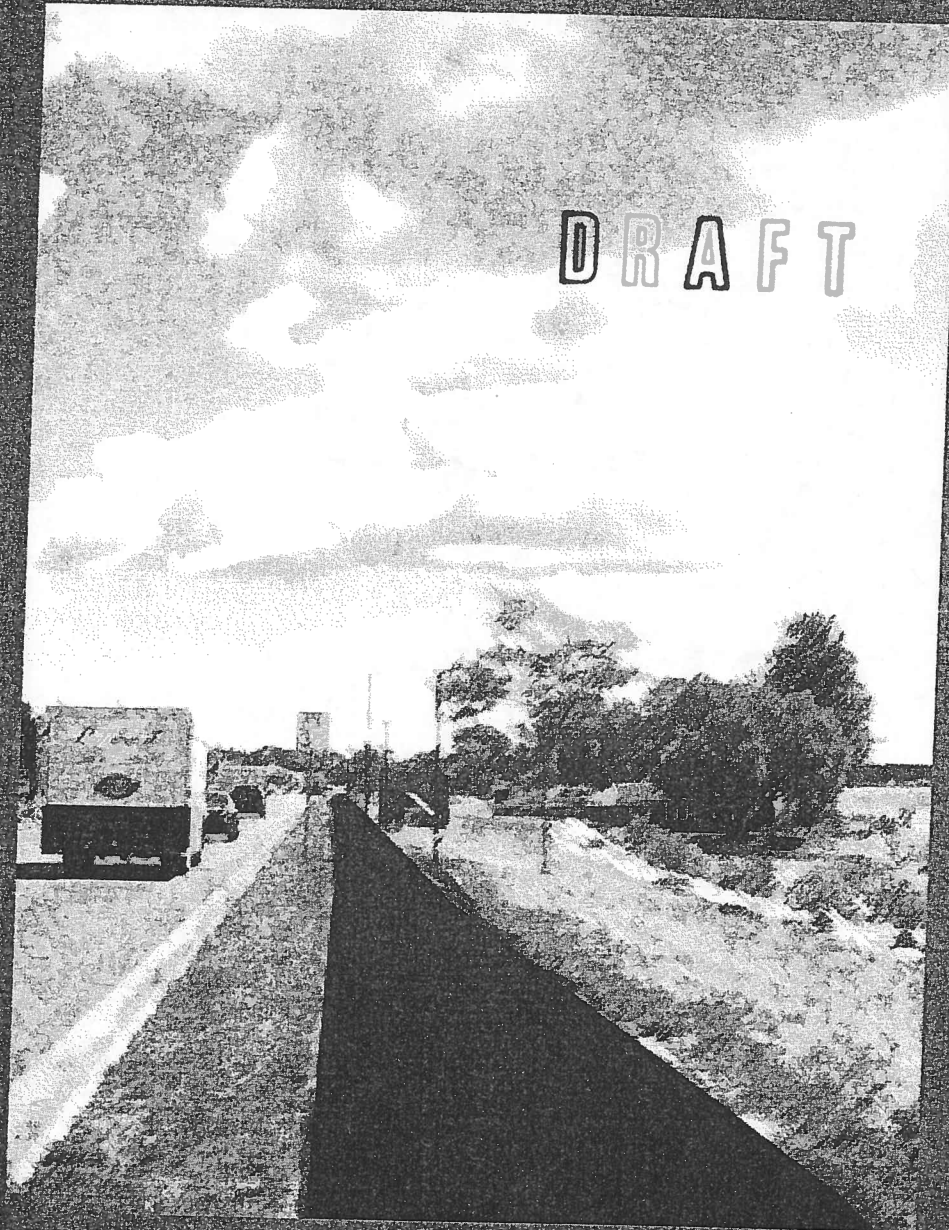


SUNRISE SIDE Recreational Pathway



Feasibility Study
September 2001

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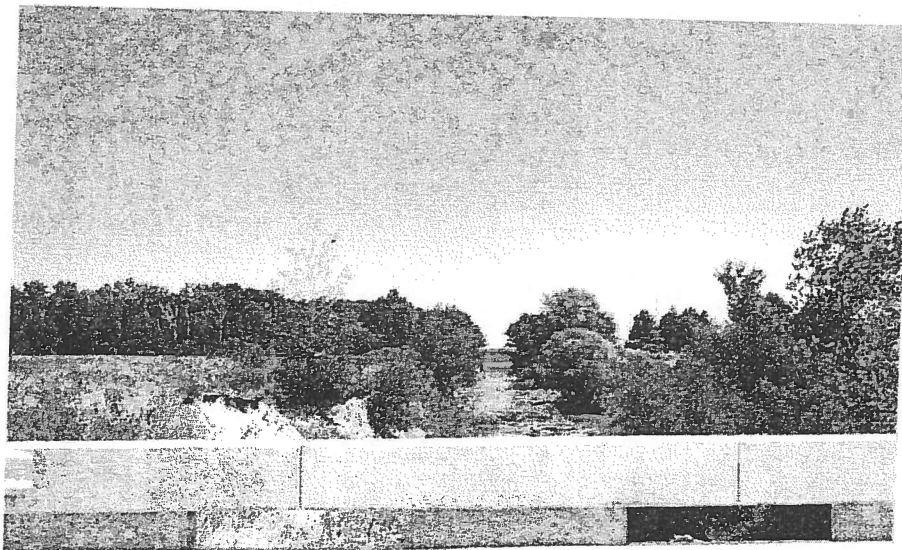
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I n t r o d u c t i o n

The purpose of this study is to provide a foundation for the development of a regional non-motorized pathway. This study will specifically identify a proposed and an alternative route for the 38.7 mile pathway, considering:

- historical significance of areas adjacent to and near the proposed pathway
- natural features including soils, wetlands, wildlife and vegetation
- geographic qualities, such as slope and terrain
- proposed links to existing and proposed pathways
- recommendations for pathway design standards and pathway features such as staging areas
- construction phasing recommendations and estimates
- maintenance estimates and recommendations

This feasibility study for the Sunrise Side Recreational Pathway also provides funding alternatives for the design and construction of the pathway and identifies contacts for additional resources and assistance.

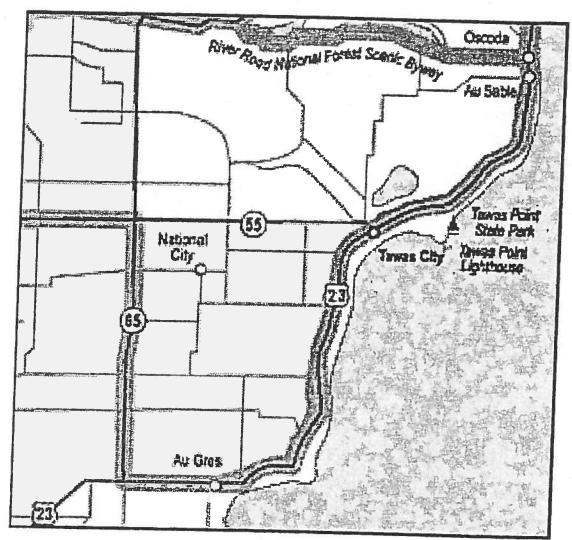


Standing on the Whitney Drain Bridge in Whitney Township, looking east to Lake Huron.

Project History

In 1999, Alabaster Township considered applying for a grant to construct a paved, non-motorized path within the Township. As conversations between the Michigan Department of Transportation and Alabaster Township continued, it was decided that an application for a pathway for the eastern side of the State would be more substantial if it were regional, rather than local, in nature. In late summer of 1999, the Sunrise Side Recreational Pathway Committee was formed with representatives from the Arenac County Road Commission, Iosco County Road Commission, Sims Township, Alabaster Township, Whitney Township, Baldwin Township, Au Sable Township, the City of Tawas, East Tawas and Au Gres.

In March of 2001, Spicer Group received authorization from the Michigan Department of Transportation to develop a feasibility study for the Sunrise Side Recreational Pathway. The process began with a first committee meeting in the end of March and delivery of the final study in September.



The Sunrise Side Recreational Pathway is proposed to generally follow the path of U.S. 23 and the Lake Huron Shore, from the City of Au Gres to the City of Au Sable.

Research for this project involved several different meeting types and visual surveys. The Sunrise Side Recreational Pathway Committee was involved in the development of this feasibility study. Altogether, six committee meetings were held. In addition, meetings were held as needed to conduct driving surveys of the area with local representatives, as well as meeting with representatives from U.S. Gypsum and National Gypsum and one public meeting.

Committee Meetings

Pathway Committee meetings were held at the Alabaster Township Hall on the following dates:

- March 27, 2001
- April 24, 2001
- May 22, 2001
- June 26, 2001
- July 16, 2001
- August 21, 2001

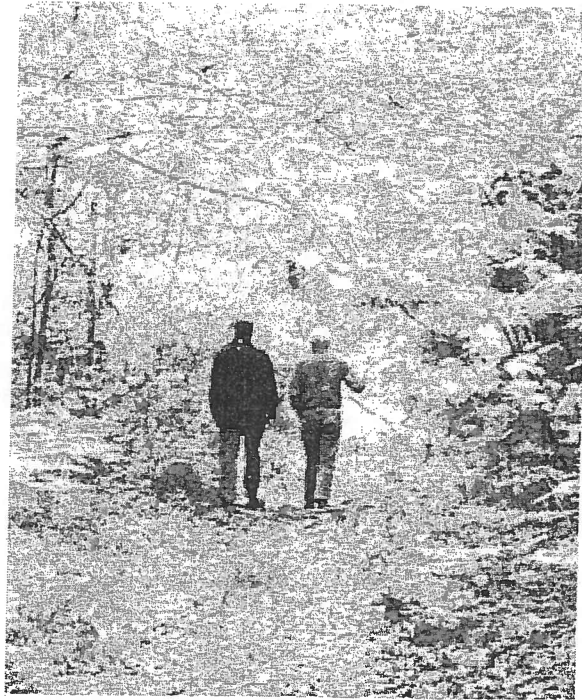
Meeting agendas and notes from these meetings are included in the appendix. Attendees at the meeting included representatives from the local municipalities through which the path would pass, representatives from U.S. Gypsum, the Iosco County Road Commission and the Arenac County Road Commission. Each meeting reviewed the progress to date and focused on the rationale for the location of the proposed and alternative pathways. Additionally, meetings also focused on specific issues, such as proposed links, pathway design standards, existing natural features, points of interest along the trail and other issues.

Driving Surveys

In total, the consultants conducted eight driving surveys. Two of the surveys were done in cooperation with Township officials. The first cooperative driving survey was conducted on May 22, 2001 with representatives from Sims, Whitney and Alabaster Townships. The purpose of physically driving with local officials was to solidify proposed

routes, challenges to the trail design, road crossings, natural features and other potential challenges.

The second driving survey, done in cooperation with Township officials in the northern portion of the study area, involved Au Sable and Baldwin Townships. This survey was conducted on June 29, 2001 in the morning. Again, the purpose of this meeting and driving survey was to identify any challenges to the trail design, road crossings, natural features and other potential challenges.




Walking an alternate pathway location in Sims Township during one of the driving surveys, Rob Eggers of Spicer Group and Timothy Roche, Sims Township Supervisor.

In both driving surveys conducted with Township officials, the cooperative nature of the survey allowed for an exchange of ideas and insight into the history of the area for which the pathway is proposed.

Driving surveys were also conducted six different times by the consultant. During these surveys, one planner drove while the other made notes on a base map and consulted a plat map to determine public or private property ownership. Three days were devoted to the southern portion of the pathway- Sims, Whitney and Alabaster Townships, and two days devoted to the northern portion of the pathway including Tawas City, East Tawas City, Baldwin and Au Sable Townships. Three additional driving surveys were conducted once the routes were solidified. These driving surveys were conducted with the intent of adjusting probable costs of construction, phasing, and any potential design challenges.

This study examines the feasibility of a proposed pathway, running from the Au Gres river in Au Gres to the Au Sable River, for more than 38 miles. The pathway generally follows U.S. 23 north from Sims Township, passing into Whitney Township, then into Alabaster Township, through the cities of Tawas and East Tawas and into Baldwin Township before ending in Au Sable. Though the pathway generally follows the footprint of U.S. 23 as it extends through to Au Sable, one of the underlying goals of the Sunrise Side Recreational Pathway Committee is to provide a pathway that is visually interesting and, whenever possible, deviates from running within the right of way of U.S. 23.



On Track

The proposed pathway, when each section is complete, will stretch more than 38 miles.

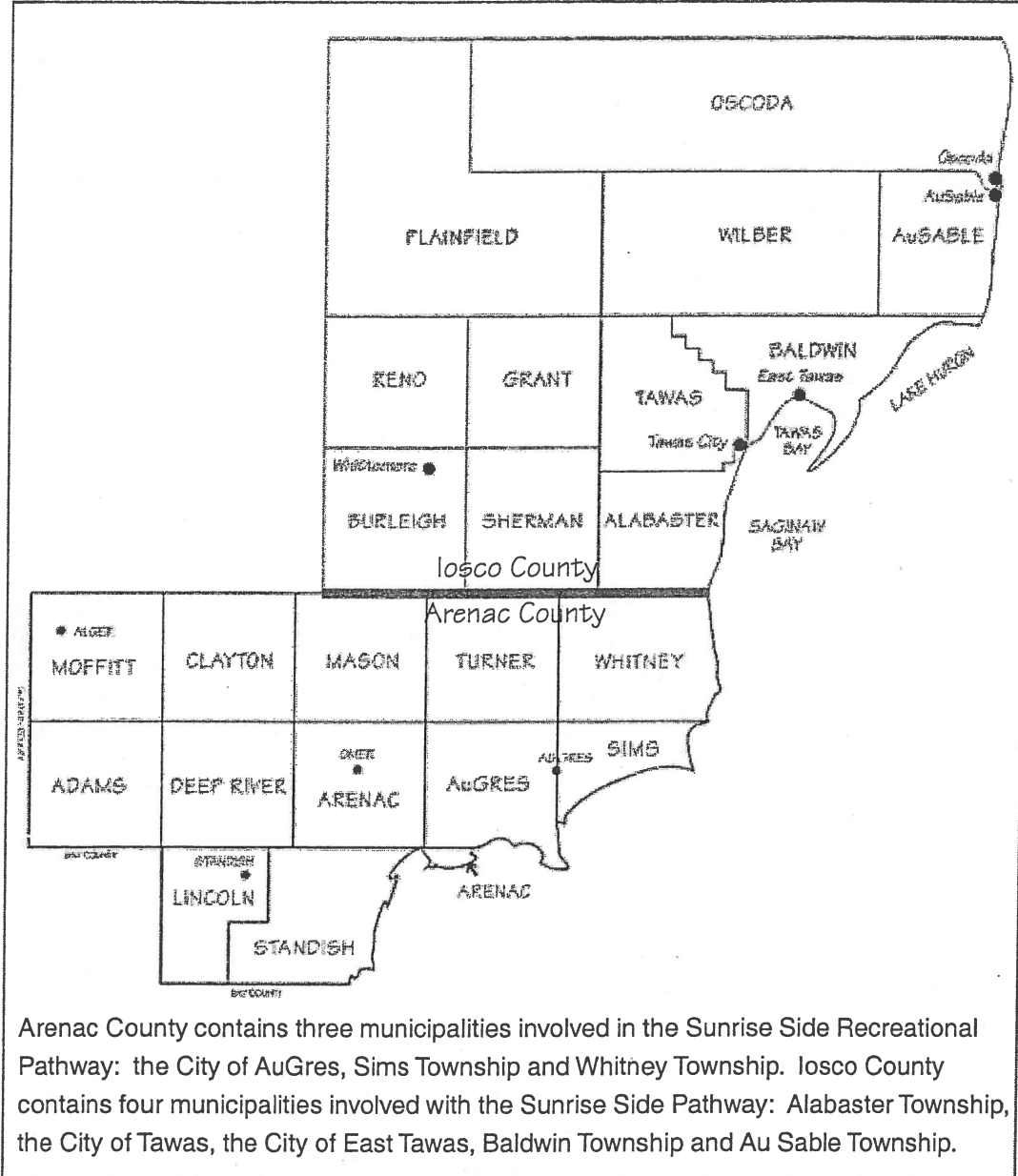
The intent of the proposed route is to capitalize on any existing pathway systems. To this end, the proposed pathway incorporates existing pathway systems as actual parts of the Sunrise Side Pathway, adjacent links or staging areas. For organization of the proposed pathway sections, we will first describe the general route of the entire pathway and then provide a detailed description of the pathway as it passes through each municipality.

General Route of the Proposed Pathway

The pathway will begin just north of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post on U.S. 23, approximately one third mile north of Tonkey Road. From this point, the path will head north within the western right-of-way of U.S. 23 into Whitney Township. Once in Whitney Township, the path will turn east on Hammell Beach Road, then follow Noble Road north to Twining Road. At Twining Road, the pathway will again turn and connect with Noble Road until the pathway crosses into Iosco County and Alabaster Township.

