Manistee County Recreation Plan

We need your input!

The Manistee County Planning Commission, in partnership with the Alliance for Economic Success, is developing a 5-year Recreation Plan. We would like input from residents to gather ideas, hear comments, and listen to suggestions about recreational programs, facilities, and parks in Manistee County.

Stop in at your convenience to talk with recreation planners and community leaders. It won’t take long, just 5 to 10 minutes of your time. We want to hear your ideas and suggestions!

Public Open House and Community Input

Thursday, January 31, 2008
4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Faith Covenant Church
475 Eighth Street, City of Manistee

If you cannot attend this open house and have suggestions on how to improve public recreation in Manistee County, please mail your suggestions to: Alan Bean, Planner, Spicer Group, 230 South Washington Avenue, Saginaw, Michigan, 48607. The Manistee County Recreation Plan will be developed in accordance to the guidelines for Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans published by the Michigan DNR.

For more information, please visit the Manistee County Recreation Plan online at: ManisteeCoRecreation.wordpress.com
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Summary of Input Received

Thursday, January 31, 2008
4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Faith Covenant Church

Approximately 35 attendees.

- Need more bicycling opportunities.
  - Target teams and family.
- Would like to see a BMX facility for kids.
- A pump track (mounds propel).
- Mountain bike/hybrid bike opportunities.
- Long term possibility – Bike lanes on roads.
- More safe hiking trails.
- Love the beach – Need to keep them.
- Would like to see road ends opened up for lake/water access.
- Dirt bikes and 4 wheeler opportunities
- More outdoor sport opportunities
- Volleyball, tennis, basketball – Would like to see multiple opportunities at one location.
- County needs to become a programming leader for recreation; MRA needs to be involved and have central role
- Provide a county run campground.
- County should provide more financial support to existing parks.
- Blessed to live here: It is so beautiful; We have so much – Natural resources – Preserve what we have; Manistee is a treasure.
- Manistee: Fresh air; Low crime
- Preserve downtown – Very charming.
- Enjoy the riverwalk and beach.
• Good fishing all around.
• Identify snowmobiling trails: To know where they are at; Need to identify trail heads.
• Need more hiking opportunities.
• More bike trails.
• Conservancy is doing a good job.
• Identify public access to Lake Michigan.
• Provide parking area near public access areas – Areas are losing identity.
• Enjoy walking the beach!
• Enjoy fishing and boating.
• Need a recreation program for “at risk” youth.
• Woman’s pistol/shooting opportunity.
• Need to acquire land to provide access to inland lakes.
• Need a Recreation Complex that is centrally located; look at potential activities such as Soccer, baseball, basketball, etc.
• Kids need to be active
• Childhood obesity very high in this area.
• Not enough ball diamonds in area.
• Walking trail – Possibly near recreation complex.
• Need a Recreation Complex. No place to practice basketball. Need indoor facilities. Not enough gyms for winter.
• Fairly good number of soccer fields in area.
• Not enough indoor recreation opportunities for kids.
• Recreation opportunities “hidden”. Lots, but no one knows where they all are.
• Improve Mish-A-Mish Park trails
• Cleon Township has plans for trail improvements. *(Information provided)*
• Provide programs for youth. Bring in kids and adults from all over for recreation.
• Must preserve and develop road ends that lead into lakes.
• More accessible recreation amenities.
• More accessibility for restrooms – Improve parks for mobility vehicles.
• Need more accessible pathways: Onekama has good example – Compacted gravel.
• Good handicapped parking opportunities.
• Excellent props and set up.
• Need more hiking trails.
• Map and compass – “Orienteering”
• Big M – Good opportunity; Schools and good for kids
• Great place for it – Maps most of work.
• Sculling opportunity – Identify place.
• Like to camp – Good on federal lands, could bring horse.
• Use natural resources to promote tourism.
• Fishing is key to tourism in this area.
• Look at Indian reservation and work with.
• Preserve our natural resources and possibly look at alternate energy components.
• Really enjoy the Open House format, Good Idea!
• Link horse trails and show access points.
• Great thing you’re doing here – Love to see the input!
