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Otsego County Recreation Plan 2022 - 2027

Otsego County Recreation Plan 2022–2027

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Adopted Month DD, 2022 by the Otsego County Board of Commissioners

Adopted Month DD, 2022 by the Elmira Township Board of Trustees

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APPENDICES These will be updated once plan is completed

- Appendix A – Plans for Courthouse Plaza Improvements
- Appendix B – Downtown Gaylord IBT Trailhead – Draft Plan
- Appendix C – MDNR Post Completion Self Certification Reports
- Appendix D – Results of Online Recreation Survey & Recreation Improvement Suggestions
- Appendix E – Conceptual Site Plan for new County Park (Former MDNR Property)
- Appendix F – Recreation Plan Certification Checklists



Chapter 1

Recreation Plan Jurisdiction

This recreation plan update was prepared for the Otsego County Parks and Recreation Commission (OCPR) along with Elmira Township. The OCPR provides an abundance of the recreational activities in the area and are proactive in their effort to provide a variety of quality community based recreational opportunities. This plan will focus on all recreational aspects of the Otsego County community.

Community Location & Recent History

Otsego County is located in the center of the northern lower peninsula of Michigan on the 45th Parallel. The County includes the City of Gaylord, the Village of Vanderbilt, nine townships and nine unincorporated communities, such as Elmira (the eastern portion only), Waters, Vienna and Johannesburg. Elmira Township, one standard township geographic area of 36 square miles, is located in the northwest portion of Otsego County. A Regional Location Map of Otsego County is shown in **Figure 1.1**; see **Figure 1.2** for a map showing the boundaries of Otsego County and its communities.

The last decennial US Census shows that Otsego County has a population of 25,091 persons, with 1,714 persons in Elmira Township (refer to **Tables 1.1** and **1.2** on pages 1-6 and 1-7). This represents a 3.8% increase from the 2010 Census, and a 2.5% increase from the 2019 population estimate of 24,490. Based on findings from the 2022 Otsego County Master Plan, many of the communities in the County will continue to grow in overall population, with the fifty-five (55) and older age groups leading at a much higher growth rate.

The County experienced a great deal of economic development with an expanded industrial and commercial base along with population growth during the 1990's and early 2000's. Since the mid-2000's, the County has experienced the closing of two major industrial plants in the area (Georgia Pacific and Kimball Electronics/Reptron). These closures also affected other associated companies. Despite the difficult local economy, the Otsego County Economic Alliance has worked to stabilize the local economy by securing many project grants and trying to attract new businesses to the area.

The Otsego County community continues to be a "Great Place to Live and Work," with quality schools, a multitude of outdoor recreational opportunities, and a lively arts community. The area has a sizable seasonal population, with many residents living here only in the summer months. The retiree population continues to rise and, while some retirees are part-time residents, many have made the County their permanent place of residence and are active in their churches, community, and charitable organizations. Educational opportunities for achieving degrees, certificates, vocational training and lifelong learning are available at the University Center at Gaylord.

Figure 1.1 Regional Location Map

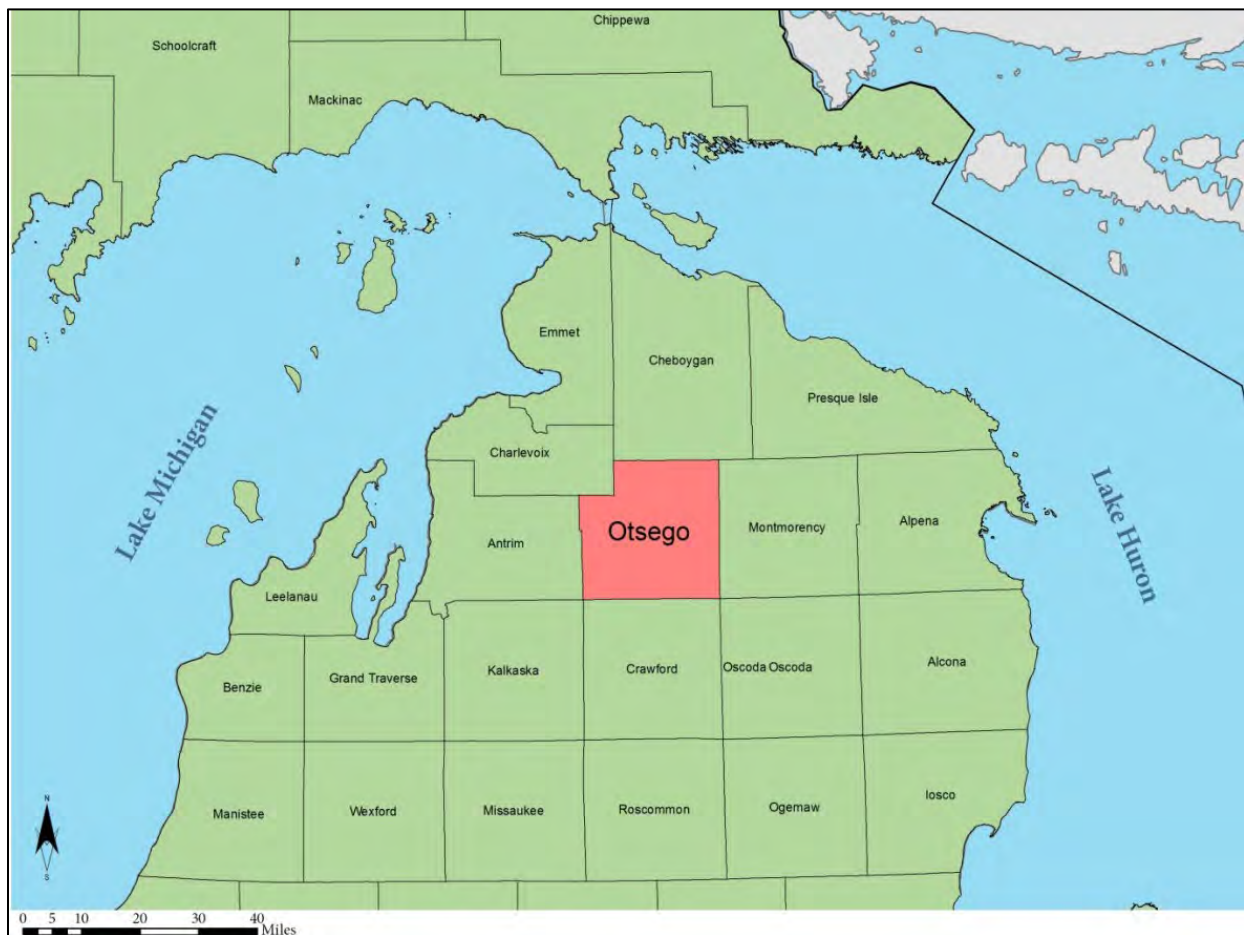
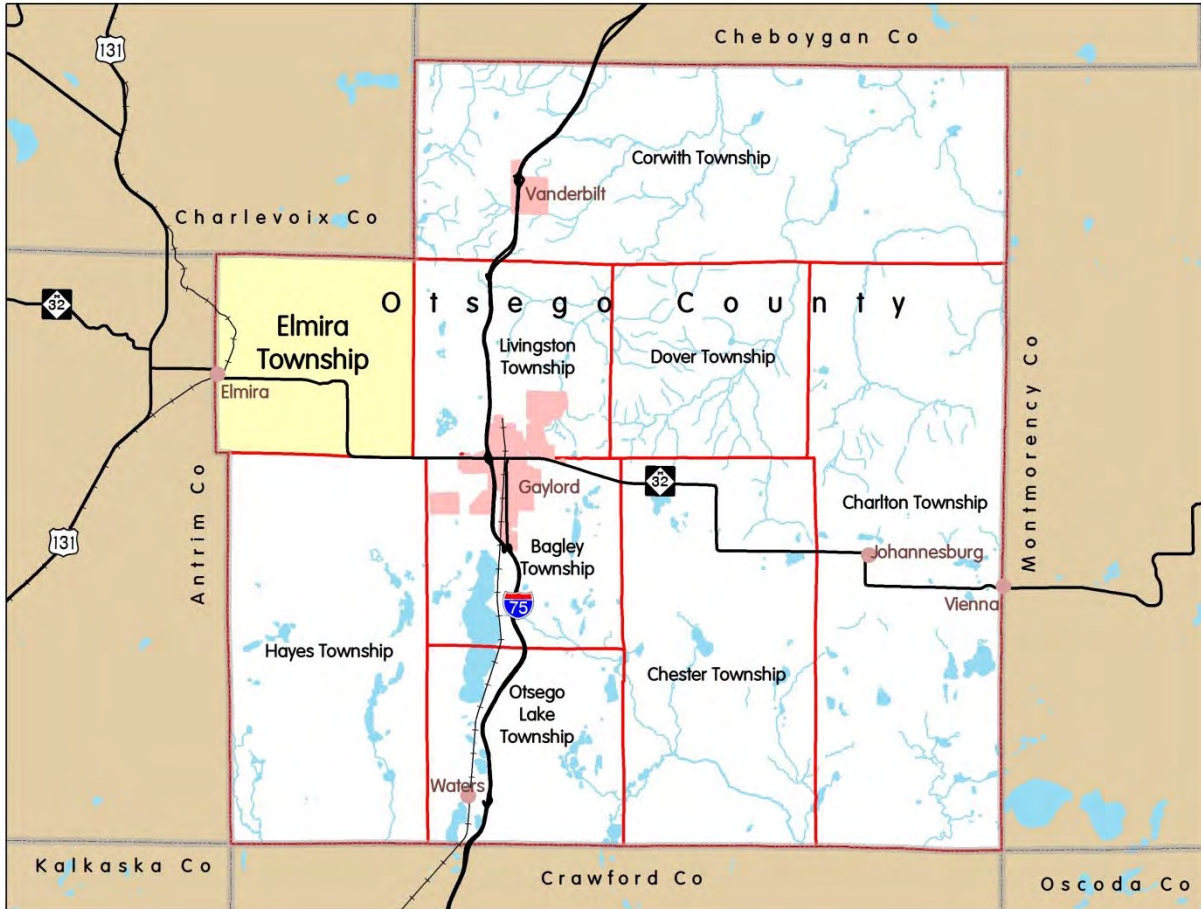


Figure 1.2 County Map



Transportation

Roads

Interstate 75 bisects the County and provides convenient north-south access from more populated areas of southeastern Michigan and northern Ohio, and indirectly, southwestern Michigan and northern Indiana. This freeway has a profound impact on the economic livelihood of the County. The major east-west route serving the County is M-32 (which bisects Elmira Township). This route connects Gaylord with Alpena, the largest city in northeast Michigan, 72 miles away. Further west outside Otsego County, M-32 indirectly provides access to Traverse City, Charlevoix and Petoskey.

Non-Motorized Transportation

The City of Gaylord has constructed several segments of bike paths within the City limits, including the pathway in Aspen Park. The State of Michigan improved the former Lake State Railroad line, now known as the North Central State Trail, between Gaylord and Mackinaw City with crushed limestone. There are three designated trailheads for the North Central State Trail in Otsego County. The first is the Gaylord Gateway/Iron Belle Trailhead in downtown Gaylord, the second is located along Fairview Road just north of Downtown Gaylord, and the third in downtown Vanderbilt. The view along this trail showcases some of the most beautiful landscapes and vistas in Northern Lower Michigan.

The bicycling route portion of the “Iron Belle Trail” (IBT), a planned trail through the State of Michigan to connect Belle Isle in Detroit to Ironwood in the western Upper Peninsula, traverses Otsego County in a North-South direction. The overall trail is approximately 70% complete at this time. The North Central State Trail, which is part of the IBT route running through Otsego County, has been completed in recent years.

Public Transportation

Otsego County residents are serviced by a public transportation bus system owned and operated by Otsego County. The Bus System limits its area of operation to the County of Otsego and in 2019 served over 60,000 passengers. Ridership in 2020 and 2021 was much lower due to COVID. The number of riders was beginning to rebound in 2022 and will most likely continue to do so. The Bus System operates a fleet of 16 busses, all of which are equipped with lifts.

Air Transportation

The Gaylord Regional Airport is a General Aviation airport with a 6,578 foot by 150 foot asphalt primary runway and 4,200 foot by 75 foot asphalt secondary runway. The approaches include ILS, VOR and NDB. Jet fuel and aviation gasoline are available. The airport is attended five days a week from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Private, corporate, government, charter and cargo planes receive full service at the airport. It is the base operations center for North Country Aviation, Traverse Lakes Aviation, and has component units of Martinaire, FedEx and UPS. Customer service, three conference rooms and rental cars and local taxi service are also available.

School Districts

There are four public school districts located within Otsego County; Gaylord Community Schools, Johannesburg-Lewiston Schools, Vanderbilt Area Schools and a portion of Crawford AuSable Schools. The County also includes parochial schools and a strong home school program. Each of the districts own and operate a variety of recreational facilities including gymnasiums, football fields, baseball/softball fields, running tracks, soccer fields, tennis courts and playgrounds. Some of the parochial schools have recreational facilities as well. The School District Boundaries are shown in **Figure 1.3**.

Figure 1.3 School Districts



Recreational Opportunities

Otsego County Parks and Recreation (OCPR) offers park facilities and recreational programs to the entire community. Facilities operated by the OCPR include Otsego Lake County Park and Campground, Pleasant View Park (Wah Wah Soo), Dr. Robert S. Libke Memorial Fields, Frank H. Wilkinson Roadside Park (Irontone Springs), the Otsego County Community Center, Pontresina Park (Dog Park), and the Louis M. Groen Nature Preserve. Other facilities owned by the County and operated by separate entities include the Otsego County Sportsplex/Energy Outlet, the Otsego County Courthouse Plaza and the Otsego County Fairgrounds (northern parcel). Elmira Township owns and operates one recreation facility, the Elmira Township Park in the community of Elmira.

Facilities owned and operated by the City of Gaylord include Freel Memorial Park, George Doumas Memorial Park, Hale Park, Claude Shannon Park, Elk Park and Aspen Park. Public facilities owned and operated by others include in part the Remi and Edna Schotte Memorial Township Park in Otsego Lake Township (Waters), Vanderbilt Memorial Park in Vanderbilt, the Otsego Conservation District Demonstration Garden and Conservation Forest near the J. Richard Yuill Alpine Center in Gaylord.

Recreational programs and opportunities in the County include, but are not limited to, baseball, softball, basketball, little league, football, soccer, hockey, figure skating, golf, disk golf, pickleball, swimming, skiing (downhill and cross country), tennis, volleyball, horseshoes and dance/aerobic/exercise classes. Snowmobile, ORV and non-motorized trail recreation facilities also abound within the county. The County also offers numerous inland lakes, miles of streams, and vast expanses of State Forest Lands that offer many opportunities for hunting and fishing.

Population Statistics

Table 1.1 Otsego County Population History		
Year	Population (persons)	Change from Previous
1960	7,545	NA
1970	10,422	Increase of 2877 (+38.1%)
1980	14,993	Increase of 4571 (+43.9%)
1990	17,957	Increase of 2964 (+19.8%)
2000	23,301	Increase of 5344 (+29.8%)
2010	24,164	Increase of 863 (+3.7%)
2020	25,091	Increase of 927 (+3.8%)

Source: US Census Bureau

Table 1.2 2020 Otsego County Population Statistics		
Township	Population (persons)	Change from 2010
Bagley	5,867	Decrease of 19 (-.32%)
Charlton	1,350	Decrease of 4 (-.29%)
Chester	1,300	Increase of 8 (+.62%)
Corwith	1,708	Decrease of 40 (-2.28%)
Dover	632	Increase of 71 (+12.65%)
Elmira	1,714	Increase of 27 (+1.57%)
Hayes	2,725	Increase of 106 (+4.04%)
Livingston	2,652	Increase of 127 (+5.02%)
Otsego Lake	2,857	Increase of 10 (+.35)
City of Gaylord	4,286	Increase of 641 (+17.58%)

*Population information taken from the Otsego County Website (www.otsegocountymi.gov).

Tourism

Tourism has a major impact on the Otsego County community, including boosts to the local economy and also an increased demand on recreational facilities. The County is a popular four-season vacation spot, attracting thousands to the area to enjoy outdoor recreation activities such as golfing, swimming, boating, camping, skiing, snowmobiling, fishing, hunting and bicycling. Many jobs in Otsego County are highly dependent on tourism.

Natural Resources

The most important of the natural resources in Otsego County in terms of providing a foundation for recreational activities are the abundance of trees, clean air, clean water and wild game. Each of these resources provides an important economic base for the County.

Water

Otsego County has some of the highest elevations in northern lower Michigan. Thus, it contains three watersheds; the Cheboygan watershed, which drains northerly, consists of the Sturgeon, Pigeon and Black Rivers; the AuSable watershed, which drains southeasterly, consists of the AuSable River; and the Manistee watershed, which drains southwesterly, consists of the Manistee River. The County has some 6,682 acres of surface water in the form of more than 370 lakes, and 140 miles of trout streams.