At the border with Alabaster Township, the pathway heads east to Oates Road. At the intersection of Oates Road with Keystone Road, the pathway heads west for a short time to connect to Rempert Road, running north. Once on Rempert Road, the pathway runs north until Alabaster Road, at which point the trail heads east and connects to the D & M Railroad. The pathway will run adjacent to the rail line within the right-of-way of the railroad. Just past Whittemore Road, the trail will move to a utility easement and connect

Map 1: Regional Map

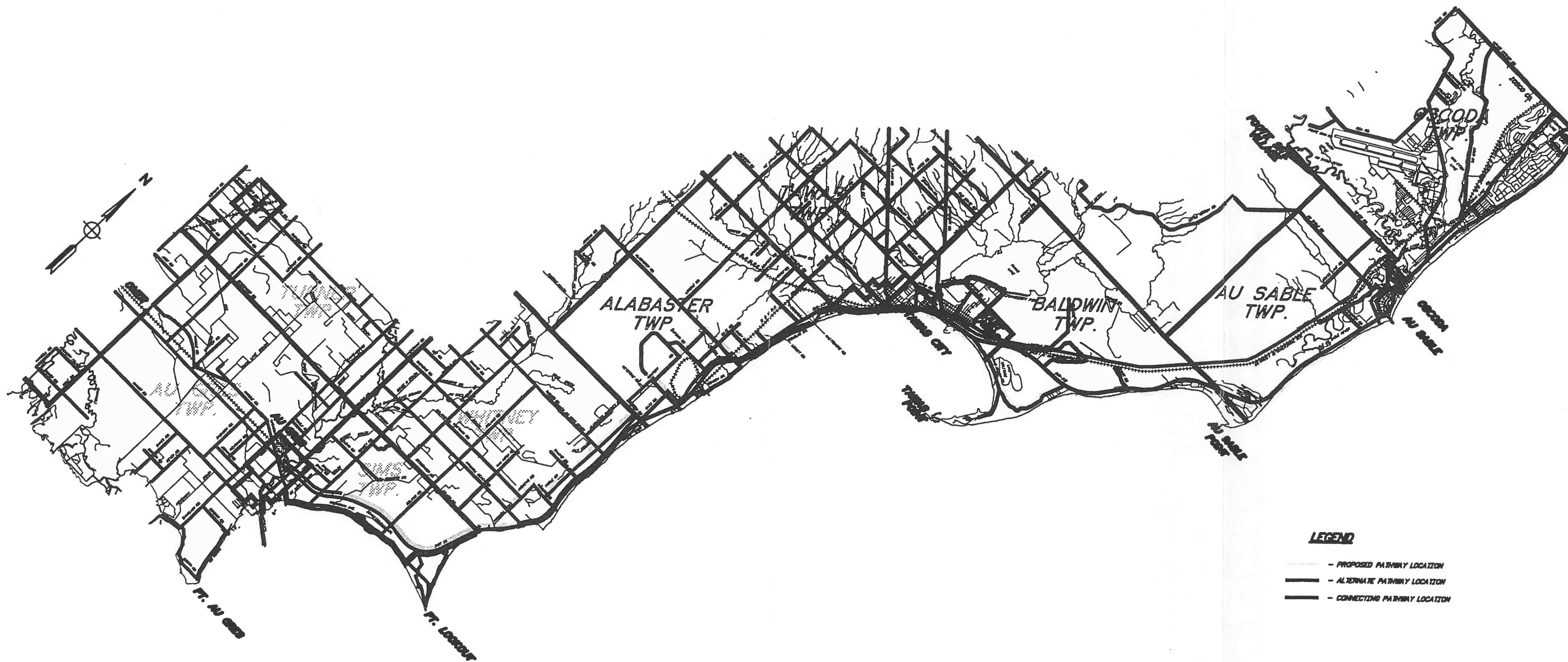


Proposed Path

with U.S. 23. The pathway will follow along the west side of U.S. 23 until it reaches the City of Tawas. Once inside the City of Tawas, the path will continue to run along the west side of the highway just prior to the bridge at Ninth Street. At this point, the pathway will cross U.S. 23 at a proposed signalized pedestrian crossing to the east side and continue traveling north along U.S. 23. The pathway will stay on the east side of U.S. 23 through the remainder of the City of Tawas and into East Tawas. In the City of East Tawas and

Baldwin Township, the pathway will run east on Tawas Beach Road, along an existing bike pathway system. At the intersection of Tawas Beach Road with Baldwin Resort Road, the pathway will turn west, northwest and follow Baldwin Resort Road out to U.S. 23. Once the pathway connects with U.S. 23, the path will remain on the east side of U.S. 23 into Au Sable Township.

MAP 2
PROPOSED AND ALTERNATIVE RECREATIONAL PATHWAY



LEGEND

- PROPOSED PATHWAY LOCATION
- ALTERNATE PATHWAY LOCATION
- CONNECTING PATHWAY LOCATION

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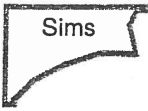
Detailed Pathway Description by Municipality

In order to provide a more detailed description of the proposed pathway and alternative path locations investigated, this section of the plan studies the pathway as it travels through each municipality. It is this portion of the plan that details the specific design challenges posed to each portion of the path, ranging from slope and terrain to wetland areas to local zoning codes. The description of each pathway also discusses the challenges posed to each pathway and how they are addressed through design suggestions, pedestrian bridges, boardwalks and more.

Staging areas are also identified when appropriate. A staging area is a generic term used to describe a location which is now, or could be used as a starting point for pathway users. Generally, staging areas are handicapped accessible parking lots with lighting, accessible to the route. Ideally, staging areas should have restrooms and drinking water available. They are described in more detail on page 34.

After each municipality is discussed, a localized Township map of the pathway is included.

ARENAC COUNTY



Sims Township

Sims Township is located on the Lake Huron coast in Arenac County between the City of AuGres to the southwest and Whitney Township to the north. The total length of pathway proposed within Sims Township is approximately six miles.

Proposed Pathway

This preferred route is a challenge at first as there is no location to serve as a staging area until approximately 1.2 miles outside the City of AuGres. At this point, there is a Veteran's of Foreign Wars building with a large parking lot which could be used as a staging area. An additional staging area could possibly be negotiated with Huron Breeze Golf Course. This study recommends investigating the shared use of the VFW as a staging area for the pathway, with the pathway starting on the northeastern end of the VFW's property. This site is located approximately one-third mile north of Tonkey Road. From this point, the pathway will continue along the western side of the highway. Sims Township Hall, also a potential staging area, is located just prior to the road crossing with Delano Road. The path crosses Delano Road and continues running on the west side of the right-of-way along U.S. 23. The pathway travels through a heavily wooded area between Delano and Foster Road. Removal of large trees should be kept to a minimum during design and construction of the pathway. This is feasible because an existing utility easement with power lines runs within the right-of-way and the pathway can follow their general location. There are limited driveways along this portion of the pathway. An additional staging area could possibly be negotiated with Huron Breeze Golf Course. There are four road crossings in Sims Township: Delano Road, which is paved, and Sims Road, Maple Road and Birch Road, all of which are gravel roads. At Bessinger Road, the pathway enters Whitney Township.

Alternate Pathway

This proposed pathway is not the preferred pathway. During initial conversations, the Sunrise Side Pathway was proposed to start at the Au Gres River, still inside the City of Au Gres, and travel through a lakefront residential area by way of undeveloped road

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extension within the next few years.

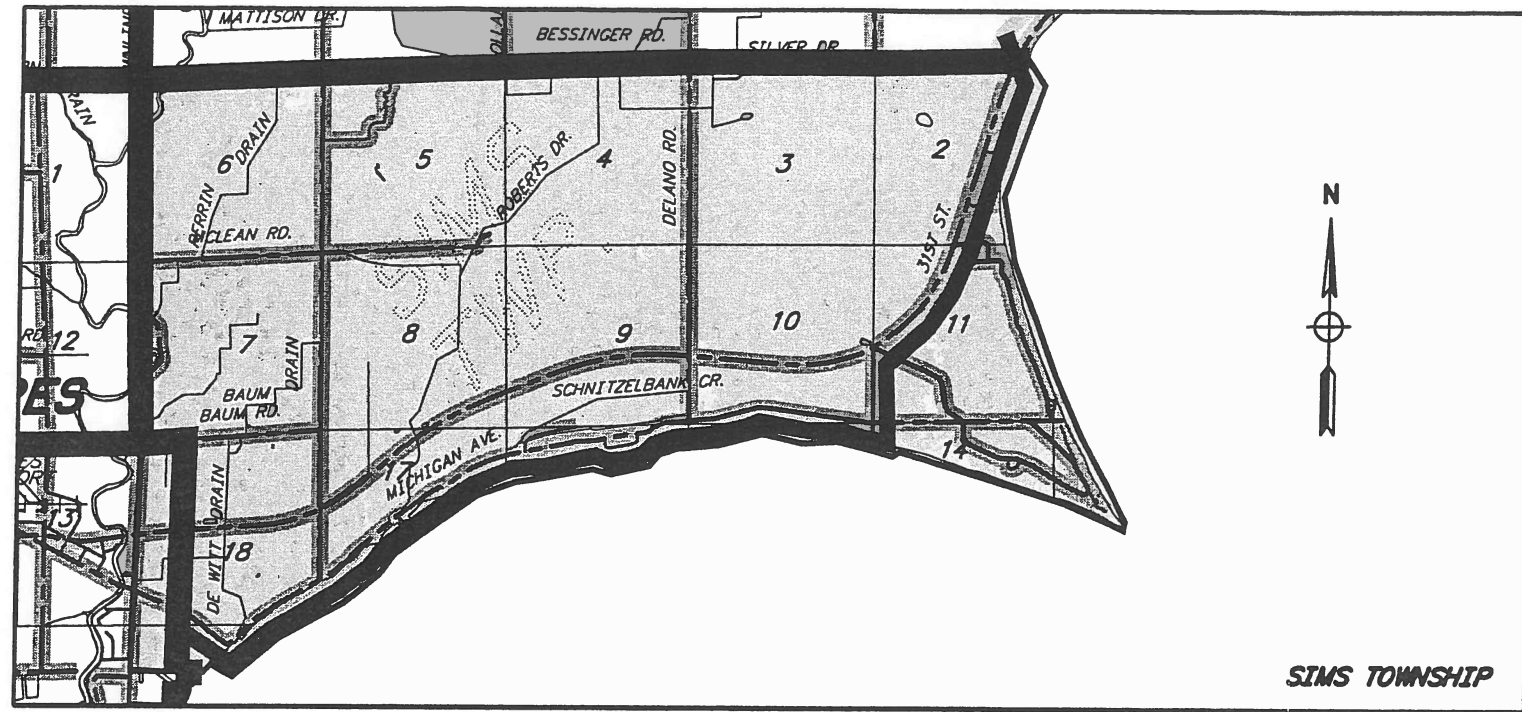
However, due to circumstances beyond the control of the committee and the consultant, this route is now denoted as the alternative route and the preferred route runs along the west side of the U.S. 23 corridor in the highway's right-of way.

Challenges

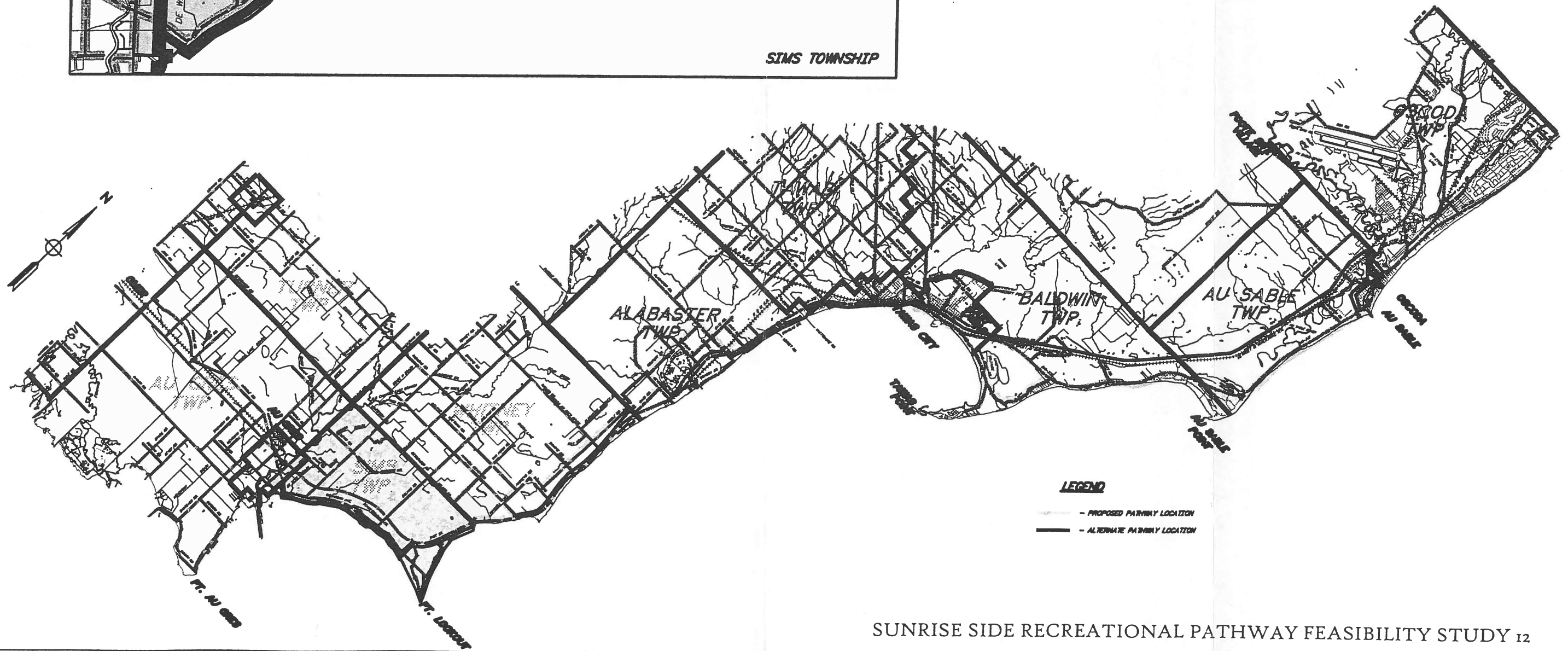
The major challenge to the pathway within Sims Township is its point of origin. Aside from the river, there is no natural starting place. Starting at the river was not an option for several reasons. To start on the west side of U.S. 23 just after the river would have increased costs due to scattered wetland issues and drainage ditches that would have to be crossed. There are also more businesses and cross streets on the east side of U.S. 23. The ideal location to start the path would be on the east side of U.S. 23 just after the river. However, running the pathway along the east side of U.S. 23 would have required a road crossing to reach Hammell Beach Road. With these issues in mind, it is more feasible to begin the pathway further north in Sims Township, with the goal to connect to the City of Au Gres as money becomes available.

There are no historically significant sites within Sims Township. A review of the local zoning ordinance did not highlight any additional issues. As with all projects constructed within road right-of-ways, extensive coordination between the Township and the Michigan Department of Transportation is required. In addition, permits from the appropriate State agencies such as the Department of Environmental Quality, and County departments, may be required. A review of the proposed pathway by the Michigan Natural Features Inventory did not identify any significant natural features.

MAP 3
SIMS TOWNSHIP



SIMS TOWNSHIP



LEGEND

- - - PROPOSED PATHWAY LOCATION
- ALTERNATE PATHWAY LOCATION



Whitney Township

Whitney Township is located just north of Sims Township in Arenac County and just south of Alabaster Township and Iosco County. The pathway proposed through Whitney Township stretches a total of 6.7 miles.

Proposed Pathway

Once inside Whitney Township, at Bessinger Road, the path continues along U.S. 23. Just prior to Antonia Road, along U.S. 23, there is an existing ditch. This area has



Standing within the right of way at the intersection of Hammell Beach Road and U.S. 23 looking southwest. An easement may be required at this location due to the location of the existing drainage ditch.

standard guardrail surrounding it and will require a pedestrian bridge in this location. The pedestrian bridge will be approximately 30 feet long. The pathway continues for approximately one and one-quarter miles from Bessinger Road, until the path reaches Hammell Beach Road, a paved two-lane

county road. It is at Hammell Beach Road that the pathway will first deviate from the right-of-way of U.S. 23.

There is a significant drainage ditch at Hammell Beach Road and the size of the drainage area may require a 15 foot easement of approximately 200 feet in length, since the pathway runs along the south side of the road. The pathway will not cross Hammell Beach Road, but will turn and run down the south side of the road. The area along Hammell Beach Road is mostly residential, with approximately five houses along the route of the proposed pathway. The pathway will follow along the right-of-way of Hammell Beach Road. It is proposed that the pathway will generally follow the location of the

Proposed Path

existing utility lines, as the area is already cleared. The path will follow Hammell Beach Road west for just more than one-half mile. At the intersection with Andrews Road, the pathway will turn north and run along the west side of Andrews Road for just more than one mile. This will require a marked road crossing.

Due to a number of challenging site issues

in this area, including wetlands, the pathway is proposed to run along an extended shoulder of Andrews Road for approximately one-quarter mile. As soon as the pathway passes the site issues, the path will resume its standard route off the road and within the right-of-way. Approximately one-half mile north of Hammell Beach Road, Andrews Road crosses a gravel road, Whitman Road. It is at this point that Andrews Road changes to a gravel road as well.



Standing at the intersection of Whitman Road and Andrews Road, looking south. The swale area shown in this photo adjacent to the farm field will be replaced with culvert and the pathway will run within the road right of way with a buffer between the road and the actual path.

The pathway continues along Andrews Road until Twining Road where it will cross and run along the north side of the right-of-way for one-half mile until the intersection with Noble Road. Twining Road is a gravel road and it runs adjacent to the Arenac County Road Commission's mining operation. The first quarter mile of Twining Road may require a culvert to construct the pathway but as Twining Road continues east, the path is proposed to run within the road right-of-way on an elevated ridge just south of an existing fence. In some areas, the fence may need to be relocated. There will be no road crossing where Twining and Noble Roads meet. The pathway will turn north and continue along the west side of Noble Road. Just prior to the intersection with Swartz

Road, which is a gravel road, and Noble Road, the pathway must cross the Diamond Drain. This drain is approximately forty feet long. A pedestrian bridge is suggested for this waterway crossing. The crossing proposed for Swartz Road is the same type as proposed for other roads with a standard approach and signage.

Whitney Township is in the process of designing a water main extension along the west side of Noble Road in this specific area. This study suggests coordination of the water main design with the intention of this trail running adjacent or parallel to the water main in order to reduce costs for clearing and grading.



The Noble Road portion of the pathway continues until Turner Road and the Whitney Drain. This portion of the pathway is probably the most challenging, and the single most expensive item in this portion of the pathway. At the

intersection of Turner and Noble Roads, the Whitney Drain is just north of the actual intersection. The Whitney Drain is 125 feet wide and 50 feet below road grade at the proposed crossing. There is a bridge, spanning 100 feet and 28.5 feet wide. Ideally, a new crossing will be constructed and designed specifically for non-motorized use. However, because this cost may be prohibitive, it is not the only option available. A second option is to retrofit the existing bridge for shared use. This would require a grade separation between the roadway and the proposed pathway as well as installation of handrail, all conforming to AASHTO standards. This option (retrofitting the existing bridge) is included in the probable opinion of cost. After the bridge crossing, the pathway continues along the west side of Noble Road until it intersects Dyer Road at the border of

Standing on the Whitney Drain Bridge looking west. A separate pedestrian bridge crossing here would be ideal but expensive. Retrofitting of the existing bridge for pedestrian use is more economically feasible.

Iosco County. The Singing Bridge Golf Course is located between Noble Road and Dyer Road.

