSHIP

Oscoda County Fairgrounds (County Owned)

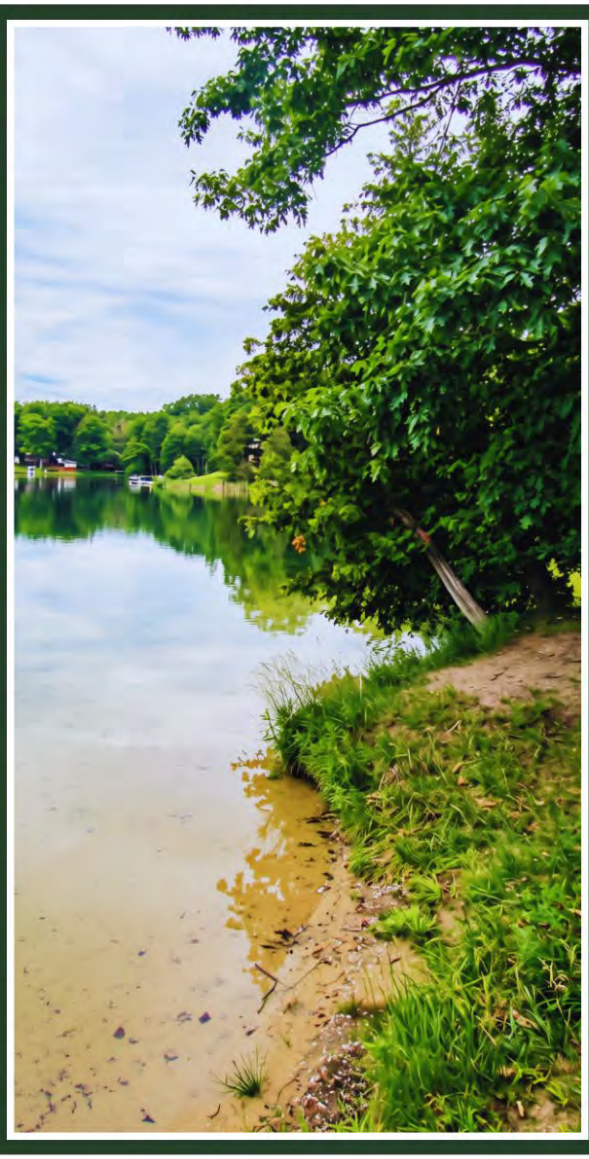
Located on Caldwell Road, north of M72/M33 and south of Helmer Lake Road, this district/regional recreation area sits on 75 acres of land and has an accessibility rating of 2.

Activity areas include eight buildings (5,000 sq. ft. each), two kitchens, a 6,000 sq. ft. covered stage, 35 pads for campers with electric hook-up, rustic camp area, five barns, livestock arenas, bump-and-run racetrack, and a nature trail. Currently, the fairgrounds are used primarily for community festivals, private events, and events held by non-profit organizations.

COMINS TOWNSHIP

Smith Lake County Park

Located on Coldwell Road near the Oscoda County Fairgrounds, this community park and beach sits on three acres and has an accessibility rating of 1. Located between Mio and Fairview, Smith Lake County Day Use Park provides beach access on Smith Lake. Park amenities include picnic tables, grills, a swing set, and beach access.



GREENWOOD TOWNSHIP

Greenwood Educational Walking Trail

Located behind the Greenwood Township Hall at 4030 Williams Road in Lewiston, this 5-acre natural area has an accessibility rating of 4. The White Pine Trail is a certified wildlife habitat and provides benches for wildlife viewing and a covered gazebo for picnicking.

MENTOR TOWNSHIP

Oscoda County Community Center (County-Owned)

Located on the corner of Cass and 9th in Mio, this indoor recreation facility and civic/public space sits on one acre and has an accessibility rating of 3. The Community Center can be rented for private events and includes an outdoor covered gazebo, volleyball court, and basketball court.

STATE AND FEDERALLY OWNED PROPERTIES

Oscoda County contains an extensive network of publicly owned lands that supports camping, boating, fishing, hiking, hunting, ORV and snowmobile riding, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, paddling, swimming, and other outdoor recreation. These lands are administered primarily by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, through the Huron-Manistee National Forests. The U.S. Forest Service owns approximately 154,500 acres of Huron National Forest land in Oscoda County.

The DNR also manages extensive state forest lands throughout the County, providing opportunities for hunting, fishing, hiking, wildlife viewing, dispersed camping, snowmobiling, ORV use, and other recreational activities. These lands are managed for multiple purposes, including timber production, wildlife habitat, and recreation. State recreation facilities are concentrated around major lakes and river corridors and include Rifle River Recreation Area and state forest campgrounds at McCollum Lake, Mio Pond, Muskrat Lake, Parmalee Bridge, and Van Etten Lake.

Federal recreation resources are more geographically extensive and include developed campgrounds, ORV and equestrian facilities, river access sites, snowmobile routes, hiking opportunities, and extensive areas for dispersed recreation. Together, state and federal lands form a regional recreation network that complements County and Township parks and private recreation facilities while providing access to the County's key natural resources, including the Au Sable and Rifle Rivers, lakes, forests, and wildlife habitat.

Continued coordination among the DNR, U.S. Forest Service, Oscoda County, and local Townships will be important to maintain public access, accommodate growing recreational demand, protect natural resources, and strengthen connections among recreation facilities.

COUNTYWIDE STATE AND FEDERAL RECREATION RESOURCES

Mio-Ausable School District and Fairview Area School District – Located in Mio and Fairview, these school districts provide sports fields and recreation amenities, including athletic fields, courts, playgrounds, track and field areas, and other outdoor facilities that support organized sports, physical education, youth activities, and community events.

Huron-Manistee National Forests - The Huron-Manistee National Forests constitute the principal federal recreation resource in Oscoda County. National Forest System lands occur across multiple Townships and support developed and dispersed recreation, including camping, hunting, fishing, hiking, paddling, horseback riding, ORV riding, snowmobiling, wildlife viewing, and scenic recreation.

Michigan State Forest Lands - The Michigan DNR manages extensive state forest lands throughout Oscoda County. These lands provide dispersed recreation opportunities and connect the county's developed recreation facilities and trail systems.

Au Sable River Recreation Corridor - The Au Sable River is one of the County's most important recreation resources. The river supports canoeing, kayaking, fishing, camping, wildlife observation, and scenic recreation. The National Scenic River segment and associated Forest Service recreation sites are concentrated in the Big Creek and Mentor Township areas.

Shore-to-Shore Trail - The Shore-to-Shore Trail is a regional hiking and equestrian trail system extending across Michigan. Portions serving Oscoda County connect public lands and recreation facilities in the western, central, and southern portions of the county.

ORV and Motorcycle Trail Network - The county's motorized recreation network includes the Mack Lake Motorized Trail, Bull Gap area, Mio-to-Meadows Michigan Cross Country Cycle Trail (MCCCT), Mio Trail, Hunt Creek ATV connections, and associated ORV routes. The network crosses both state and federal lands, making it a regional rather than single-owner recreation resource.

Snowmobile Trail Network - Designated snowmobile trails cross multiple Oscoda County townships and connect the county with regional snowmobile systems in surrounding counties.

BIG CREEK TOWNSHIP

Big Creek Township contains an extensive concentration of state and federal recreation resources, particularly along the Au Sable River and in the Luzerne area. The Township includes portions of both Michigan state forest land and the Huron-Manistee National Forests.

State-Owned Recreation Resources

1. **Mio Pond State Forest Campground and Group Camp -** Located along the Au Sable River at Mio Dam and Mio Pond. The facility provides 24 rustic campsites, a group camping area, boat launches, fishing, paddling, hunting access, hiking, and access to nearby ORV and snowmobile routes.
2. **Parmalee Bridge State Forest Campground and Canoe Camp -** Located along the Au Sable River approximately 10 miles west of Mio. The campground provides rustic camping, a group site, canoe/kayak access, fishing, paddling, and hiking.
3. **Camp 10 Bridge –** Located downriver from the Luzerne campground, where the AuSable begins to widen out into the Mio Pond flooding. The area provides a handicap accessible covered fishing pavilion on each side of the river as well as a boat launch. Due to severe flooding in 2026, Camp 10 Bridge is currently closed due to structural safety concerns.
4. **State Forest Lands -** Extensive state-owned forest lands occur throughout Big Creek Township. These lands provide opportunities for hunting, wildlife viewing, dispersed recreation, hiking, fishing, snowmobiling, and motorized recreation.

Federally Owned Recreation Resources

1. **Huron-Manistee National Forest System Lands -** National Forest lands occupy substantial portions of Big Creek Township. These lands provide opportunities for hunting, fishing, hiking, dispersed camping, wildlife observation, ORV use, snowmobiling, and other outdoor recreation.
2. **Luzerne Trail Camp -** A U.S. Forest Service equestrian and trail camping facility near Luzerne. The site provides access to the Shore-to-Shore Trail and surrounding National Forest lands.
3. **Island Lake Campground -** A Forest Service campground on 58-acre Island Lake providing camping, swimming, fishing, boating, and hiking opportunities.
4. **Wagner Lake Campground -** A Forest Service campground on Wagner Lake providing camping, fishing, boating, swimming, and paddling opportunities.
5. **Meadows ORV Campground -** A Forest Service campground serving the Meadows motorized recreation area. It provides camping and direct access to the surrounding ORV and motorcycle trail network.

Regional Trail Systems

1. **Shore-to-Shore Trail -** The Shore-to-Shore Trail passes through the western portion of the township and provides hiking and horseback-riding opportunities.
2. **Luzerne Trail System -** Trail facilities around Luzerne connect to the Shore-to-Shore Trail and surrounding public forest lands.
3. **Mio-to-Meadows MCCCT -** The Michigan Cross Country Cycle Trail passes through Big Creek Township as part of the Mio-to-Meadows motorized trail system.
4. **Snowmobile Trail Network -** Designated snowmobile routes cross Big Creek Township and connect with the broader Oscoda County trail system.