Ground water supplies are very productive in the predominant gravel and unconsolidated sands of the glacial drift. The ground water aquifers are recharged by precipitation which is readily absorbed by the permeable soils. Individual wells near the lakes and streams are usually quite shallow due to the high water table. Wells located on high moraines may have depths in excess of 250 feet. Wells of a six-inch diameter or more can yield from ten to five hundred gallons per minute.

Soils

Much of the County consists of excessively drained to well-drained sandy soils, making ground water contamination and soil erosion topics of concern.

Minerals

Mineral resources in the County also contribute to the local economy. It is estimated that 400 people are employed in the drilling, exploration and production of gas and oil. These mineral resources have also provided additional income to the property owners. In the latter part of the 1980s, Antrim gas wells made Otsego County the leading producer of natural gas well drilling.



Chapter 2

Administrative Structure

This Section defines the organizational structure for the OCPR and Elmira Township. A description of governmental structure, budgets and support for recreation are also discussed. Organizational charts are shown as **Figures 2.1 and 2.2**. The process for approving the Otsego County Community Recreation Plan is by review and recommendation by the OCPR and Elmira Township Planning Commission, followed by a Public Hearings and Adoptions by the Otsego County Board of Commissioners and the Elmira Township Board.

Otsego County Parks and Recreation Administration

Otsego County established the Otsego County Parks and Recreation Commission under the authority of Public Act 261 of 1965, as amended by Public Act 242 of 1966. The current Commission and staff are:

Commission

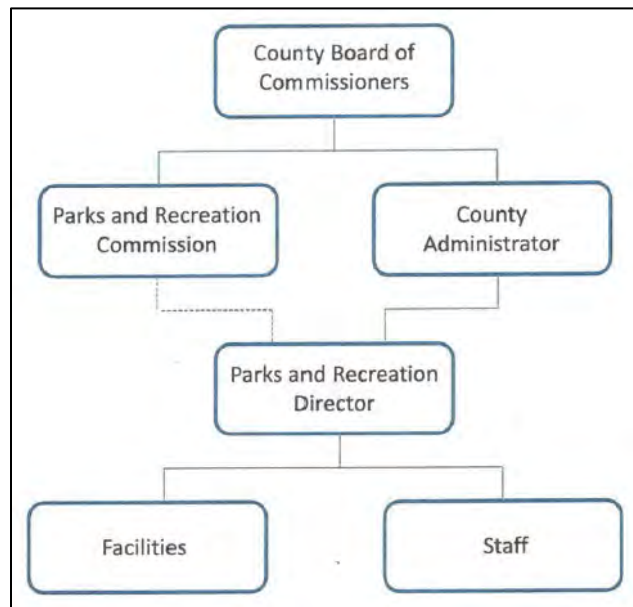
Dave Baragrey, *President*
Scott Courterier, *Vice President*
Bonny Miller, *Secretary*
Randy Stults, *Commissioner At Large*
Justin Wing, *Commissioner At Large*
Jack Korte, *Commissioner At Large*
Doug Johnson, *Otsego Co. Board of Commissioners*
Troy Huff, *Otsego Co. Road Commission*
Judy Jarecki, *Otsego Co. Planning Commission*

Staff

Thomas Pratt, *Parks & Recreation Director*
Jacob Brown, *Parks & Recreation Coordinator*
Keri Swantek, *Community Center Monitor/Ranger*

The Commission employs a full-time Parks and Recreation Director and also two full-time staffers: a Parks and Recreation Coordinator and a Parks and Recreation Monitor/Ranger. Additionally, seven to nine seasonal staffers are employed from May to September. The Louis M. Groen Nature Preserve has a full-time Manager along with support staff (refer to the separate document Louis M. Groen Nature Preserve Conservation Easement for detailed information).

Figure 2.1 OCPR Organizational Chart



The OCPR budget and operations are monitored by the County Board of Commissioners. The Board of Commissioners is currently comprised of (Will update after November election):

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| Ken Glasser, Chairperson | Brett McVannel |
| Rob Pallarito, Vice Chairperson | Doug C. Johnson |
| Julia Powers-Gehman | Jason Caverson |
| Henry Mason | Bruce Brown |
| Paul L. Liss | |

Otsego County’s Administrator, Matt Barresi, is appointed by the Board of Commissioners to implement Board policies, to oversee the daily activities of the County, to serve as the Chief Executive Officer, and to supervise non-elected County departments/functions.

The OCPR serves in an operational capacity to the Otsego County Board of Commissioners. The functions of the OCPR include, but are not limited to the following:

PLANNING - to provide a systematic means of planning the location, acquisition, development, and maintenance of a system of parks, recreation and open space areas, facilities and activities within the County. Definite criteria for inclusion shall be adopted and revised periodically to keep pace with changing demands and habit use patterns.

ACQUISITION - to provide a program of acquisition of adjoining acreage or to acquire unique or strategic scenic, scientific or historical areas for the enjoyment of the residents of the County and their guests. Said areas shall be acquired in an organized, systematic manner so as to provide equal opportunity, access, and enjoyment for all.

DEVELOPMENT - to provide those activities and facilities commensurate with the needs of the people. All development should be carefully planned and be of a durable nature to minimize maintenance.

FUNDING - to explore and utilize every means of financing that is available to the Commission including Federal and State matching fund programs, general obligation bonds, general funds, user fees and charges, along with gifts and donations.

OPERATION - to provide the necessary personnel to operate the parks as effectively and efficiently as feasible. Adequate supervision should be provided to all areas to protect the facilities and to ensure equal opportunity for enjoyment by all users.

MAINTENANCE - to maintain all parks and facilities in a clean, neat, sanitary and orderly manner, to protect the public health, safety and enjoyment of its users.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION - to employ qualified and competent personnel to carry out the functions and operations described above for the County park system. To maintain and establish those procedures necessary for maintaining an accurate accounting of all funds utilized by the Commission.

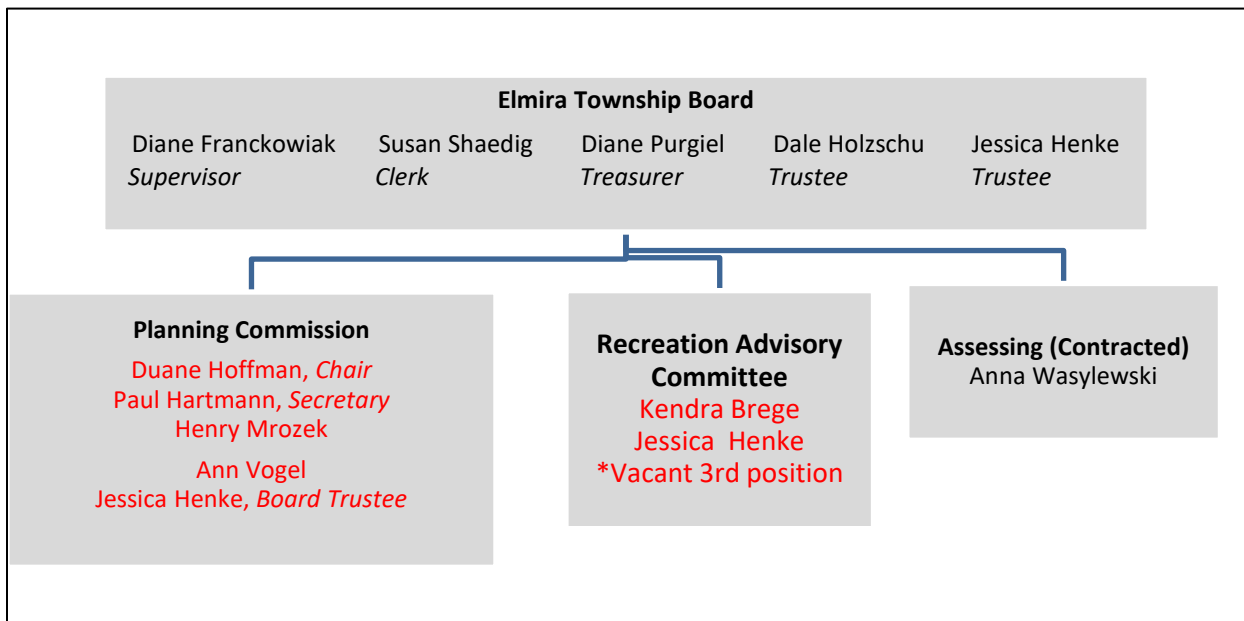
Elmira Township Administration

Elmira Township is governed by a five-member elected Board of Trustees consisting of a Supervisor, Clerk, Treasurer and two Trustees. These positions are chosen by registered voters of the Township in an at-large election held every four years. Expenditures for parks and recreation facilities are under direct control of the township Board of Trustees. The Board receives recommendations from the Township Planning Commission regarding parks and recreation improvements.

The Elmira Township Planning Commission is a five-member body, serving three-year staggered terms. Planning Commission members are intended to represent a broad spectrum of community interests, including recreation, commerce, industry, government, education, transportation, and so on. Planning members may come from many walks of life, but they all contribute their time and talents to the local planning process. In addition to the responsibility of preparing the Master Plan and Recreation Plan, in accordance with the Michigan Planning and Enabling Act of 2008, as amended, the Planning Commission is charged with reviewing development projects as they are proposed.

Elmira Township does not employ any dedicated parks and recreation staff. Community volunteers have contributed time to park improvement activities over the years. Regular park maintenance and other improvements have contracted out as needed and at the discretion of the Township Board. The Elmira Township Planning Commission developed a Recreation Advisory Committee in 2016, which will, in the future, allow for more oversight and decision-making regarding community recreational facilities and making recommendations to the Township Board. An organizational chart is shown below.

Figure 2.2 Elmira Township Organizational Chart



Parks and Recreation Operating Budgets

The taxpayers of Otsego County originally approved a millage of 1/16 of a mill in 1990, to operate, improve and expand the Otsego Lake County Park. This millage continued thru December 31, 2010 when it was allowed to expire. These funds were also used to expand and make improvements at the Pleasant View Park (Wah Wah Soo), the Dr. Robert S. Libke Memorial Fields and the Frank H. Wilkinson Roadside Park (Irontone Springs). The Otsego County voter-approved millage was re-established in 2016.

The Otsego County Parks and Recreation Commission currently operates on a voter-approved millage (1/4 of a mill) that will provide approximately \$340,000 annually. This 5-year millage was renewed by voters in 2022. Small user fees, interest and contributions provide additional revenue. All present and future facilities owned and/or operated by the OCPR can use this millage for operations.

In 1994, Otsego County voters approved a millage to establish and construct the Otsego County Sportsplex. The County owns the facility and its’ recreational opportunities. There is an Operational Agreement between the County and the “Otsego County Sportsplex (Sportsplex),” a Michigan non-profit corporation, which allows the Sportsplex to operate and manage the facility. Since 1994, there have also been subsequent operating millage requests that have been approved by Otsego County voters.

The Louis M. Groen Nature Preserve operation and maintenance is funded by a trust fund that has been established for the facility.

For 2022, the budgeted revenue is \$640,671, with an identical figure for total expenses. The breakdown for these figures appears below.

Table 2.1 OCPR Total Revenue	
Property taxes (millage levy of 1/16 + 3/16)	\$340,316
Community Center Services (user fees)	\$9,550
Campground User Fees	\$248,000
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$42,805
Total Revenue (2022)	\$640,671

Table 2.2 OCPR Total Expenses	
Personnel (Including wages and benefits)	\$322,717
Maintenance and Supplies	\$75,503
Utilities and Advertising	\$46,780
Miscellaneous Contingency	\$195,671
Total Expenses (2022)	\$703,081

For 2023, the projected budget figures are as follows:

Table 2.3 OCPR Projected Total Revenue	
Property taxes (millage levy of 1/16 + 3/16)	\$358,658
Community Center Services (user fees)	\$11,725
Campground User Fees	\$224,600
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$42,805
Total Revenue (2017)	\$637,788

Table 2.4 OCPR Projected Total Expenses	
Personnel (Including wages and benefits)	\$341,919
Maintenance and Supplies	\$102,400
Utilities and Advertising	\$48,780
Miscellaneous Contingency	\$144,689
Total Expenses (2017)	\$637,788

The annual budget is prepared by the Parks and Recreation Director, reviewed and approved by the Otsego County Parks and Recreation Commission, then sent to the Otsego County Board of Commissioners for adoption. The proposed budget for fiscal year 2023 indicates total revenue for the entire Parks and Recreation Department, from property tax millage levies, user fees, and contributions to be \$637,788; total expenses for the year are budgeted for the same amount. This budget is administered and expended by the Otsego County Parks and Recreation Department.

Funding for maintaining and improving Elmira Township’s park and facilities comes directly from their Township operating budget. The 2016 Township budget is \$230,000, of which \$21,500 is set aside for parks and recreation maintenance/improvements. As of August 24, 2016, the Township had spent \$665.86 of those funds on recreation maintenance. The projected 2017 budget is expected to be similar; the Township will not determine their FY 2017 budget until February 2017, as their fiscal year begins on April 1.

Volunteer Involvement

The OCPR is fortunate to receive a fair amount of volunteer support throughout the year. These volunteers help coordinate annual summer festival activities and fireworks displays. Further, a high level of volunteer support allows the Bear Basketball program to continue each year. The Bear Basketball program is the Community Center's largest single recreational offering in terms of numbers of participants. Dozens of parents and students alike volunteer regularly to coach, referee, keep score and maintain statistics. Local businesses also support the program by providing equipment and uniforms.

Elmira Township has utilized the assistance of community volunteers to help with maintenance projects such as recently installing new wood chips underneath the play structure in their park and restoring the tower structure for the historical Elmira Agricultural School bell (described below).

Partnerships with Schools

The OCPR and Elmira Township are not officially associated with the local school systems or their recreational facilities. However, the OCPR Director works to maintain close relationships with all area schools, including public, parochial and private. Additionally, Gaylord Community Schools recently donated an historical school bell associated with the former Elmira Agricultural School (current site of the Township Park) to Elmira Township for future placement in their park.

Relationships with Other Public Agencies or Private Organizations

Elmira Township recently received a grant from their Township's liability insurance provider to purchase new wood chips to place underneath their park's play structure.

OCPR has partnered with the private company Mega Power Sports and Marine of Gaylord to provide kayaks, paddleboards, and pontoon boats for rental by guests at the Otsego Lake County Park. A portion of the rental proceeds is provided to OCPR.

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Chapter 3

Recreation Inventory

The recreation inventories from previous County Recreation Plans were used as a starting point then reviewed and updated to include recent improvements to parks and facilities. Information for the current recreation inventory was gleaned from state, city, village and township governments as well as from the local Chamber of Commerce, private businesses and other County departments. A recreational inventory of all OCPR parks and recreation facilities was originally conducted by NEMCOG during June 2016. Staff visited each park property and updated the physical description and inventory of each facility, including playground equipment, buildings, site furnishings, recreation fields and parking facilities. Facilities not owned by the OCPR or Elmira Township were not all visited for the inventory. Information was provided by some site visits, park staff interviews, current local community master plans and recreation plans, and from internet web sites. During the fall of 2021 limited site visits were conducted at some facilities to verify or update recreation inventory information for this recreation plan update.

Recreational activities are a key factor in establishing the character of Otsego County. State forest land accounts for over 128,000 acres within the County, or 37% of the total land surface. These lands are located primarily in the northeast and southeast sections of the County, along the southern border and west of Otsego Lake. However, each township in the County contains State Land. There are numerous State forest campgrounds, providing over 150 campsites, located within the County. Hiking, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, boating, canoeing, biking, snowshoeing, horseback riding, geo-caching, hunting and fishing are other primary public uses of the County's State forest lands. The location of land owned by the State of Michigan is shown in **Figure 3.1**.

The County's water resources also play an important role in area recreation activity. Public facilities on the lakes include the Otsego Lake State Park and the Otsego Lake County Park/Campgrounds. The State Park is located along the southeast shore of Otsego Lake and includes over 152 campsites on 62 acres with easy access to Otsego Lake for boating and fishing. The County Park is located on 30 acres along the

northwest lake shore. The County Park provides facilities for extensive day use, boating and camping. All 80 campsites have electricity and the campground includes shower facilities, a flush and fill station for camping vehicles and a septic field that was constructed in 1993. Four cabins and two pavilions located along the lake are available for rent.

Many other smaller lakes are located throughout the County, especially through the southern sections. These are used during the summer months for boating, skiing, or fishing. During the winter months, these lakes are used less intensely for skating, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling or ice-fishing.

In addition to the lakes, Otsego County has an extensive system of rivers and wetlands. The Sturgeon, Pigeon, Manistee and Black Rivers all originate in the central portion of the County, while the north and middle branches of the AuSable flow through the southern sections of the County. These rivers offer many opportunities for fishing and canoeing. As with the County's lakes, property along these rivers is valuable for residential purposes.