Alternate Pathway

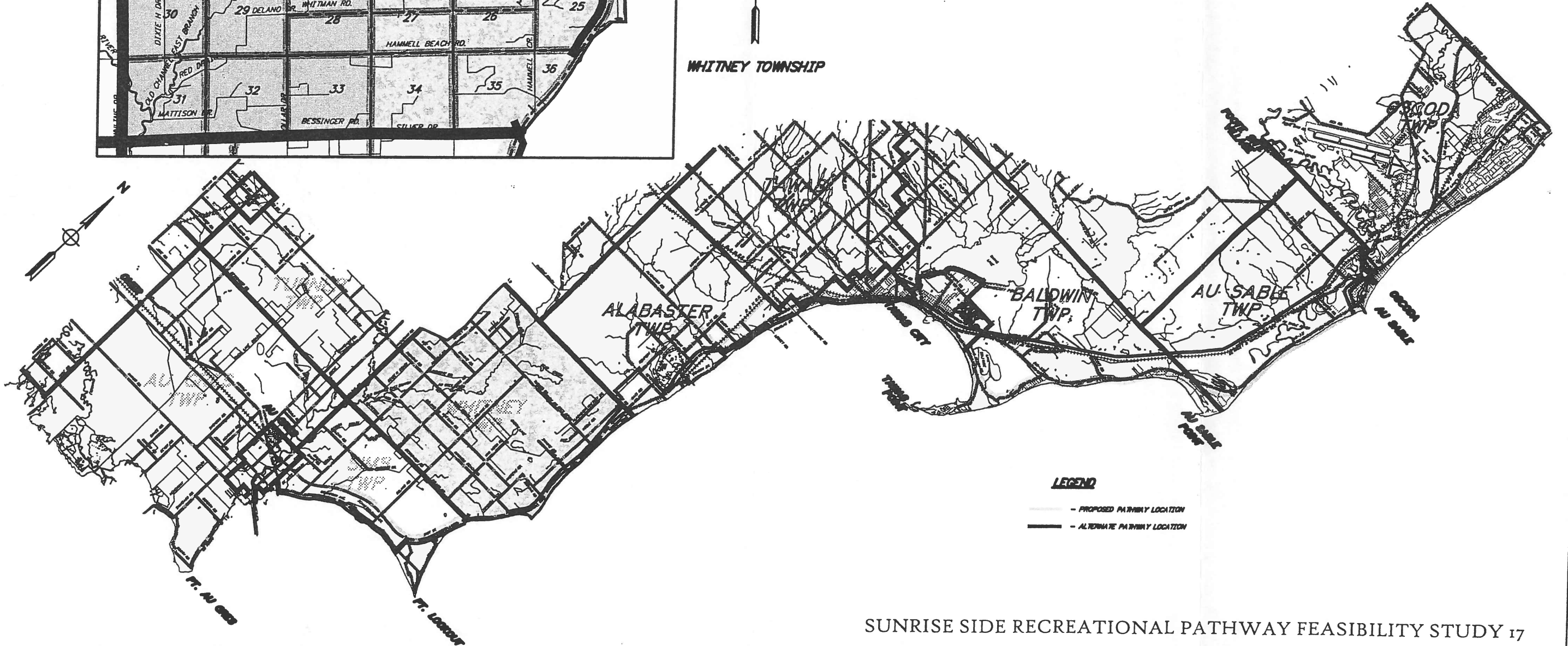
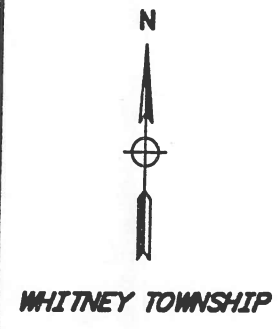
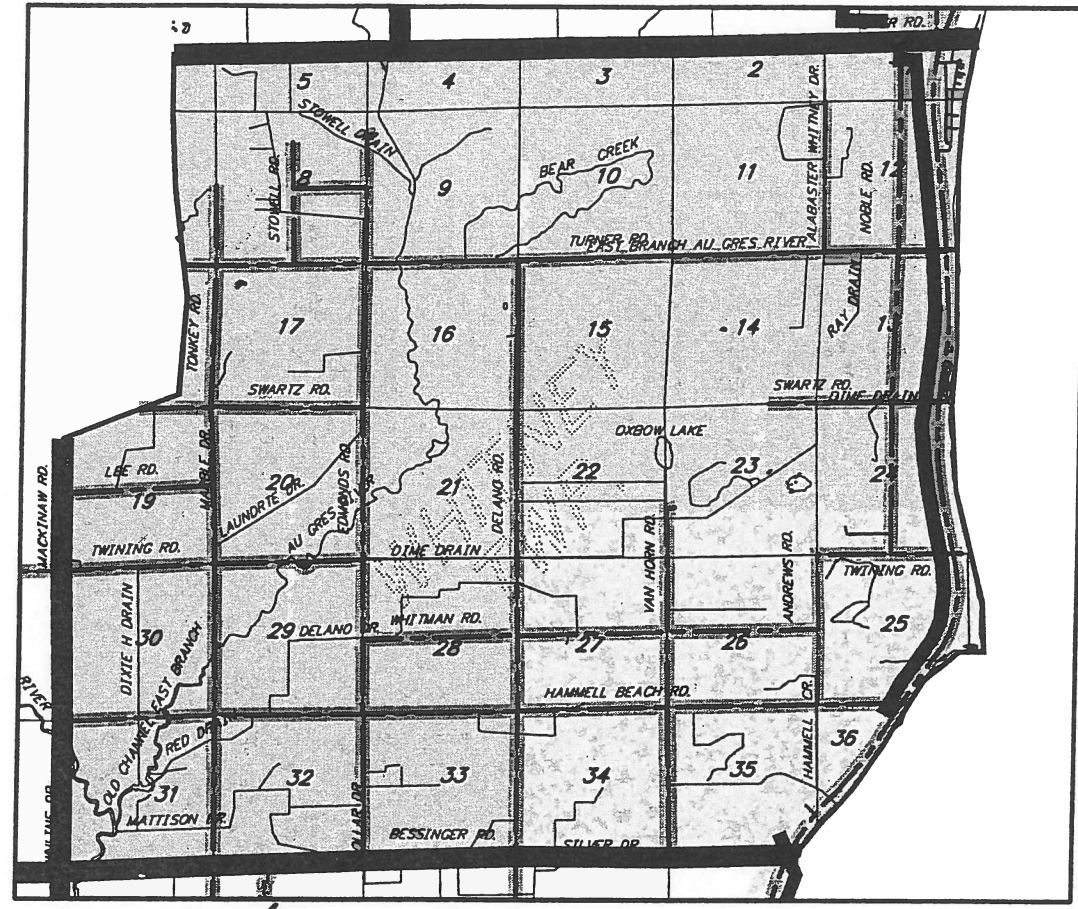
The alternate pathway identified for Whitney Township is within the right-of-way of U.S. 23 along the western side. This option was not pursued given the number of drives and road crossings necessary. In addition, Whitney Township had several factors to capitalize on when considering locating the trail, especially working in conjunction with a proposed water main project.

Challenges

There are three challenging issues to the pathway within Whitney Township; the wetland area located on Andrews Road, the crossing required at the Diamond Drain and retrofitting the Whitney Drain Bridge to allow for pedestrians.

A review of the local zoning ordinance did not highlight any additional issues. There are no historically significant sites in Whitney Township according to the State Historic Preservation Office and a search of Michigan's Historic Registered Sites online. There are a few palustrine wetlands located near the proposed pathway, but not directly adjacent or crossing the pathway, except for a short portion along Andrews Road. As with all projects constructed within road right-of-ways, extensive coordination between the Township and the Michigan Department of Transportation is required. In addition, permits from the appropriate State agencies such as the Department of Environmental Quality, and County departments, may be required. A review of the proposed pathway by the Michigan Natural Features Inventory did not identify any significant natural features.

MAP 4
WHITNEY TOWNSHIP



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IOSCO COUNTY



Alabaster Township

Alabaster Township is located between Whitney Township and Tawas City.

Alabaster Township is the southeastern most Township in Iosco County.

The total length of pathway proposed to run through Alabaster Township is eight miles.

Proposed Pathway

The pathway crosses into Iosco County and Alabaster Township by way of Dyer Road.

The proposed route follows Dyer Road east to Oates Road. The pathway will continue along Oates Road for one mile along the west side of the right-of-way. A small culvert

will be required at the end of Oates Road, where it intersects with Keystone Road. It is at this point that the pathway will cross Keystone Road. Once on Keystone Road, the path will run within the road right-of-way on the north side of the road for one-half mile.

An easement may be sought from U.S. Gypsum for this portion of the pathway. Approximately one quarter mile east of Rempert Road, the pathway would change from a bituminous pathway to a boardwalk in order to accommodate an emergent wetland area.

The area is approximately

100 feet in length. A road

crossing will be required

at the intersection of

Keystone and Rempert

Roads. The majority of

the path that follows

Rempert Road would be

located through ease-

ment on the property of

U.S. Gypsum and in

coordination with the

County Road Commis-

sion. The approximately

two mile section of Rempert Road north of Keystone Road is within the control of U.S.

Gypsum. It is this area where the proposed pathway would pass along side a con-



Standing on Rempert Road, looking east at the constructed wetlands on the U.S. Gypsum property.

Proposed Path

structed wetland which U.S. Gypsum created through mitigation in 1999. Approximately one-quarter mile north on Rempert there is a ravine which is approximately fifty feet wide. A pedestrian bridge is required for this location.

The pathway continues along Rempert Road, for the most part, following a high ridge, which at times is already used as a pathway as evidenced by the existing two-tracks. A crossing will again be required at the next road crossing with Turtle Road. This road is used by the U.S. Gypsum company and there is a flashing yellow traffic signal installed at this location. Immediately following this road crossing, the pathway continues along the west side of Rempert Road.

During this portion of the proposed pathway, the right-of-way area that had been used for the pathway becomes a swale and then, groupings of marsh plants that can be classified as wetlands. In order to avoid impacting these wetlands, the pathway at this point is proposed to run along the road grade with adequate separation. This is necessary for approximately one-eighth of a mile. Approximately one-quarter mile further north, the pathway crosses Gypsum Road. This road crossing will require two culverts.

The pathway again continues along the west side of Rempert Road until Alabaster Road.

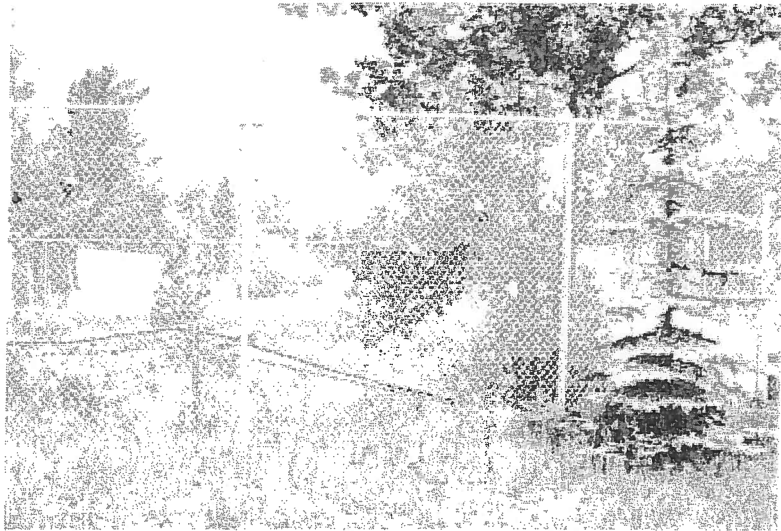


One road crossing is necessary at this intersection, to get the pathway from the west side of Rempert Road to the north side of Alabaster Road. At Alabaster Road, the pathway would head east for approximately one and one-tenth miles, until Alabaster Road meets a railroad crossing, where it will turn north and following

Looking north down the rail line. The proposed path would run within the rail road right of way along the east side.

the railroad right-of-way. Culverts will be necessary along this portion of the pathway. This rail line is rarely used. In conversations with representatives from U.S. Gypsum and pathway committee members, the rail is used only a few times each year and as of July 2001, there has been no use the entire year. From Alabaster Road, the pathway would follow the east side of the rail's right-of-way north to just past Whittemore Road, where a road crossing is required. This crossing will require two culverts. At this point the path will turn and travel ap-

proximately one-half mile east through an existing utility easement to Whittemore Road. The path continues along the east side of U.S. 23 to Townline Road, which is located on the Township border with Tawas. Between Whittemore Road and Townline Road, National Gypsum has a transmission line that



Standing just south of the fenced National Gypsum Transmission line on the west side of U.S. 23 between Whittemore Road and Townline Road in Alabaster Township.

creates a ravine approximately 75 feet wide. Conversations with representatives from National Gypsum identified that a crossing at this point is feasible. In fact, National Gypsum may have an existing bridge that could be retrofitted to span this crossing. At Townline Road, the pathway enters Tawas.

Alternative Pathway

The alternative considered for Alabaster Township is to run the pathway along Oates Road and then turn east on Keystone Road and connect the pathway to the west side of U.S. 23 until Alabaster Road. At Alabaster Road, the pathway would cross U.S. 23 and travel Douglas along Lake Huron until just prior to Whittemore Road. The pathway would join U.S. 23 on the east side at this point and continue through the City of Tawas. This

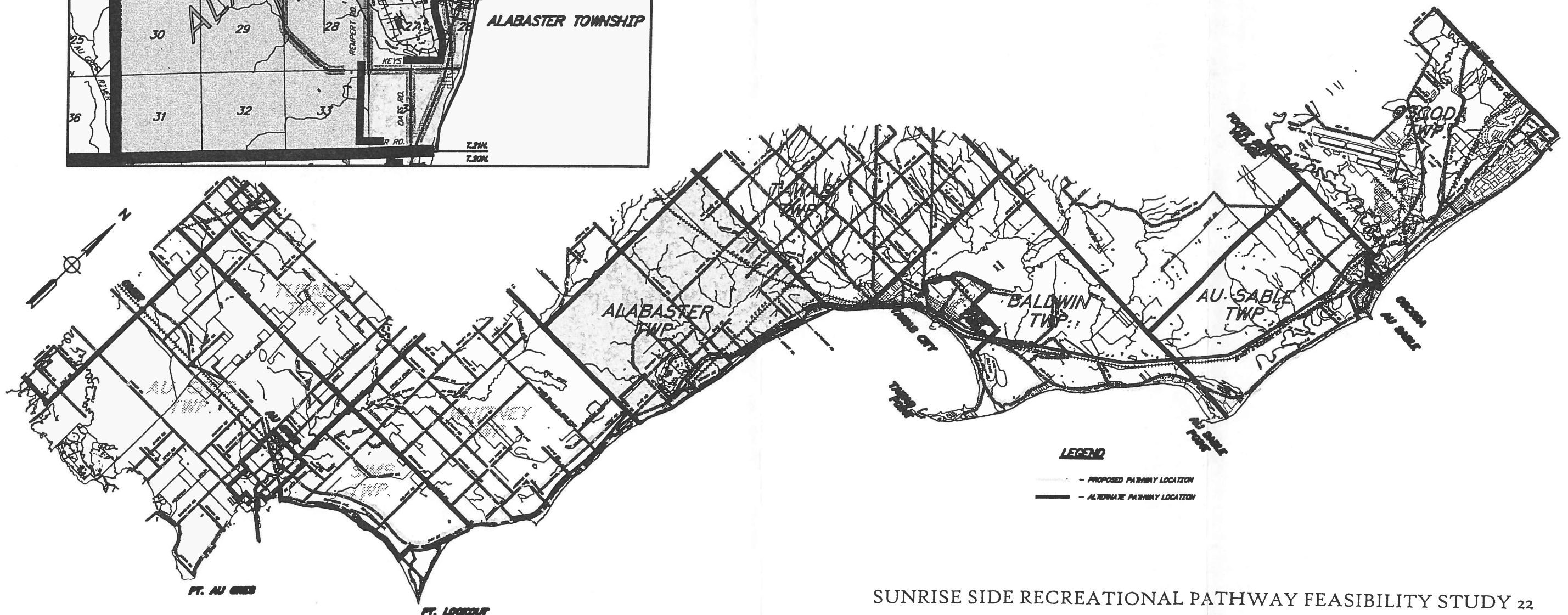
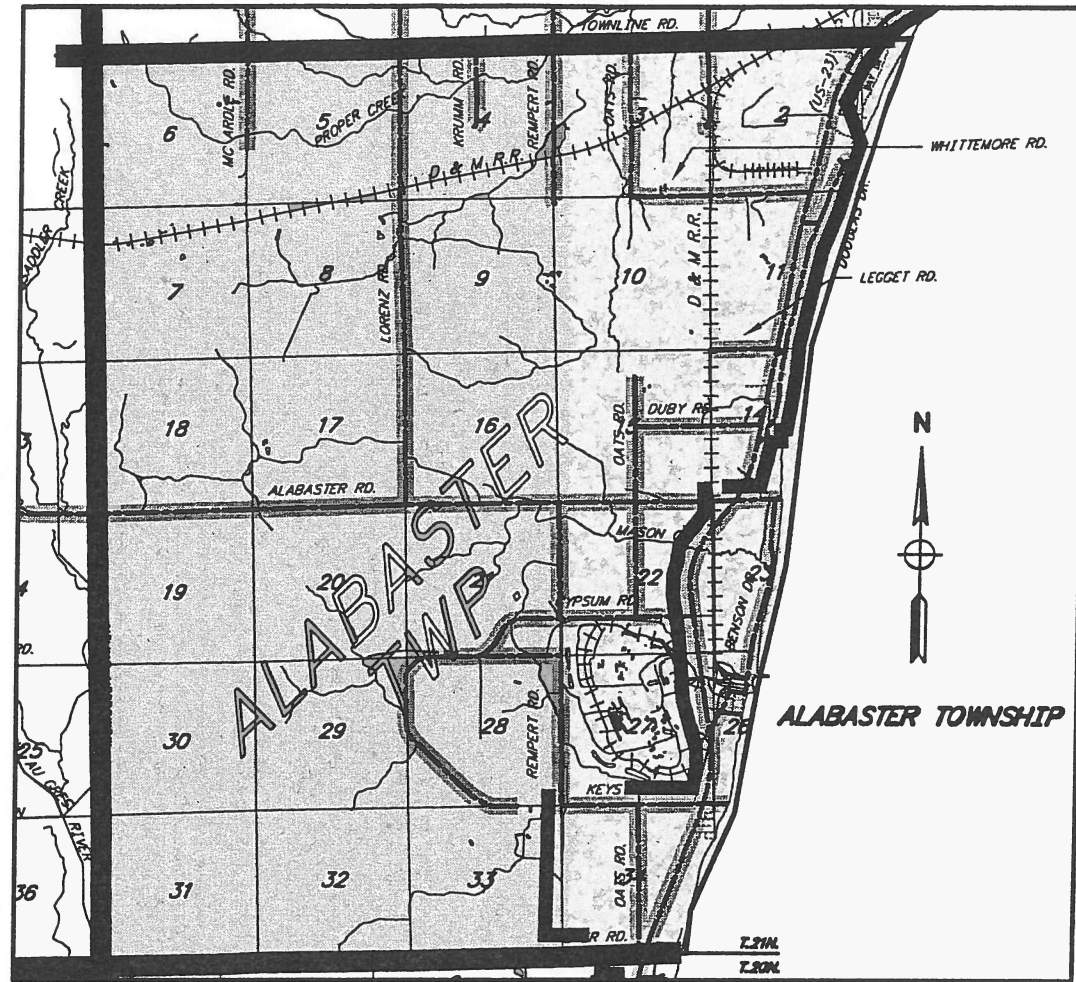
alternative was not chosen as the preferred route for several reasons. This alternative kept the pathway along U.S. 23 when it does not have a consistent wide shoulder. It also proposes a road crossing where the speed limit is 55 miles per hour. These two items would increase cost significantly as opposed to the preferred route.

