

**VILLAGE OF MACKINAW CITY
MASTER PLAN/RECREATION PLAN**

PUBLIC INPUT WORKSHOPS

***RECREATION PLANNING
WORKSHOP
SUMMARY REPORT***

**March 8, 2007
7:00-9:00 PM**

**Mackinaw City Village Hall
Council Chambers**

INTRODUCTION

Background

The Village of Mackinaw City Planning Commission voted late in 2004 to rewrite the Village Master Plan, then called the Comprehensive Development Plan, since it was beginning to be outdated. Early in 2005, the Mackinaw City Planning Commission created a list of elements that would be included in the new Master Plan. Recreation was one of those elements. The Planning Commission also created a corresponding list of stakeholders for each element who would be notified when each element was to be discussed during the planning process.

Mackinaw City also needed to create a new Recreation Plan. The Recreation Planning Process was coordinated with the Master Planning process. Recreation Planning began with an inventory of the facilities and programs within the Parks and Recreation Department. This information was compiled and an information packet produced that served as preparation for a goal setting workshop held on March 8th, 2007. This information packet was made available to those stakeholders identified by the Planning Commission. Those stakeholders were invited to this goal setting workshop.

This summary paper describes the results of that public workshop. These results will guide the writing of a draft Recreation Plan. Specific action items and objectives will be created and then be subjected to thorough public review prior to adoption.

Process

Public notice was made in the local paper and mailed to past attendees and stakeholders in the Village's Parks and Recreation system as identified by the Planning Commission. The workshop was attended by 19 people, including representatives of the Planning Commission, Village Council, Mackinac State Historic Parks, Emmet County Parks and Recreation Department, and citizens of Mackinaw City.

A presentation was given by Community Development Director, Steve Schnell, on the Village's current Parks and Recreation system and Recreation planning. Following this presentation was a 1 and ½ hour session of parks and recreation system goals setting and planning. The nominal group technique was used to gather information on the desired goals for the parks and recreation system. Three parts of the workshop included identifying and ranking assets to preserve, issues to address, and creating a 20-year vision of our parks and recreation system.

Results

Assets to protect

Consistently it is expressed that Mackinaw City's best qualities relate to its natural resources. The parks are highly valued because they preserve these natural resources and offer people a place to enjoy them. The parks are appreciated for their simple layout and low clutter. People seem to appreciate that the parks are respectful of the natural environment and don't interfere by placing large, complicated attractions within the parks.

Our park users enjoy the many waterfront parks that are at the street-ends, also called pocket parks. They appreciate the simple amenities and waterfront view. The waterfront parks were voted the most important asset to protect in our parks system. Second in importance for assets to protect were the wide open, natural spaces that are part of our parks design.

Parks and Recreation Assets to Protect:

Asset	Votes
waterfront	13
wide open spaces/nature	8
pocket parks	6
low clutter parks, lo-tech	5
well-maintained	4
free access	3
recreation center	3
Hiking/biking trails	3
location, proximity	2
fishing pier	2
pedestrian access	1
overall social benefit	1
equipment	1
picnic areas	1
community involvement	1
fort	0
music	0
kiosks	0
architecture	0
high number of parks	0
all age visitors, friendly, welcoming	0

Issues to address

Mackinaw City is in two counties and two townships. But it isn't the political boundaries that separates the Village as much as the physical boundary created by I-75. More commercial development occurs on the east side of I-75 than on the west side. Most tourist activity does not cross to the west side. For this reason, since 1940, a large proportion of full-time residents have left the east side of the Village and moved to the west side.

However, most of the parks in the Mackinaw City system are located on the east side of the Village. The most important issue to address for Mackinaw City parks is that the parks are disconnected from the users. Better park location and means of park access will better connect users with their parks. If children and elderly are one of the intended user groups parks should be located near their residences and should be accessible by sidewalk or bike path.

There is also a need for dog parks in the area. Locations for these dog-friendly parks should be chosen to best serve the needs of the public.

More programs for seniors are also desired. This was the third most popular issue that needs attention. Senior citizens are a growing part of our population in Mackinaw City. They are becoming a larger percentage of our population at an even faster pace than the State of Michigan. This emphasizes our demand for more facilities and programs that meet the needs of our elderly citizens.

Other issues that were mentioned are as follows:

Issue	Votes
parks disconnected from users	11
need dog parks	9
programs for seniors	5
illegal beach clearing	5
awareness	5
west side sidewalks	4
visitor & residents' need differ	4
handicap, barrier free	4
again population accommodations	3
connect using trails	1
height of neighboring buildings	1
upkeep	0

Vision

The future of the parks system includes more pathway connecting parks with each other and with their users. The vision for the future includes more interior (non-waterfront) parks that serve more user groups. Water front parks are already highly valued and it is clear that more water front land should be purchased when possible to preserve the view of the water and public access to it. Again reflecting the value of waterfront parks, the beaches that are accessible to the public should always be well-maintained and kept clean. More family activities are also desired.

The vision, as voted on by the attendees is as follows:

Vision	Votes
Parks connected by pathways	15
More interior parks for more user groups	13
Continue water front purchase	9
clean beaches	8
more family activities	3
restrooms	2
skateboard park	1
Curling	0
racetrack for tractors, wheelchairs	0
more indoor facilities	0