Guidelines have been established to protect the County's water resources from misuse or over-development. The Otsego County Zoning Ordinance (Article 18) addresses lots near water. The intent of this Ordinance section is to attempt to prevent and control water pollution, to preserve shore land vegetative cover, to maintain the natural beauty of the County water resources. To further the maintenance of safe and healthy conditions of the shore lands of streams, rivers, lakes, and flowages of water within the County. The County also has the ability to protect water resources via the Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Act, No. 347, Public Acts of 1972 and the rules promulgated there under.

OCPR and Elmira Twp. Parks and Facilities

Detailed descriptions of OCPR and Elmira Township owned parks and facilities are described in the section below and illustrated on **Figure 3.1**. These facilities were evaluated for accessible design and given a ranking from 1 to 5, where:

- 1= None of the site elements meet 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design;
- 2 = Some of the elements meet the standards;
- 3 = Most of the elements meet the standards;
- 4 = All of the elements meet the standards; and
- 5 = The entire facility was developed/renovated using the Principles of Universal Design.

Other parks and recreation facilities (not owned/operated by OCPR/Elmira Twp.) that serve the County and/or region are also included in this section, but with less detailed information noted, and are illustrated on **Figures 3.1, 3.4, and 3.5**.

1. Otsego Lake County Park 1657 County Park Road, Gaylord MI 49735

Size: 30 acres

Service Area: local, regional, and state-wide users; occasional national/international users

Purpose: Campground/Day Use Park

Accessibility Rating = 3 (Most of the elements meet ADA standards for Accessible Design)



Otsego Lake County Park provides public access to the west side of Otsego Lake. Park permits are required for motor vehicle entry; rates are listed below. The campground and day use areas are open from May to September; the exception is that lake access at the park is maintained year-round to accommodate ice fishing. Reservations can be made anytime of the year for the camping season. Features of the campground areas include 80 modern wooded campsites, fire pits and electrical hookups at all sites, four lakeside cabins (rentable), paved roads, showers, a flush and fill station for camping vehicles, a short nature trail, and firewood and ice sales. Day use features include a 500-foot sand beach area, boat launch with paved parking area and vault toilet, two pavilions (rentable), an outdoor basketball court, a sand volleyball court, horseshoe pits, a playground and picnic areas. Refer to **Figure 3.2** for a park map.

Most of the park meets barrier-free accessibility guidelines (**Accessibility Ranking = 3**). Most of the toilets and shower facility components are barrier-free. Other accessibly-designed features include two campsites in the south campground, the day use parking area and access route to the boat launch, and some barrier-free picnic tables in the pavilions. Paved roads allow barrier-free access to most facilities.

Vehicle Pass Rates	Day Pass	\$4
	Resident and Non-Resident Season Pass	\$15
	Senior & Veteran Season Pass	\$7
Camping Fees/Night	Otsego County Resident	\$25-\$33
	Non-County Resident	\$26-\$34
	Cabin Rental	\$55-\$90
<i>*Fees vary based on 50-amp service and lakefront sites</i>		

Figure 3.2 Otsego Lake County Park Map



2. Pleasant View Park (Wah Wah Soo) 5200 Wah Wah Soo Dr., Gaylord, MI 49735

Size: 4 acres

Service Area: Otsego County (and visiting tourists)

Purpose: Special Use

Accessibility Rating = 2 (Some of the elements meet ADA standards for Accessible Design)



This county park provides public access, free of charge, to the east side of Otsego Lake. It is located near the intersection of Wah Wah Soo Drive and Old Highway 27. A small, sandy parking area is located across the street from the park. The park includes a buoyed swim area, a sandy beach, two picnic tables, two benches, one grill and vault toilets. Steep steps drop from the road to the beach, and there are no accessible routes to any of the park features. (**Accessibility Ranking = 2**).

3. Dr. Robert S. Libke Memorial Fields 2029 Van Tyle Rd., Gaylord, MI 49735

Size: 5 acres

Service Area: Otsego County

Purpose: Community Park

Accessibility Rating = 2 (Some of the elements meet ADA standards for Accessible Design)



This county park, located just west of the Gaylord Airport, includes a gravel parking lot, two multi-purpose fields, bleachers, and a maintenance shed. The fields are mowed weekly and are used (free of charge) for flag football, soccer practice, frisbee, model airplane flying, school activities and other green space area uses. The fields may be reserved. The entry gates to the fields are wide enough for wheelchair access; however, there is not an accessible route to these features from the parking lot (**Accessibility Ranking = 2**).

4. Frank Wilkinson Park (Irontone Springs) 3549 N. Old US Hwy 27, Gaylord, MI 49735

Size: 4.5 acres

Service Area: Otsego County, Inter- and Intra-state Travelers

Purpose: Mini Park

Accessibility Rating = 2 (Some of the elements meet ADA standards for Accessible Design)



This free, day use, county park is heavily wooded and offers picnic areas and mowed lawn areas along a spring-fed stream. The park includes a rentable pavilion, a barrier-free unisex vault toilet, several picnic tables, four grills, a paved parking area, and two bridges across a flowing stream. It is located just three miles north of Gaylord. The facility was first established and maintained by the Otsego County Road Commission but is now under the control of OCPR. It is used as a location for weddings, family reunions, and senior and prom pictures. The park's signature piece is the artesian well drinking fountain, the water from which has an iron-toned taste, hence the name of the park. Some of the park areas meet accessibility guidelines as the bridge over the brook is wide enough for wheelchair access, the pavilion is paved, electrical outlets are located at an accessible height, barrier-free picnic tables are available and there also is a barrier-free vault toilet and an accessible parking space; however, there are no accessible routes to these features. **(Accessibility Ranking = 2).**

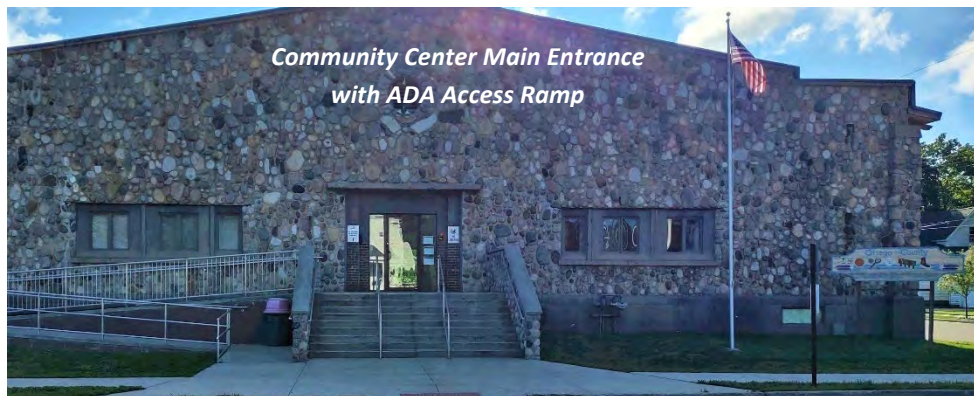
5. Otsego County Community Center 315 S. Center Ave., Gaylord, MI 49735

Size: 1.6 Acres (Note: Otsego County owns the Community Center and the land on which it sits; while the City owns the remainder of the parcel)

Service Area: Otsego County and adjoining counties

Purpose: Community/Neighborhood Recreation Facility

Accessibility Rating = 3 (Most of the site elements meet ADA Standards for Accessible Design)

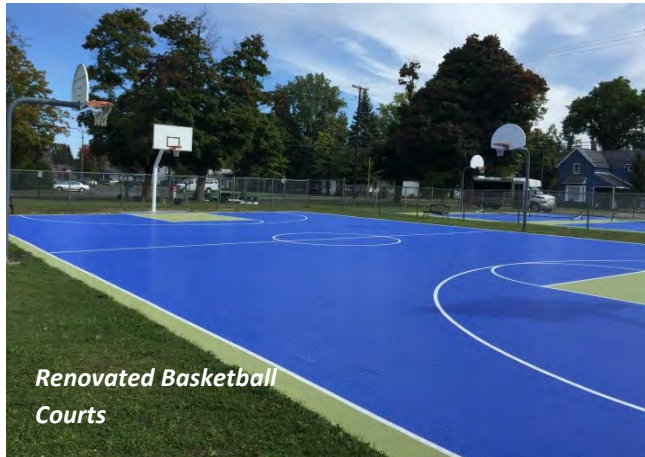


The Community Center is located on a full city block near the center of Downtown Gaylord. Outdoor features consist of one tennis court, a basketball court, and a pickle ball court. Indoor features, which are rentable, include a basketball court and bleachers, game rooms, meeting rooms and lounges. Accessible men's and women's restrooms are located on the main level. Men's and women's locker rooms are located on the lower level (not designed for accessibility). On-street parking is available along the perimeter of the facility, but there are no designated accessible parking spaces. The main entrance to the building is fully accessible, along with a newly constructed, interior accessible ramp which leads to the accessible upper level basketball court viewing area (**Accessibility Ranking = 3**).

Open 6 days a week seasonally, it serves the entire County and residents of other counties who drive to Gaylord for the purpose of participating in one of the center's recreational programs. It particularly serves area youth in grades 4-12; most weekdays from 3-5 pm is reserved for open gym for student use. Summer hours may vary.

5. Otsego County Community Center, continued:

OCPR completed a \$55,000+ project in the summer of 2016 which included the resurfacing of the existing tennis courts and the outdoor basketball court with modular polymer mesh (user- and weather friendly material, allowing users to play on the surface soon after a rain); resurfacing a second basketball court with modular polymer mesh and temporarily converting it to three pickleball courts; replacing damaged fencing around the perimeter of the courts; repainting basketball poles and tennis backing; and replacing two light poles with new lights that face in both directions to light the tennis and basketball courts. The courts were finished in the U.S. Open blue and green color scheme. More recently, the OCPRC completed a \$200,000+ project to install a new gym floor, install a handicap accessible ramp at the front door, complete needed drainage improvements around the building. These projects markedly changed the look and function of the interior and exterior of the Center while offering improved facilities and more recreational options for all ages.



6. Louis M. Groen Nature Preserve 2043 Gingell Road, Johannesburg, MI 49751

Size: 764 Acres

Service Area: Otsego County/Region, with some Statewide, National and International visitors

Purpose: Regional Park

Accessibility Rating = 2 (Some of the site elements meet ADA Accessible Design Standards)



The Louis M. Groen Nature Preserve (Preserve) was acquired by OCPR in 2012. It is a free, day use nature preserve located southeast of Gingell Road and Waters Road in Johannesburg, Michigan and is a significant natural feature located in Otsego County. The latest phase expanded the nature preserve to 789 acres. Maintenance is funded with an established trust fund from the Groen family. The property contains Kujawa and Johannesburg Lakes, along with being the former home of both the Johannesburg Manufacturing Company as well as Echo Valley Ranch. There are 24 miles of trails for hiking, geocaching, snowshoeing, mountain biking, groomed cross-county skiing and equestrian use. Equestrians are allowed on Sundays and Mondays during Daylight Savings time hours; biking is not allowed on those days. Local school groups use the trails for cross country training/events and environmental science classes.

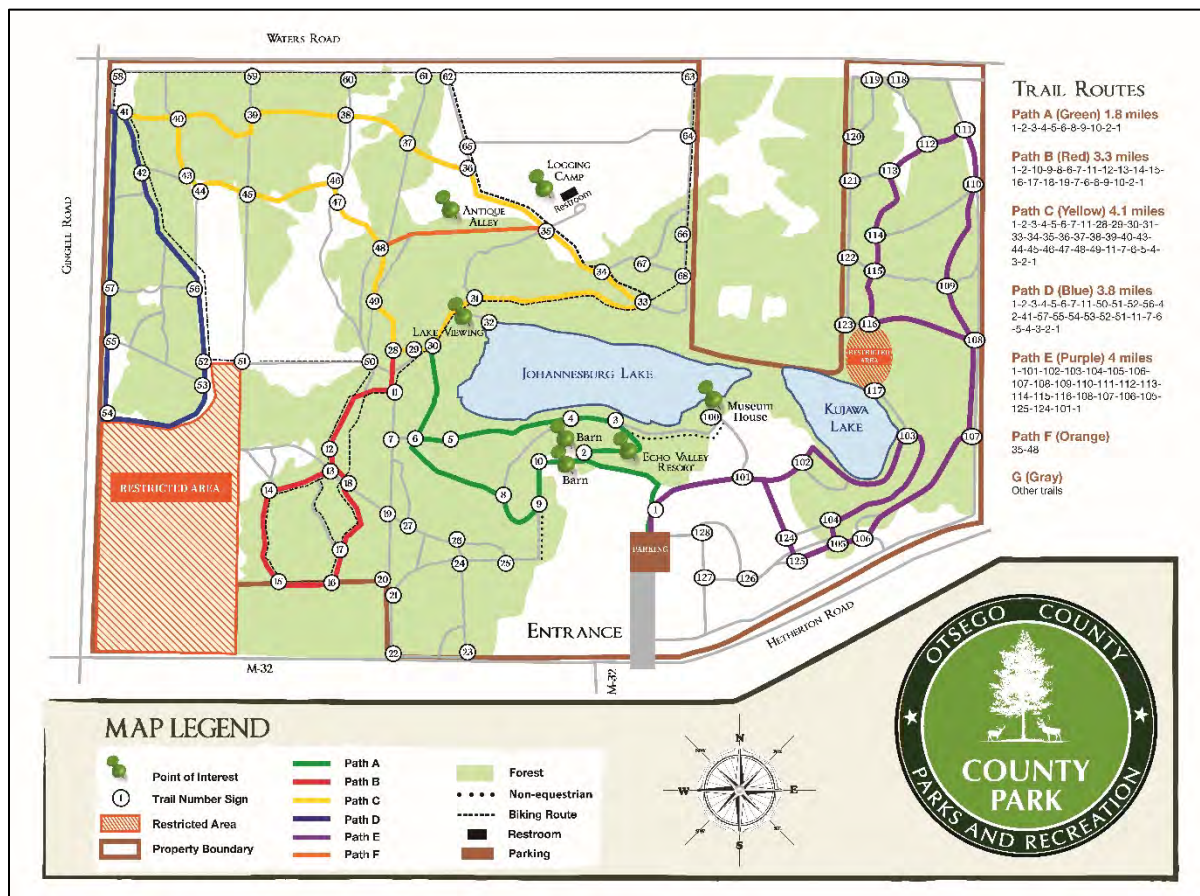
Improvements at the entrance in the northwest corner of the park include a gravel parking lot, small welcome center building, maintenance shed, portable restroom, trailhead information, hitching posts, picnic tables, pavilion, additional parking area and garbage cans. Natural gas extraction sites are scattered throughout the site.