CLINTON TOWNSHIP

Clinton Township is located in northeastern Oscoda County and contains one of the county's principal state-owned lake recreation facilities.

State-Owned Recreation Resources

1. **McCollum Lake State Forest Campground -** Located on the southwest shore of McCollum Lake. The rustic campground contains 20 sites and provides camping, fishing, boating, hiking, and hunting access.

Federally Owned Recreation Resources

1. **Huron-Manistee National Forest System Lands -** Federal forest lands occur in portions of Clinton Township. These lands provide opportunities for dispersed outdoor recreation, hunting, wildlife viewing, hiking, and motorized recreation.

Regional Trail Systems

1. **Shore-to-Shore Trail / Equestrian Network -** Regional equestrian and hiking routes occur in the broader northern Oscoda County area and connect state and federal forest lands.
2. **Snowmobile Trail Network -** Designated snowmobile routes provide seasonal connections through the township and into neighboring townships and counties.

Other Publicly Owned Sites

1. The Bush – Walking trail owned and managed by the Audubon Society located off Delano Road.

COMINS TOWNSHIP

Comins Township occupies the northeastern portion of Oscoda County and contains state and federal forest lands, waterways, and portions of regional recreation networks.

State-Owned Recreation Resources

1. **State Forest Lands -** State-owned forest lands in Comins Township provide opportunities for hunting, wildlife viewing, hiking, dispersed recreation, and seasonal motorized recreation.
2. **State Forest Roads and Access Areas -** The Township contains state forest roads and access points providing entry to public forest lands, lakes, and wildlife areas.

Federally Owned Recreation Resources

1. **Huron-Manistee National Forest System Lands -** National Forest System lands occur within Comins Township.

Regional Trail Systems

1. **Snowmobile Trail Network -** Designated snowmobile routes pass through or connect with Comins Township.
2. **Regional Motorized Trail Network -** Motorized trail and route connections link Comins Township with the larger Mio-area ORV and motorcycle network.
3. **Au Sable River Recreation Connections -** The upper portions of the Au Sable River recreation system connect the Township to downstream recreation facilities in Mentor and Big Creek Townships.

ELMER TOWNSHIP

Elmer Township contains one of Oscoda County's principal state forest campgrounds and a substantial network of state forest lands and motorized recreation routes.

State-Owned Recreation Resources

1. **Muskrat Lake State Forest Campground -** The campground provides 13 rustic campsites, fishing, paddling, hunting access, and winter recreation. There is direct access to the Mio Trail and Hunt Creek ATV Trail system. ORVs may be operated within the campground when accessing designated trails.
2. **State Forest Lands -** Extensive state-owned forest lands provide hunting, wildlife viewing, dispersed camping, hiking, fishing, and motorized recreation opportunities.

Regional Trail Systems

1. **Mio Trail -** The Mio Trail has approximately 25 miles of cycle and ATV trail, with an additional 12 miles of full-sized vehicle route. The trailhead is directly accessible from Muskrat Lake State Forest Campground.
2. **Hunt Creek ATV Trail / Hunt Creek Loop -** The Muskrat Lake campground provides access to the Hunt Creek Loop of the Hunt Creek ATV Trail, approximately six miles northeast of the campground.
3. **Mio-to-Meadows MCCCT -** Trail 9 and associated motorized routes
4. **Snowmobile Trails -** Designated snowmobile routes, including Trail 9 and connecting routes

Federal Recreation Resources

1. **Huron-Manistee National Forest System Lands -** Federal forest lands occur in portions of the township and provide additional opportunities for hunting, wildlife viewing, hiking, and dispersed recreation.

GREENWOOD TOWNSHIP

Greenwood Township occupies the northwest corner of Oscoda County and contains significant state and federal forest lands. The township is particularly important for forest-based recreation and access to the western portion of the county's trail network.

State-Owned Recreation Resources

1. **State Forest Lands -** State forest lands provide hunting, hiking, wildlife viewing, dispersed recreation, and seasonal motorized recreation.

Federally Owned Recreation Resources

1. **Huron-Manistee National Forest System Lands -** Federal forest lands provide opportunities for dispersed camping, hunting, hiking, wildlife viewing, and other outdoor recreation.

Regional Trail Systems

1. **Shore-to-Shore Trail / Northern Spur -** The regional Shore-to-Shore equestrian and hiking network occurs in the broader western and northern public-land area.
2. **Snowmobile Trail Network -** The DNR-designated snowmobile system provides seasonal connections through western Oscoda County and into neighboring counties.
3. **Other Forest Trails and Access Routes -** State forest roads, hiking routes, and public access corridors provide connections to the broader public-land recreation system.

MENTOR TOWNSHIP

Mentor Township contains the largest concentration of developed federal recreation facilities in Oscoda County. It includes the Mio/McKinley area and a substantial portion of the Au Sable River National Scenic River corridor.

State-Owned Recreation Resources

1. **State Forest Lands -** State forest lands occur throughout Mentor Township and provide opportunities for hunting, hiking, fishing, wildlife viewing, snowmobiling, ORV use, and dispersed recreation.
2. **State Forest Roads and Access Sites -** Numerous state forest roads and access points provide access to lakes, streams, and public forest lands.

Federally Owned Recreation Resources

1. **Huron-Manistee National Forest System Lands -** Extensive National Forest System lands occur in Mentor Township.
2. **Mack Lake ORV Campground -** The campground provides camping and direct access to the Mack Lake motorized trail system.
3. **Au Sable Loop Campground and Day Use Area -** The facility provides camping, river access, scenic viewing, and wildlife observation.
4. **River Dune Campground -** A small Forest Service primitive campground along the Au Sable River.
5. **Meadow Springs Campground -** A small primitive Forest Service campground along the Au Sable River primarily used by river paddlers.
6. **Cathedral Pines Campground -** A primitive, walk-in Forest Service campground associated with mature eastern white pine along the Au Sable River.
7. **McKinley Horse Trail Campground / Trail Facility**
   Federal equestrian trail facility providing access to horseback riding and hiking.
8. **McKinley Landing -** A Forest Service river access site providing canoe and kayak access to the Au Sable River.
9. **Davis Rest Stop -** A designated Forest Service river rest stop and carry-down canoe/kayak access along the Au Sable National Scenic River.
10. **Loud's Rest Stop -** A designated Forest Service river rest stop and fishing access along the Au Sable River.

Regional Trail Systems

1. **Mack Lake Motorized Trail System -** ORV and motorcycle trail network surrounding Mack Lake.
2. **Bull Gap ORV Trail System -** Motorized recreation network associated with Bull Gap and the Mack Lake area.
3. **Mio-to-Meadows MCCCT -** The MCCCT and associated motorized routes connect the Mio and Meadows areas.
4. **Shore-to-Shore Trail -** The regional hiking and equestrian system connects with public lands and trail facilities in the McKinley area.
5. **Snowmobile Trail Network -** Multiple designated snowmobile routes cross Mentor Township, providing regional connections to the remainder of Oscoda County.

PRIVATELY OWNED PROPERTIES

Oscoda County's private recreation sector complements the County's extensive state, federal, County, and Township recreation resources. Privately owned businesses provide camping, lodging, canoe and kayak rentals, river trips, golf, equestrian activities, outdoor equipment and outfitting, fishing opportunities, and other recreational services.

Big Creek Township

- Rainbow Resort Cabins & Canoe Livery - Canoe/kayak/tube livery, cabins
- Mio Pine Acres Campground & Cabins - Camping/RV/cabins
- Au Sable Trophy Water Lodge - Riverfront lodging/paddling/fishing
- Ausable River Outfitters - Outdoor outfitting/fishing/camping
- Lost Creek Lodge - Outdoor lodging
- Big Foot Lodge LLC - Camping/cabins/ORV/snowmobile
- Luzerne Express Campground & RV - Camping/RV/outdoor recreation

Clinton Township

- Former Camp Michi-Lu-Ca - Walking Trail
- Cedar Valley Golf Club - Golf
- Cedar Valley RV Park - Camping/RV/cabins
- Wild Frontier Fun Park - Amusement/family recreation

Comins Township

- Camp Barakel - Private nonprofit camp/recreation

Greenwood Township

- Garland Lodge & Golf Resort - Golf/resort
- Black Dog Base Camp - Camping/ORV/snowmobile/family recreation
- Tee Lake Resort - Lake resort
- Serenity Cabins - Vacation lodging/ATV/snowmobile
- Parmalee Trading Post - Canoe/kayak/tube rental

Mentor Township

- Hinchman Acres Resort - Canoe/kayak livery, resort, camping

REGIONAL AREA RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

The neighboring counties provide recreation resources that substantially expand the opportunities available to Oscoda County residents. The most significant regional connections include:

- **Au Sable River corridor** – connecting Oscoda, Crawford, Roscommon, Alcona and Iosco Counties.
- **Huron-Manistee National Forests** – extending across Oscoda, Alcona, Iosco, Ogemaw, Crawford and Roscommon Counties.
- **Shore-to-Shore Trail** – connecting Oscoda County with Crawford, Otsego and Montmorency County recreation systems.
- **High Country Pathway** – connecting Oscoda County's northern recreation area with Montmorency and Otsego Counties.
- **Michigan Cross Country Cycle Trail (MCCCT)** – providing regional ORV and motorcycle connections.
- **Regional snowmobile trail system** – connecting all or portions of the surrounding counties.
- **Au Sable River paddling system** – one of the most important regional water-based recreation resources.
- **Lake Huron recreation corridor** – connecting Oscoda County to Iosco, Alcona and Alpena Counties.
- **State forest lands and campgrounds** – creating a continuous landscape of public recreation opportunities across the region.