Challenges

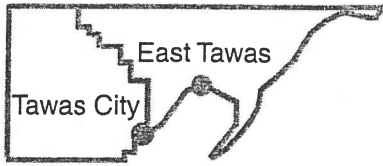
Most of the challenges that the proposed route of the pathway faces through Alabaster Township are based on terrain. On Keystone Road, there is an emergent wetland between Oates and Rempert Road that can be addressed by running a boardwalk in this area for approximately 100 feet in length. Once on Rempert Road, a ravine exists that would have to be crossed by means of a pedestrian bridge approximately 50 feet in length. Between Whittemore Road and Townline Road, the pathway would have to cross a transmission line owned by National Gypsum. A bridge spanning approximately 75 feet will be required in this area.

A review of Michigan's Historic Registered Sites revealed two historic sites within Alabaster Township; the Alabaster Historic District, which dates to 1861, and the Alabaster Quarry Informational Site, which dates to 1862. These historic sites do not include any structures along the route of the proposed pathway. There are a few palustrine, (small and shallow) wetlands located near the proposed pathway but not directly adjacent or crossing the pathway, except for a short portion along Keystone Road between Oates and Rempert Roads, and on Rempert Road, just past Gypsum Road. As with all projects constructed within road right-of-ways, extensive coordination between the Township and the Michigan Department of Transportation is required. In addition, permits from the appropriate State agencies such as the Department of Environmental Quality, and County departments, may be required. A review of the local zoning ordinance did not highlight any additional issues. A review of the proposed pathway by the Michigan Natural Features Inventory did not identify any significant natural features.

MAP 5 ALABASTER TOWNSHIP



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Tawas City and City of East Tawas

The City of Tawas and the City of East Tawas are located within Tawas Township and Baldwin Township respectively. The two municipalities are located directly on Lake Huron and have highly developed pedestrian systems, especially when compared to the other municipalities participating within this study. The proposed pathway through the City of Tawas and the City of East Tawas will be 6.5 miles in length. However, not all of this pathway will be new construction, as the cities already have bike paths and shared use paths established in some locations.

Proposed Pathway

As the pathway heads north and crosses Townline Road, it enters the City of Tawas. It is here the City's existing pedestrian system begins. On both the west and east side of U.S. 23, an eight foot wide concrete path, complete with lighting, runs for approximately one mile north. The proposed Sunrise Side path will run along the west side of U.S. 23 on the existing pedestrian system through the City of Tawas until just prior to Ninth Street, where the existing concrete path ends. At this point, the pathway will cross U.S. 23 to the east side, where the sidewalk continues. This study proposes a flashing yellow pedestrian signal, road stripping and the installation of an S-shaped gate. This will require users to come to a stop in order to cross the highway.

After the pathway crosses U.S. 23 to the east side it will continue north over the Tawas bridge and onward along the city's existing sidewalk system. This study proposes using the system as it now exists with a future goal of widening it to eight feet wide as monies permit. Further along, just prior to the intersection of U.S. 23 and M-55, the sidewalk connects to an existing six foot wide bituminous bike path. The proposed path joins this

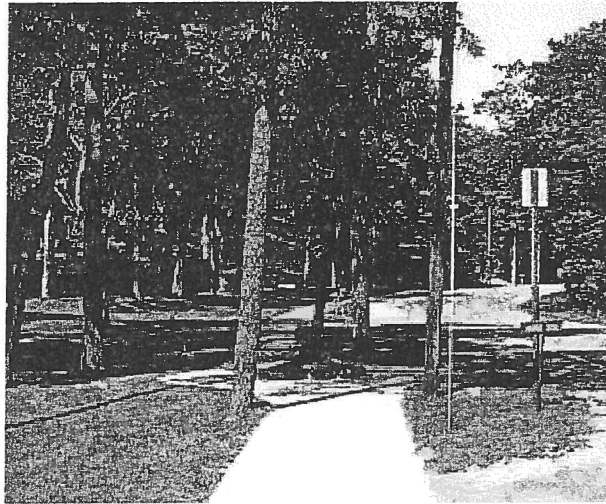


The southern city limit of Tawas, looking north, just past Townline Road. The pathway will follow the City's existing pedestrian system.

connection and continues north, northeast along the existing bituminous path, still on the east side of U.S. 23, into the City of East Tawas.

When the bituminous bike path in the City of Tawas ends, the pathway is now in East Tawas. The bike path connects to the City of East Tawas' existing bike path system for approximately one-half mile until it intersects with Tawas Beach Road.

There is one road crossing in this area, between the State Park and the Holiday Inn. At Tawas Beach Road, the pathway will follow an existing bicycle path along Tawas Beach Road. The path is already signed and marked per AASHTO standards. Here the path will run east for approximately three-quarters of a mile within the City of Tawas before it passes into Baldwin Township.



Standing on Tawas Beach Road, looking north at the existing bike path.

Alternate Path

The alternate path through the City of Tawas and East Tawas would take path users on the east side or lake side of U.S. 23 and cross to the west side of U.S. 23 just past the junction with M-55. At this point, the pathway would run in the right-of-way of the active Detroit and Mackinaw Railroad through to Au Sable. This alternative pathway location was not chosen for a number of reasons. Starting the pathway on the east side of Tawas at Townline Road would require immediately upgrading the existing five foot wide sidewalk, while starting the pathway on the west side of U.S. 23 in the same location allows the pathway to take advantage of the existing eight foot wide sidewalk. This allows a substantial cost savings. Running the pathway along the rail road may decrease the accessibility of the pathway by limiting the number of access points pathway users can use to access the proposed path.

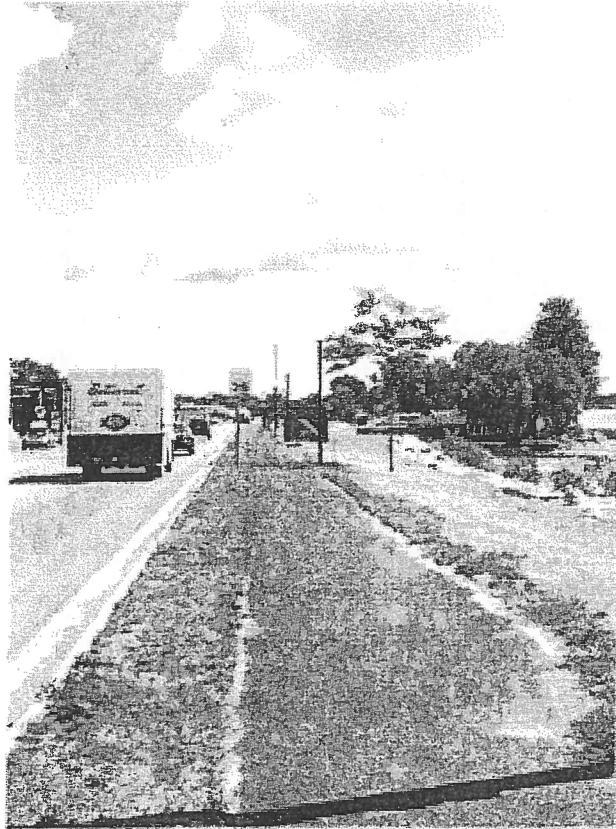
Challenges

The major challenge in the City of Tawas and the City of East Tawas will be effectively incorporating the existing shared use pathways and bicycle path into the proposed pathway. This should be done by using standard signage and markings. A second major challenge will be crossing U.S. 23 prior to Ninth Street. The crossing required here should include an S-shaped gate which requires users to come to a complete stop and a flashing yellow light. This is the preferred location to cross because the speed limit is lower and there are already pedestrians using the existing system. A review of Michigan's Historic Registered Sites revealed three historic sites within East

Tawas; the Ladies Literary Club

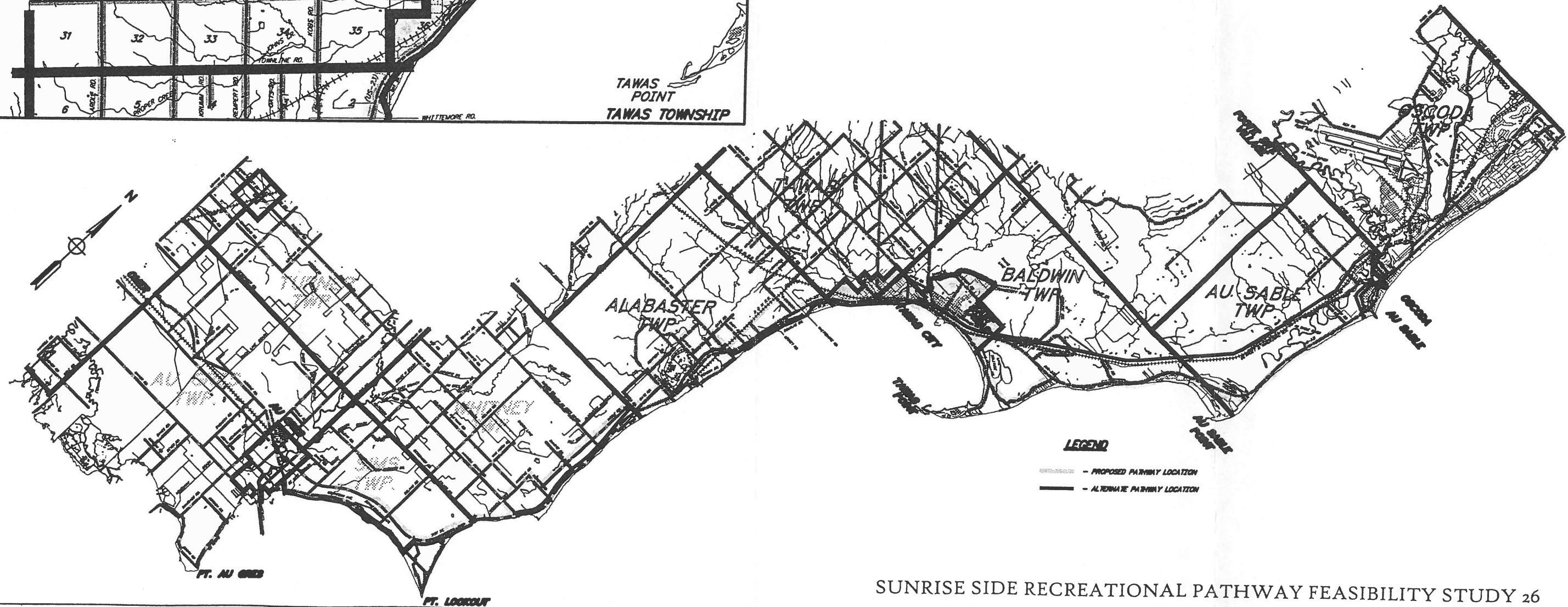
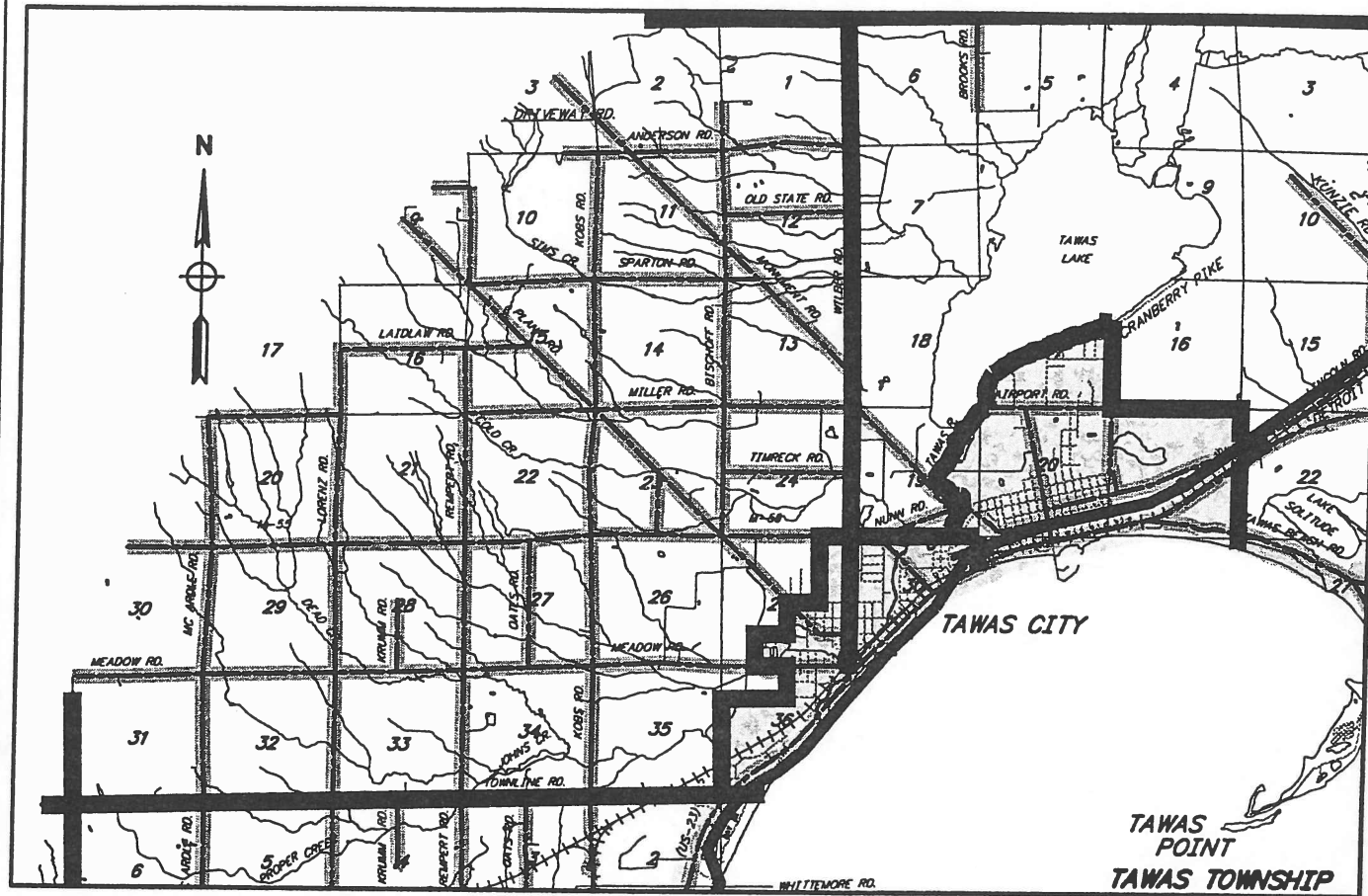
Building, the Tawas Point Light Station, and a historical designation denoting lumbering on the shores of Lake Huron. The historic sites do not include any structures along the route of the proposed pathway. There are a few palustrine wetlands located near the proposed pathway but not directly adjacent or crossing the pathway. As with all projects constructed within road right-of-ways, extensive coordination between the Township and the Michigan Department of Transportation is required. In addition, permits from the appropriate State agencies such as the Department of Environmental Quality, and County departments, may be required. A review of the local zoning ordinances did highlight an additional issue in East Tawas. A review of the proposed pathway by the Michigan Natural Features Inventory did not identify any significant natural features.

Baldwin Township



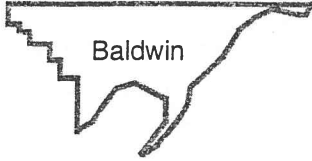
Part of the City of Tawas' existing shared use pathway. The pathway extends for just more than one-half mile in this location. The proposed Sunrise Side Pathway will connect to the existing pathway.

MAP 6
CITY OF TAWAS AND CITY OF EAST TAWAS



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Baldwin Township

Baldwin Township, which contains the City of East Tawas, is located just northeast of the City of Tawas and just south of Au Sable Township. The proposed pathway will extend through Baldwin Township for approximately 6.5 miles.

Proposed Pathway

The pathway enters Baldwin Township at the intersection approximately three-quarters of a mile east on Tawas Beach Road. At this point the pathway is running within an existing bike path that is already signed and striped according to AASHTO standards. The pathway continues along the south side of Tawas Beach Road, heading east for approximately one mile before intersecting with Baldwin Resort Road. At Baldwin Resort Road, the pathway will cross and follow in the west side of the Baldwin Resort Road right-of-way until Baldwin Resort Road and U.S. 23 meet. The pathway will continue running north along U.S. 23 within its eastern right-of-way. At this point the right-of-way is 200 feet wide. Ameritech has a fiber system running within the right-of-way in this area. There are a number of road crossings in this area; Huron Hills, Ader Avenue, Ottawas and Wolverine, which are all gravel roads. A short distance past Ottawas Road, there is a significant wetland area that extends between Ottawas Street and Wolverine Road. In this area, there are two options for the trail. The preferred option is to locate buildable



land within the 200 foot right of way. If this is not feasible, the second option is to locate the pathway off the roadway and paved shoulder by a distance that does not impact the wetlands, which may be

Standing at the intersection of Huron Hills Road and U.S. 23, looking south through the right-of-way, a portion of which has already been cleared for use by Ameritech to run underground fiber transmission lines.

as little as two feet from the edge of the paved shoulder. This would be a total of 11 feet distance between the traveled road and the pathway.

As the pathway continues north along the eastern right-of-way of U.S. 23, it approaches an area that has steep slopes, just past the Norway Road crossing. In this area, if it is not feasible to run the pathway off the highway area, within the right-of-way due to the steep slopes, it is recommended that the pathway again run a short distance off the paved shoulder, as described earlier.

The pathway continues north, northeast, crossing Media Road, Birchcrest Road, Kirkland Road, Crescent Road, Aster Street, Sue Street, and Julie Street, before it enters Au Sable Township. Many of these roads are small roads and all but Media Road and Crescent Road are gravel.