6. Louis M. Groen Nature Preserve, continued:

There is an accessible, heated restroom building in the northeast portion of the park (former logging camp area) along with an accessible water fountain, accessible picnic tables, a water trough and hitching post for horses, trash cans and a kiosk. The trails consist of grassy two-tracks, gravel/dirt or woodchip surfaces and are wide and well-marked at each intersection; however there are areas of steep running slopes and cross-slopes. **(Accessibility Ranking = 2).**

According to the Master Plan for this nature preserve, planned improvements include restoring the historic sawmill and associated buildings to help educate people about this important part of Johannesburg history. Twenty-five acres of adjoining property was acquired by OCPD to allow for additional recreation activities, including the development of a museum and nature center. A new entrance drive and parking area is being constructed by OCPD on the south side of the preserve near Johannesburg and will be completed and open to the public soon. A trust fund was established by the Groen family for the operation and maintenance of this facility; therefore it is operated at zero cost to OCPD. A park map is illustrated below:

Figure 3.3 – Louis M. Groen Nature Preserve Map



7. Otsego County Sportsplex/Energy Outlet 1250 Gornik Ave., Gaylord, MI 49735

Size: 11 Acres in total; Sportsplex is 68,500 sq. ft.; Energy Outlet is 83,200 sq. ft. or 1.91 acres

Service Area: Otsego County and adjoining communities

Purpose: Sports Complex

Accessibility Rating = 4 (All of the site elements meet ADA Standards for Accessible Design)



The Energy Outlet



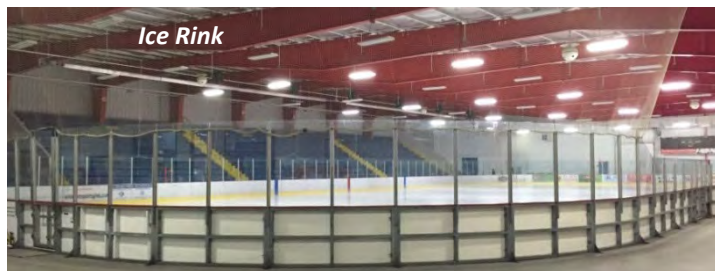
Pavilion



Playground Entrance



Aquatics Complex



Ice Rink

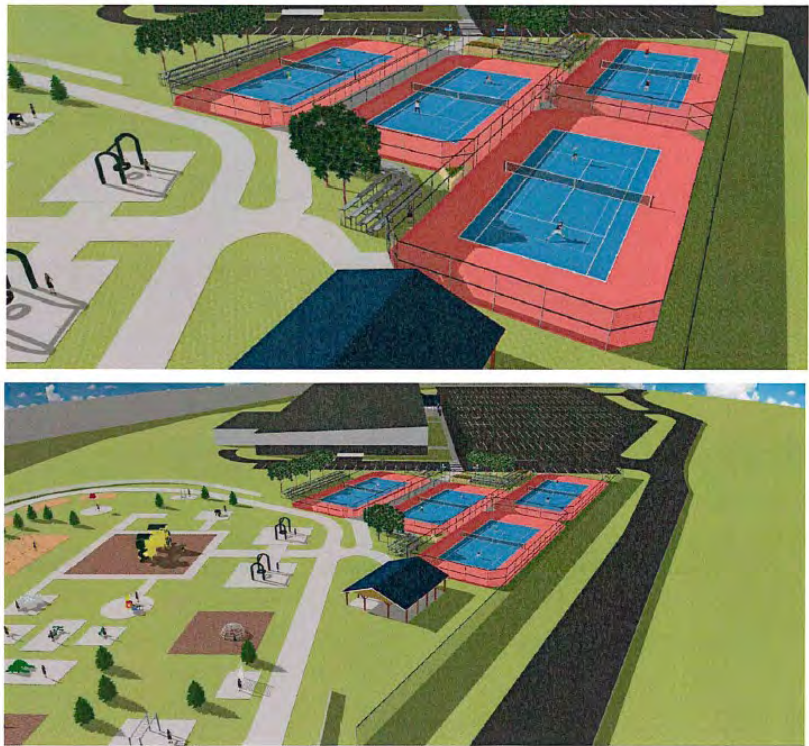
Otsego County owns this Sports Complex and its' recreational opportunities, which consist of an indoor aquatics complex, ice rink, event rooms, a 1/8 mile indoor walking track around the ice rink, a concessions area, lockers and locker rooms, and an outdoor playground complex. The indoor facilities can be rented out. There is an Operational Agreement between the County and the "Otsego County Sportsplex (Sportsplex)," a Michigan non-profit corporation, which allows the Sportsplex to operate and manage the facility. Pool activities include swimming lessons/team swim, water aerobics, open swim, lifeguard classes and a kayak club. Ice rink activities include hockey and skating lessons, hockey leagues, open skate, and curling. Other offerings include a Summer Day Camp, fitness classes (yoga, spinning and karate), pickleball and ping pong. The Energy Outlet consists of a large outdoor playground with a variety of play features. A ¼ mile paved track and maintained gardens surround the playground. Other features include a pavilion, several picnic tables, bike racks and a portable restroom. With the exception

7. Otsego County Sportsplex/Energy Outlet, continued:

of a lack of an accessible route to the portable restroom at the Energy Outlet, the facility is 100 percent barrier-free and fully accessible (**Accessibility Ranking = 4**).

The City of Gaylord recently closed its skateboard park. The City and the Otsego County Sportsplex are planning on relocating the park to the northern portion of the Sportsplex property. The City would own the skateboard park equipment and would have an agreement with the Sportsplex to provide a location. The City and Sportsplex plan on entering into an agreement defining responsibilities of maintenance.

There are two additional planned improvements to the Sportsplex. The Alpine Regional Tennis Association intends to help secure funding for financing and construction of four adjacent outdoor tennis courts adjoining the Energy Outlet playground. Four outdoor courts (conceptual design shown below) would allow for increased access for people of all ages to learn and play tennis, allow for development of high school tennis teams and provide a site for tennis tournaments. Funds will be secured from various grants such as the MDNR Passport and Trust Funds, United States Tennis Association and local fundraising. The second improvement is construction of a multi-purpose facility to allow for expanded recreational access for county residents, providing a place to play and teach sports such as tennis, baseball, football, cheerleading, etc. during the winter months. The Sportsplex will have plans in place for maintenance of these facilities prior to beginning construction.



8. Pontresina Park (Dog Park) 540 S. Illinois Avenue, Gaylord, MI 49735

Size: 1.4 Acres

Service Area: Primarily Otsego County

Purpose: Special Use Park

Accessibility Rating = 2 (Some of the site elements meet ADA Standards for Accessible Design)



Dog Park Entrance



Pavilion



Pontresina Park is located three blocks south of Main Street, west of Otsego Avenue, in Gaylord. The site, part of a 9-acre parcel, was formerly owned by the MDNR and was transferred into ownership by Otsego County in 2005. The park was developed with grants, in-kind donations and volunteer work from the Otsego County Community Foundation, private funds, the Rotary Club of Gaylord, Otsego County Animal Control, local businesses and individuals. The park opened in June 2014 and is open from May 1 through Oct. 31 during daylight hours. The park is currently maintained by the Otsego County Parks & Recreation.

A gravel entrance drive and parking lot leading to two fenced, grassy dog park areas - one for small dogs less than 19 pounds and one for large dogs over 20 pounds. The site also includes a maintenance shed, benches, water spigots, shade trees, picnic tables and dog waste bag dispensers with garbage cans are located throughout the park.

Some of the features are barrier free, such as the pavilion's concrete foundation and picnic tables and the route from the parking lot to the dog park entry gates. However, there is not an accessible route to the pavilion, bleachers, benches, or waste containers; benches inside the dog park are not designed for accessibility; there are no signed accessible parking spaces; and water spigots are not placed at an accessible reaching distance. **Accessibility Ranking = 2.**

9. Otsego County Courthouse Plaza 225 W Main St #204, Gaylord, MI 49735

Size: Less than 1 acre

Service Area: Primarily Otsego County

Purpose: Special Use Park

Accessibility Rating = 4 (All of the site elements meet ADA Standards for Accessible Design)



The Otsego County Courthouse Plaza is located along the north side of the courthouse, adjoining Main Street and the covered pavilion on South Court Avenue (which hosts the farmer's market). In 2012 and 2013, the County of Otsego was involved in a community-wide process to improve the traffic congestion and air quality in downtown Gaylord along with creating a pedestrian-friendly environment that will draw people to the downtown. The central downtown location of the Courthouse is an ideal location to create an activity center for people to gather when shopping or pursuing outdoor recreational activities in the area. Completed improvements for the plaza include an interactive water fountain and café style seating. The plaza design also incorporates the historic naval cannon, veterans memorial, several historic plaques, and an ice tree that provide for a unique year-round experience and activities for people of all ages. The intent is for the plaza to complement the parks system throughout the County and draw more people downtown and to the North Central State Trail, where a new Iron Belle Trail trailhead was recently completed by the City of Gaylord just one block away from the courthouse.

10. Otsego County Fairgrounds 213 Fairview Road, Gaylord, MI 49735

Size: 12.12 acres

Service Area: Otsego County and the Northern Lower Peninsula

Purpose: Regional Park

Accessibility Rating = 2 (Some of the site elements meet ADA Standards for Accessible Design)

This property is a rectangular-shaped, flat parcel of mowed grass that adjoins the main Otsego County Fairgrounds complex to the north. A paved access road bisects the site in a north-south direction, serving as the main access point to the Fairgrounds complex. Otsego County acquired this parcel of land in 1986 and has leased it to the Fairgrounds Board for their use as primarily a parking and staging area for special events held at the Fairgrounds annually from April through October.



Looking south from the northern entrance



Looking southwest from the northern entrance

11. Elmira Township Park Village of Elmira, MI 49730

Size: 1.61 acres

Service Area: Elmira Township and the Village of Elmira

Purpose: Neighborhood Park

Accessibility Rating = 1 (None of the site elements meet ADA Standards for Accessible Design)



Located approximately 10 miles west of Gaylord and just south of M-32, Elmira Township Park is comprised of four parcels of land bordered by Lincoln Street, Sanborn Street, Harvest Street, Mt. Jack Road, Curtis Street and Jordan Street. It is owned and operated by Elmira Township. The northwest portion of the site consists of a wooden play structure with a woodchip landing surface, mowed fields, a smaller plastic playset, swing set with two functioning swings, slide, sandbox, in-ground play features (some in disrepair), three picnic tables, and trash cans. The southeast quarter of the site consists of a basketball court with one basketball hoop and a volleyball court area. The remainder of the site is mowed grass. An access road with a portable restroom separates the northern triangular-shaped parcel (acquired by the Township in 2012 from the Otsego County Road Commission) from the remainder of the park. The northeast parcel on the site (a partially fenced, grassy area) was acquired by Elmira Township from the Coan Family in 2012. None of the features of this park meet accessibility guidelines.

Elmira Township has utilized the assistance of community volunteers to help with maintenance projects such as recently installing new wood chips underneath the play structure in their park and restoring the tower structure for the historical Elmira Agricultural School bell. The site of the park was originally the location of the Elmira Agricultural School. Gaylord Community Schools recently donated an historical school bell associated with the former Elmira Agricultural School to Elmira Township for future placement in their park. A community volunteer will re-build the wooden bell tower for the park.

Recreation Grant Inventory

Otsego County has received four recreation grants from the MDNR, descriptions of which are described below. The required PCSC Reports are included in the Appendix. Elmira Township has applied for one MNRTF grant in the past 5 years, but has not been awarded a recreation grant.

Table 3.1 – Otsego County Recreation Grants

Grant # /Year	Project Title & Status	Project Scope	Project Description	Current Condition
26-01217 / 1981	Otsego Lake County Park - LWCF Grant for \$30,000; Grant Closed	Bury overhead wires; campground (40 sites); 2 drinking fountains; picnic equipment, roadway; 6 vault toilets; well	Develop parking lot improvements, picnic sites, play equipment, restrooms with utilities, wire burial and LWCF sign	Well maintained and in good condition; campgrounds frequently utilized by patrons; LWCF Grant Plaque on display near cmpgrd. entrance
TF86-115 / 1986	Otsego County Fairgrounds Expansion MNRTF Grant for \$30,000; Grant Closed		To acquire approximately 11 acres adjacent to the Otsego County Fairgrounds	Well maintained and in good condition; MNRTF plaque on display at entrance
BF90-277 / 1990	Otsego [Lake] County Park Bond Fund for \$49,300; Grant Closed	4" well; addl. dwgs. & plans; contingencies; dump station, water tower; electrical for pumps; electricity to campsites; septic system	Upgrading of the septic facilities and development of the campground and pump station to provide good use and protection of Otsego Lake.	Well maintained and in good condition.
CM00-026 / 2000	Otsego Lake County Park 20-Site Development Clean MI Initiative for \$139,848; Grant Closed	2 privy and 2 lavatory; 2" PVC SDR-21 watermain, culvert & end; 20 fire pits; 20 picnic tables; drinking fountain; potable water fill; electric svc & pedestals; fence; footpath FIBAR; roads – grading, gravel, asphalt; roadway & campsite clearings	Develop 7 acres at Otsego Lake County Park to include 20 modern camping sites, paved roads, electricity, safe lights, privy and potable water swimming.	Well maintained and in good condition; campgrounds frequently utilized by patrons; CMI Grant Plaque on display near campground entrance
69-069 / 2008	Otsego Lake County Park – MDNRE & State Waterways Commission Grant		Dredging channel, ramp construction, skid pier construction, parking lot paving, sidewalk, new vault toilet. Completed in 2011	Well maintained and in good condition; regularly used by the public/park patrons; Grant recognition sign on display by boat launch.

Grant # /Year	Project Title & Status	Project Scope	Project Description	Current Condition
TF16-0016 / 2016	Otsego County Sportsplex Tennis Courts – MNRTF Grant for \$300,000; Grant Closed	Access Pathway 5-6' Wide; Rain Garden with native plants; Benches; Bike Rack; Fencing; Landscaping; Recycling Bins; Tennis Courts	Development of four adjacent outdoor tennis courts at the popular Otsego County Sportsplex to allow for the growth of tennis programs in Otsego County.	Well maintained and in good condition; regularly used by the public/park patrons
TF16-0067 / 2016	Iron Belle Trail Otsego County South Development - \$2,320,700; Grant Closed	Trail 6' wide or more; Benches; Informational Kiosk; Fencing; Signage	Development of an eleven-mile multi-purpose pathway from Waters northerly to Wisconsin Ave in Gaylord. The trail will be located within the right-of-way of the Lake State Railroad which runs along Old Highway 27, south through much of the project limits, lending itself to good visibility by motorists, but far enough off the road to provide separation for safety and comfort of trail users. The entire trail, which runs parallel to the rail corridor, is currently used as a regional snowmobile trail and is part of Michigan's Iron Belle Trail.	Well maintained and in good condition; highly used
26-01863 / 2021	Otsego Lake County Park Campground Drainage Improvements; NPS Approval Pending	Campsite(s) Fire Pit(s) Landscaping Picnic Table(s) Rain Garden with Native Plants	Renovation of approximately 30 individual campsites at Otsego Lake County Park, a seasonal use campground located on the west side of Otsego Lake. The project will help prevent storm water from ponding in the middle of campsites which makes it difficult	Ongoing grant project

			for campers to enjoy these sites or makes the sites unusable after rain events.	
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Other Park & Recreation Facilities in Otsego County (not owned/operated by Otsego County)

Otsego County area residents have a wide variety of other public and privately owned recreation sites to choose from. For example, there are over approximately 90 miles of “wilderness trails”, which are either owned by the state or private landowners, and are open to hiking, biking, equestrian, and cross-country skiing use. There are also 93 miles of signed, groomed snowmobile trails throughout and near Otsego County. Several of these snowmobile trails are also shared with ORV users, and are owned or leased by the State.

Over 20 golf courses are located within and surrounding Otsego County. This includes 15 of Gaylord’s “Golf Mecca” association courses and resorts, shown in **Figure 3.5 on page 3-23**.

There are also three major regional and intra-state trail systems that are located within the county; these are described in detail below. Following that information is a list of other public and privately owned/operated recreational facilities within each Otsego County community, such as multiple rustic State-owned campsites, fishing/boating access sites and a State Park/Campground. Many of those facilities are identified in **Figure 3.1 on page 3-3 and Figure 3.4 on page 3-22**.

Intra-State and Regional Trails

The Iron Belle Trail

The “Iron Belle Trail” (IBT), a planned trail through the State of Michigan to connect Belle Isle in Detroit to Ironwood in the western Upper Peninsula, traverses Otsego County in a North-South direction. The existing North Central State Trail (part of the IBT route) ends approximately four blocks north of downtown Gaylord, and has a 10-foot wide, crushed limestone surface. There are three on-going projects in the County to complete and enhance the IBT from the southern Otsego County line to the North Central State Trail that runs through Vanderbilt.

Otsego County worked with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Bagley Township, Otsego Lake Township, the City of Gaylord, and the Gaylord Area Convention and Tourism Bureau on the establishment of a downtown Gaylord trailhead for the IBT/North Central State Trail and have extended the 10-foot wide trail from i Fairview Avenue in Gaylord for approximately 12.85 miles south to the county

border. 1.65 miles of the trail, south of Fairview Avenue through the City of Gaylord, is designated the “Gaylord Gateway Trail” and has an asphalt surface. Further south of the City limits, the trail extends for 11.2 miles and has a crushed limestone surface. This segment is known as the “Otsego County South Trail”. Part of the project includes a connection to the Otsego County Sportsplex and Energy Outlet, where there is parking and restroom facilities, on the north end of this trail section. Further south, the trail connects directly to Wah Wah Soo County Park and Otsego Lake State Park, and adjoins Otsego Lake Township Hall in the community of Waters, which has parking and facilities. A map of the Iron Belle Trail development through Gaylord to the southern county border is shown as **Figure 3.4 on page 3-22**.

The Village of Vanderbilt and the Corwith Township worked together to create a trailhead on the existing North Central State Trail in Vanderbilt as part of the IBT. Improvements include parking, tennis courts, a pavilion, half basketball court, exercise equipment, restroom, and a library story trail.

Shore-to-Shore Trail

The Michigan Shore-to-Shore Trail is over 220 miles long that connects Lake Huron (Oscoda) to Lake Michigan (Empire). The North Spur of this trail is located in the eastern portion of Otsego County, and connects to Crawford County to the south and Cheboygan County to the north. Primarily used by horseback riders, the trail is also open to hikers and cross-country skiers. Elk Hill State Forest Equestrian Campground/Trail Camp (in Corwith Township) and Johnson’s Crossing Trail Camp (in Charlton Township) serve as equestrian campsites along this route in the County. The Michigan DNR owns and/or operates this trail.