Montmorency County

- Clear Lake State Park
- Avery Lake State Forest Campground
- Big Oaks Equestrian State Forest Campground and Trail Camp

- Ess Lake State Forest Campground
- Jackson Lake State Forest Campground
- Little Wolf Lake State Forest Campground
- Town Corner Lake State Forest Campground
- High Country Pathway
- Hunt Creek MCCCT and Motorcycle Trail
- Snowmobile Trail Network
- Montmorency County Fairgrounds

Alpena County

- Alpena County Fairgrounds
- Alpena County Sportsplex
- Negwegon State Park
- Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary
- Rails-to-Trails

Alcona County

- Harrisville State Park
- Negwegon State Park
- Huron National Forest
- Alcona Recreation Area
- Black River Recreation Area

Iosco County

- Huron National Forest
- Van Etten Lake State Forest Campground
- Tawas Point State Park
- River Road National Scenic Byway
- Lumberman's Monument
- Iargo Springs
- Iosco County Fairgrounds
- Lake Huron Coastal Preserve

Ogemaw County

- Ogemaw County Fairgrounds
- Black Lake Nature Preserve
- Ambrose Lake State Forest Campground
- Rifle River State Recreation Area

Roscommon County

- North Higgins Lake State Park
- South Higgins Lake State Park
- Hartwick Pines State Park
- Wakeley Lake Federal Forest Area
- 4-Mile State Forest Trail Camp
- Au Sable River Canoe Camp
- Burton's Landing
- Keystone Landing Campground
- Kneff Lake Campground
- Lake Margrethe State Forest Campground
- Jones Lake State Forest Campground
- Rainbow Bend Forest Campground
- White Pine State Forest Canoe Camp
- Iron Belle Trail

Crawford County

- Hartwick Pines State Park
- North Higgins Lake State Park
- Goose Creek State Forest Trail Camp
- Manistee River Bridge Campground
- Upper Manistee River Campground
- Au Sable River Canoe Camp
- 4-Mile State Forest Trail Camp
- Lake Margrethe State Forest Campground
- Wakeley Lake Federal Forest
- Jones Lake State Forest Campground
- Rainbow Bend Forest Campground
- White Pine State Forest Canoe Camp
- Hanson Hills Recreation Area
- Crawford County Sportsplex / Fairgrounds
- Grayling Fish Hatchery

Otsego County

- Otsego Lake County Park and Campground
- Louis M. Groen Nature Preserve
- Otsego County Sportsplex
- Otsego County Fairgrounds
- Otsego Lake State Park

- North Central State Trail
- High Country Pathway
- Shore-to-Shore Trail
- Iron Belle Trail
- Big Bear–Crapo Creek Trail System

RECREATION GRANT HISTORY AND STATUS

Clinton Township - RP17-0026: Acquisition of 63.47 acres to establish a nature preserve and campground

- Development of Clinton Township Park including renovation of the basketball court and baseball field, improvements to the parking and access pathways, and establishment of four rustic campsites and a Fitness trail.
- This project is complete, and all grant-funded amenities are operational.

Comins Township – 26-00104 D: Comins Township Recreation

- Installation of a covered pavilion and vault bathroom
- This project is complete, and all grant-funded amenities are operational, with the exception of the vault bathrooms, which are no longer operational.

Big Creek Township – CM99-435: Comstock-Nelson Park Improvement ($51,000)

- Park improvements to include a new play structure and picnic shelter with tables and benches; handicap accessibility (path and parking)
- Project is complete and operational.

In process - Confirming previous grants, if any, received by Greenwood, Mentor, and Oscoda County.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Oscoda County is characterized by extensive forests, abundant waterways, wetlands, and large areas of publicly owned land that provide a strong foundation for outdoor recreation. More than 80 percent of the county is forested, and approximately 56.6 percent of the county's land was identified in the county master plan as being owned by the U.S. Forest Service or the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. The Huron National Forest occupies much of the southern portion of the County, providing extensive opportunities for hiking, hunting, wildlife viewing, camping, fishing, paddling, and other outdoor activities.

Forests and Public Lands - Forests are one of Oscoda County's most important natural resources. The Huron National Forest and state-managed forest lands contain large, contiguous

areas of northern Michigan forest and provide habitat for a wide variety of wildlife. These lands also support forest products, hunting, snowmobiling, off-road vehicle use, hiking, cross-country skiing, and other forms of dispersed recreation. Sustainable forest management is important not only for timber resources but also for maintaining forest health, wildlife habitat, scenic character, and recreational opportunities.

Rivers, Lakes, and Waterways - The Au Sable River is a defining natural feature of Oscoda County. The river flows through the County and supports fishing, canoeing, kayaking, wildlife viewing, and scenic recreation. Portions of the Au Sable are designated as a National Scenic River because of their outstanding scenic and recreational qualities. The river corridor also includes steep forested bluffs, springs, wetlands, and other sensitive natural features that contribute to the County's scenic character.

Oscoda County also contains numerous inland lakes and ponds, including Mio Pond, Mack Lake, Loon Lake, and many smaller lakes. These water resources provide opportunities for fishing, boating, paddling, swimming, and wildlife observation. The DNR maintains an inventory of numerous inland lakes in the county, demonstrating the extent and diversity of its aquatic resources.

Wetlands and Wildlife Habitat - Wetlands, marshes, riparian areas, and other lowland habitats are important components of Oscoda County's natural resource base. These areas provide habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds, mammals, amphibians, fish, and other wildlife while also helping to filter water, store floodwaters, and maintain water quality. Forested wetlands and river corridors are particularly valuable because they connect aquatic and terrestrial habitats and provide continuous wildlife corridors. Protecting these areas should be considered an important component of future recreation and land-use planning.

Resource Protection Considerations - Because recreation and tourism depend heavily on the quality of Oscoda County's natural environment, future recreation planning should balance public access with resource protection. Development of trails, water access, campgrounds, and other facilities should be designed to minimize impacts to wetlands, shorelines, forests, wildlife habitat, and sensitive river corridors. Maintaining the county's large blocks of undeveloped public land and protecting water quality will help preserve the natural character that makes Oscoda County an important destination for outdoor recreation.

GOALS AND ACTION PLAN

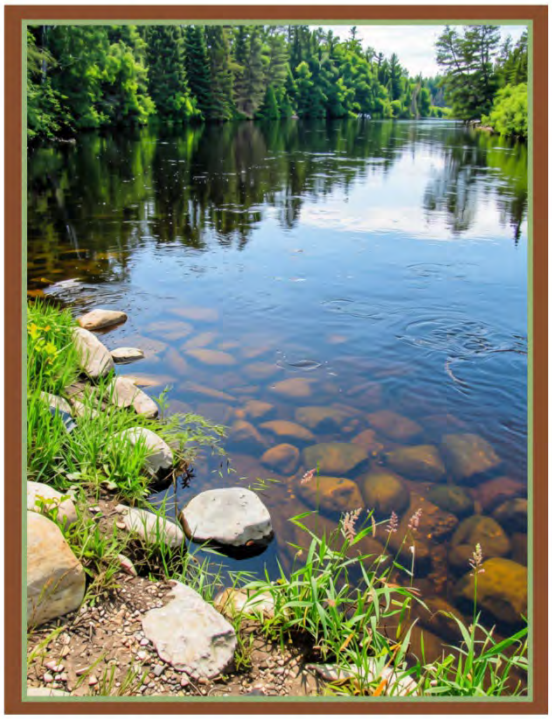
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

After reviewing input from the community and the County's demographic characteristics, the following goals and objectives were created to guide the development of recreation projects.

RECREATIONAL PLANNING	
1	**Engage in recreational planning processes that ensure the needs of residents and visitors of all age groups can be met.**
1.2	Ensure area residents are involved in the recreational planning and development process.
1.3	Review and update the recreation plan every five years to ensure community needs are being met.
1.4	To ensure all people have access to recreational opportunities regardless of age, sex, income, cultural background, or abilities.
1.5	Maintain, improve, and expand recreational opportunities to enhance quality of life, support healthy communities, strengthen the local economy, and attract visitors and new residents.
1.6	Continue to implement ADA design standards whenever possible for all recreational improvement projects.
1.7	Identify and prioritize improvements to recreation and pedestrian facilities that connect neighborhoods, parks, and community destinations with schools.

FACILITIES AND ACTIVITIES	
2	**Maintain and enhance recreational facilities and activities.**
2.1	Partner with state and local agencies and organizations to improve public access sites and waterfront amenities.
2.2	Update play equipment, providing a universal play area meeting the needs of individuals, including those of varying abilities.
2.3	Design and operate parks and facilities in a manner that promotes efficient operation, is compatible with adjacent land uses and is consistent with the existing development plans for these facilities.
2.4	Develop or redevelop recreation areas and facilities that minimize operating and maintenance costs and are sustainable within the financial resources and level of support available to the entity (Township or County) responsible for their operation and maintenance.
2.5	Continue to promote trails and adjacent attractions to residents and visitors.
2.6	Ensure all parks and recreation areas are clean and well-maintained.

RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS	
3	**Provide recreational programming activities that meet the needs of residents and visitors of all age groups.**
3.1	Provide unique activities and community social gatherings to foster physical and mental wellness and community cohesiveness.
3.2	Partner with local organizations and agencies to increase outdoor and natural programming for all age groups.
3.3	Provide a balanced mix of recreational amenities that serve residents of all ages, with a focus on families, youth, and older adults, to enhance community livability, attract new families, and retain residents.
3.4	Promote Oscoda County and its communities as a tourist destination that offers quality recreational amenities.