Alternative Pathway

The alternative pathway for Baldwin Township is along the Detroit and Mackinaw Railroad, within its right-of-way. This alternative was not chosen due to the limited areas in which users could connect to the pathway. Also, because this route is away from typical destinations, such as places of business, this route would not encourage use of the path as an alternative form of transportation.

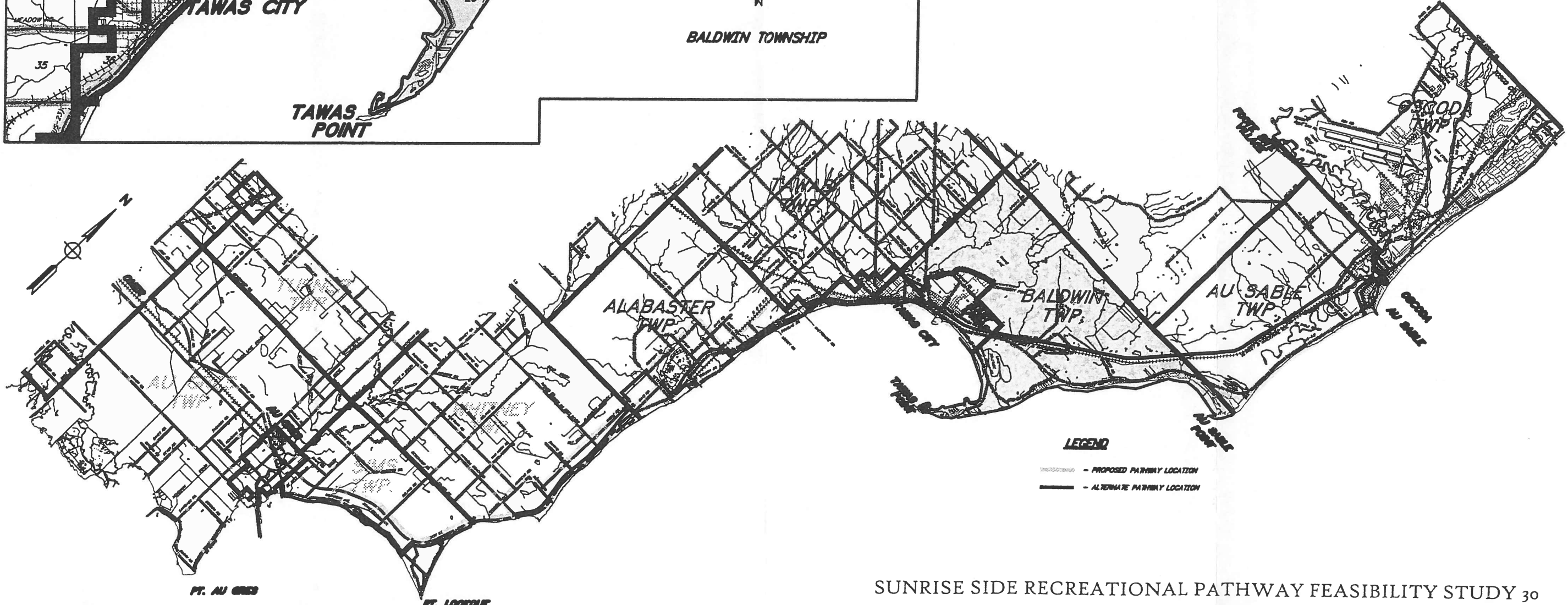
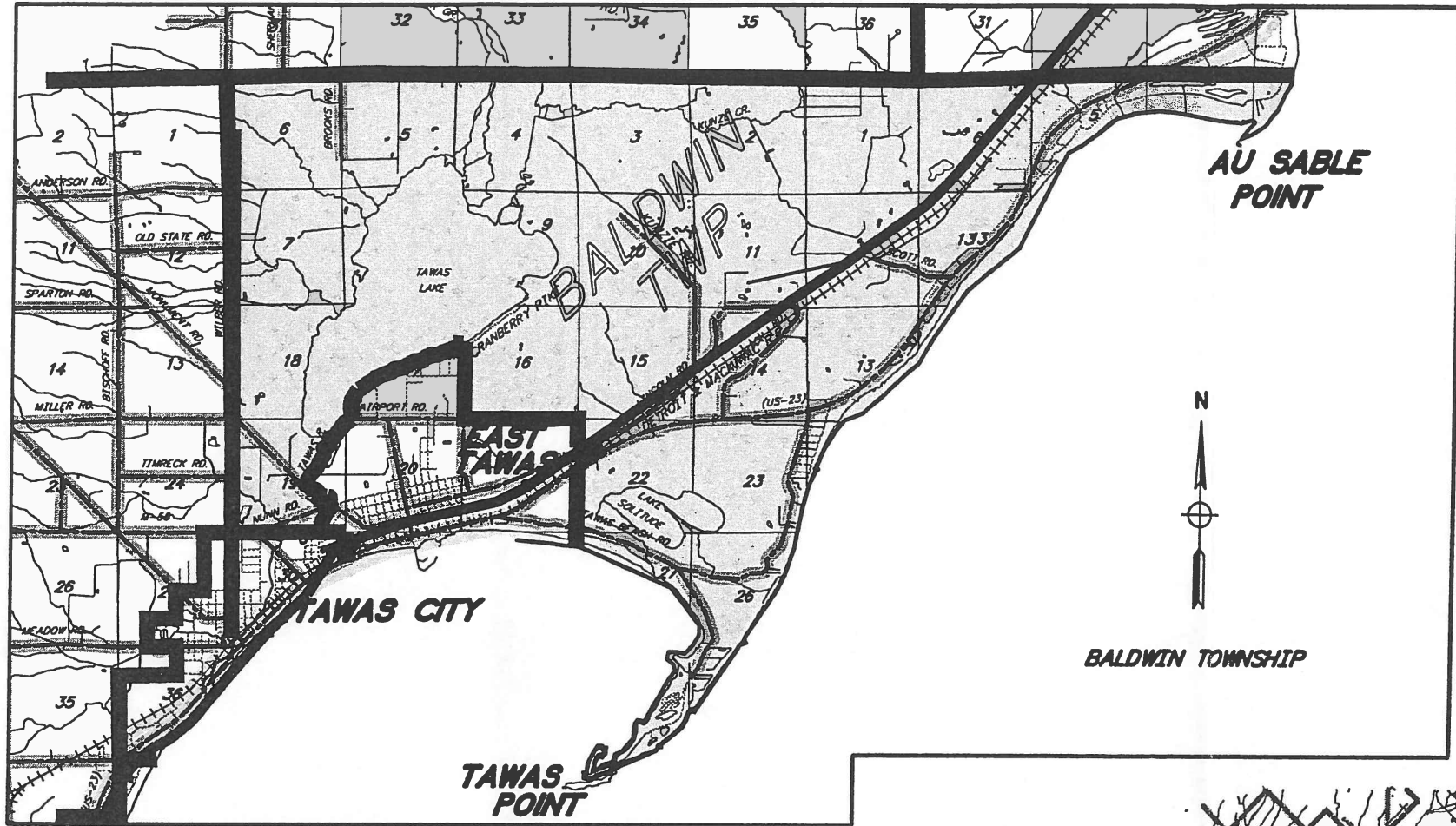
Challenges

A review of Michigan's Historic Registered Sites revealed no historic sites within Baldwin Township. There are a few palustrine wetlands located near the proposed pathway but not directly adjacent or crossing the pathway, except for between Ottawas Road and Wolverine Street for approximately one-third of a mile. Steep slopes exist just fifteen feet off the paved shoulder of U.S. 23 for approximately 100 feet in length just past Norway Road.

As with all projects constructed within road right-of-ways, extensive coordination between the Township and the Michigan Department of Transportation is required. In

addition, permits from the appropriate State agencies such as the Department of Environmental Quality, and County departments, may be required. A review of the local zoning ordinance did not highlight any additional issues. A review of the proposed pathway by the Michigan Natural Features Inventory did not identify any significant natural features.

MAP 7
BALDWIN TOWNSHIP



LEGEND
 - - - - - PROPOSED PATHWAY LOCATION
 - - - - - ALTERNATE PATHWAY LOCATION

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Au Sable Township

The Township is located directly north of Baldwin Township and south of Oscoda. Au Sable Township is the northern-most Township within the Sunrise Side Pathway Committee Area and it is the northern-most point of the proposed pathway. The pathway will extend a total of 6.3 miles through the Township.

Proposed Pathway

AuSable Township commissioned a bicycle plan which was completed in January of 1999 by planning consultant Carlisle/Wortman Associates. The plan details the Township's plans for improving their intermodal transportation, both on and off U.S. 23. Some of the Township's proposed bicycle facilities are shown as potential links for the purpose of this plan. In Summer 2001, Au Sable Township was awarded a grant through Michigan's Transportation Enhancement Program to construct 1.4 miles of shared use pathway along the east side of U.S. 23, from downtown Oscoda south to Johnson Road. This plan uses that 1.4 mile section of pathway proposed for construction in 2003 as the northern-most piece of the Sunrise Side Recreational Pathway.

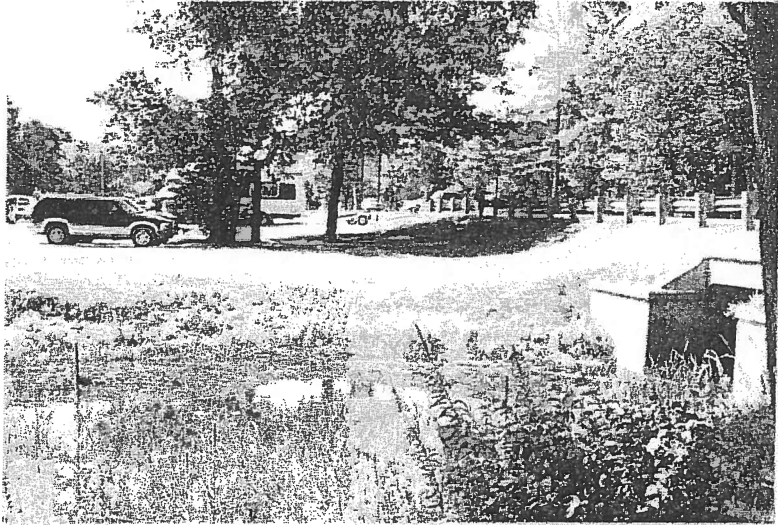
A good portion of Au Sable Township and Baldwin Township is devoted to the Huron National Forest. This limits the number of road crossings on U.S. 23 and increases the feasibility for the shared use path to run within the right-of-way of U.S. 23. The pathway first enters Au Sable Township just north of Au Sable Point. The pathway runs along the east side of U.S. 23 for 4.8 miles. Between Au Sable Point and the next road crossing, Gowan Road, there is an area of significant wetland which stretches for approximately a tenth of a mile. This wetland area should be able to be avoided by running the pathway in the eastern-most portion of the right-of-way. The right-of-way in this area is 200 feet wide. This proposed location is the same or near the same location as an existing utility transmission line easement.

The pathway will continue along U.S. 23 in the right-of-way. A pedestrian bridge crossing will be necessary at the old Au Sable River drainage outlet, approximately one mile south of Johnson Road. A pedestrian bridge with a span of approximately 45 feet will be

required for this water crossing. The proposed pathway will continue to Johnson Road. Once at Johnson Road, the pathway continues for 1.4 miles, which is already funded, to downtown Oscoda.

Alternative Pathway

The alternative pathway through Au Sable is to continue along the right-of-way of the active Detroit and Mackinaw Railroad. The alternative was not selected as the preferred route for a number of reasons. In addition, the location of the path along the railroad right-of-way would limit the points of entry along the pathway. The Township also has a bicycle plan which denotes U.S. 23 as the location for the bike path.



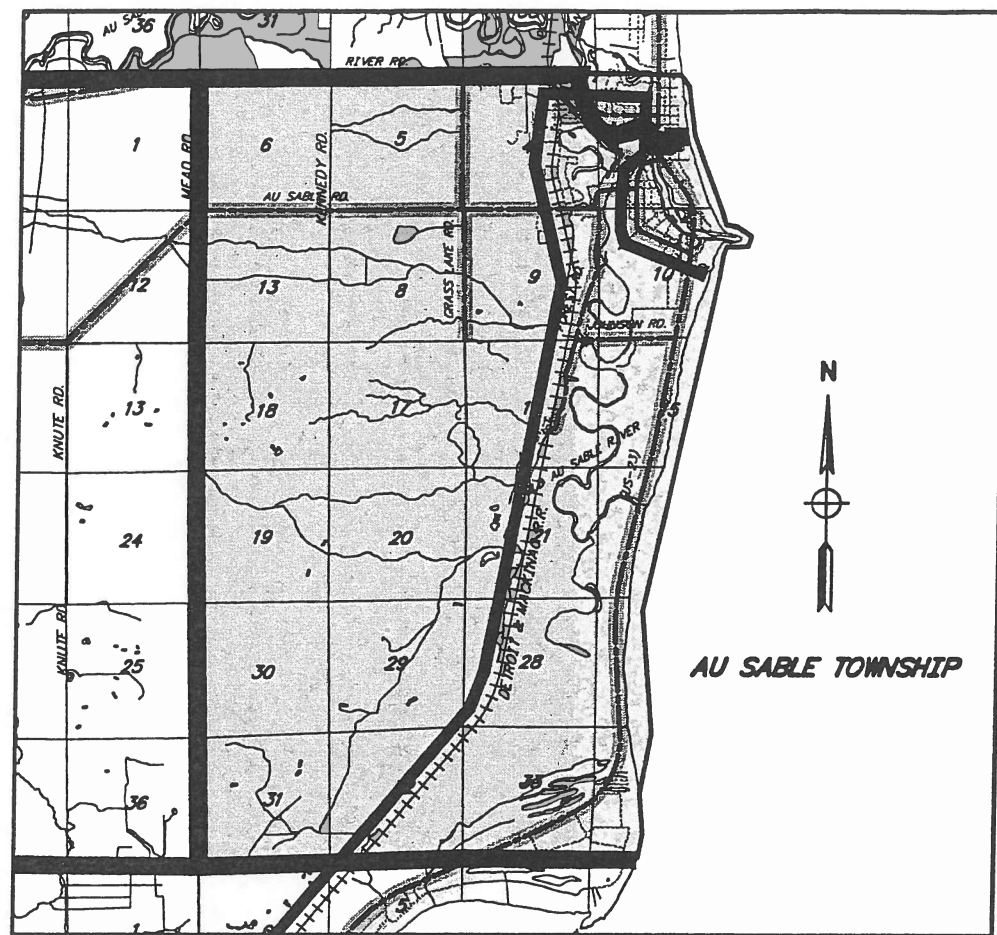
Standing just north of the branch of the Au Sable River at the outlet to Lake Huron, just more than 1.1 miles south of Johnson Road.

Challenges

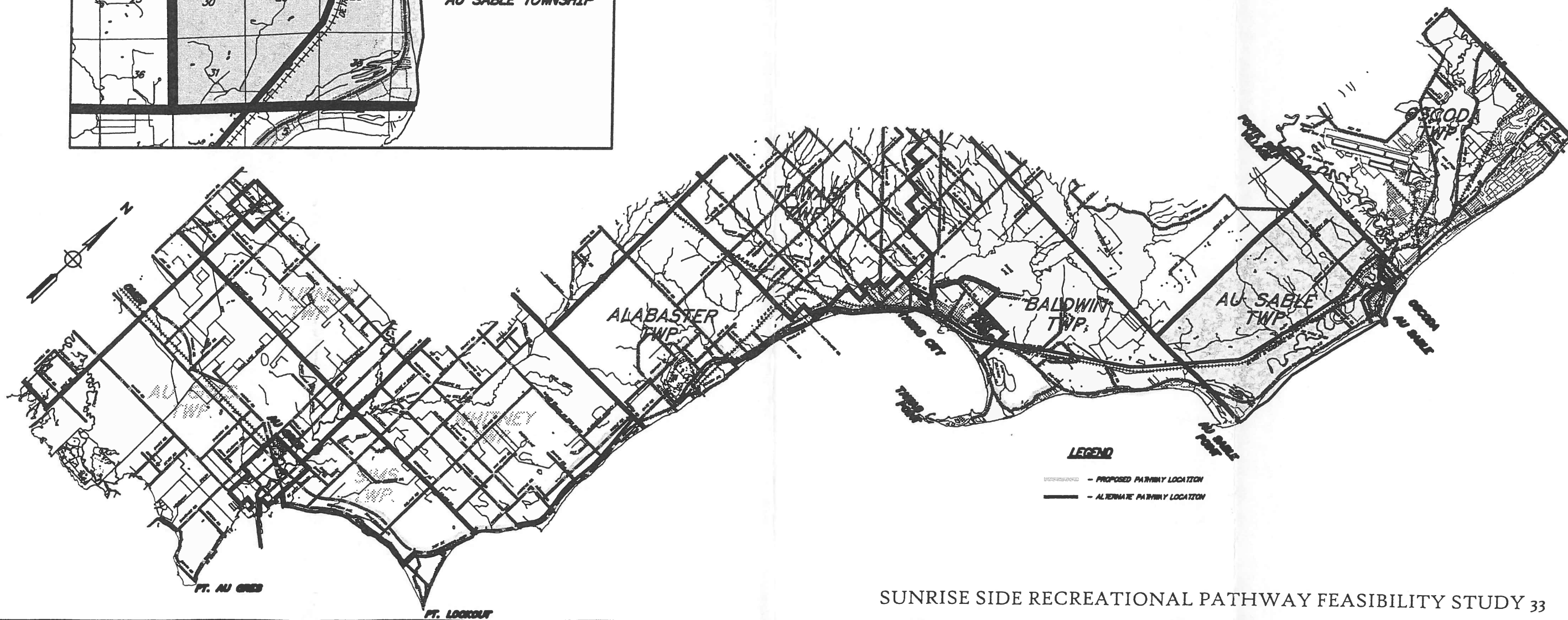
The most significant challenge within Au Sable

Township is the crossing of the branch of the Au Sable River when it outlets to Lake Huron. This will require a pedestrian bridge crossing approximately 45 feet in length. A review of Michigan's Historic Registered Sites revealed no historic sites in the Township. There are a few palustrine wetlands located near the proposed pathway but not directly adjacent or crossing the pathway, except for an approximately one-tenth of a mile stretch between Au Sable Point and the next road crossing, Gowan Road. As with all projects constructed within road right-of-ways, extensive coordination between the Township and the Michigan Department of Transportation is required. In addition, permits from the appropriate State agencies such as the Department of Environmental Quality, and County departments, may be required. A review of the local zoning ordinances did not highlight any additional issues. A review of the proposed pathway by the Michigan Natural Features Inventory did not identify any significant natural features.