• Manistee County has exceptional outdoor recreation opportunities.
• Need an indoor tennis facility
  o Possibly use an existing building.
• Need more disc golf opportunities: Low maintenance; Good for all ages; Possibly Big M area.
• Disc golf competition – Could draw tourists.
• Need more bike trails: Possibly paved.
• We are a recreational area.
• Irons #2 in state for second homes: Connect with trail and casino.
• So many key opportunities for trails.
• I like the idea of safe trails – Off the road.
• Relocate Manistee County Fairgrounds (in Onkama).
  o Sits on very valuable property.
  o Sell and build new facility.
• Sell some road ends – Use money to make good access to those that would be good for County.
• Capitalize on “horse” community for tourism draw.
• Indoor tennis facility.
  o Link with Recreation Complex.
- Soccer, basketball, etc.
- Locate by High School – Lots of land.
- Good fishing opportunities.
- Public access to Lake Michigan and Portage Lake (for example).
  - Dozens and dozens of unmarked areas – Many treated as private property.
  - Lots of public access around lake.
- 1 mile of sandy beach on Portage Lake: DNR ramp just west.
- County needs to identify all recreation opportunities.
- Need to identify snowmobile trails and increase trail system in communities.
- Manistee National Forest snowmobile trail needs to access all adjoining Manistee County communities – i.e. Arcadia
- To bring in commerce and tourism, look at abandoned rail bed for multi-use path opportunity – Kaleva to Onekama to Casino to Burger King
- Use “2-tracks” for trail system – Could be very extensive.
- Promote mountain biking in the area - This area is becoming more popular.
  - Popular areas: Big M, North Country Trails
- Land conservancy should work to acquire more land for Mountain Biking and other uses in Manistee County. - Focus in the Arcadia area.
- Should think about Mountain Bike Skills area – Pump track.
  - Outdoor or indoor.
  - Like mini – BMX.
  - Safe, good for many skill levels.
- Mountain Bike Obstacle Course
  - To have a broad range of difficulty for various skill and ability levels.
  - Outdoor or indoor.
- Compare to Ray’s Mountain Bike Park – Indoor facility in Ohio.
- New accessible amenities funded by the Easter Seals:
  - City Riverwalk: Will have a hydraulic lift at marina into boat.
- Tribal parcels near Tippy Dam Pond are ideal for recreational development.
  - Funding available from Tribe for projects that can be combined to complement resources.
- Funding available to maintain roads, trails, paths, etc. that are not necessarily available through the State.
- Need more recreational opportunities for youth/younger people.
- Usage of road ends should be respectful to adjacent land owner(s).
  - Needs more stewardship so that this resource doesn’t get abused.
- Nordhouse Dunes: Need easier access to this wonderful site/area.
- Need better signage at Big M – Can help first-time users understand how easy and user-friendly the site/trails are.
- Need better information for people out of the area to know where they can go kayaking/canoeing.
  - If a project: focus on Bear Creek West.
  - Information needed to be catalogued:
    - Put in points.
    - Location information (GPS coordinates).
    - Put it in a map to some publication.
- Bike access is very important.
- West Shore Community College has an ice rink (and other recreation opportunities).
  - Partnership with City and transit authority to bring to people to the ice rink.
- Programming – Need MRA to act as the nucleus for recreation programming.
  - Need to do a better job at making MRA better funded to combine efforts.
- Need better access to our beaches and water resources.
- Need to look into more space for the County Fairgrounds.
- Need safer bike lanes (MSU - STDI had great ideas).
- Need more rail trail:
  - Connect existing trail by Burger King in Manistee
  - Gets people off the roads and is safer.
- Would like to see more opportunities for younger people for outdoor/cardio activities.
- MRA:
  - More organized/coordination for activities for youth.
  - Get involved with programming activities at the new pool at the High School.
- Need to better promote Manistee and all the wonderful assets in the area!
- Mountain Biking is up and coming and Manistee can be a focal point for its growth.
• Manistee pool at High School:
  o Add to inventory.
  o Complete in 2009.
  o For the entire County.
  o Will have a separate therapy pool for seniors.
• Accessible metal roll-up sidewalk.
  o Beach pathway that crosses the sand at 5th Avenue Beach in Manistee.
  o Accessible new beach house (to be opened spring 2008).
• Consider a shooting range.