NATURAL RESOURCES	
4	**Conserve, protect, and maintain natural resources for the enjoyment of current and future residents and visitors.**
4.1	Consistently apply standards when reviewing development proposals.
4.2	Encourage the use of natural landscaping in community parks and recreational areas where appropriate.
4.3	Ensure that sites of existing and proposed parks and recreational facilities are environmentally safe for all users.

ENHANCED SAFETY	
5	**Enhance safety and security features at all recreational facilities.**
5.1	Maintain and operate recreational areas and facilities effectively for quality use.
5.2	Address the needs of all age groups when maintaining and/or improving parks and amenities. Consider elements such as slopes, seating, lighting, restrooms, equipment, wheelchair accessibility, etc.
5.3	Add infrastructure to provide security lighting at all recreational facilities and areas.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS SCHEDULE

The Capital Improvements Schedule describes the recreational improvements Oscoda County and Townships would like to consider over the next five years. Project costs are not yet known. Funding will vary by project with potential sources of local and/or county government general funds, grants, donations, and partnerships.

OSCODA COUNTY

1. Oscoda County Fairgrounds – Update plumbing and electrical. Repair and update buildings and pavilion structure. Repair or replace fencing. Increase security throughout the fairgrounds and install additional lighting. (Supports Goal 1.5, 2.2)
2. Oscoda County Park – Expand electric campsites. Update and improve play structures, install additional fencing, and expand lighting throughout the park. (Supports Goal 1.5, 2.2)
3. Update the Mio Community Center. Remodel the meeting/event space, assess ADA accessibility, upgrade the HVAC system, and renovate the kitchen. (Supports Goal 1.5, 2.4)

BIG CREEK TOWNSHIP

1. Luzerne River Park – Construct an ADA-compliant children's playground. Create a safe impact zone around existing swings and climber. (Supports Goal 2.2, 5.2)
2. Mio Playground and Park – Complete a handicap-accessible park. (Supports Goal 1.5, 3.1)
3. Enhance the off-leash dog park at Comstock-Nelson Park – add bench seating, a shade area, and an obstacle course. (Supports Goal 1.5)
4. Construct additional sidewalks in Mio's downtown and surrounding area to support Safe Routes to School. (Supports Goal 1.7)
5. Sidewalks and Hiking Trail in Luzerne – Construct sidewalks on Deeter Road from M-72 to Palmer Road followed by the construction of a 1.25-mile hiking trail along Palmer Road and Galloway Road to the Luzerne Boardwalk Access Site. (Supports Goal 1.7)
6. Mio Pond Non-Motorized Trail – Continue discussions with U.S. Forest Service and Consumers Energy for the potential creation of a hiking, biking, and cross-country ski trail from the Big Creek Township Hall to the Mio Pond and the Camp Ten Bridge. Consideration for this project is dependent upon renewal of the Mio Dam license, which expires in 2034. (Supports Goal 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 2.1)
7. Joe Pillars Park – Add a walkway from the existing park to the tailrace of the Mio Dam and add a handicap accessible fishing pier at the Mio Dam Tailrace waters. This project is also dependent on the relicensing of the Mio Dam. (Supports Goal 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 2.1)

CLINTON TOWNSHIP

1. Improve Clinton Township Park through the installation of additional ADA accessible equipment. (Supports Goal 1.4, 1.5, 1.6)
2. Update amenities and improve accessibility at McCollum Lake Campground (DNR-owned property). (Supports Goal 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 2.1)

3. Improve Bass Lake Park through the addition of a dock and portable restroom facilities. (Supports Goal 1.4, 1.5, 1.6)

COMINS TOWNSHIP

1. Fairview Town Square – Expand the Town Square to include the adjoining 18.46 acres of land owned by Comins Township. Develop a walking path, restroom facilities, covered pavilion, picnic tables, add educational and interpretive signage, and a well hand pump. (Supports Goal 1.5, 1.7, 2.3, 3.1)
2. Boney Park – Improve the park through additional lighting in the parking area, update the ballfield, grandstand, dugouts, and concession stand. (Supports Goal 1.5, 2.4, 5.3)
3. Perry Lake – Rebuild the pavilion, create accessible access from the pavilion to the swim area; install an accessible t-dock/fishing pier for improved fishing access; and add a kayak launch. (Supports Goal 1.4, 1.5, 2.2)
4. Ice rink - Install a covering over the ice rink and update or replace the existing warming hut. (Supports Goal 1.5)
5. Smith Lake Park – Improve playground equipment, repair or replace water access stairway, repair or replace fencing and lighting. (Supports Goal 1.5, 2.4, 5.3)
6. Explore water activity options at the Town Square and Boney Park. (Supports Goal 2.4, 3.3)
7. Improve pedestrian walkways by adding/extending sidewalks from the school to Boney Park. (Supports Goal 1.7)

GREENWOOD TOWNSHIP

1. Develop non-motorized trails and pathways. (Supports Goal 1.5, 1.7, 2.5, 3.2)
2. Work with the Road Commission to implement four-foot shoulders when updating and repairing roadways. (Supports Goal 1.7, 2.1, 5.2)

MENTOR TOWNSHIP

1. Construct additional sidewalks in Mio's downtown and surrounding area to support Safe Routes to School. (Supports Goal 1.7)

BASIS FOR ACTION

Recreation planning in Oscoda County should consider its population with specific consideration given to age, disability, and income characteristics. The County's total population is 8,425.

The County has a medium-sized mid-life population. The County's median age is 52.5 years, which is older than the State's median age of 40.2 years. Individuals 45 to 64 years of age make up 27.36% of the population, while individuals aged 65 and older make up 29.45% of the population. Therefore, both the mid-life and older populations should be given consideration when planning for recreational activities.

Younger people, under the age of 19, make up 21.2% of the County's population, while individuals between the ages of 20 and 44 years represent 22.3% of the population. Given the population makeup, the recreational facilities in the County need to appeal to diverse age groups.

Of the total population in Oscoda County, 16.1% possess a disability, expressing difficulty with hearing, vision, cognitive, or ambulatory functions compared to 14.3% statewide. Ambulatory difficulty is the most prevalent, representing 6.7% in the County and 7.1% in the State. Accessibility, especially mobility, needs to be considered when planning for recreational activities.

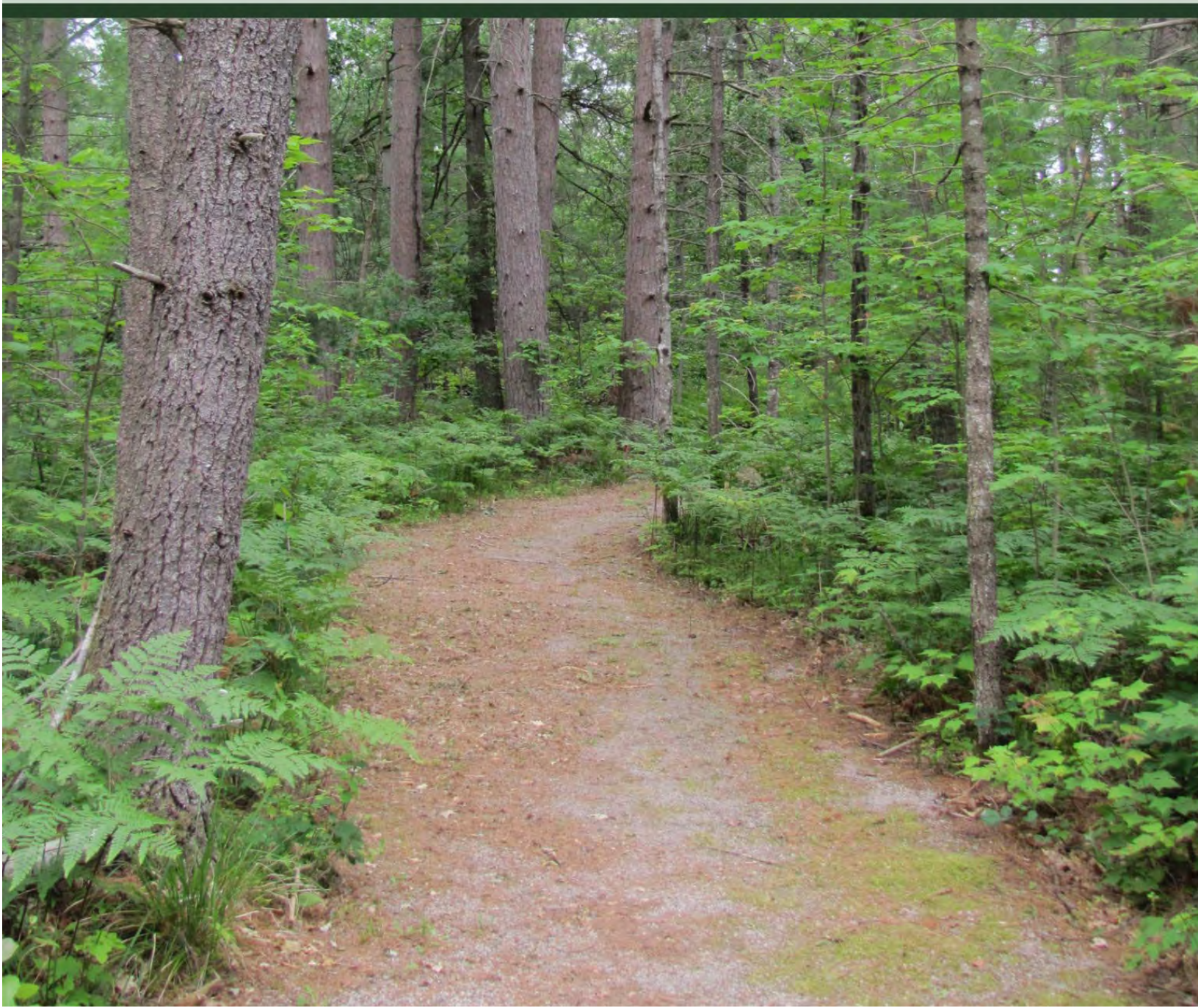
The County's median household income is $49,515, which is slightly lower when compared to the State's median income of $72,875. About 53.2% of the households in the County receive Social Security income compared to 34.9% statewide. Additionally, almost 36.8% of the households receive retirement income compared to 28.1% statewide. Consideration should be given to whether or not residents can afford to incur the cost of recreational activities, and the drive time and expenses associated with traveling to recreational facilities.