MAP 8
AU SABLE TOWNSHIP



AU SABLE TOWNSHIP



LEGEND

- - - PROPOSED PATHWAY LOCATION
- ALTERNATE PATHWAY LOCATION

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Staging Areas

For the purpose of this study, a staging area is a combination of a official parking area and rest area for pathway users. During the planning process, several areas were identified as potential parking and staging areas. These areas include:

- Veteran’s of Foreign Wars, Post 8275, in Sims Township, located approximately 1/3 mile north of Tonkey Road
- an undeveloped 55-acre parcel on Turner Road and U.S. 23, currently owned by the Department of Natural Resources in Whitney Township
- Tawas City Park, with approximately 100 parking spaces, restrooms, picnic facilities, playground equipment, and beachfront access, City of Tawas
- Shoreline Park, Au Sable Township

Like a number of other pathways, trails and recreational facilities, users will create their own access points. This may occur in conjunction with other facilities, such as Singing Bridge, or they may occur at road crossings. Though the focus of the committee is to restrict access to where it is most appropriate, there is no way to ensure this. The best incentive to encourage pathway users to use the staging areas is to make them convenient, easy to use and well marked.

Staging Area/Parking Standards

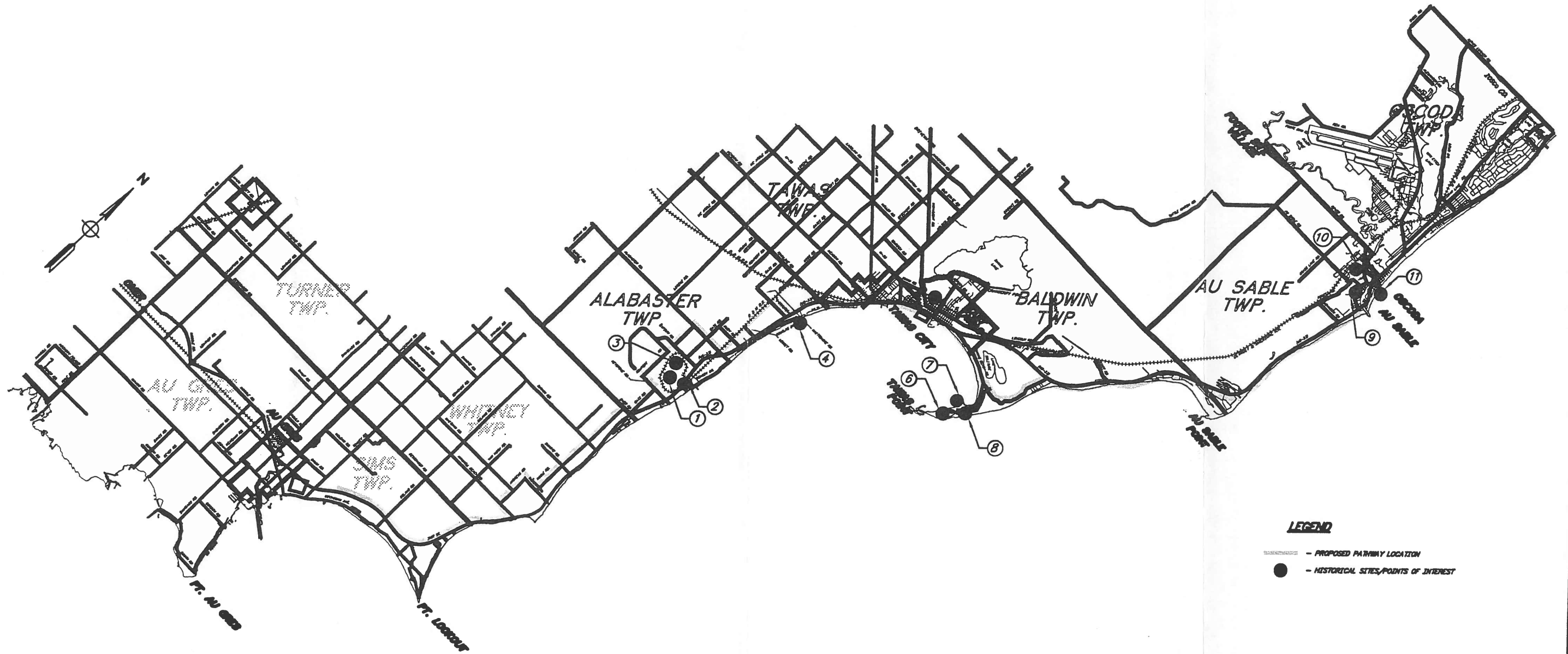
In order to provide guidance for development of these parking areas and to ensure continuity along the following standards have been assembled:

- conform to AASHTO standards
- comply with the Americans with Disability Act
- use recycled materials where appropriate
- investigate the use of permeable surfaces for a portion of the parking area
- provide adequate space for parking
- provide seating, picnic tables and trash cans
- with funding available, restrooms should be accessible at all official staging areas

Points of Interest

This section of the plan details opportunities that are not necessarily located on the pathway itself but may appeal to different users. These mainly encompass historic sites placed on the national or state historic registry. This list also includes a scenic view, two informational sites and an established area for wildflower viewing. The map on the following page details the location of each site.

MAP 9
POINTS OF INTEREST AND HISTORICAL SITES



HISTORICAL SITES AND POINTS OF INTEREST

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Alabaster Historic District | 7. Lumbering on the Huron Shores Information |
| 2. Alabaster Quarry Information Site | 8. Tawas Point State Park |
| 3. Scenic View of Alabaster Quarry | 9. Louis Chevalier Claim Informational Site |
| 4. Wildflowers | 10. Edward A. Breckenridge's House |
| 5. Ladies Literary Club Building | 11. The Dock Reserve Informational Site |
| 6. Tawas Point Lighthouse | |

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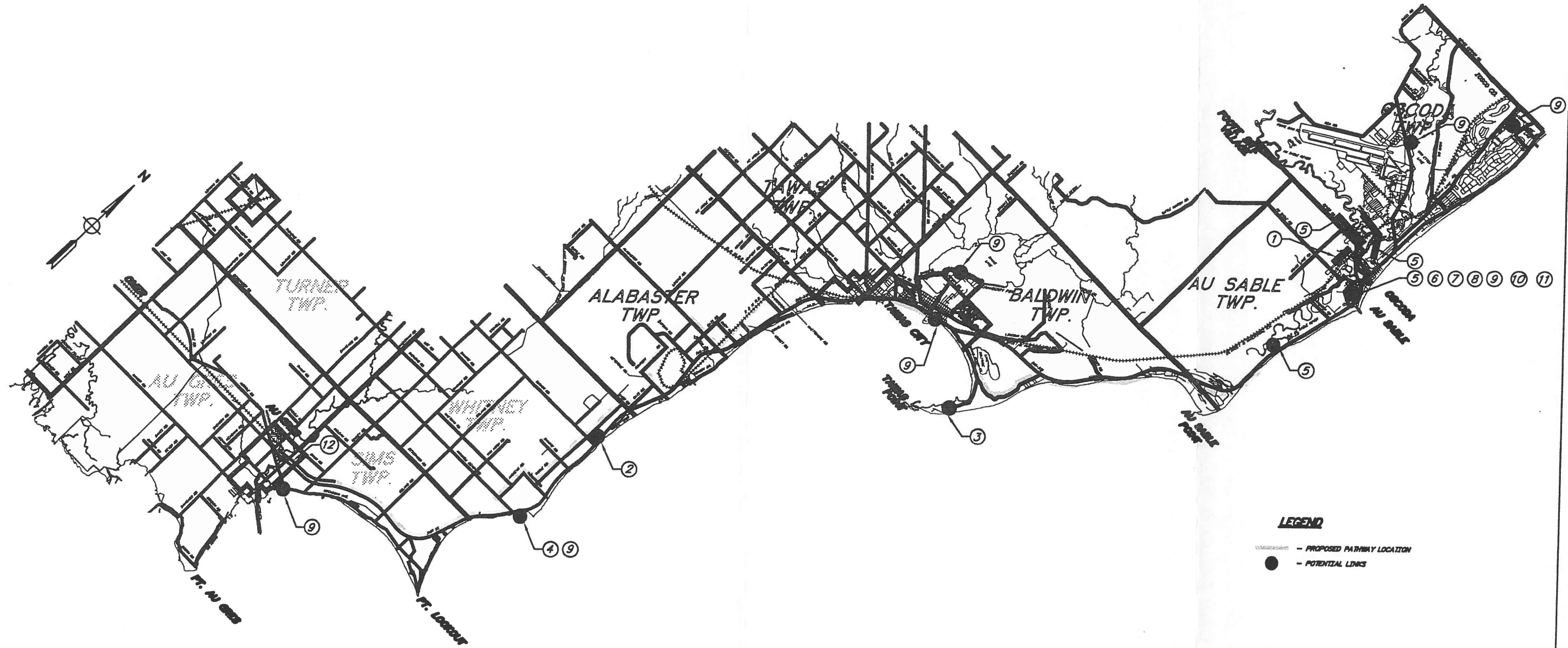
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Adjacent Links

The discussion of potential adjacent links is intended to highlight additional opportunities to extend and lengthen the pathway to provide further connections to local community sites and other activity generators, such as businesses, schools and local parks. This study did not investigate the feasibility or practicability of the adjacent links, it only works to identify those links as identified in conjunction with the Sunrise Side Recreational Pathway committee. The potential links should conform to the same design standards as the Sunrise Side Pathway itself so it provides continuity, but each should be signed separately. The links identified include:

- River Road Scenic By-Way
- Oscoda High School
- Whitney Drain Park
- Tawas Bay Light House
- Singing Bridge
- Au Sable River
- Oscoda-AuSable Senior Center
- Children's Park
- Finish Line Park, AuSable
- DNR and Township Boat Launches, Au Gres, Whitney Township, AuSable Township
- Oscoda-AuSable Visitor Information Center
- McQuaig Park, Oscoda

MAP 10
POTENTIAL LINKS



POTENTIAL LINKS

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. AuSable Industrial Park | 7. Children's Park |
| 2. Whitney Drain Park | 8. Finish Line Park |
| 3. Tawas Bay Lighthouse | 9. DNR & Township Boat Launches |
| 4. Singing Bridge | 10. Oscoda AuSable Visitor's Information Center |
| 5. AuSable River | 11. McCuaig Park |
| 6. Oscoda AuSable Senior Center | 12. City of Au Gres |

LEGEND

- PROPOSED PATHWAY LOCATION
- POTENTIAL LINKS

The proposed Sunrise Side Recreational Pathway passes through some of the most scenic areas in northeastern Michigan. Many portions of the pathway offer views of Lake Huron, passing through wooded areas and near wetlands. A description of the proposed pathway location was transmitted to the Michigan Natural Features Inventory for review against known locations for endangered, threatened or otherwise significant plant and animal species, natural plant communities, and other natural features.

The results of the Department of Natural Resources inventory show that the proposed pathway should have no impact on rare or unique natural features, if it proceeds according to the planned pathway. Although this provides general clearance for completing the design as each phase approaches, it is important that each section of the proposed pathway be reviewed again as design of the pathway begins. A copy of this letter is included in the appendix.

In addition to the review conducted by the Department of Natural Features, the consultant also inventoried known natural features, including wetlands, water crossings, and wildlife and habitat. Each of these items is discussed in more detail below.

Wetlands

There are several locations along the proposed pathway where the pathway runs adjacent to or near existing wetlands. Wetlands, in general, contribute to the overall health of this area and are important to both preserve and protect. This section identifies the general areas of wetlands and suggests ways to approach implementing a multi-use pathway near the wetland areas. Because of the proximity of the trail to the wetland areas; Lake Huron, the Whitney Drain and several other smaller drainage course, it is important that the pathway employ “best management practices” during the design and through construction and maintenance of the pathway system. It is important to keep in mind that significant efforts are planned to ensure that the pathway does not impact the wetland area. These efforts include relocating the path wherever possible, and building a boardwalk when necessary. Because the majority of the pathway is located within road right-of-ways, the area itself has been disturbed and compacted, any additional runoff contributed by the construction of the pathway itself will be minimal. The design of the

pathway should incorporate native vegetation that can help to stem any potential rainfall and improve the habitat of the area.

All the wetlands located along the trail are palustrine in nature. This means they are relatively small and shallow. The map on the following page details information on the location and type of wetland.

Wetlands are present near the proposed pathway, particularly in the following locations:

- Sims Township, between Tonkey Road and Delano Road
- Keystone Road, between Oates Road and Rempert Road
- Rempert Road, between Gypsum Road and Alabaster Road
- U.S. 23, within the right-of-way, between Ottawas Street and Wolverine Road, in Baldwin Township
- U.S. 23, within the right-of-way, between Au Sable Point and Gowan Road, in Au Sable Township

As discussed in the previous text, and as identified in the following map, wetland areas surrounding the trail are significant. These areas must be given due care when developing trail amenities and potential adjacent links or trails to the rail trail. Runoff of pollutants or significantly increasing the width of the trail in these areas may pose a detriment to the surrounding wetlands.

Because of the proximity of the pathway to wetland areas, permits from the Department of Environmental Quality will be required prior to construction.

MAP II
WETLANDS LOCATION



LEGEND

- PROPOSED PATHWAY LOCATION
- WETLAND CONCERNS

DEFINITION:

These are Palustrine Wetlands, defined as non-tidal wetlands less than 20 acres in size, with no wave-formed or bedrock shoreline with the water depth in the deepest part of the basin being less than 2 meters at low water. This area encompasses vegetated wetlands traditionally called swamp, marsh, bog, fen and prairie. It also includes small shallow, permanent or intermittent water bodies such as ponds.

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Soils

Most of the pathway runs through areas which have already been disturbed, especially along U.S. 23. Many of these areas which have experienced construction contain imported fill. However, much of the area both in Arenac and Iosco County is sandy.

Water Crossings/Hazard Crossings

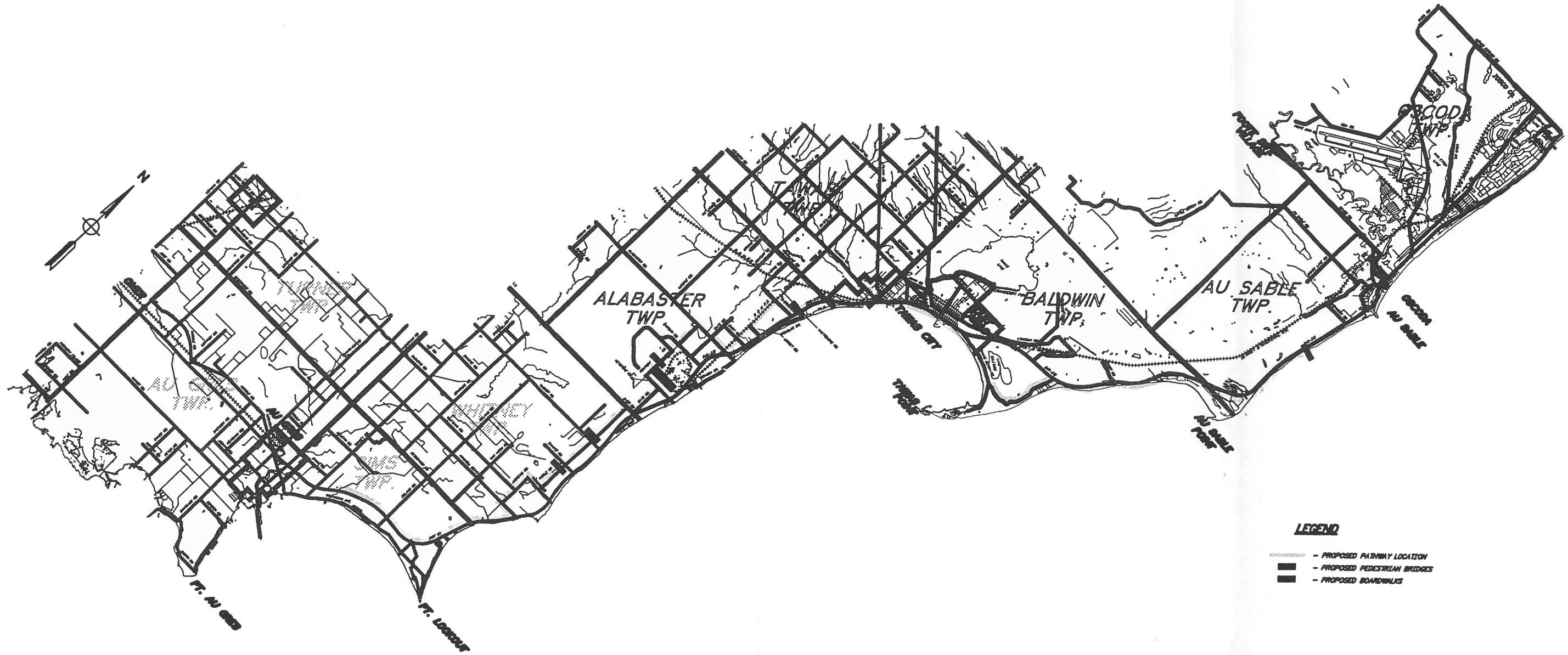
Throughout the course of the proposed pathway there are a number of water crossings, ranging in size and intensity. For the most part, pedestrian bridges will accommodate these areas.

Starting at the south end of the pathway in Sims Township, the first water crossing occurs in Whitney Township, when the proposed pathway crosses the Diamond Drain. The next water crossing is the largest, the Whitney Drain, and also occurs in Sims Township. There is an existing bridge over the Whitney Drain, constructed in 1999, that carries Noble Road. A pedestrian bridge at this crossing may be prohibitive to build due to the size and cost of the structure. A pedestrian crossing at this location is proposed to be retrofitted on the existing bridge.

Once into Alabaster Township, the first challenge is a wetland area along Keystone Road. The area is approximately 100 feet long. Here the pathway is proposed to run along a constructed board walk. Further into Alabaster Township, on Rempert Road, between Dyer Road and Gypsum Road, is an approximately 50 foot wide ravine. A pedestrian bridge is recommended for this location. Once the pathway comes back onto U.S. 23 in Alabaster Township, a pedestrian bridge will be required to cross an existing transmission line owned by National Gypsum. The next required crossing is in AuSable Township when a pedestrian bridge is required to cross the branch of the AuSable River as it outlets into Lake Huron.

The map on the following page details the location of these water crossings and identifies the location of pedestrian bridges and boardwalks.