High Country Pathway

The High Country Pathway is a 80+ mile trail system that runs through the heart of Pigeon River Country in the northeast portion of Otsego County (Corwith Twp. and Charlton Twp.), as well as Montmorency and Cheboygan Counties. It is designed to provide the more enthusiastic backpacker and mountain biker with about one week of high quality outdoor adventure. In Otsego County, the Pathway connects to and is accessible by Pigeon Bridge State Forest Campground, Pigeon River State Forest Campground and Round Lake State Forest Campground. The trail provides access to the Pigeon River and Black River. Part of this trail is also connected with and shares part of the Shingle Mill Pathway System. The Michigan DNR owns and/or operates this trail.

Figure 3.4 Otsego County's Portion of the Iron Belle Trail Development

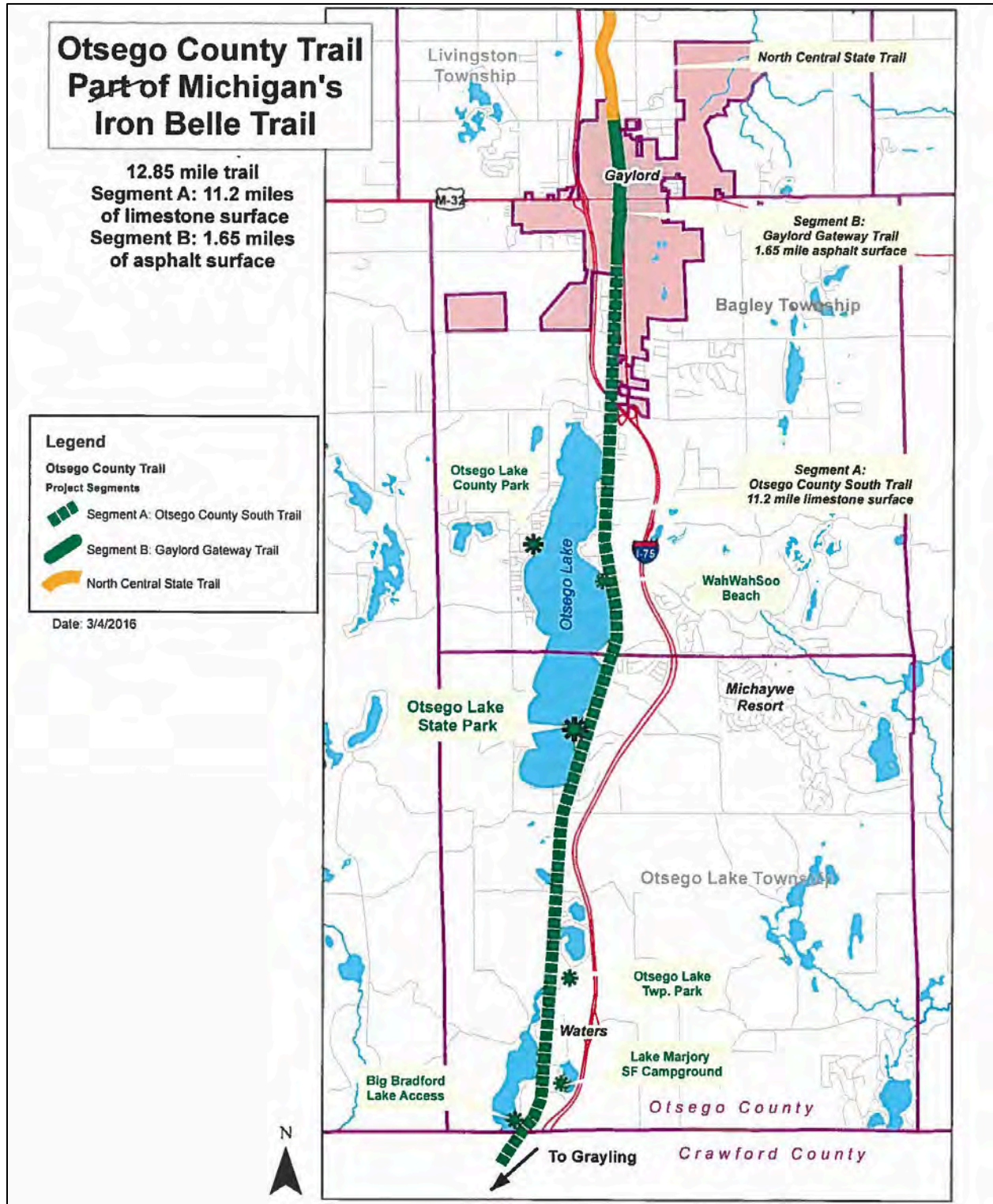
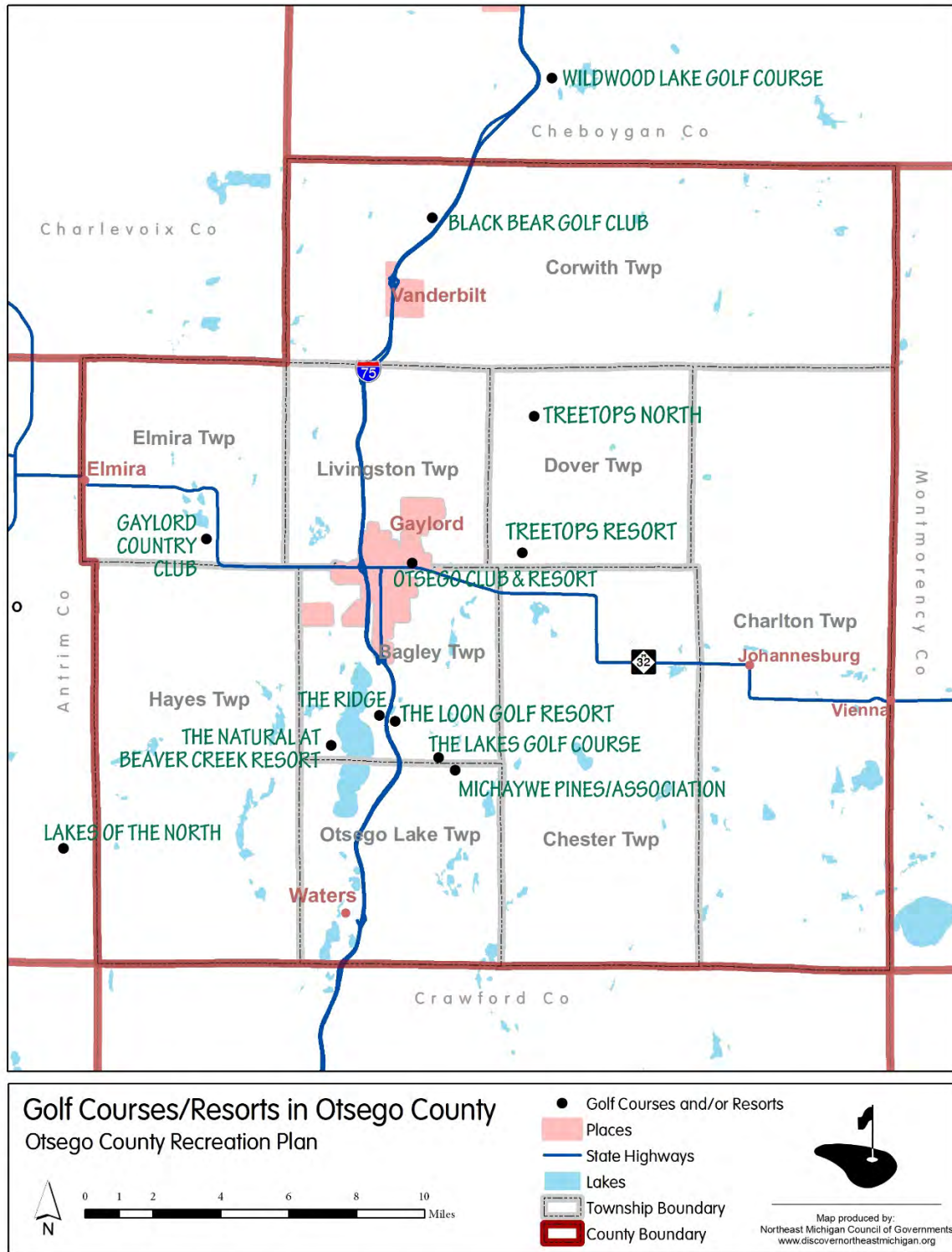


Figure 3.5 – Golf Courses and Resorts in Otsego County



Recreational Facilities by Community in Otsego County

BAGLEY TOWNSHIP

Name	Ownership /Operation	Description	Location
Hutchins Little League Park	Private – Gaylord Little League non-profit	6 little league ball fields and 1 t-ball field	South of M-32 on Little League Drive, just outside of Gaylord’s city limits
The Loon Golf Resort	Private	Offers three 18-hole golf courses :“The Loon”, “The Lakes” and “The Ridge (formerly Marsh Ridge Golf Course”) and accommodations via lodges, cabins, townhomes and dining.	4400 Championship Drive, Gaylord, MI 49735; 4400 Championship Drive Gaylord, Michigan 49735; 4815 S Old 27, Gaylord, MI 49735
Michaywe’ Association (partially in Bagley Twp)	Private	4-season recreation and residential community of over 950 homes with an 18-hole golf course “Michaywe’ Pines” and cross-country skiing and hiking trail. Clubhouse, beach, tennis courts and pool are for members only.	1535 Opal Lake Road, Gaylord MI 49735
Benjamin’s Beaver Creek Resort	Private	80 acre resort with 18-hole golf course “The Natural”; snowmobile rentals and tours, rental cabins, and modern log cabin-style condominiums. An RV campground adjoins to the north. Open to membership and the public for reservations. Swim, hiking, biking, playground, mini-golf and waterslide.	5004 W. Otsego Lake Drive, Gaylord, MI 49735 (about 5 miles southwest of Gaylord); golf course is at 4706 W Otsego Lake Dr, Gaylord, MI 49735
Gaylord KOA Campground	Private	Campground with swimming, playground, mini golf, horseshoes, shuffleboard, volleyball and biking.	5101 Campfires Parkway, Gaylord, MI 49735
Corey Cove Shores Resort	Private	Furnished cabin rentals, year-round; boat slip and launch on Otsego Lake	5545 Corey Cove Ave., Gaylord, MI 49735
Lambert’s Lakeside Lodges	Private	Furnished cabin rentals, year-round; Otsego Lake access	5591 Corey Cove, Ave., Gaylord, MI 49735
Sojurn Lakeside Resort	Private	35 wooded acres with 20 rooms/suites, great hall, private beach access on Dixon Lake	2332 E. Dixon Lake Road, Gaylord, MI 49735
Northland Sportsman’s Club	Private non-profit	Family- oriented club; focus is outdoor activities and conservation of natural resources. Skeet shooting, archery range, rifle range, meeting hall.	1592 Old Alba Rd, Gaylord, MI 49735
Dixon Lake Public Access	MDNR	Fishing, swimming, boat launch, vault toilets.	East part of the township

BAGLEY TOWNSHIP, CONTINUED			
Name	Ownership/ Operation	Description	Location
Iron Belle Trail	MDNR & Otsego County	Multi-use, crushed limestone trail; described on page 3-18.	Central portion of Twp. in a N-S direction
Snowmobile trails No 4, 7, and 774	MDNR	Part of the Big Bear-Crapo Creek Trail and North Branch Route open to motorcycles, ATV, ORV	Northwest, central and southeast portions of the township
Gaylord Schools Plantation	Gaylord School District	The school district uses this 62.36 acre site with hiking trails for forestry studies	NW portion of Twp; S. of M-32
Otsego Christian School	Private Elementary School	Multi-purpose room; outdoor playground with swings & other standard equipment, basketball court, soccer practice field.	1377 M-32 East
Arbutus Beach	Private	Small unincorporated resort settlement on east side of Otsego Lake	Near southern boundary of Twp.
Ellison Place	Private	Large event and conference space used for weddings, banquets, fundraisers, and consumer and trade shows.	150 Dale Dr
Pine Cone Accommodations	Private	Pine Cone Inn & Suites and vacation cabin rentals. Vacation/resort rental homes throughout Otsego County. Vacation real estate services	Inn on Charles Brink Rd in Bagley Twp. Other vacation rentals county-wide

CHARLTON TOWNSHIP

Name	Ownership/ Operation	Description	Location
Charlton Township Park	Charlton Township	Community park with a pavilion, play structures, swings, a tennis court, basketball court and a baseball field.	On Rowan Street in Johannesburg
Johannesburg-Lewiston High School	Johannesburg-Lewiston School District	Baseball/softball field, football field, basketball court (gymnasium), track, tennis courts, playground.	10854 M-32, Johannesburg, MI 49751
Big Bear Lake State Forest Campground	MDNR	Rustic campground with 30 sites for tent and small trail use, and 11 sites that for up to 40' long trailers. Hiking and biking on the 2.2 mile paved Big Bear Lake Path. Fishing, swimming, boat launch.	Southeast portion of the township.
Big Bear Point State Forest Campground	MDNR	14 rustic campsites. Fishing, swimming, boat launch, hiking and biking trails.	Southeast portion of the township.
Johnson's Crossing Trail Camp	MDNR	Rustic campground can accommodate up to 100 equestrians with tents and small trailers; along the Shore-to-Shore Trail.	Pigeon River State Forest; N. portion of the township.
W. Twin Lake Access Site	MDNR	Boat launch, skid pier, fishing, swimming.	SE portion of the township.
Shore-to-Shore Trail	MDNR	Hiking, horseback riding, XC skiing.	N-S direction in the east half of the township.

CHARLTON TOWNSHIP, CONTINUED			
Name	Ownership/ Operation	Description	Location
High Country Pathway	MDNR	Hiking, mountain biking, XC skiing	NE corner of the Twp.
Big Bear – Crapo Creek Trail System and North Branch Route	MDNR	Part of a 61.5 mile trail system (extends to the west into Chester Twp. and Bagley Twp. and east into Montmorency County) for ORV and motorcycle use.	Southern portion of the township
Snowmobile Trail #448 & #4	MDNR	Snowmobile trails; shared with part of Big Bear-Crapo Creek Trail system	Southern portion of the township.

CHESTER TOWNSHIP

Name	Ownership/ Operation	Description	Location
Big Lake Public Access Site	MDNR	Boat launch, fishing, swimming, vault toilets, watercraft controls, stocked by DNR	Northeast portion of the township
Emerald Lake Public Access Site	MDNR	Boat launch, fishing, swimming, vault toilets.	Along west-central township boundary
Big Bass Lake Public Access Site	MDNR	Boat launch, fishing, swimming, vault toilets.	East-central part of Twp.
N. Branch AuSable River (tributaries) Public Access	MDNR	5 miles of public access for fishing	Southern portion of the Twp.
Lower Chub Lake	MDNR	Fishing, swimming	SW part of twp.
Snowmobile Route No. 4	MDNR	Snowmobile Route; shared with part of Big Bear/Crapo Creek Trail system	Central portion of the Twp. running NW/SE
Chester Township Hall	Township	The Township Hall can be rented for hosting events	1737 Big Lake Rd, Gaylord, MI 49735

CORWITH TOWNSHIP

Name	Ownership/ Operation	Description	Location
Black Bear Golf Club	Private	18-hole golf course and clubhouse	1500 Alexander Rd, Vanderbilt, MI 49795
Treetops “North” Golf Courses / Condo Assn.	Private	Contains four 18-hole golf courses: “Premier”, “Threetops”, “Tradition” and “Signature”.	4282 Fazio Drive, Gaylord, MI 49735
Song of the Morning Yoga Retreat	Non-Profit – Golden Lotus, Inc.	800 acres along the Pigeon River for yoga retreats, workshops and yoga teacher training	9607 E. Sturgeon Valley Road, Vanderbilt, MI 49795
North Spur Shore-to-Shore Trail	MDNR	Hiking, horseback riding, xc skiing.	N-S direction in the east half of the township, in the Pigeon River Country State Forest
High Country Pathway	MDNR	Hiking, biking, XC skiing	Pigeon River Country State Forest; NE part of Twp.