Figures obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2024 5-year estimates.

With the Township's population in mind, the following factors also influence recreational development in Oscoda County:

1. All residents and visitors should have access to safe routes that connect recreational facilities, residential areas, and local attractions throughout the County. Consideration of public safety, accessibility, and inclusiveness will be considered when planning for recreational opportunities within the County.
2. Oscoda County has an abundance of natural and recreational spaces with amenities that improve the quality of life in the County. Providing year-round recreational opportunities in these spaces will attract visitors and offer a means of enjoyment for residents. These spaces will also provide opportunities for social interaction and educational programming.
3. All residents and visitors should be able to enjoy recreational opportunities in the County. When planning, consideration will be given to the types of parks, their location, their distribution, and the types of recreational activities that are offered.
4. The maintenance and operation of both existing and new recreational facilities will balance the preservation of the natural environment and scenic areas with tourism potential.

PLANNING PROCESS



PLANNING SCHEDULE

Development of a community recreation plan must involve interaction and input from citizens and community groups. The Oscoda County Board of Commissioners, Township Planning Commissions, and Township Boards of Trustees were the lead entities in developing the Recreation Plan. Meetings were open to the public, with time allocated for comments. A timeline for the recreation plan update is as follows:

PLANNING SCHEDULE	
Month	Activity
12/2025 to 01/2026	County and Township Officials contracted with the Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG) to assist in drafting a recreation plan for Oscoda County.
04/2026	NEMCOG drafted an online survey with recreation questions and worked with the representatives from the Townships and County to finalize the survey. The survey was released to the public and made available on the County website and community Facebook pages. Additionally, paper copies of the survey were available at the County Building and Township Offices.
04/2026 to 07/2026	NEMCOG reviewed the prior plan and made updates to the community description, administrative structure, and the recreation inventory.
07/2026	NEMCOG staff conducted on-site visits to reach recreational facilities in the County and Townships and conducted an accessibility assessment.
08/2026	The public input survey was closed, and results were compiled.
08/2026	NEMCOG staff met with the County and Townships to discuss survey results and formulate goals, objectives, and an action plan.
XX/XXXX	A public notice appeared in the Oscoda Herald advertising the Recreation Plan's availability for review and the date of the public hearing.
XX/XXXX	The Oscoda County Board of Commissioners held a public hearing on the Recreation Plan. After considering public comments, the County Board of Commissioners passed a Resolution of Adoption.
XX/XXXX	The Comins Township Board of Trustees held a public hearing on the Recreation Plan. After considering public comments, the Board passed a Resolution of Adoption.
XX/XXXX	The Clinton Township Board of Trustees held a public hearing on the Recreation Plan. After considering public comments, the Board passed a Resolution of Adoption.
XX/XXXX	The Big Creek Township Board of Trustees held a public hearing on the Recreation Plan. After considering public comments, the Board passed a Resolution of Adoption.
XX/XXXX	The Greenwood Township Board of Trustees held a public hearing on the Recreation Plan. After considering public comments, the Board passed a Resolution of Adoption.
XX/XXXX	The Mentor Township Board of Trustees held a public hearing on the Recreation Plan. After considering public comments, the Board passed a Resolution of Adoption.

SURVEY RESULTS SUMMARY

Citizen opinion on recreation priorities is vital to the development of a recreation plan. An online survey was offered to citizens to gain input about recreation facilities in the County. The Joint Project Team approved the survey, and it was publicized on local government websites, posted in local government offices, and publicized on community Facebook pages, and made available for both the County and surrounding area residents. The County received 69 survey responses. The survey results can be found in the Appendix.

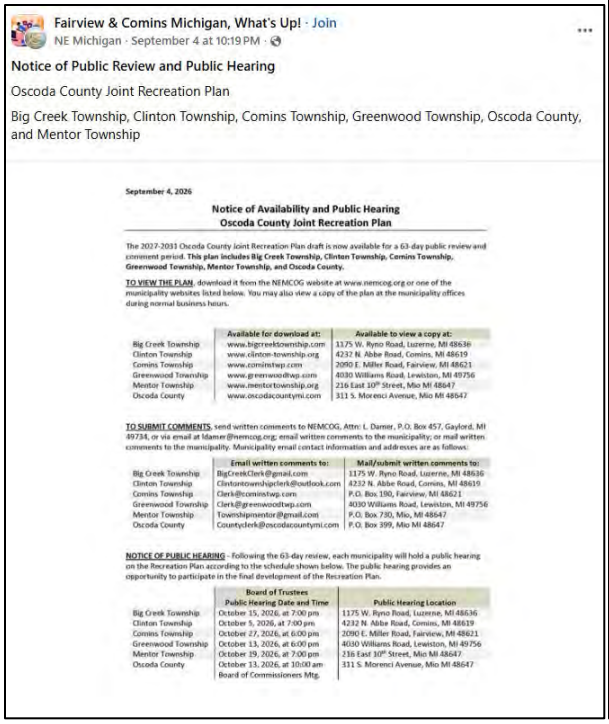
The Action Plan and Capital Improvement Projects were developed following the collection and documentation of public input. Feedback received throughout the public input process was carefully considered and incorporated into the development of the Action Plan and the Capital Improvement Projects list.

PUBLIC SURVEY POSTINGS

The public input survey was advertised on township and county websites, multiple Facebook pages, and advertised in the Oscoda County Herald.

PUBLIC NOTICES

Notice of Draft Plan's Availability for the 30-day review Period and Public Hearing Notice



Fairview & Comins Michigan, What's Up! · Join
NE Michigan · September 4 at 10:19 PM ·

Notice of Public Review and Public Hearing

Oscoda County Joint Recreation Plan

Big Creek Township, Clinton Township, Comins Township, Greenwood Township, Oscoda County, and Mentor Township

September 4, 2026

Notice of Availability and Public Hearing
Oscoda County Joint Recreation Plan

The 2027-2031 Oscoda County Joint Recreation Plan draft is now available for a 63-day public review and comment period. **This plan includes Big Creek Township, Clinton Township, Comins Township, Greenwood Township, Mentor Township, and Oscoda County.**

TO VIEW THE PLAN, download it from the NEMCOG website at www.nemcog.org or one of the municipality websites listed below. You may also view a copy of the plan at the municipality offices during normal business hours.

	Available for download at:	Available to view a copy at:
Big Creek Township	www.bigcreektownship.com	1175 W. Ryno Road, Luzerne, MI 48636
Clinton Township	www.clinton-township.org	4232 N. Abbe Road, Comins, MI 48619
Comins Township	www.cominstwp.com	2090 E. Miller Road, Fairview, MI 48621
Greenwood Township	www.greenwoodtwp.com	4030 Williams Road, Lewiston, MI 49756
Mentor Township	www.mentortownship.org	216 East 10th Street, Mio MI 48647
Oscoda County	www.oscodacountymi.com	311 S. Morenci Avenue, Mio MI 48647

TO SUBMIT COMMENTS, send written comments to NEMCOG, Attn: L. Damer, P.O. Box 457, Gaylord, MI 49734, or via email at ldamer@nemcog.org; email written comments to the municipality; or mail written comments to the municipality. Municipality email contact information and addresses are as follows:

	Email written comments to:	Mail/submit written comments to:
Big Creek Township	BigCreekClerk@gmail.com	1175 W. Ryno Road, Luzerne, MI 48636
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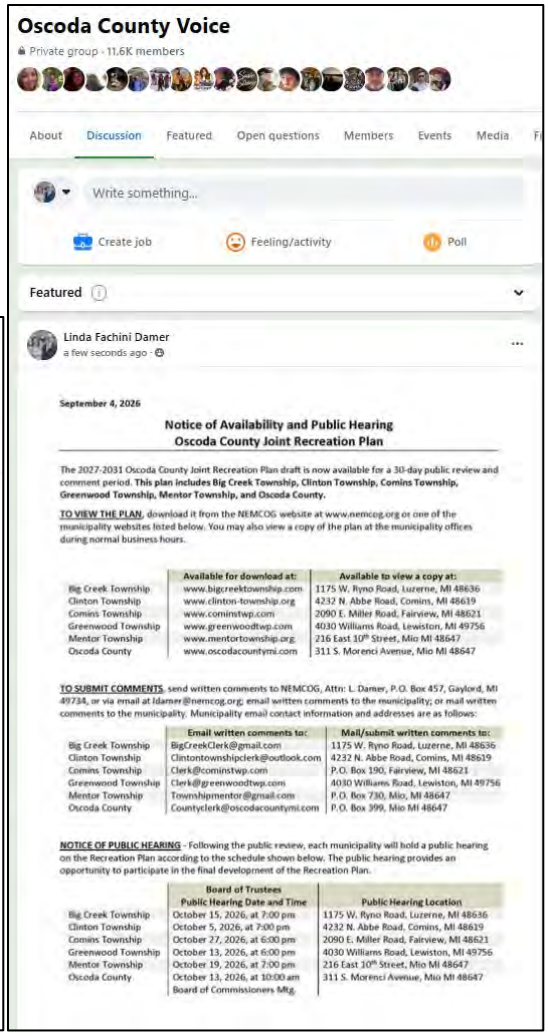
Comins Township	Clerk@cominstwp.com	P.O. Box 190, Fairview, MI 48621
Greenwood Township	Clerk@greenwoodtwp.com	4030 Williams Road, Lewiston, MI 49756
Mentor Township	Townshipmentor@gmail.com	P.O. Box 730, Mio, MI 48647
Oscoda County	Countyclerk@oscodacountymi.com	P.O. Box 399, Mio MI 48647

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING - Following the 63-day review, each municipality will hold a public hearing on the Recreation Plan according to the schedule shown below. The public hearing provides an opportunity to participate in the final development of the Recreation Plan.