MAP 12
 WATER CROSSINGS, PEDESTRIAN BRIDGES, AND BOARDWALKS



LEGEND

-  - PROPOSED PATHWAY LOCATION
-  - PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN BRIDGES
-  - PROPOSED BOARDWALKS

Vegetation and Wildlife

The quality and extent of vegetation and wildlife along the proposed pathway vary greatly depending on where the pathway is located -- off the U.S. 23 corridor or within the highway corridor. For the most part, as the pathway travels within the U.S. 23 corridor, vegetation and wildlife is limited and mostly typical of vegetation and wildlife found in urbanized to semi-rural areas; grasses, small mammals and birds. When the pathway leaves the U.S. 23 corridor, the variety of vegetation and wildlife intensifies. As the pathway progresses off U.S 23, some of the wildlife seen along this portion of the proposed pathway



Wild turkeys, seen during a consultant driving survey along Andrews Road in Whitney Township.

includes white-tailed deer, raccoons, turkey, snapping turtles, turkey vultures, great blue heron, red fox, rabbits, woodchucks and other small mammals.

Most of the pathway is occurring within road right-of-way, so the majority of the pathway's existing vegetation is limited and mostly scrub brush. Off the pathway, in some areas by just a few feet is a mixture of hard wood forests, agricultural land and emergent wetlands.

This section outlines the national guidelines and standards for bicycle facilities. Although this feasibility study is specific to the Sunrise Side area, reference to national guidelines is necessary to ensure pathways are constructed to standards.



On Track

Standards recommend that a shared use pathway be a minimum of 10 feet wide with a two foot shoulder on either side.

Facility Type and Width

There are a number of different types of facilities that are acceptable, per AASHTO standards, for bicycle or multi-use pathways ranging from a shared roadway to a road shoulder to bicycle lanes. Though each of the types of pathways listed above meet the letter of AASHTO requirements, this feasibility study recommends that the Sunrise Side Pathway be a bicycle path, or a pathway that is physically separated from motor vehicle traffic by an open space or barrier. According to the 1999 AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, the recommended minimum width of the shared use path is 10 feet with a two-foot graded shoulder on either side with no more than a 1:6 slope. Vertical clearance on the path should be a minimum of eight feet. This standard for the Sunrise Side Pathway was developed in conjunction with the Sunrise Side Pathway Committee.

The nature of the pathway is a challenge in that, in certain communities, the preferred location for the pathway is along U.S. 23. This location is preferred for a number of reasons, including that many users would use the path for utility reasons - getting from Point A to Point B and to detour them from an established route would decrease the usefulness of the pathway. In some instances, the purpose of the pathway will be less utilitarian and is therefore, more conducive to routes that take the users off U.S. 23. Aside from meeting the needs of the different types of pathway users, this feasibility study also seeks to provide a reasonable, and economically sensitive design.

Many sections of U.S. 23 have paved, wide shoulders that now can be used for biking. This pathway should not preclude experienced riders who are comfortable with riding with traffic from using the wide shoulders and the road itself as a transportation function. However, from discussion with the committee members and the local road commission, many of the current riders in this area are less experienced, often young and would prefer the alternative of a shared-use pathway not connected to a vehicular highway.

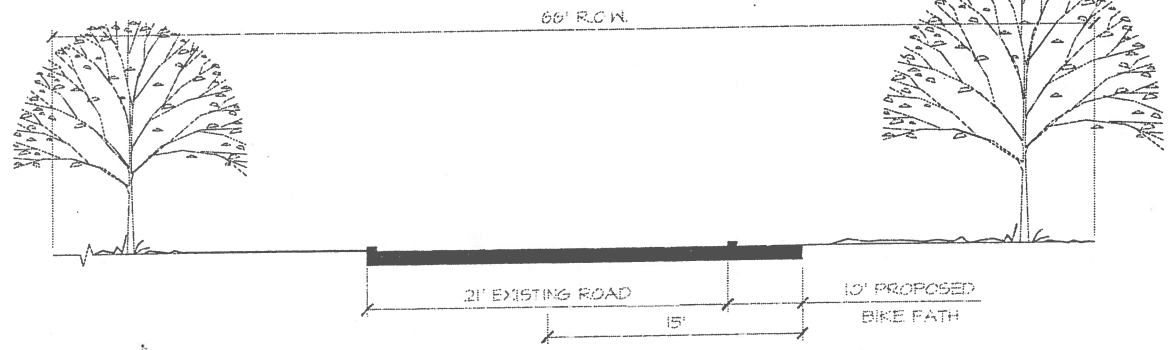
There are a number of concerns regarding the use of shared pathways adjacent to roads but, in this situation, the benefits and local need outweigh the recommendations. In many instances, a shared use pathway can be a challenge along a highway, especially if there are drives and cross streets. In order to address these concerns, steps have been taken to provide continuity of the pathway. For example, the preferred pathway location will:

- minimize the number of times a user is required to cross traffic;
- include a wide separation between the roadway and shoulder and the pathway, a minimum of 10 feet is preferred, when necessary the pathway may decrease to five feet in order to minimize impacting wetlands or other such site features.
- provide for standardized road crossing and deterrents to motorized traffic entering the pathway
- the uses identified for this pathway include bicycles but are not limited to them, in fact, many local committee members identified walkers and rollerbladers as potential users

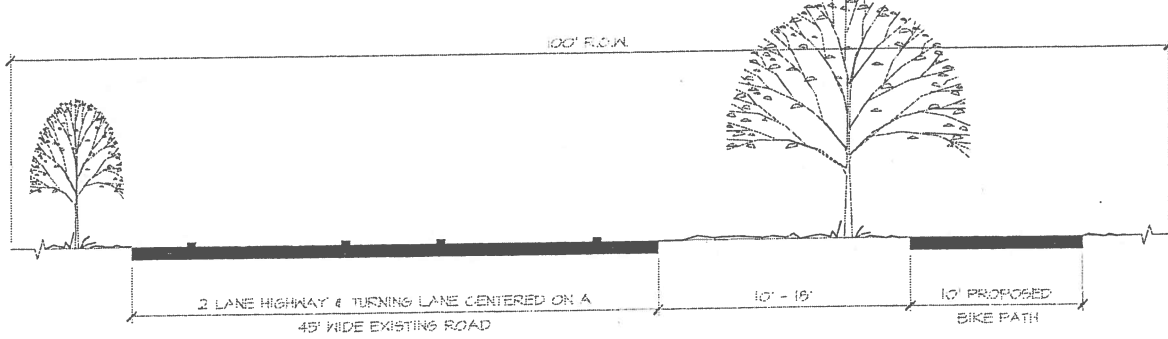
Pathway Perspectives

Because the proposed path travels through diverse land uses, rights-of-ways and site conditions, there are three typical perspectives for this pathway. All of these perspectives provide for some form of separation between the actual road and the proposed pathway.

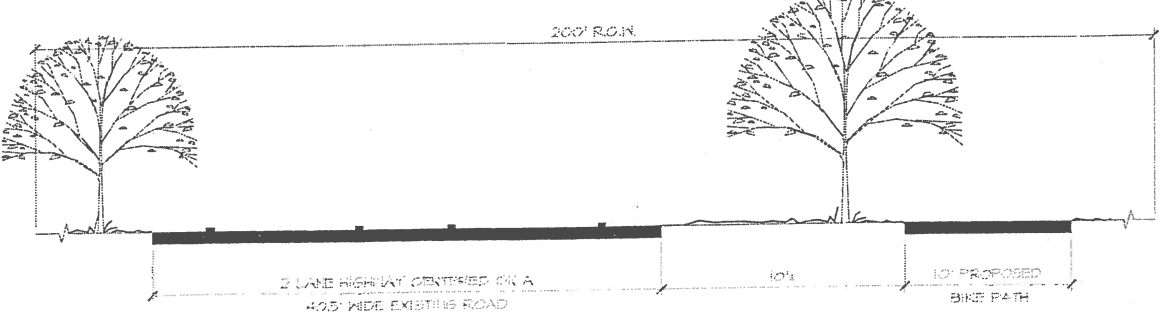
Proposed Pathway Perspective, County Road Right-of-Way



Proposed Pathway Perspective, U.S. 23 Right-of-Way, 100 foot right-of-way



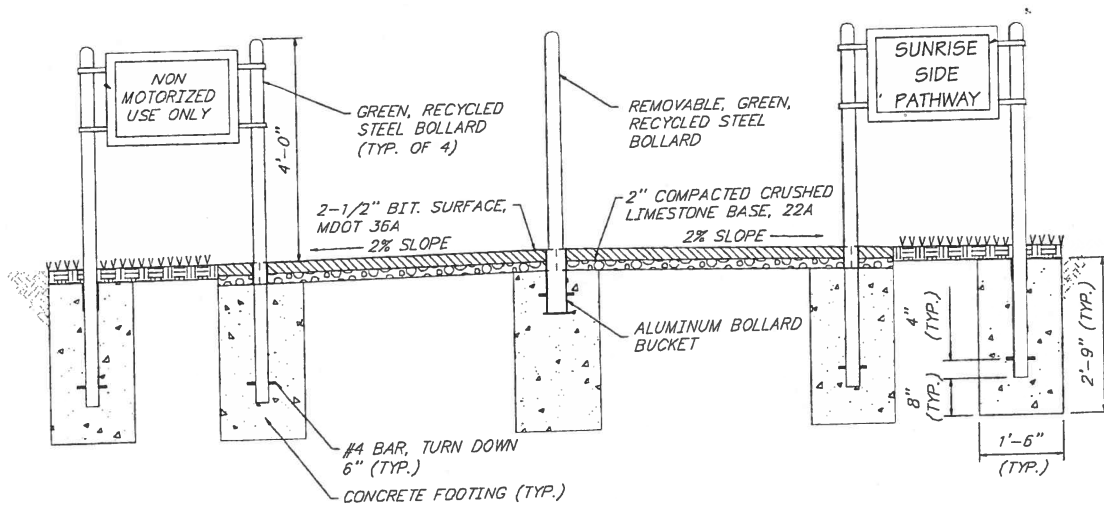
Proposed Pathway Perspective, U.S. 23 Right-of-Way, 200 foot right-of-way



Road Crossings

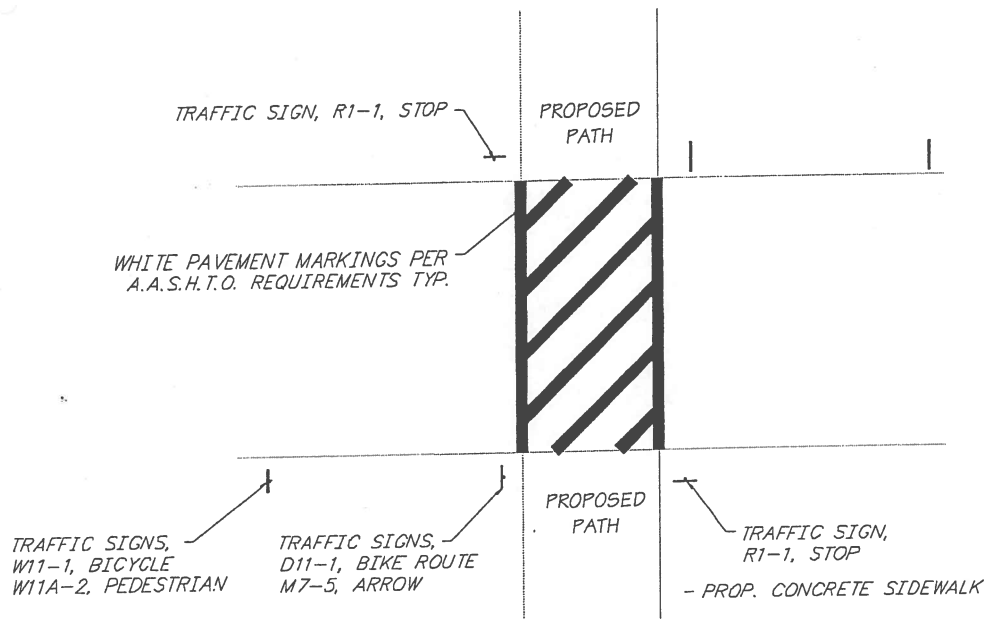
At road crossings, signage 50 feet before the road crossing will alert path users that they are approaching a crossing. Recycled steel bollards, (removable poles which prevent cars and other motorized vehicles from accessing the path) will be used to both slow pathway traffic and prevent motorized vehicle access. The center bollard is removable, and emergency, safety and parks personnel will be able to unlock and remove the center post for access to the trail. The bollards will be encased in a concrete footing. These footings allow for a sturdier base for the bollards. Near the road right of way, a concrete path, constructed to sidewalk standards will be placed to provide a visual cue that a change is approaching.

Typical Road Crossing Section



The crossing at the road will be striped according to AASHTO Standards. For vehicles approaching the roadway, pedestrian crossing signs will be placed on either side of the crossing, in accordance with the County Road Commission's standards.

Typical Road Crossing Plan



The proposed phasing of the pathway is an important part of the overall plan. When determining the phasing of the pathway a number of items were considered, including:

- willingness of the community to commit to funding the project
- length of the proposed pathway completed in each phase

For these reasons, and others described below, the development of the Sunrise Side Recreational Pathway has been separated into five distinct phases.

Phase I - Alabaster Township to the City of Tawas

This phase of the pathway is approximately 11.3 miles. Alabaster Township was chosen as Phase One because it provides a significant portion of pathway simply by connecting with the City of Tawas' and the City of East Tawas' existing pedestrian system and then making improvements. Also, Alabaster Township has already secured funding for a portion of the pathway and has significant local support.

Phase II - Whitney Township to Alabaster Township

There is strong support in Whitney for the pathway. Located just south of Alabaster Township, the connection with Whitney Township will provide an additional 6.7 miles of pathway. In addition, there is a proposed water main project that will clear and grade a significant portion of the proposed pathway area. This project should be planned and constructed in tandem with the proposed water main project.

Phase III - AuSable Township to Oscoda and AuSable Point

This portion of the pathway starts at the northernmost point of the proposed pathway and works south to AuSable Point. This phasing builds excitement in the northern trail area. In 2001, the Township was awarded a Michigan Transportation Enhancement Act grant to construct 1.4 miles of pathway along the east side of U.S. 23, from AuSable to Johnson Road. In conjunction with this portion of the pathway, AuSable Township may also wish to pursue a connection to the north which would link the proposed bikepath in Oscoda Township along US 23.

Phase IV - Baldwin Township and East Tawas

This portion of the pathway will create an additional 10.1 miles, bringing the total of the completed pathway to 35.6 miles along the coast of Lake Huron. This portion of the Sunrise Side Pathway completes the link between two significant trail systems, AuSable to the north and Tawas, East Tawas, Alabaster and Whitney to the south.

Phase V - Sims Township

This section of the pathway will be the last link and complete the 38.7 mile pathway. It is proposed that Sims Township and the City of Au Gres cooperate to extend the pathway directly into the City.

Pathways

The costs below detail the probable cost of the pathway as it extends through each municipality. Throughout the path, there are certain challenges to the pathway ranging from wetlands to ravines to ditches. Each of these circumstances increase costs. For the most part, the pathway has been planned to avoid high cost issues however, there are instances when the preferred route does pass through some difficult challenges.

The costs are detailed below by municipality and by average cost per mile by municipality. Some cost adjusting has been considering, realizing some of the construction may not take place for up to five years. The municipalities are arranged from south to north, as they were discussed in the study, beginning with Sims Township. The costs are further detailed by phase. Complete cost estimates are included in the appendix.

Sims Township (Phase V)

Total path length: 4.3 miles
Total cost for construction (including engineering in 2001): \$842,500
Average cost per mile: \$195,930

Whitney Township (Phase II)

Total path length: 6.7 miles
Total cost for construction (including engineering): \$1,306,500
Average cost per mile: \$195,000

Alabaster Township (Phase I)

Total path length: 8.5 miles
Total cost for construction (including engineering): \$1,657,500
Average cost per mile: \$195,000

City of Tawas (Phase I)

Total path length: 2.8 miles

Total cost for construction (including engineering): \$170,000

Average cost per mile: \$60,715

draft

City of East Tawas (Phase IV)

Total path length: 2.1 miles

Total cost for construction (including engineering): \$126,000

Average cost per mile: \$60,000

draft

Baldwin Township (Phase IV)

Total path length: 8 miles

Total cost for construction (including engineering): \$1,349,000

Average cost per mile: \$168,625

draft

AuSable Township (Phase III)

Total path length: 6.3 miles

Total cost for construction (including engineering): \$820,000

Average cost per mile: \$130,159

draft

Funding Alternatives

There are a variety of funding sources to develop and maintain pathways, ranging from federal grants to donations. The different sources of funding typically used in Michigan are briefly discussed below. They include:

- Transportation Enhancement (TEA-21)
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund and the Land and Water Conservation Fund
- Private Foundations
- Fundraising

Michigan's Transportation Enhancement Program

Commonly referred to as TEA-21, this program is a funding mechanism designed to create a balance between motorized and non-motorized transportation. This program uses initiatives first established under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA). The Michigan Transportation Enhancement Program, which is made possible through federal pass-through monies through TEA-21, funds non-motorized facilities including pedestrian and bicycle facilities, streetscape improvements, preservation of abandoned railroad corridors, safety activities and other projects. Typically the State announces a call for applications in the late summer to fall for the fiscal year 18 months in advance (for example, in August 2001, a call for applications to be constructed in 2003 was announced). The program is extremely competitive and requires a minimum twenty percent match.

Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund

This grant program accepts applications for development in the spring with a second application opportunity for land acquisition in August. The program provides financial assistance to local governments for outdoor recreational needs. The Trust Fund grants a maximum of \$500,000 for development projects. There is no maximum for land acquisition projects. The program requires a minimum twenty percent match. An additional

source of funding, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, was made available through the DNR in the form of federal pass-through monies in 2001. This funding source can be pursued through the same grant application and has the same deadlines. In 2001, the Land and Water Conservation monies were earmarked for development projects only. This grant program requires a minimum fifty percent match.

Private

Foundations, environmental and trail advocacy groups can sometimes provide funding for pathway or trail development. The majority of the Sunrise Side Pathway does not run along a railroad, but it may be helpful to contact the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, which has a department dedicated to helping critical rail trail projects. Other state and even nationwide private funding sources who typically can provide assistance with pathway or trail projects include the Nature Conservancy, the Open Lands Project, and the Conservation Fund.

Private and community foundations are also a viable option for seeking funding. In many instances, these agencies can provide additional match money when pursuing larger grants from state or federal agencies.