CORWITH TOWNSHIP, CONTINUED			
Name	Ownership/ Operation	Description	Location
Shingle Mill Pathway	MDNR	14 miles of hike/bike trails; consists of 5 trail loops ranging from 0.75 to 11 miles long	Pigeon River Country State Forest; east part of Twp.
North Central State Trail/Iron Belle Trail	MDNR	A multi-purpose, non-motorized pathway in the summer and snowmobile trail in the winter. Crushed limestone surface. NCST extends 62 miles from Gaylord to Mackinaw City.	North and south of Vanderbilt; east of and somewhat parallel to I-75 in the western portion of the Twp.
North Country State Trail Trailhead Park	Vanderbilt	New trailhead along the Iron Belle/North Central State Trail	Downtown Vanderbilt
Sturgeon River Access	MDNR	Public access for fishing	Old Vanderbilt Road, Sturgeon Valley Road
Pigeon River Public Access	MDNR	Public access points for fishing	Old Vanderbilt Road, Sturgeon Valley Road and Ford Lake Road
Black River Public Access	MDNR	Public access points for fishing	Black River Tr, the Tin Shanty Road bridge, and Chandler Dam Rd
Pickerel Lake State Forest Campground	MDNR	Public access for fishing and swimming with 39 rustic campgrounds for tents and moderately sized trailers. Includes universally accessible campground facilities and the trailhead for the <u>1.9 mile Pickerel Lake Pathway</u> for hiking and biking.	Pigeon River Country State Forest
Elk Hill Equestrian State Forest Campground and Trail Camp	MDNR	Accommodates equestrian and non-equestrian campers; 10 rustic campsites for tents and small trailer use. Fishing access on Pigeon River.	Pigeon River Country State Forest, along the Shore-to-Shore Trail
Pigeon River Bridge State Forest Campground	MDNR	Public access site for trout fishing; 10 rustic campsites, picnic tables and hiking/biking trails.	Pigeon River Country State Forest
Pigeon River State Forest Campground	MDNR	This is a scenic and densely wooded area with public hunting and fishing areas and a boat launch. It also includes several miles of trails for biking, hiking, cross-county skiing and horseback riding. 19 rustic camping sites for tent and small trailer use, vault toilets and potable water from well hand pump. This State forest has the largest herd of free-roaming elk located east of the Mississippi River.	Pigeon River Country State Forest

CORWITH TOWNSHIP, CONTINUED			
Name	Ownership/ Operation	Description	Location
Round Lake State Forest Campground	MDNR	Public access for swimming and fishing. Campground and hiking/biking trails.	Pigeon River Country State Forest
*Town Corner Lake State Forest Campground	MDNR	Public fishing area and campground. Connects to the High Country Pathway.	*Immediately adjoining to the west in Montmorency County
Pigeon River Discovery Center	MDNR, Discovery Center Steering Committee	A 1930's historic log cabin used as a discovery center to promote natural resource and recreation opportunities in the PRCSF, host environmental education programs, and teach visitors about the history of the PRCSF.	9984 Twin Lakes Rd directly adjacent to the PRCSF Headquarters.
Towerman's Watch Pathway	MDNR	3.2 and 3.8 mile trail loops for hiking through the Pigeon River Country State Forest and along the Pigeon River	Pigeon River County State Forest – pathway begins at the PRCSF Headquarters and Discovery Center

DOVER TOWNSHIP

Name	Ownership/ Operation	Description	Location
Treetops Resort	Private	A 4-season ski and golf resort community. This property, known as "Treetops South", features an 18-hole golf course, "Masterpiece", along with 23 alpine ski runs, cross-country ski trails, snowmobiling, golf instruction, children's summer camp, spa, three restaurants, resort lodging, and special events hosting.	3962 Wilkinson Road, Gaylord, MI 49735

ELMIRA TOWNSHIP

Elmira Township has requested to be included in the Otsego County Recreation Plan Update. The Township has completed the recreation inventory that is listed below and has included proposed projects in the Action Plan.

Name	Ownership /Operation	Description	Location
Elmira Township Park	Elmira Twp.	A free, day-use facility in Elmira with a playground, basketball court, grass volleyball area and picnic tables.	Approximately 10 miles west of Gaylord, south of M-32.
Lake 27 Public Access Site	MDNR	Boat launch (car top boat and canoes only), vault toilets, swimming and fishing access. 6 paved parking spaces.	Northwest side of Lake 27
Gaylord Golf Club	Private	18-hole golf course offering clinics, leagues, driving range, special events hosting, and food/beverage service. Open to members and the general public. Opened in 1975.	4893 M-32 West, Gaylord, MI 49735
Snowmobile Trail #76, Chandler Hills Trail, and Kalkaska to Tomahawk MCCCT	MDNR	These trails are shared and overlap in the northwest portion of the Township. The Chandler Hills Trail is open to motorbikes and motorcycles, and the Michigan Cross Country Cycle Trail (MCCCT) is open to motorcycles.	NW portion of the Twp.
Lost Valley Bible Camp	Private	Offers a children's camp and retreat packages for the Christian community. Open May to mid-October. Wooded setting along Pettifor Lake. Amenities include a gym, sports fields, basketball, volleyball, disc golf, softball, soccer, climbing/ropes course, game room, hiking, hayrides, beach, go carts, RV camping, meeting rooms.	5724 M-32 W., Gaylord, MI 49735
Camp Sancta Maria	Private	Christian youth camp. 96 acres of wooded property offering ropes course, beach, horseback riding. Grounds border Lake 27 and Martin Lake.	5361 W. M-32, Gaylord, 49735
Fleming Farms	Private	A working farm used for agricultural tourism. Offers farm tours for school groups; a petting zoo; and seasonal fall pumpkin patch, corn maze and hay rides.	4264 Martindale Road, Gaylord, MI 49735

HAYES TOWNSHIP

Name	Ownership/Operation	Description	Location
Pine Baron Pathway	Jointly funded and operated by the MDNR, Otsego County, Gaylord Convention and Tourism Bureau and Hayes Twp.	7 mile mountain bike trail; 2 miles of paved trail; in the winter the 2 mile path is lighted at night and groomed for XC skiing	NW portion of the Twp. off of Lone Pine Road, about 3 miles west of downtown Gaylord.
Lake Manuka Public Access Site	MDNR	Boat launch, skid pier, parking, vault toilets, fishing, swimming	East-central portion of the Twp.
Manistee River Public Access	MDNR	Fishing access	SW corner of the Twp.
Wilderness Valley & Black Forest Golf Courses	Private	Two 18-hole golf courses and accommodations	6500 Nicklaus Drive Gaylord, MI 49735
Snowmobile Trails #774 and #4	MDNR	Snowmobile trails	Part of #774 is located in the southern portion of the Twp.; #4 is in the NE part of the Twp.

LIVINGSTON TOWNSHIP

Name	Ownership/Operation	Description	Location
Otsego Club and Resort (northern portion of the golf course is in the Twp.)	Private	Year-round resort offering two PGA championship 18-hole golf courses; open to the public and membership. 31 downhill ski slopes, 5 chair lifts and 1 high-speed quad lift, 4 terrain parks, 1 rope tow, 6.2 miles of XC ski trails. Also offers 4 restaurants, lodging and meeting space.	696 M-32 East, Gaylord, MI 49735
Otsego County Alternative Landscaping Demonstration Gardens	Public – Otsego County Conservation District	a demonstration center for native plants landscaping, home composting, etc. Also includes a youth gardening program to raise produce for those in need as well as a 16 acre model conservation forest with nature trails.	800 Livingston Blvd., Gaylord, MI 49735 (in the Alpine Center)

LIVINGSTON TOWNSHIP, CONTINUED			
Name	Ownership/Operation	Description	Location
Five Lakes Access Site	Public – Livingston Twp. owns and operates	Fishing, swimming, boat launch, picnic area	SW portion of Twp.
Five Lakes Natural Area	Public – managed by the Otsego Conservation District and owned by Gaylord Community Schools	20-acre facility with wildlife viewing, picnic tables, and trails for hiking, mountain biking, XC skiing.	SW portion of the Twp.
Otsego County Fairgrounds	Owned and operated by the Otsego County Fair Association, a non-profit volunteer organization	Five exhibit barns, race track horse barns, midway booth and grandstand. Hosts the annual county fair and other major special events from spring-fall.	275 Fairview Rd. PO Box 500 Gaylord, MI 49734
North Central State Trail/Iron Belle Trail	MDNR	A multi-purpose non-motorized pathway in the summer and snowmobile trail in the winter. Crushed limestone surface. Extends 62 miles from Gaylord to Mackinaw City.	Central portion of the Twp. in a N-S direction
Gaylord High School	Gaylord Public Schools	Indoor: Gym with 3 basketball courts, weight room & wrestling room. Outdoor: football stadium, track, 2 soccer fields, 2 practice fields, softball & baseball diamonds.	90 Livingston Boulevard, Gaylord

OTSEGO LAKE TOWNSHIP

Name	Ownership/Operation	Description	Location
Remi and Edna Schotte Memorial Township Park	Otsego Lake Twp.	24.8 acre park with three pavilions, picnic tables, grills, playground with splash pad, the Leonard Jensen nature trails, baseball diamond, basketball court, a zip line horseshoe pit, drinking fountain and restrooms.	SW portion of the Township, off of Memorial Drive
Bike lane along the full length of Memorial Drive	Otsego Lake Twp./County Road Commission	A portion of the roadway shoulder is designated for bicycle use	Near the Township Park
Otsego Lake State Park	MDNR	62-acre State Park with 156 campsites, 1,000 ft. sand beach, boat launch and hiking trails	NW portion of the Twp.

OTSEGO LAKE TOWNSHIP, CONTINUED			
Name	Ownership/Operation	Description	Location
Lake Marjory State Forest Campground	MDNR	Rustic camping – 10 sites for tent/small trailer; 2 sites accommodate 40' long trailer/vehicle. Boat launch (car top boats and canoes), vault toilets.	S. portion of the Twp.
Big Bradford Lake Public Access Site	MDNR	Boat launch (for med./sm. boats), fishing, swimming, parking, vault toilets, watercraft controls, stocked by DNR.	SW portion of Twp.
Heart Lake Public Access Site	MDNR	Boat launch, parking, vault toilets, swimming and fishing. Lake has watercraft controls, DNR stocked	Central portion of Twp.
Opal Lake Public Access Site	MDNR	Carry down boat launch, parking, vault toilets, swim, fishing, watercraft controls, DNR stocked	SW portion of Twp.
Big Chub Lake Access Site	MDNR	Fishing and swimming.	W. portion of the Twp.
Bridge Lake Public Access Site	MDNR	Fishing and swimming.	Central portion of Twp.
Little Bradford Lake	MDNR	Fishing and swimming	SW portion of Twp.
Snowmobile Trail #4	MDNR	Snowmobile use	SW portion of the Twp.
Iron Belle Trail	MDNR/ Otsego County	See description on page 3-20	W. portion of Twp. Along Old US 27
Michaywe' Assn. (Part in Otsego Lake Twp.)	Private	4-season recreation and residential community > 950 homes with 18-hole golf course "Michaywe Pines" & XC ski/hike trail. Clubhouse, beach, tennis courts & pool for members only.	1535 Opal Lake Road, Gaylord MI 49735
Guthrie Lake Association	Private-Enchanted Forest Property Owners Assn.	A private residential resort community with a clubhouse with indoor recreational amenities and an indoor/outdoor pool for members only.	11393 Nottingham Dr., Frederic, MI 49733
DerMiner's Parkside Resort	Private	Furnished cabins for vacation rentals.	6628 Old 27 S., Gaylord, MI 49735
Heart Lake Resort Cottages	Private	Furnished rental vacation cottages on Heart Lake	9603 Old 27 S., Gaylord, MI 49735

VILLAGE OF VANDERBILT

The Village of Vanderbilt updated their community’s 5-year Recreation Plan in 2015.

Name	Ownership/Operation	Description	Location
Vanderbilt Memorial Park	Village of Vanderbilt	1.3 acre community park with a pavilion, grills, benches, picnic tables, drinking fountain and portable restroom	North of Garfield Rd., SW of Old US 27
Custer Park	Village of Vanderbilt	Ball field	SW of Garfield and Elm Streets
Kids’ Park	Village of Vanderbilt	0.5-acre park with a playground, swing sets, spring-mounted fixtures for children, sand play area, lighted basketball court, drinking fountain and portable restroom	North of Main St. and east of Cheboygan St.
Vanderbilt Area School	Vanderbilt Area School District	Gymnasium, playground, baseball field, softball field, trails, forestry study area, picnic area	947 Donovan Vanderbilt, MI 49795; NE corner of the Village
Elkland Senior Center (connected to Horsell Manor)	Otsego County Commission on Aging	Older adult activities & meals	7910 Arthur Street, Vanderbilt
Horsell Manor	Owned by Otsego County Commission on Aging; operated by private co. KMG Prestige	20-units senior housing complex with an on-site senior center offering recreational opportunities	920 E. Main St., Vanderbilt
North Central State Trail/Iron Belle Trail	MDNR	A multi-purpose non-motorized pathway in the summer and snowmobile trail in the winter. Crushed limestone surface. NCST extends 62 miles from Gaylord to Mackinaw City.	East of Old US-27 and east of Cheboygan Street; runs in a N-S direction;

CITY OF GAYLORD

The City of Gaylord completed an update of its Recreation Plan in 2016.

Name	Ownership/ Operation	Description	Location
George Doumas Memorial Park	City of Gaylord	1.3 acre park with a restroom, gazebo, play structure, paved pathways, picnic tables, and drinking fountain.	Intersection of E. Fourth Street and S. Maple Ave., adjoining South Maple Elementary, Gaylord Intermediate and Middle School complexes with football field and softball field.
Freel Memorial Park	City of Gaylord	1.2 acre park with restroom, gazebo, play structure, paved pathways, picnic tables and drinking fountain.	Huron Street
Joseph N. Hale Memorial Park	City of Gaylord	0.1 acre, triangular shaped park with a small pavilion, picnic table, bench, drinking fountain.	Two blocks south of Main Street near S. Otsego Avenue
Elk View Park	City of Gaylord	Provides a viewing area of the City's Elk herd. The City is proposing to improve this park in the future with a parking lot, restrooms, pathways, picnic areas, playground, climbing wall, interpretive signs, and a lighted, paved pedestrian trail to Aspen Park.	Intersection of Elkview/Commerce Blvd. and also at the end of Grandview Blvd.
Aspen Park	City of Gaylord	105 acre park with 2 miles of lighted, barrier free paved trails, an extensive unimproved trail system (with single-track mountain bike trails) disc golf course, tennis court, and picnic tables. Trails groomed for XC skiing.	Termination point of Commerce Boulevard.
Claude Shannon Park	City of Gaylord	Small pocket park with benches, flowers, water fountain and walkway leading from W. Main St. to a parking lot north of the Main St. businesses.	On the north side of the 100 block of W. Main Street.
Gaylord Soccer Complex	City of Gaylord owns the site; leased and operated by the Gaylord Soccer League	16 acres with 8 improved soccer fields, pavilion, concession stand, restroom, unimproved parking area.	Opposite Fairview Cemetery and adjacent to N. Ohio Elementary School
Pavilion-On-Court	City of Gaylord DDA	A multipurpose facility (one-way street with an overhead cover) used as a gathering place for many activities, such as the weekly Farmers' Market.	North Center Ave., just south of Main Street
North Hazel Property	City of Gaylord	The City proposed to develop this 66' x 132' parcel as a neighborhood park.	North Hazel St.

CITY OF GAYLORD, CONTINUED			
Name	Ownership/ Operation	Description	Location
Otsego County Fairgrounds (portions of property in Livingston Twp)	Otsego County Fair Association, non-profit	Annual County Fair, special events April-Oct.	895 N. Center Street
Alten Zimmer Facility	Otsego County Commission on Aging	Meeting location for senior meals and activities	120 Grandview Blvd., Gaylord
North Central State Trail/Iron Belle Trail	MDNR/Otsego County	There is an existing trailhead at Fairview Road. A 1.65 mile paved trail is planned for development within the City of Gaylord from Grandview Blvd to Fairview Road. 11.2 additional miles of trail with a crushed limestone surface is planned from Grandview Blvd. to the southern County line.	The entire segment is along a slightly used, active rail corridor, in a N-S direction through the City and center of the County.
Gaylord Middle School	Gaylord Community Schools	Outdoor basketball courts, ball diamond, soccer/practice field, swings and nature area. Indoor gymnasium. 18-hole disc golf course	600 E. Fifth St.
Gaylord Intermediate School	Gaylord Community Schools	Indoor gymnasium with basketball court; outdoor facilities include a football field and track, softball field, practice field, basketball courts, play structures and jungle gym, swings and benches	240 E. Fourth St.
South Maple Elementary School	Gaylord Community Schools	Outdoor ball diamond, swing sets, slides, climbing/jungle gym structures, sand boxes, basketball hoop and swinging rings. Indoor gymnasium.	650 E. Fifth Street
North Ohio Elementary School	Gaylord Community Schools	Outdoor basketball courts, swing sets, slide, jungle gyms, large tires, ball diamond, fitness course and benches. Indoor gymnasium.	9112 N. Ohio Ave.
Board of Education Building	Gaylord Community Schools	The school district operates a latchkey program in this building, including a fenced-in outdoor play area with a play structure.	615 S. Elm Street
St. Mary Cathedral Schools	Private Parochial School	Outdoor swing sets, slides, jungle gym, large tires, ball diamonds, basketball court and practice fields on the north side of W. Petoskey Street. On the south side of W. Petoskey St., facilities include swings, jungle gym and climbing structure.	321 North Otsego Ave.
Snap Fitness	Private	Gym - membership	780 Edelweiss Village
Powerhouse Gym	Private	Gym – membership	1044 W. Main St.
Nautilus Fitness Center	Private	Gym - membership	151 N. Illinois St.
Yoga-45	Private	Yoga Studio – workshops and classes	2646 S. Otsego Ave.