	Board of Trustees Public Hearing Date and Time	Public Hearing Location
Big Creek Township	October 15, 2026, at 7:00 pm	1175 W. Ryno Road, Luzerne, MI 48636
Clinton Township	October 5, 2026, at 7:00 pm	4232 N. Abbe Road, Comins, MI 48619
Comins Township	October 27, 2026, at 6:00 pm	2090 E. Miller Road, Fairview, MI 48621
Greenwood Township	October 13, 2026, at 6:00 pm	4030 Williams Road, Lewiston, MI 49756
Mentor Township	October 19, 2026, at 7:00 pm	216 East 10th Street, Mio MI 48647
Oscoda County	October 13, 2026, at 10:00 am Board of Commissioners Mtg.	311 S. Morenci Avenue, Mio MI 48647



Oscoda County Voice
Private group · 11.6K members

About Discussion Featured Open questions Members Events Media

Write something...

Create job Feeling/activity Poll

Featured

Linda Fachini Damer
a few seconds ago ·

September 4, 2026

Notice of Availability and Public Hearing
Oscoda County Joint Recreation Plan

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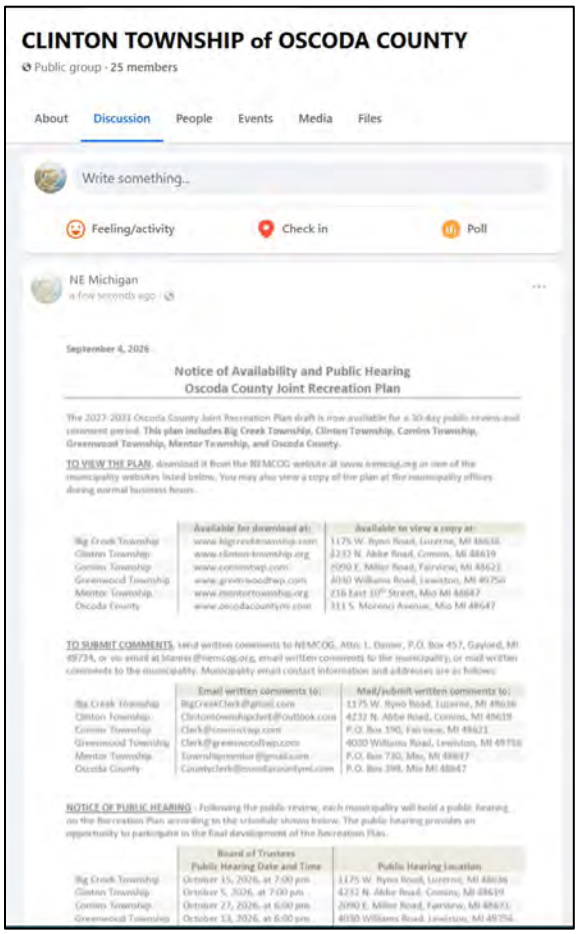
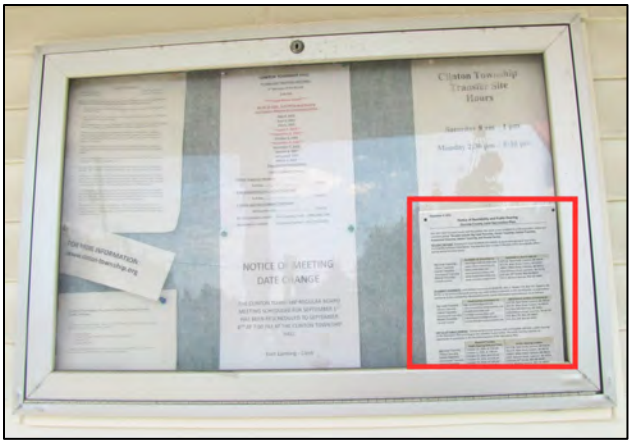
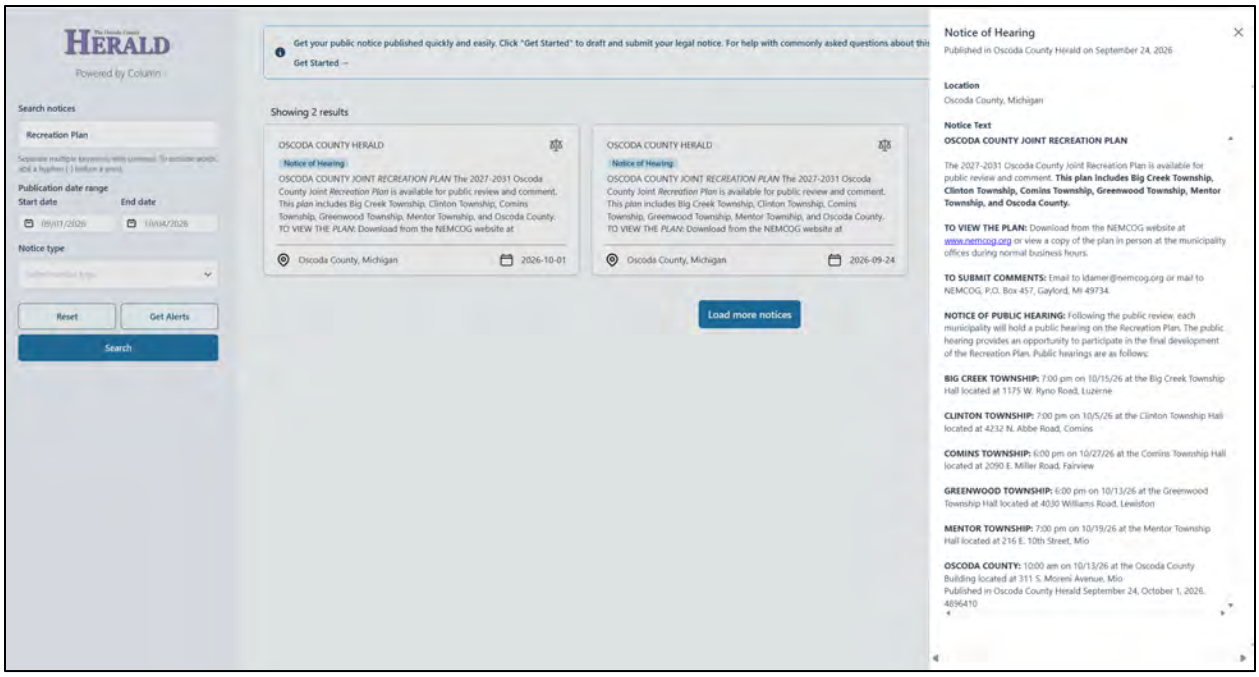
nemcog.org/nemcog-news
Constant Contact
Board Meetings
Canva
NE MI
Sharepoint
Adobe Acrobat
Google
Property Taxable Val...
SurveyMonkey: The...
Home - OneDrive
Read More
9/15/26
Oscoda County Joint Recreation Plan - Public Review Draft
Read More
9/15/26
Oscoda Joint Recreation Plan - Public Notice
Read More


CLINTON TOWNSHIP of OSCODA COUNTY
Public group · 25 members
About
Discussion
People
Events
Media
Files
Write something...
Feeling/activity
Check in
Poll
NE Michigan
September 4, 2026
Notice of Availability and Public Hearing
Oscoda County Joint Recreation Plan





MEETING MINUTES AND RESOLUTIONS OF ADOPTION

Public Hearing and Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes and Resolution of Adoption

xx

Township Board Meeting Minutes and Resolutions of Adoption

Xx

SUBMITTAL LETTERS

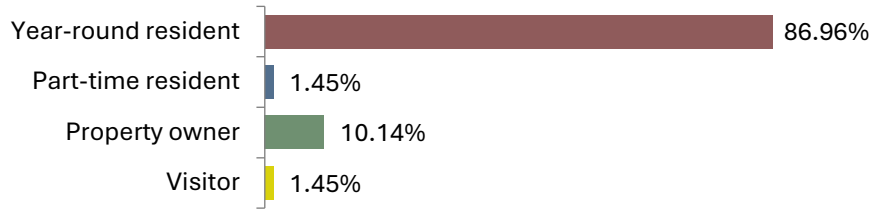
County and NEMCOG Submittal Letters

Xx

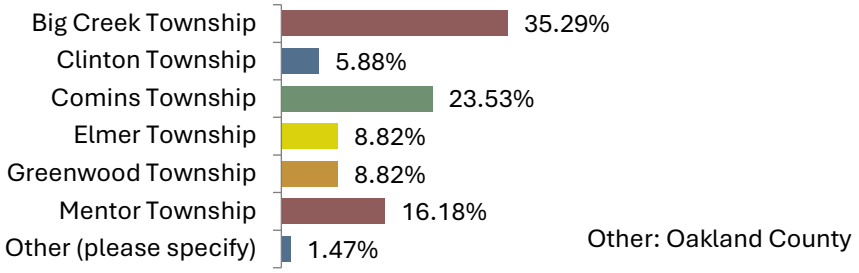
APPENDIX

PUBLIC INPUT SURVEY RESULTS

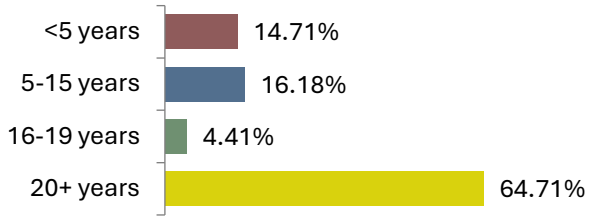
Q1: What is your residency status? (69 responses)