Fundraising

With a strong community network of supporters, such as is present within the majority of the Sunrise Side Pathway communities, individuals can assist with costs. Fundraising efforts vary from individuals donating time to path construction to donating hard cash. Businesses can also be approached to “sponsor” a portion of the path.

Maintenance

Maintenance costs are often overlooked in the development of a pathway or trail system, yet maintenance is an extremely important factor in the continued success of a pathway and user satisfaction. Pathway systems or trailways require preventative maintenance much the same as actual roadways. The breakdown below details maintenance cost per one standard mile of pathway and by routine maintenance versus as required maintenance.

Typical or routine maintenance of a bituminous path will include:

- sweeping the path with a power broom
- mowing the grass shoulders of the path
- removing obstacles on the path
- cleaning trash along the pathway (including emptying trash cans)

As the pathway ages, additional maintenance items will become necessary. These may include:

- Patching and/or repairing holes, cracks and other signs of wear in the path and in the path shoulder
- Repairing and/or replacing signs
- Repairing and/or replacing road crossings

Routine maintenance should be performed several times a year and will vary from year to year based on need. Based on routine maintenance costs on other pathways, a minimum of \$500 per mile per year should be budgeted. This budget may be supplemented by using volunteers to perform some of this work.

In order to accommodate these maintenance items such as repairs to the path when they occur, a minimum of \$750 should be budgeted each year as soon as the path is constructed. These money should be maintained in a separate account as a contingency fund to cover repairs when needed.

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Appendix A
Meeting Notes

Sunrise Side Recreational Pathway
April 24, 2001
2 p.m.

Agenda

- I. Discuss Potential Pathway Location
- II. Discuss Pathway Obstacles
- III. Discuss Design Standards
- IV. Review Local Zoning and Construction Standards
- V. Schedule next meeting

Meeting Notes
April 24, 2001
Alabaster Township Hall
2 p.m.

The majority of the meeting focused on the potential route of the pathway, starting at the south end and stretching north. Below is an understanding, Township by Township, of the proposed pathway location discussion.

Sims Township

The pathway is proposed to start at the river near the H&H Bakery and Restaurant. From this point, the pathway could follow Stanley Drive to Michigan Avenue. Northport Store was also mentioned as a potential staging area for the pathway.

It was discussed that Spicer Group would arrange to drive and route this portion of the trail with Timothy Roche, Sims Township Supervisor. This will be arranged, the pending date is May 22, 2001 in the afternoon.

Moving north, the path would follow Michigan Avenue until its end, where it would bring the pathway out to US-23 near Huron Breeze Golf Course.

Somewhere between this point and Hammel Beach Hardware, the path needs to cross US 23 to the west side. In general, it was thought that crossings should be kept to an absolute minimum and, wherever necessary, should be proposed at locations where installation of a traffic signal may be possible. Bessinger Road was suggested for a potential crossing. This is still an issue that requires alternatives.

Whitney Township

Once near Hammel Beach Hardware, the pathway may join with Andrews Road and run north. At Twining Road the pathway will run east until it reaches Noble Road. At Noble Road, the pathway will turn and head north.

Alabaster Township

At Dyer Road, the pathway crosses into Alabaster Township. Several alternatives were identified for this area. The pathway could extend up Rempert Road, which is not used. Alabaster Township will check records to determine if the road was abandoned or vacated. If this currently unused portion of road is feasible for the path, the pathway would extend north along Rempert, running in the road right of way until Alabaster Road. At Alabaster Road, the path would head east. It was discussed that Spicer Group would arrange to drive and route this portion of the trail with Stephanie Wentworth, Alabaster Township Supervisor. This will be arranged, the pending date is May 22, 2001 in the early afternoon.

Once heading east on Alabaster Road, the trail could either follow the existing railbed north to near Blair Road, or it could follow Alabaster Road east to U.S. 23. At this point along U.S. 23, an easement exists along the east side of 23 due to a recent water main

project. A swath of land has been cleared in this area making it a natural pathway. If this route, along U.S. 23 is recommended, than additional efforts should be made to find an alternate route on the east side of U.S. 23 in Whitney Township, so the number of times a trail user is required to cross U.S. 23 are minimized.

Tawas City

From this point, the trail needs to connect with the existing sidewalk in the City of Tawas, which begins at Townline Road. The sidewalk runs on both the west and east side of the road. It is preferred to not cross U.S. 23 at Townline Road, so whatever side the pathway is on prior to Townline Road, is the side of the road at which it will enter the City of Tawas. Prior to the river and bridge crossing, it will be necessary that if the pathway is not on the east side of the road, that it cross to the east side. There are a number of traffic signals that provide this opportunity.

Throughout the City of Tawas there are a number of potential staging and rest areas.

The pathway will extend through the City of Tawas, up to Tawas Beach Road. There was discussion as to whether or not the trail should follow Tawas Beach Road or U.S. 23 north.

Tawas Beach Road links to Baldwin Resort Road and would detour the pathway around U.S. 23 and near the lakefront. It was discussed to investigate the existing two-track that exists along the lakefront off Baldwin Beach Road.

A historical marker exists at the foot of Turtle Road, at the intersection of Benson and Turtle Roads. The marker denotes the gypsum rock, how it used and when mining began.

After the pathway location discussion, the group was asked to consider pathway design standards. These standards include path width, pavement, signs, crossings, links, restrooms, etc. The group should be prepared to discuss these items at the next meeting.

At the next meeting we will focus on the path location possibilities through Baldwin Township and AuSable Township. The meeting date is set for May 29, 2001 at 2:00 p.m. at Alabaster Township Hall.

It was also discussed that Township representatives should bring a copy of their township's zoning map to the next meeting, if available.

Thank you everyone for all the informative input!

Rob Eggers & Bridget Smith

Concerns expressed:

- Minimize or eliminate crossing U.S. 23
- If crossing U.S. 23, are there certain standards? What are they?
- Mixed support for MDOT for the trail running in the U.S. 23 right of way
- Representatives from the two county road commissions were not present.

Actions to be taken:

- Encourage representatives from the road commission to attend the next meeting
- Determine if crossing U.S. 23 is an option. If so, what are the design standards?
- Investigate Rempert Road.
- Investigate Andrews Road.
- Drive Sims Township with the supervisor.
- Drive Alabaster Township with the supervisor.
- Complete driving and routing the northern portion of the pathway.
- Township representatives should bring a copy of their existing zoning map, if available.

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Sunrise Side Recreational Pathway
May 29, 2001
2 p.m.

Agenda

- I. Review Proposed Pathway Map
- II. Review Proposed Staging Areas
- III. Review Proposed Adjacent Links/Connecting Trails
- IV. Collect Local Zoning information/documents
- V. Distribute Design Standards
- VI. Schedule next meeting

Please RSVP to Bridget Smith at Spicer Group by email, bridgets@spicergroup.com or by phone at 800-833-0062.

Proposed Connecting Pathways/Links

- AuSable River
- River Road Scenic Byway
- Oscoda High School
- Oscoda-Ausable Senior Center
- Children's Park
- Finish Line Park
- DNR and Township Boat Launches
- Oscoda-AuSable Visitor Information Center
- McQuaig Park
- Singing Bridge
- Whitney Drain Park

Points of Interest

- Gypsum Historical Marker
- Charity Island
- Former Harmon City
- Mennonite Settlement
- Saginaw-Midland Water supply

Potential Staging Areas

Meeting Notes
May 29, 2001
Alabaster Township Hall
2 p.m.

The majority of the meeting focused on the proposed route and alternative routes from the City of Au Gres north through the City of Tawas. The northern portion of the trail was also discussed. With members of the Road Commission present, it was also discussed in detail the need for a safe and reasonable distance between the path and any roadway, preferably with a greenbelt or some sort of separation between the two.

Sims Township

Since the last meeting, Spicer Group drove this portion of the trail with Timothy Roche, Sims Township Supervisor and two other Sims Township representatives. It is recommended that the trail follow Michigan Avenue. Michigan Avenue starts and stops a number of times in this portion of the trail. At one point, Michigan Avenue is a highway by use only, and as such, has no real right of way. For this portion of the trail, it is proposed to route the path through existing road right of ways that are platted but not paved. The Township is in the process of updating its assessments. It is assumed that with these assessments, and a pending water project, the path would ideally run in conjunction with the water project and the road right of way will be established through the updated assessment. The pathway would follow Michigan Avenue to 15th Street where it would run to 31st Street. At 31st Street, the path would extend east to cross U.S.-23. Here the path will run along U.S.-23 in the western right of way.

Whitney Township

Once near Hammel Beach Hardware, the pathway may join with Andrews Road and run north. At Twining Road the pathway will run east until it reaches Noble Road. At Noble Road, the pathway will turn and head north.

Alabaster Township

At Dyer Road, the pathway crosses into Alabaster Township. Several alternatives were identified for this area. The pathway could extend up the old Rempert Road right of way, which is not being used. Alabaster Township will check records to determine if the road was abandoned or vacated. If this currently unused portion of road is feasible for the path, the pathway would extend north along Rempert, from Dyer to Alabaster Road, running in the road right of way until Alabaster Road. At Alabaster Road, the path would head east.

Once heading east on Alabaster Road, the trail could either follow the existing railbed north to near Blair Road, or it could follow Alabaster Road east to U.S. 23. At this point along U.S. 23, an easement exists along the east side of 23 due to a recent water main project. A swath of land has been cleared in this area making it a natural pathway. If this route, along U.S. 23 is recommended, than additional efforts should be made to find an alternate route on the east side of U.S. 23 in Whitney Township, so the number of times a trail user is required to cross U.S. 23 are minimized.

Tawas City

From this point, the trail needs to connect with the existing sidewalk in the City of Tawas, which begins at Townline Road. The sidewalk runs on both the west and east side of the road. It is preferred to not cross U.S. 23 at Townline Road, so whatever side the pathway is on prior to Townline Road, is the side of the road at which it will enter the City of Tawas. Prior to the river and bridge crossing, it will be necessary that if the pathway is not on the east side of the road, that it cross to the east side. Throughout the City of Tawas there are a number of potential staging and rest areas.

The pathway will extend through the City of Tawas, up to Tawas Beach Road. There was discussion as to whether or not the trail should follow Tawas Beach Road or U.S. 23 north.

Tawas Beach Road links to Baldwin Resort Road and would detour the pathway around U.S. 23 and near the lakefront. It was discussed to investigate the existing two-track that exists along the lakefront off Baldwin Beach Road.

A historical marker exists at the foot of Turtle Road, at the intersection of Benson and Turtle Roads. The marker denotes the gypsum rock, how it used and when mining began.

After the pathway location discussion, the group was asked to consider potential pathway links and/or connections. A list of identified connections was provided to those present.

An abbreviated collection of design standards typical for bike facilities was distributed.

At the next meeting we will focus on the path location possibilities through Baldwin Township and AuSable Township. The meeting date is set for June 26, 2001 at 2:00 p.m. at Alabaster Township Hall. **Please RSVP your attendance by fax – 517-754-4440 or by phone – 800-833-0062, to Bridget Smith.**

It was also discussed that Township representatives should bring a copy of their township's zoning map to the next meeting, if available.

Thank you everyone for all the informative input!

Rob Eggers & Bridget Smith

Concerns expressed:

- Minimize or eliminate crossing U.S. 23
- If crossing U.S. 23, are there certain standards? What are they?
- Mixed support for MDOT for the trail running in the U.S. 23 right of way
- Representatives from the two county road commissions were not present.

Actions to be taken:

- Encourage representatives from the road commission to attend the next meeting
- Determine if crossing U.S. 23 is an option. If so, what are the design standards?
- Investigate Rempert Road.
- Investigate Andrews Road.
- Drive Baldwin Township with the supervisor.
- Drive Au Sable Township with the supervisor.
- Complete driving and routing the northern portion of the pathway.
- Township representatives should bring a copy of their existing zoning map, if available.

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Meeting Minutes with U.S. Gypsum Mining Company
June 6, 2001

Attendance: C.A., Bruce, Stephanie Wentworth, and Rob Eggers

1. Possibility to establish easement along ROW
2. Look at Alabaster
3. Look at Rempert ROW
4. Rail up to Turtle Rd. owned by U.S. Gypsum
5. Turtle Rd. north is Lake States
6. *Letter to Bruce*
7. Look at map area for Rempert
8. Could supply sand
9. Letter of support will write a cautious letter
10. *Share easement with road ROW*
11. What is Rempert Row
12. On west side in section 28 (or east)
On east side in section 21 or 22
13. *Possibility put path in new wetland area!!*
14. Discuss with Fred Timlock
15. Done with Hall Rd. by end of the year
16. *Look at tax incentives*
17. Get Bruce's card
18. Call Fred Timlock
19. Look at ravine
20. Drive Rempert and Meesore
21. *Call Gary Kellan*
22. Baldwin Supervisor- Jim Supboda at ? 362-3742 ?
23. Au Sable Supervisor- Ron Lamrock at 739-9169
24. Meet with Ron Lesly – East Tawas
Ken Huber – Tawas City

Agenda
Sunrise Side Pathway
June 26, 2001
Alabaster Township Hall
2 p.m.

- I. Review of Ordinances
- II. Review of proposed links
- III. Maps
- IV. Perspective of the standard trail

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Meeting Notes
June 26, 2001
Alabaster Township Hall
2 p.m.

- The meeting began with the review of the overall goals of the Sunrise Side Pathway, which are as follows:
 1. Determining the proposed path of the project
 2. The physical characteristics of the proposed path
 3. Identify potential design challenges due to terrain, soils, and /or natural features
 4. Design pathway in regards to width, construction materials etc.
 5. Construction phasing for the pathway
 6. Preliminary cost estimate
- There was discussion about driving along the proposed pathway through Baldwin Township and Au Sable Township with the township supervisors. Stephanie will set up this meeting.
- Rebecca Owsley brought up the path location throughout Sims Township and the link to Point Lookout. Rebecca, a Sims Township Representative, no longer supports the link to Point Lookout. She thought the path might be better suited along U.S.-23. We will be meeting with the Sims Township Supervisor to further discuss this.
- Discussion occurred about creating public interest through all communities. One group will investigate writing an article for the *Bay City Times* and also about holding a public meeting to raise interest and awareness.
- Bridget Smith brought up the fact that Spicer Groups needs to see the zoning ordinances for a few communities yet.
 1. Baldwin Township
 2. Au Sable Township
 3. Sims Township
- A map was handed out to each member showing the proposed path so far, and the possible links to existing pathways. Discussion then ensued about the links to other trails. The overall project map is coming along well.
- Spicer Group handed out proposed pathway cross sections and discussed the gravel thickness, paving, and signage.

Sunrise Side Recreational Pathway
July 16, 2001
2 p.m.

Agenda

- I. Proposed Pathway
- II. Alternate Pathway
- III. Proposed Phasing
- IV. Public Participation/Public Meeting
- V. Schedule next meeting

Meeting Notes
July 16, 2001
Alabaster Township Hall
2:00 p.m.

- The meeting began with the discussion of different funding sources for the municipalities.
 1. DDA funding source in Baldwin Township
 2. Issue in Tawas Township, funding of a ¼ mile
 3. Federal funds
 4. State funds
 5. Win Grants
 6. Bay Arenac Community Foundation
 7. Iosco County Grants are possible
- Path maintenance was brought up as an issue. There was talk about the use of a pillow tax for the cost of maintenance.
- Jim Svoboda volunteered to contact Lake States Railroad.
- Stephanie developed a proposed resolution for each township/municipality. We need Tawas Township, Au Sable Township, Arenac County and Iosco County. East Tawas City Hall has given its ok.
- The cost to fund the ads will come from MDOT budget.
- We agreed to ask Jay Gailitis to attend the public hearing meeting and our meeting, and can he find an ad for the two newspapers.

Sunrise Side Recreational Pathway
August 21, 2001
2 p.m.

Agenda

- I. Review of Draft
- II. Review of Preliminary Estimates of Cost
- III. Schedule to return drafts with comments
- IV. Public Meeting
- V. Comments/Concerns

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Appendix B
Supporting Documentation

**NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION**

KEITH J. CHARTERS, Chair
NANCY A. DOUGLAS
PAUL EISELE
BOB GARNER
WILLIAM U. PARFET
FRANK WHEATLAKE

STATE OF MICHIGAN



JOHN ENGLER, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

STEVENS T MASON BUILDING, PO BOX 30028, LANSING MI 48909-7528

WEBSITE: www.dnr.state.mi.us

K. L. COOL, Director

REPLY TO:

NATURAL HERITAGE
WILDLIFE DIVISION
PO BOX 30180
LANSING MI 48909-7680

July 27, 2001

Ms. Bridget Smith
Spicer Group, Inc.
P.O. Box 1689
Saginaw, MI 48605-1689

RE: proposed Sunrise Side Pathway

Dear Ms. Smith:

The location of the proposed project was checked against known localities for natural features. Unique natural features are recorded in a statewide database. This continuously updated database is a comprehensive source of existing data on Michigan's endangered, threatened, or otherwise significant plant and animal species, natural plant communities, and other natural features. Records in the database indicate that a qualified observer has documented the presence of special natural features at a site. The absence of records in the database for a particular site may mean that the site has not been surveyed. Records are not always up-to-date, and may require verification. In some cases, the only way to obtain a definitive statement on the status of natural features is to have a competent biologist perform a complete field survey.

Under Act 451 of 1994, the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, Part 365, Endangered Species Protection, "a person shall not take, possess, transport, ... fish, plants, and wildlife indigenous to the state and determined to be endangered or threatened," unless first receiving an Endangered Species Permit from the Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Division. *Responsibility to protect endangered and threatened species is not limited to the list below. Other species may be present that have not been recorded in the database.*

The presence of threatened or endangered species does not preclude activities or development, but may require alterations in the project plan. Special concern species are not protected under endangered species legislation, but recommendations regarding their protection may be provided. Protection of special concern species will help prevent them from declining to the point of being listed as threatened or endangered in the future.

If the project is located on or adjacent to wetlands, inland lakes, or streams, additional permits may be required. Contact the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Land and Water Management Division, P.O. Box 30473, Lansing, MI 48909 (517-373-1170).

The following is a summary of the results for the project in Arenac, Iosco Counties (location as described in June 20, 2001 environmental review request):

The project should have no impact on rare or unique natural features at the location specified above if it proceeds according to the plans provided. Please contact me for an evaluation if the project plans are changed.

Thank you for your advance coordination in addressing the protection of Michigan's natural resource heritage. If you have further questions, please call me at 517-373-1263.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lori G. Sargent".

Lori G. Sargent
Endangered Species Specialist
Wildlife Division

LGS:kpg