CITY OF GAYLORD, CONTINUED			
Name	Ownership/ Operation	Description	Location
Otsego County Historical Society Museum	Non-profit	Historical museum showcasing historic artifacts from Otsego County	320 W. Main St.
Otsego Grand Event Center	Private	Special event space for 25-200 guests, catering on and off-site	610 S. Wisconsin Ave.
Call of the Wild & Bavarian Falls Park	Private	Wildlife exhibit museum, adventure mini golf, bumper cars, go karts	850 S. Wisconsin Ave.
Gaylord Bowling Center	Private	Open and league bowling; space rental	1200 Gornick Ave.
Otsego Club and Resort (northern portion of the golf course is in Livingston Twp.)	Private	Year-round resort offering two PGA championship 18-hole golf courses; open to the public and membership. 31 downhill ski slopes, 5 chair lifts and 1 high-speed quad lift, 4 terrain parks, 1 rope tow, 6.2 miles of XC ski trails. Also offers 4 restaurants, lodging and meeting space.	696 M-32 East, Gaylord, MI 49735
Alpine Regional Tennis Association	Non-profit organization & US Tennis Assn. Member	Mission is to foster interest and skill development for the lifelong sport of tennis for people of all ages in Northern MI	Gaylord area
Wings Over Gaylord	Private— Special Event	Air show held annually on Father's Day weekend	Gaylord Airport
Alpenfest	Local special event	Public-private effort for annual multi-day festival in summer (July)	Downtown Gaylord
Alpenfrost	Local special event	Public-private effort for annual multi-day festival in winter (February)	Downtown Gaylord/Local Resorts

Otsego Lake and Road End Access Locations

Otsego Lake is the County's largest lake (1972 acres) and is a very significant natural feature within the County. Otsego Lake is a valuable economic and recreation resource not only for Otsego County, but for the region as well. The lake is approximately five miles long, has an average width of 0.7 miles (max. width is 1 mile) and a maximum depth of 23 feet. It is used by many for boating, fishing and swimming. There are two official Public Access Sites for the lake, Otsego Lake State Park and Otsego Lake County Park. However, **Table 3.2** on the following page lists the many other road ends that allow public access.

Table 3.2 Otsego Lake Access Points

<u>Road Name</u>	<u>Huron Pines Site #</u>	<u>Township</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Plat Name</u>
Kimbal	1	Bagley	28	Unplatted
Pinehurst	2	Bagley	29	Point Comfort Pleasure Resort
Michigan	3	Bagley	21	Point Sunset
Superior	4	Bagley	21	Point Sunset
Dakota	5	Bagley	21	Point Sunset
Idaho	6	Bagley	21	Point Sunset
Cypress	7	Bagley	21	Salling Beach
Stonewood	8	Bagley	21	Salling Beach
Lancewood	9	Bagley	21	Salling Beach
South Tall Tree Lane	10	Bagley	21	Tall Tree Acres
North Tall Tree Lane	11	Bagley	21	Tall Tree Acres
Lee	12	Bagley	21	Unplatted
Greentree Drive	13	Bagley	20	Otsego Lake View
Pinetum	14	Bagley	20	Otsego Lake View
Beach Komer	15	Bagley	20	Unplatted
Four Oaks	16	Bagley	20	Unplatted
Log Cabin Lane	17	Bagley	20	Unplatted
Tree Line Drive	18	Bagley	20	Unplatted
Stevens	19	Bagley	20	Unplatted
Acme	20	Bagley	20	Acme Park
Pontiac	21	Bagley	20	Acme Park
Fairgrove	22	Bagley	20	Unplatted
Redwood	23	Bagley	29	Idylwild
County Park Road	24	Bagley	29	Unplatted
Pioneer	25	Bagley	29	Hazel Banks
Elmwood	26	Bagley	32	Hazel Banks
Heritage	27	Bagley	32	Hazel Banks
Beechwood	28	Bagley	32	Idylwild
Bluewater	29	Bagley	32	Birchwood Banks
Birch Way	30	Bagley	32	Birchwood Banks
Corey Cove	31	Bagley	32	Unplatted
Channel Drive	32	Bagley	32	Unplatted
Ferndale	33	Bagley	32	Ridgeway
Park Ridge	34	Bagley	32	Ridgeway
Wm Brooks Drive	35	Otsego	8	Unplatted
Beaver Dam Road	36	Otsego	8	Unplatted
Olmstead	37	Otsego	8	Unplatted
Compton Drive	38	Otsego	8	Compton Beach
Sunset Drive	39	Otsego	8	Compton Beach
Timber Point Drive	40	Otsego	8	Unplatted
White Rock Lane	41	Otsego	8	Unplatted
Lombard	42	Otsego	8	Otsego Sands
State Park	43	Otsego	8	Unplatted
Lakeview Avenue	44	Otsego	4	Pine Beach
Gilbert	45	Otsego	4	Pine Beach
Leighton	46	Otsego	4	Pine Beach
Watts	47	Otsego	4	Pine Beach

*Data taken from 2008 Huron Pines Otsego Lake Road End Survey (www.huronpines.org).

Recreation Programming in Otsego County

Recreation Programming at the Otsego County Community Center

For Youth:

Bear Basketball League – Open boys/girls, Grades 3-6. \$15/person. More than 100 participants/year.

Student Open Gym – Students in grades 4th – 12th are permitted to use the facility Monday - Friday from 3-5 pm. No charge.

Overnight Lock-Ins - \$275 on Friday and Saturday only, October through March. 9 p.m. to 7 a.m.

For Adults:

Community Playgroup - For children (newborn - 5 years old) and their caring adult. Held Tuesdays during the school year from 9:30 – 11:30 am. Summer locations and times vary. No charge.

Pickup Basketball Games – for adults ages 18+. Monday and Wednesday from 6-9 pm. \$1/person.

Facility Rental - \$22.50 per hour. Can be used for birthday parties, family parties, and practices on Friday or Saturday evenings or Sunday afternoon.

Volleyball Leagues – Price varies depending on participation levels. 4 on 4 Ladies' League – started March 2016. Mondays and Wednesdays

Adult Basketball League – Price varies depending on participation levels – Tuesdays and Thursdays

Pickleball – Free of charge, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.

Recreation Programming at the Otsego Lake County Park

2023 Special Events:

Free Camper Clean-up Weekend: May 3-7 - please bring your rakes and help clean up your site.

Memorial Day Weekend: May 26-29 - Activities include Hayrides and Candy Bar Bingo

Sea Plane Splash-in: June 9-11

Fireworks Over Otsego Lake: Saturday July 1

Labor Day Weekend: September 1-4 Activities include Hayrides

Halloween Weekend 1: 3rd weekend of September Reservations Required

Halloween Weekend 2: 4th weekend of September Reservations Required

Recreation Programming at other facilities

Flag and Tackle Football – Flag football open to youth in grades 1-6. Tackle football is open to grades 5-6.

Recreation Programming at the County Sportsplex

Ice Rink Programming

Otsego County Youth Hockey Association

Gaylord Area Men’s Hockey League

Skate Lessons

Hockey Lessons

Open Skate

Kid’s Day Camp Use

Pool Programming

Children’s Swim Lessons

American Red Cross Learn to Swim Class (anyone over age 5)

Aqua Fit Water Fitness

“Kayak Klub” and Children’s Swim Teams

Open Swim

Other

Room Rentals: “Rent the Plex”, “Rent the Rink”, Overnight Lock-ins, Conference Room and 2 Recreation Rooms for individual rentals

Summer Kid’s Day Camp : 10 weeks from June through August. Kids can swim, skate and play each day. Art and music projects sponsored by Gaylord Area Council for Arts and supported by Saturn Booksellers.

Fitness Classes: TNT Children’s Karate, Yoga, Pickleball, and Spinning Classes.

Additional Community Recreation Facilities

The following facilities are owned by public or non-profit entities and available for recreational use.

Otsego County Commission on Aging (OCCOA)

The OCCOA offers a wide variety of social activities, educational programs and exercise programs for older adults. Primary goals of the exercise programs are disease prevention and fall reduction. Young At Heart Exercise Classes (gentle aerobics and light weights) are held Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings at the Powerhouse Gym in Gaylord and Matter of Balance (MOB) classes (improving strength, flexibility and balance) are presented in eight week sessions throughout the year.

The OCCOA also offers a congregate meal program (nutrition and nutrition education) at three different meal sites. OCCOA meals are offered at the OCCOA business location – Alten Zimmer, 120 Grandview Boulevard, the Elkland Senior Center – 7910 Arthur in Vanderbilt and in Johannesburg at the Charlton Township Hall. Home delivered meals are also distributed to homebound older adults in Otsego County, with assistance from the Gaylord Community Schools and the Otsego County Bus System. A full list of OCCOA programs and services is available at <http://www.otsegocountycoa.org/>

Gaylord Community Schools Outdoor Environmental Learning Site

Gaylord Community Schools have provided space for the 40- acre Otsego Environmental Learning Site and the Gaylord Adventure Center. Both facilities are located adjacent to and behind the Gaylord Middle School and South Maple Elementary. The Otsego Environmental Learning Site includes a log cabin (built in 2001 for use as a 3-season nature learning center), an outdoor classroom area, a mixed hardwood forest, a pond and prairie grass. There are also two working windmills that add water and air to the pond. Visitors can observe the pond habitat and the prairie habitat anytime during daylight hours. The site is also home to an 18-hole disc golf course that was built and maintained by volunteers. The first 9 holes were built for an Eagle Scout Project and funded by the Rotary and other donations. The back 9 were built by the Gaylord Disc Golf Club.

Otsego Conservation District (OCD)

The OCD is available to help landowners and citizens in Otsego County manage their resources wisely. OCD manages and operates the Alternative Landscaping Demonstration Garden and the Conservation Forest located on County property near the J. Richard Yuill Alpine Center. This 19-acre area includes a 3-acre community garden and 16 acres of forest and trails that is open for residents to explore at their convenience. The garden area was a former dumping site that was transformed into a new home for many native flowers, butterflies, wetland plants and wildlife. It educates people of all ages on the benefits that native plants provide for water quality and wildlife habitat. The garden is meant to inspire visitors to use similar landscaping on their own land, rather than planting high maintenance lawns that require watering, fertilizer or chemicals. This area also features a home compost demonstration site. The adjacent Conservation Forest provides a forest management demonstration, complete with educational

signs, as well as a number of trails for the public to enjoy. The trails can be used for hiking, mountain biking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. The area is also used to facilitate workshops and other educational events that focus on natural resources and conservation. The OCD also manages the Five Lakes Natural Area for Gaylord Community Schools. This area provides the only public access of Five Lakes and includes 20 acres with wildlife viewing, picnic tables and trails for hiking, mountain biking, snowshoeing or cross-country skiing.

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Chapter 4

Planning and Public Input Process

Development of a community recreation plan must involve interaction and input from citizens and community groups. The Otsego County Parks and Recreation Commission and the Elmira Township Planning Commission were the lead entities in developing this recreation plan. Parks and Recreation Committee meetings were open to the public with time allocated for comments. A timeline of the development of the recreation plan update is as follows:

Schedule

September, 2021	OCPRC and Elmira Township officials contracted with Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG) to assist in drafting recreation plan for the county and their township.
November, 2021	NEMCOG develops and posts a public input survey for Otsego County & Elmira Recreation Plan.
December 1, 2021	A press release was issued promoting the online recreation survey. Links to the survey were placed on the websites of NEMCOG, OCPR, and OCPR's Facebook page.
December, 2021	NEMCOG staff develops an initial draft update of the Recreation Plan.
January, 2022	The online survey remains open.
February, 2022	NEMCOG develops a flyer promoting the online survey that can be distributed at upcoming community events to hopefully gather more responses.

May, 2022	The survey is closed after receiving 109 responses. NEMCOG prepares online survey responses for review by OCPRC & Elmira Twp.
June, 2022	The draft plan and survey responses are transmitted to OCPRC and Elmira Township for review.
October DD, 2022	A public notice is published in the <i>Weekly Choice</i> newspaper announcing the plan is available for the 30-day public comment period. Links to the plan are also placed on the websites of NEMCOG, Elmira Township, Otsego County and OCPR's Otsego Lake County Park Facebook page. A hard copy of the plan was made available at the Otsego County Library reference desk and the Otsego County Community Center.
Month DD, 2022	A public notice is published in the <i>Gaylord Herald Times</i> announcing a public hearing to be held at the Otsego County Board of Commissioners Meeting on Month DD, 2022, regarding the recreation plan adoption.
Month DD, 2022	At OCPRC's regular monthly meeting, they pass a Resolution of Adoption for the plan and recommend that the County Board of Commissioners adopt the plan.
Month DD, 2022	The Otsego County Board of Commissioners holds the public hearing at their meeting and passes a Resolution of Adoption for the Recreation Plan.
Month DD, 2022	A public notice is published in the <i>Gaylord Herald Times</i> announcing a public hearing to be held at the Elmira Township Board meeting on Month DD, 2022 regarding the recreation plan adoption.
Month DD, 2022	The Elmira Township Board holds a public hearing at their and passes a Resolution of Adoption for the Recreation Plan.
Month DD, 2022	NEMCOG submits paper and digital copies of the adopted plan to OCPRC and Elmira Township. The plan is uploaded to the MDN's MiGrants system for Otsego County and Elmira Twp.

Public Input

Citizen opinion on recreation priorities is key to the development of a recreation plan. An online survey was provided for Otsego County area citizens to provide input about recreational facilities. A summary of the survey results can be found in **Appendix D** of this plan.

A total of 109 people responded to the survey. While this is not a large amount of people, OCPRC and Elmira Township felt that the community was adequately represented, given that if a public input session

would have been held, fewer people would have shown up to participate via that method. After all public input was gathered and recorded, OCPRC and Elmira Township met to prioritize their goals, objectives and projects for the Action Plan.

Online Recreation Survey Publicity

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OTSEGO COUNTY
Recreational Activities & Facilities
PARKS AND RECREATION

Otsego County Parks & Recreation Department
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4.6 out of 5 - Based on the opinion of 4 people

2,206 people like this
2,315 people follow this
8,303 check-ins

Photos

PRESS RELEASE

For more information contact:
Nico Tucker, Regional Planner, NEMCOG
ntucker@nemcos.org
989-705-3732

For Immediate Release

Online Recreation Survey Conducted by Otsego County and Elmira Township

December 1, 2021 – The Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG) is assisting Otsego County and Elmira Township with updating their joint 5-Year Recreation Plan.

This Recreation Plan identifies how the communities will work towards achieving goals and objectives for improving recreational opportunities in Otsego County. Communities are required to have a current, 5-Year MDNR-approved Recreation Plan in order to qualify for recreation grant funding from the Michigan DNR.

The planning process incorporates a community participation element that encourages input from citizens. These two units of government have chosen to work together to

Community

About

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PRESS RELEASE

For more information contact:
 Nico Tucker, Regional Planner, NEMCOG
ntucker@nemcoi.org
 989-705-3732

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The planning process incorporates a community participation element that encourages input from citizens. These two units of government have chosen to work together to gather this public input in an online survey. The survey takes approximately 10 minutes to complete and is available online on the following websites:
<https://www.otsego-county-mi.gov/>; and NEMCOG's webpage at
<http://www.discovernortheastmichigan.org/recreation.asp>

Direct Survey Link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/OtsegoCountyRecreation>

County and Township officials are encouraging citizens in and around Otsego County to complete this survey because public input is a highly valued and vital component to shaping the future of recreational opportunities in the area. The survey will be open until January 1, 2022 and responses are anonymous.



Otsego County Parks & Recreation Department

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ANNOUNCEMENT

If you all could take the time to fill out this brief survey, it would help the Parks & Recreation Department have a better understanding of what recommendations community members, for both Otsego County and Elmira Township, may have for the parks and recreational facilities in our county. These recommendations would be specific for our 5-year Recreation Plan we are currently working on. The link to the survey, along with more information regarding the 5-year Recreation Plan, are below. Thank you in advance!