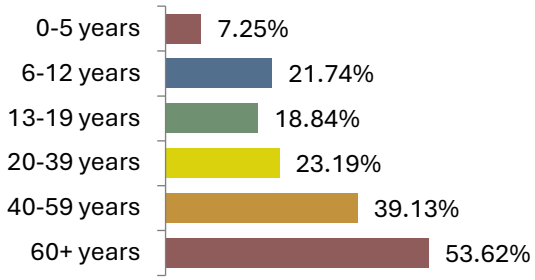
Q2: Where do you live? (68 responses)



Q3: How long have you lived or owned property in Oscoda County? (68 responses)

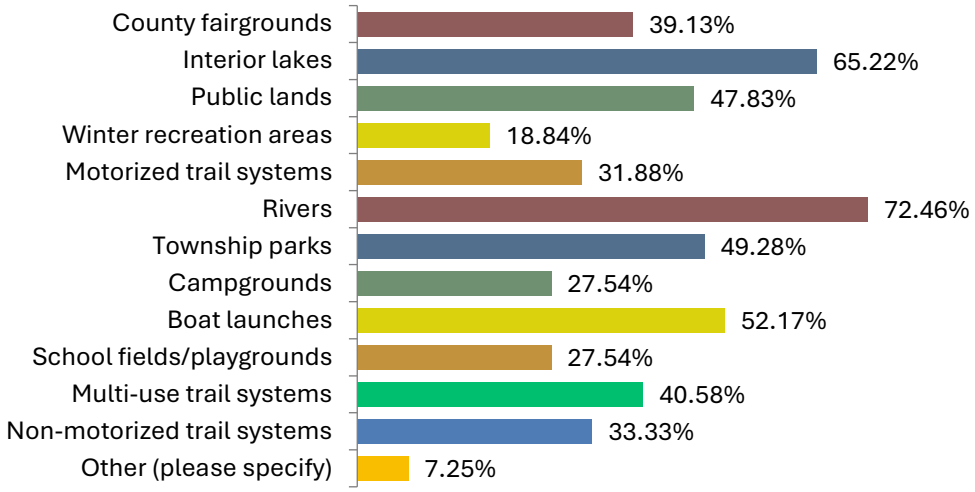


Q4: What are the ages of the members of your household? (Check all that apply.) (69 responses)



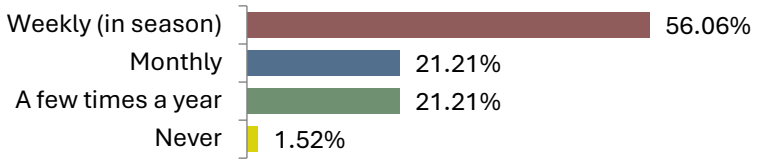
Q5: On a scale of 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest), how much of a priority are parks and recreation to your quality of life? (68 responses)

Q6: Which facilities do you use most often? (Check all that apply.) (69 responses)

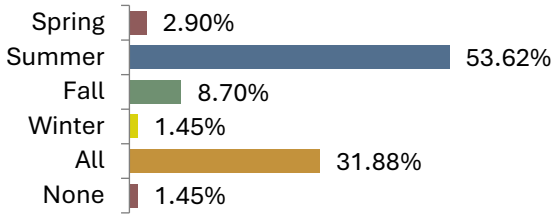


Other responses include: horse trails, snowmobile-only trails, town sidewalks; concern was expressed due to insufficient handicap accessibility in some areas.

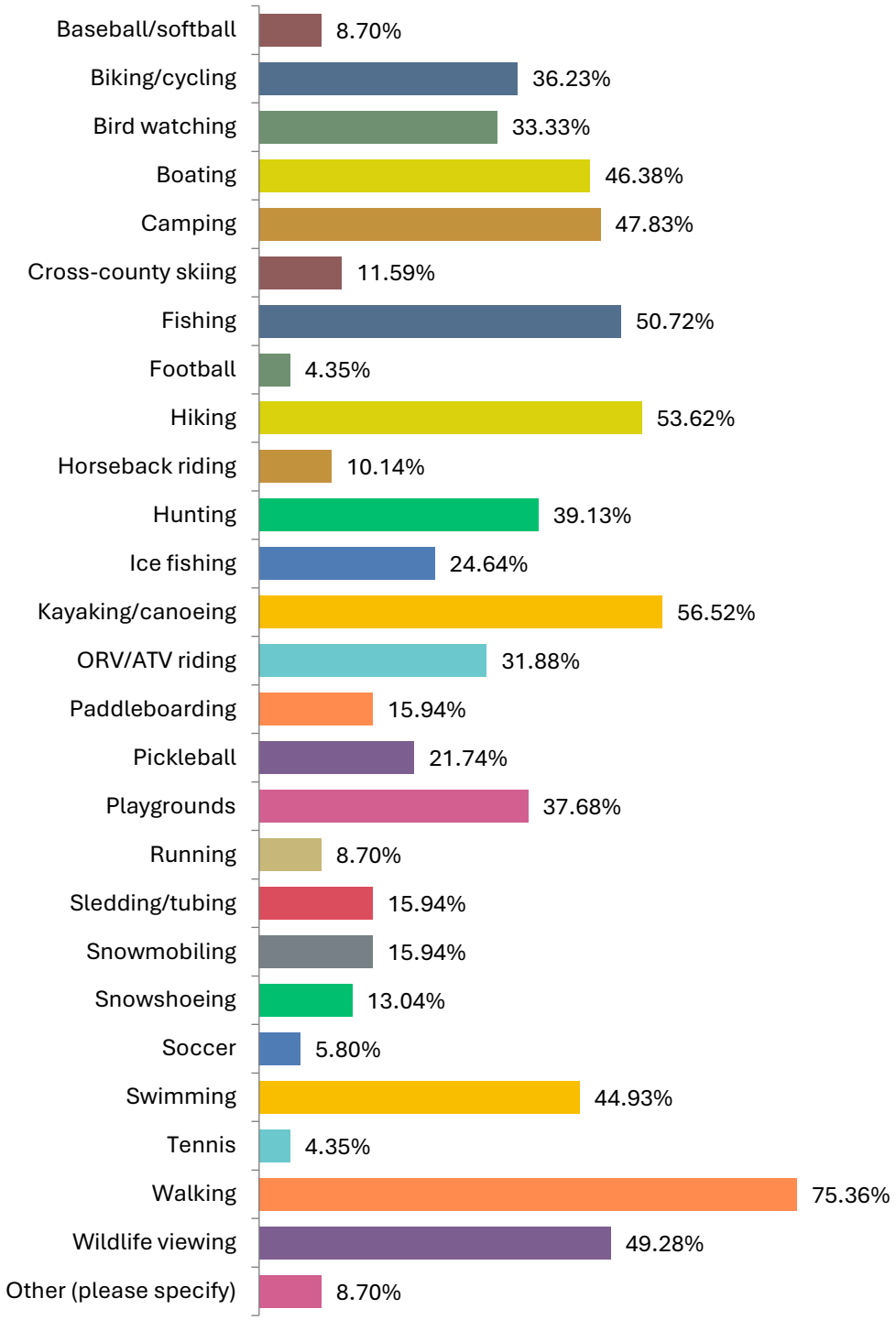
Q7: How often do you use recreational facilities/areas? (66 responses)



Q8: In which season do you use recreation facilities/areas most? (69 responses)

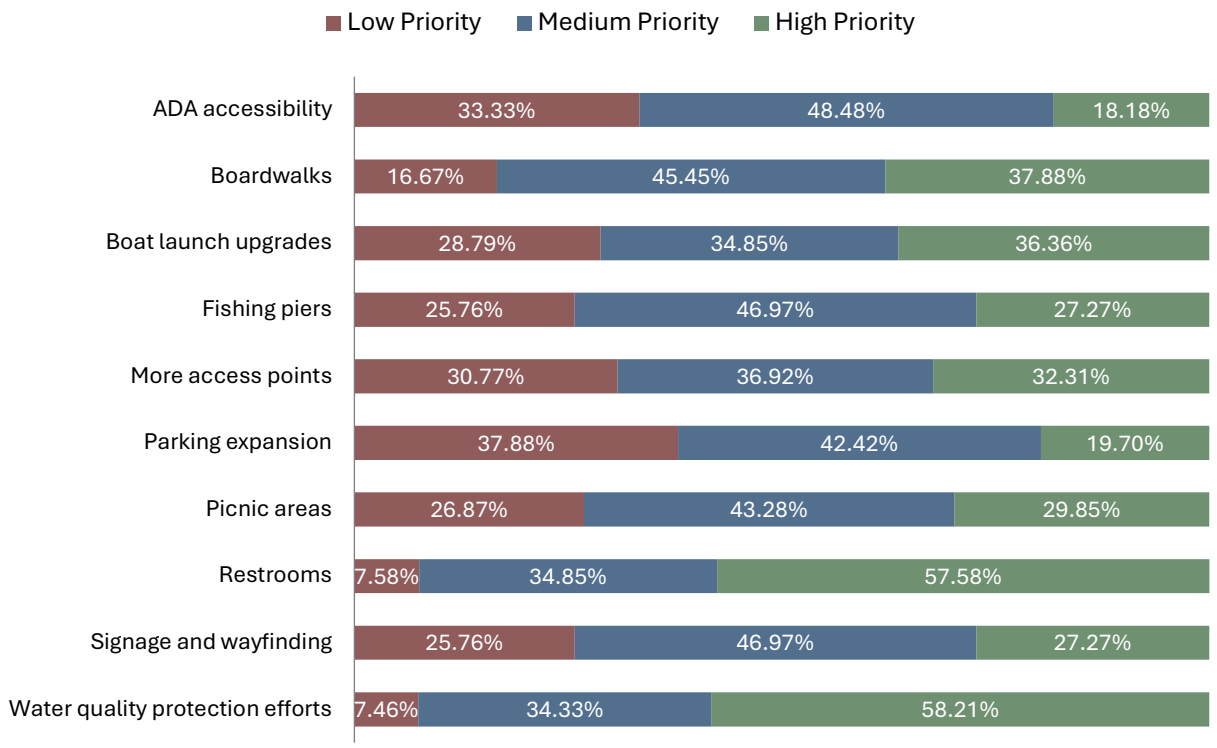


Q9: Which activities do you participate in? (Check all that apply.) (69 responses)

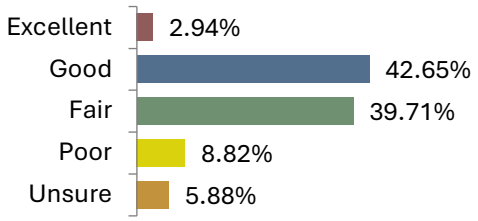


Other responses include ice hockey, snow skiing, foraging, and picnics.