Additional Input
• Improve access to the lower portion of the Big Manistee. This is an excellent fishing/recreation area, but access is limited. Some issues: 1) Insta launch is private and freezes up early in the season, 2) Bridge Street is dangerous, in terrible condition, and has no parking, and 3) access from Manistee Lake is limited due to shallow water. It seems that the area East of the 55 bridge would be a great place if public access could be purchased.
• Expected a “formal” meeting type environment and was delighted to see the one-on-one event. Received good views from others.
• Would like to see more for teens/pre-teens in community. Not everyone is a skateboarder. BMX track, pump track, etc. Cycling-oriented activities.
• Build a disc golf course, it’s a growing sport.
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Public Open House and Community Input
Tuesday, February 19, 2008
4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Brethren High School
4400 North High Bridge Road
Brethren, MI 49619 (Dickson Township)

If you cannot attend this open house and have suggestions on how to improve public recreation in Manistee County, please mail your suggestions to: Alan Bean, Planner, Spicer Group, 230 South Washington Avenue, Saginaw, Michigan, 48607. The Manistee County Recreation Plan will be developed in accordance to the guidelines for Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans published by the Michigan DNR.

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Summary Input Received

Tuesday, February 19, 2008
4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Brethren High School

Approximately 13 attendees.

- Need more opportunities for arts and culture at parks
  - Would like to see more programming at parks.
- Tie-in arts and culture with the “public spaces” available at public parks.
- Opportunity for programming through arts and culture.
- Parks can be places for the performing arts:
  - Build from local artists and performers.
  - Residents have talent and creativity.
- Would like to see more interpretive signs along trails (nature/ecological).
- Need to make parks more handicapped accessible.
- Improve signage for the North Country Trail (so people can find the trailheads), while maintaining its low-impact status.
- Find ways to promote more environmental education programs at Lake Buff Audubon Society.
- Would like to see paths and nature trails to be expanded to have more opportunities for nature viewing (birding, wildflowers).
- Need to highlight historical sites:
  - Old Indian mounds.
  - Lumbering areas.
- Many historical sites in Brethren/Dickson Township:
  - Find ways to put in more interpretive signs.
  - Many of these sites are on federal property.
• Need more indoor spaces to play games, etc:
  o Small community center.
• Recreation is inclusive of mind, body, spirit.
• Integrate programming with recreation:
  o Need more opportunities in Manistee County.
  o Family-focused (all ages).
• Tour of County sites related to the arts.
• Need to help people move around and find recreational and arts/cultural sites:
  o Signage.
  o Get the word out.
• Use parks as the public spaces to be venues for the arts and culture (programming):
• Brochure of Manistee County needs to highlight the special places in Manistee County
  ("tour of the County").
• Need more bike trails; from Thompsonville down to Kaleva to see the Bottle House, log
  cabin, etc.
• Create connections from the North County Trail to historic sites along the river.
• Improve fisheries in Manistee County and focus on Portage Lake, Bear Lake, Tippy
  Backwaters; also Big Bear Creek and its tributaries.
• Increase awareness of the many recreational opportunities available in Manistee County.
  o Need better promotion and involvement with media.
• Need more recreational opportunities for youth/children:
  o Partnership with schools.
  o Field trips to outdoor venues.
  o Awareness of opportunities for recreation/fun.