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/OtsegoCountyRecreation?fbclid=IwAR3BkH5nU9PsbBVA_LQml088nx1TNdN4A2Mte8EggX-jBJQim__r_37TphI

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Otsego County Web Page Accessed 12/2/2021

www.otsegoountymi.gov



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Posted on: December 2, 2021

Press Release: Online Recreation Survey Conducted by Otsego County and Elmira Township

PRESS RELEASE

For more information contact:
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989-705-3732

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NEMCOG News Webpages

www.discovernortheastmichigan.org/recreation.asp

Webpage Notice – November 22, 2021

The screenshot shows the website interface for recreation planning. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS', 'MICHIGAN WORKS!', 'PROSPERITY COLLABORATIVE', and 'DOCUMENT LIBRARY'. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with links for 'Business', 'Hot Job Profiles', 'Jobseekers', 'Community', 'Agencies', 'COVID', and 'Data'. The main content area features a left sidebar with a blue background containing a list of links: 'Community Development by County', 'Community Development Resources', 'Community Development Projects', 'Master Plans', 'Zoning Ordinances', 'Recreation Plans', 'Environment & Natural Resources', 'Joint Land Use Study', 'Hazard Mitigation Plans', and 'Solid Waste Plans'. The main content area has a breadcrumb trail: 'Home / Community / Planning & Community Development / Recreation Plans'. The title 'Recreation Plans' is prominently displayed. The text explains that the Michigan Department of Natural Resources requires communities to have a DNR-approved recreation plan to qualify for DNR Recreation Grant programs. It states that Recreation Plans are valid for a five-year period and that NEMCOG staff works with local communities to create these plans and assist with the grant application process. An aerial map of Island Park is shown, with various areas highlighted in different colors (green, yellow, red) and labeled with terms like 'WILDLIFE SANCTUARY', 'ISLAND PARK', and 'RECREATION PLAN'. To the right of the main text, there is a 'Recreation Plan News' section with two entries: 'Otsego County Recreation Survey' dated Nov 22, 2021, and 'NEMCOG Program Highlights July 2020-February 2021' dated Mar 22, 2021.

Online Survey Flyer



Otsego County

Parks & Recreation Commission

We need your input on our parks!

The Commission is updating the Parks & Recreation Plan to apply for grant funding to improve the county parks. Please take a few minutes to visit this website (or scan the QR code) to fill out a quick survey.

Thank you!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/OtsegoCountyRecreation>



Notice of Availability of Recreation Plan for at least 30 days

Notices for Public Hearings

**Resolution of the Otsego County Parks and Recreation Commission
Recommending Adoption of the Recreation Plan, November 7, 2016**

**Resolution of the Otsego County Board of Commissioners Adopting
the Recreation Plan, November 8, 2016:**

**Minutes from the Otsego County Board of Commissioners Meeting
and Public Hearing on November 8, 2016:**

**Resolution of the Elmira Township Planning Commission
Recommending Adoption of the Recreation Plan**

Resolution of Elmira Township Board Adopting the Recreation Plan

Minutes from the Elmira Township Board Meeting /Public Hearing

Copies of Submittal Letters



Chapter 5

Goals, Objectives and Action Plan

The following are goals and objectives for recreation projects formed directly from review of the 2017 Recreation Plan, contributions from OCPRC and Elmira Township Planning Commission, feedback from community members and the public input methods. The items listed are not ranked by importance.

Goals & Objectives

Goal 1. To continue to offer a wide variety of recreational activities for all ages.

Objective 1A: Evaluate existing program offerings and maintain/enhance viable programs.

Objective 1B: Maintain community support and volunteers for youth activities.

Objective 1C: Maintain appropriate staffing levels and contracts with specialized vendors.

Goal 2. To improve existing recreational offerings and facilities for recreation in Otsego County and Elmira Township. Coordinate recreation programs within the County and include County-wide non-profit group information as well.

Objective 2A: Make user-friendly physical changes at the Otsego Lake County Park and Community Center.

Objective 2B: Review security and safety features at County facilities with appropriate County-wide emergency services. Revise as necessary.

Objective 2C: Review existing facilities and make upgrades as desired.

Objective 2D: Review existing offerings and make improvements as desired.

Goal 3. To maintain County and Elmira Township recreational facilities and equipment.

Objective 3A: Provide appropriate parking and access at all County and Elmira Twp. facilities.

Objective 3B: Assure continued public access to lakes and beach areas.

Objective 3C: Acquire new property, equipment and structures as necessary.

Objective 3D: Enhance current equipment and facilities as necessary.

Goal 4. To establish new multi-faceted indoor recreational facilities.

Objective 4A: Respond to public demand for expanded indoor recreational facilities.

Objective 4B: Establish the capacity to hold multiple indoor events & activities simultaneously.

Goal 5. To establish new multi-faceted outdoor recreational facilities.

Objective 5A: Respond to public demand for expanded outdoor recreational facilities.

Objective 5B: Develop gifted properties and incorporate them into Otsego County and Elmira Township recreational facilities.

Action Plan

This section provides an overview of the proposed recreation projects for the next five years, which were identified as a result of input received from the public and County and Elmira Township officials. These projects will implement the identified goals and objectives, as well as help counter any perceived deficiencies in service that may arise over the next five years. They are not ranked by importance.

Proposed Projects

Action 1. Complete necessary improvements at the Otsego County Community Center

Description: The Community Center is a popular recreational facility for County residents and beyond. Proposed improvements will maintain and expand the various opportunities at this facility. Proposed projects include, but are not limited to a new roof, new interior flooring, gym floor maintenance and refinishing, the installation of baseboard heat registers, computer upgrades, tennis court maintenance and improvements, purchase of gymnasitcs equipment, new large flat panel TV's and associated equipment, new recreational games (including pool tables, ping pong tables and air hockey games), toys, improvements and additions to off-street parking, reconfiguration of on-street parking, functional and aesthetic improvements to the interior and exterior of the community center, and landscaping improvements.

Goals & Objectives Met: These improvements will make user-friendly changes and upgrades to this popular existing recreational facility (Objectives 2A, 2C, 2D, 3A, 3C, 3D, and 4A).

Action 2. Develop the remainder of the former MDNR property into a County Park

Description: The State of Michigan deeded the former MDNR Repair Facility property near downtown Gaylord to Otsego County in 2005. The property was then transferred to the Otsego County Parks & Recreation in 2017. Part of this 9-acre property has since been developed into Pontresina Park (Dog Park); improvements made on the remainder of the parcel include fencing, signage, a drinking fountain, benches and garbage cans. The County intends to continue development of the remainder of the land into a park using grant funds. An environmental site assessment has been completed and a conceptual site plan has been developed, as shown in **Appendix E**.

Potential improvements may include statues, art, fountains, information kiosks and a splash park. Use areas could include topography changes with berms and landscaping, indigenous plants, a unique ice-skating rink including the potential of synthetic ice to skate year-round; small scale sledding hills, picnic/sheltered areas, a community fire pit, benches and furniture. Landscaping improvements and connecting Pontresina Park (Dog Park) to the Gaylord Gateway Trail will improve usability and aesthetics. Structures may include a depot building along the paved Gaylord Gateway Trail/Iron Belle Trail which could include restrooms, a maintenance area, a welcome center, a concession stand or a community center. A band shell could be placed in the northwest portion of the property which would direct sound south and be buffered so it would not disturb residential uses to the north. Parking could be placed at the east side of the railroad tracks that could also be used as a trailhead for the Gaylord Gateway Trail. The Park could also be connected to the Otsego County Library, located to the southeast.

Goals and Objectives Met: This project will expand the recreational opportunities for the community and enhance its physical appearance. This facility will also respond to public demand for expanded outdoor recreational facilities (Objectives 2C, 3A, 3D, and 5A).

Action 3. Complete necessary improvements at the Otsego Lake County Park and Campground

Description: The County Park and Campground is a popular recreational facility as noted in this plan. Proposed improvements will maintain and expand the various opportunities at this facility. Proposed projects include, but are not limited to, a new roof for the campground shower building, new maintenance equipment (including small lawn mowers, weed trimmers and leaf blowers), enhanced and accessible playground equipment, an outdoor washing station, a new fish cleaning station, new electric pedestals for campsites and continued upgrading of the electrical at all campsites and outbuildings. Overall land improvements include erosion control efforts along the lakeshore to protect the recreational areas and facilities, acquiring adjacent lands that become available to expand the campground and park facilities, and forest management planning and improvements.

Goals and Objectives Met: These improvements will provide needed changes and upgrades to this popular recreational facility (Objectives 2A, 2C, 3B, 3C, 3D, and 5A).

Action 4. Enhance the Dr. Robert S. Libke Memorial Fields

Description: These fields are located on a 5-acre facility, which, based on the online survey, receive very little use. OCPRC would like to install barrier-free vault restrooms and make other improvements to create public interest and increased use of this day-use park.

Goals and Objectives Met: Improvements at this facility should create additional public interest and increased use of this facility (Objectives 1A, 2C, 3A, 3C, and 5A).

Action 5. Add/enhance barrier-free access to all existing parks and recreation facilities

Description: Encourage the development of balanced recreational opportunities for both active and passive usage, and for all levels of physical and mental abilities. Complete renovations, as appropriate, to existing facilities so they can be enjoyed by persons of all abilities.

Goals and Objectives Met: This project would provide barrier-free access and use of existing and future community recreation facilities (Objectives 2C and 3A).

Action 6. Further develop the Louis M. Groen Nature Preserve

Description: OCPRC will continue to maintain the nearly 800 acres of the Louis M. Groen Nature Preserve (Preserve) at the former Echo Valley Ranch. This includes keeping most of the land in its natural state, maintaining the multi-use trails for hiking, mountain biking, cross-country skiing and equestrian use, as well as the newly constructed park restroom, benches, drinking fountain, and park office building. Over the next five years, OCPRC will be to implement the objectives outlined in the conservation easement for the preserve.

Goals and Objectives Met: This project will expand the recreational opportunities for the community and enhance its physical appearance. This facility will also respond to public demand for expanded outdoor recreational facilities, including trails (Objective 5A).

Action 7. Complete needed improvements at Frank Wilkinson (Irontone Springs) Park

Description: OCPRC will make further improvements at the park to improve the amenities and offerings available. Improvements include, but are not limited to, improving the accessibility of the trail, a new pedestrian bridge, a gazebo, fixing the artesian well, and conducting forest management planning and improvements.

Goals and Objectives Met: This project will improve the recreational opportunities for the site and enhance its physical appearance (Objectives 2C, 3D, and 5A).

Action 8. Complete needed improvements at Pleasant View Park (Wah Wah Soo)

Description: Wah Wah Soo is a small but popular park and beach area on Otsego Lake. Improvements will enhance the overall usability of the facility. Proposed improvements include expanding the beach area, installing a drinking source, reinforcing the breakwall and stairs to the beach, and repairing the concrete around the vault toilets.

Goals and Objectives Met: This project will improve the usability and accessibility of the park and enhance its physical appearance (Objectives 2C, 3B, and 3D).

Action 9. Acquire land for recreational purposes in Otsego County

Description: Acquire land in Otsego County to provide new/additional recreational opportunities to residents and visitors of the County. Potential land acquisitions include obtaining parcels adjacent to existing parks should they become available and acquiring new land that holds recreational potential.

Goals and Objectives Met: This project will expand the recreational opportunities available to the community (Objectives 3C and 5A)

Action 10. Acquire land for recreational purposes in Elmira Township

Description: Acquire land in Elmira Township to provide new/additional recreational opportunities to residents within and near the Township. Specific areas for possible target acquisition include land adjacent to the Lake Twenty-Seven boat launch in the central portion of the Township, and land that would provide public access to Porcupine Lakes in the eastern portion of the Township. The existing Lake Twenty-Seven boat launch is gravel and has a very steep grade. Acquiring additional lots adjacent to the boat launch would allow the area to be expanded and upgraded in the future. Parmater Road runs between the Porcupine Lakes, and cars park along the road to access the lakes. The Township would like to determine if there is legal public access to Porcupine Lakes. If not, they would like to acquire land to provide and develop legal public access.

Goals and Objectives Met: These land acquisitions would expand recreational opportunities for the community by providing a Township park with waterfront access, and also respond to public demand for expanded outdoor recreational facilities (Objectives 3B and 5A).

Action 11. Make improvements to the Elmira Township Park

Description: Elmira Township would like to design and develop improvements within the Park, including improved accessibility, replacement of aging or missing fixed recreational equipment, parking, and create a vegetative management plan. The Township would also like to develop new features, such as, but not limited to, an accessible walking path loop through the park with distance markers. Other potential improvements include installing physical fitness stations and a

gazebo structure. These improvements will enhance the recreational opportunities in the western portion of the county (and adjoining communities in Antrim County) and draw more users of all ages and abilities to the park.

Goals and Objectives Met: This project will expand the recreational opportunities for the community and enhance the park (Objectives 2C, 3C, and 3D).

Action 12. Develop non-motorized linkage trails within Elmira Township

Description: Elmira Township would like to construct non-motorized trails within their Township that would link them to other points of interest outside the Township, such as the Jordan River Valley Pathway System (hiking trails shared in part with the North Country Trail) to the west/southwest in Antrim County; the Gaylord Industrial Park; and the North Central State Trail/Iron Belle Trail. These would be multi-use, non-motorized trails for mountain biking, horseback riding, hiking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. Under no circumstances would the trails be used by snowmobiles in the winter.

Goals and Objectives Met: These improvements will respond to public demand for expanded outdoor recreational facilities, particularly trails (Objective 5A).

Action 13. Develop non-motorized trails on State-owned land within Elmira Township

Description: Elmira Township would like to construct non-motorized trails on State-owned land that is adjacent to Hallenius Road and Burdo Road, within Sections 35 and 36 of the Township. These trails would be used for mountain biking, horseback riding and hiking in the summer months and for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing in the winter months. Under no circumstances would the trails be used by snowmobiles in the winter. The Elmira Township Planning Commission has identified this as a top priority.

Goals and Objectives Met: These improvements will respond to public demand for expanded outdoor recreational facilities, particularly trails (Objective 5A).

General Basis for Action Plan

There are a number of issues to consider when planning for recreational facilities in Otsego County and Elmira Township:

1. In 2019 the median age of residents in Otsego County was 44.9 years; for Elmira Township, it was 45.6 years. Compared to data from the 2010 U.S. Census, this statistic represents an increase of 1.7 years for all of Otsego County, and an increase of 0.6 years for Elmira Township.

Furthermore, 2020 Census data indicates that while the County as a whole grew by 927 persons, or 3.8%, the population of ages 45 and over slightly decreased compared to the previous decade; a .4% decrease in 45-64 year olds in the County and an increase of 4.8% for those aged 65 and older in the County. Elmira Township, while a much smaller 2020 population of 1,714 persons, saw a 2.0% increase in 45-64 year olds and a 5.0% increase in persons over age 65.

Therefore, as the community is expected to grow in overall population in the future, much of the growth will be in an aging, older adult population. With people living longer in general these days, many older adults will want to continue to lead active lifestyles. Recreational features that are designed for universal accessibility, such as pathways with crosswalks and a firm and stable surface, will be needed for this growing market of recreational users. Also, consideration must be given to planning for a growing retirement/seasonal population, which as both the time and desire for age-appropriate recreational activities.

2. Young persons of ages 0-19 years comprised 23.3% of the County's population in 2019; a decrease of 2.1% compared to 2010. In Elmira Township, persons under age 19 comprised 27.4% of the overall population, also representing an increase since 2010, of 2.9%. Only 26.8% of the County's population was aged 20-44 in 2019; Elmira Township's at 24.5% , representing a decrease of .9% to .4% compared to 2010.

Younger generations tend to choose their place of residence based on the quality of life offered in a community, which is often determined by the recreational and adventure opportunities offered. Recreational opportunities, such as quality programming and universally accessible playgrounds for children and families, as well as a variety of outdoor and indoor year-round recreational opportunities and special events, can help attract and keep young people in Otsego County.

3. Otsego County's median household income is an estimated \$54,332, compared to that of the State of Michigan's average of \$57,144. An estimated 40.8% of the households in the County include Social Security recipients, compared to 34.7% statewide. Over 25.6% of households have retirement income, compared to 23.7% statewide. Accordingly, to be truly accessible, recreation must also be affordable, which means that nearby facilities should be enhanced to lessen the driving time and expenses that residents would incur to travel to facilities farther away.
4. There is significant seasonal resident population in the County. The US Census does not report seasonal populations; however, seasonal structures are reported. An estimated 30.0% of the housing units in the county, or 4,454 units, are used as seasonal, recreational, or occasional use homes. Based on the average household size in the county of 2.47 persons per unit, the expected seasonal increase would be 11,002 persons.

When developing and providing recreational opportunities, consideration should be given for individuals with diverse incomes, including recreation available at a no-cost or low-cost basis, as well as appealing to potentially higher-income visitors from more urban areas.

5. Otsego County and Elmira Township are very proud of their natural resources and rural character, balanced with a growing commercial center and small-town charm. It is important to those planning for growth and development that efforts be made to balance ecological concerns with changes such as residential/comercial development or natural resource extraction. Protection of natural resources, including groundwater, and scenic areas must therefore be a major element of the planning process. Existing and new recreatoinal facilities must be developed, maintained and operated in a manner that preserves ecological and scenic values.

Figures obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2015-2019 5-Year Estimates.