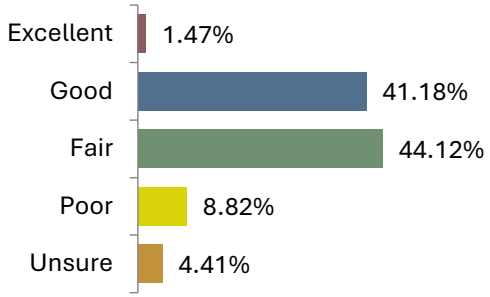
Q10: How much of a priority are the following waterfront improvements? (67 responses)



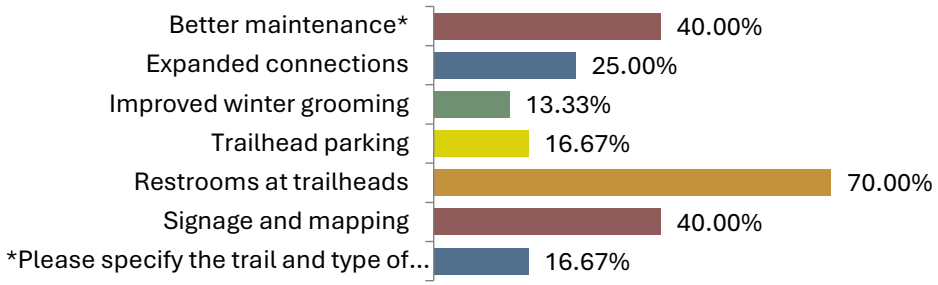
Q11: How would you rate the overall quality of recreation areas/facilities in your community? (68 responses)



Q12: How would you rate current public waterfront access? (68 responses)

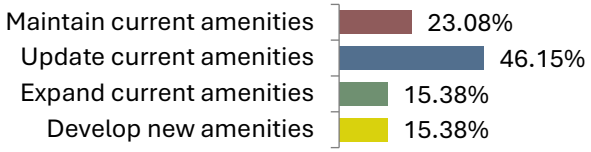


Q13: What trail improvements are most needed? (Check all that apply). (60 responses)

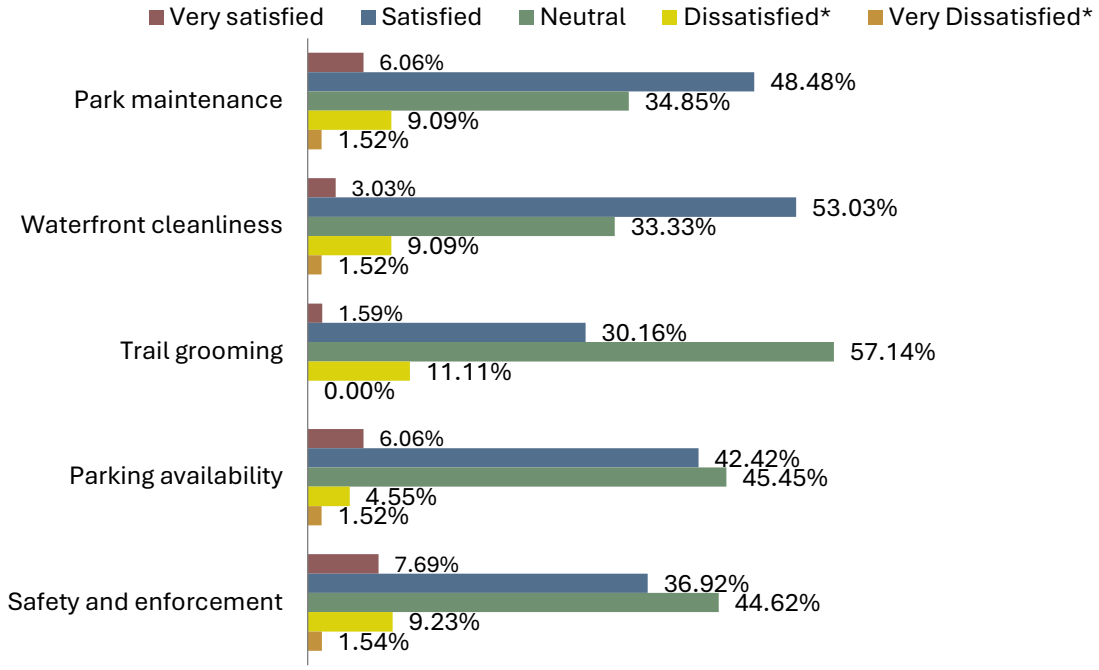


Comments include grading, grooming of the motorized trail systems, additional non-motorized trails, and keeping the river trail clear of logs; add benches and resting areas to enjoy the view, clearing the trail and installing restrooms at Wolf and Loud Creek.

Q14: Which should be the highest priority over the next five years? (65 responses)

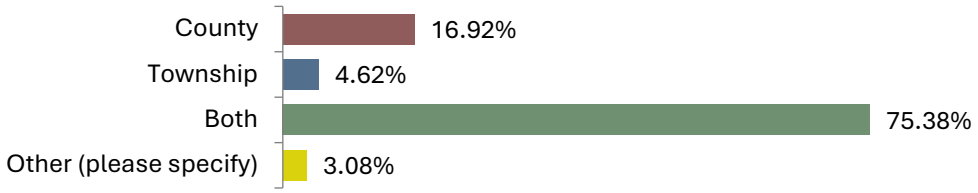


Q15: How satisfied are you with...? (68 responses)

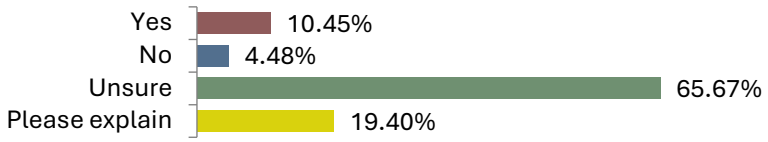


Comments include desire for visible DNR or law enforcement presence, mowing, and general maintenance to clear overgrowth.

Q16: Who should invest in facilities that support recreation tourism? (65 responses)

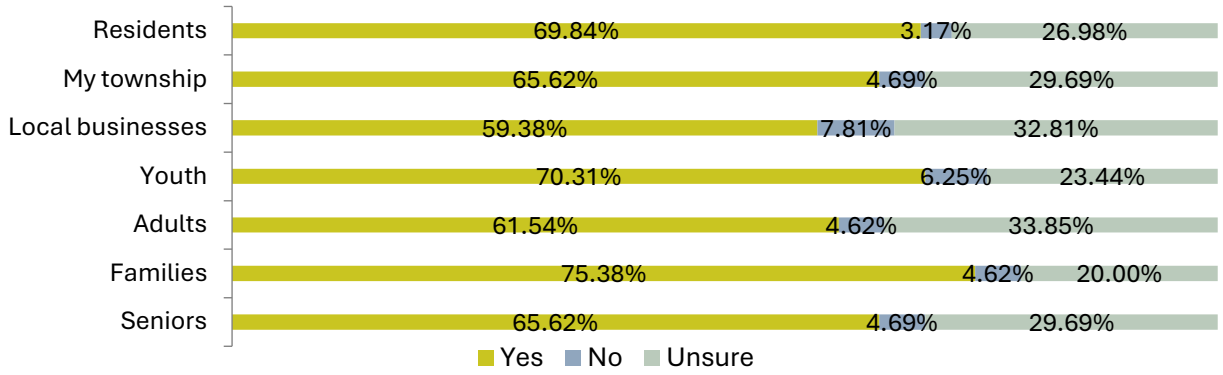


Q17: Are there gaps in recreation services that neither the township nor the county currently address? (67 responses)



Comments include desire for additional accessibility features for those who are unable to walk a distance or climb steep banks; adding more benches along the river trails; wider and paved shoulders on county roads to encourage bicycling – steep drop-offs along the shoulders; additional advertisement of motorized trail systems; a playground in Mentor Township; plowing boat launches for ice fishing; more options for older children.

Q18: Are there specific improvements that would most benefit the following groups? (66 responses)



Comments include improved signage, graded parking areas; mow/trim areas to control invasive plants; more equestrian recreation; build a dog park; more accessibility for those with mobility issues; more walking trails.

Q19: Is there anything you would like to add?

- A kayak ramp at Whirlpool would be great
- More equestrian recreation options
- More river trails and benches/resting spots along those trails
- Update the skating rink warming hut
- Add designated bike trails

POST-COMPLETION SELF-CERTIFICATION REPORTS

INSERT Post-Completion Self-Certification Reports