



# **Township Recreation Plan**

**2021-2025 Edition**

**Plan Approval and Adoption**

Recreation Committee Approval..... October 11, 2022  
Waterloo Township Board Adoption..... October 25, 2022

**The 2021-2025 edition of the *Waterloo Township Recreation Plan* will expire on December 31, 2025**

Prepared with the assistance of



## Table of Contents

### 1. Community Description

Location.....	1-2
A Brief Socioeconomic Summary .....	1-3
Population History and Projections .....	1-3
Age & Gender of the Population .....	1-3
Racial & Ethnic Composition.....	1-3
Disabilities of Residents.....	1-3
Household & Family Composition .....	1-3
Income.....	1-4
The Health of Jackson County Residents.....	1-4

### 2. Administrative Structure

Authorization .....	2-2
Organizational Structure .....	2-2
Parks and Recreation Budgeting .....	2-3
Sources of Funding.....	2-3
Relationships with Other Recreation Providers .....	2-4
Schools .....	2-4
Local, County, State Government and Private Providers .....	2-4

### 3. Recreation and Resource Inventories

Township Parks .....	3-2
Barrier-Free Access.....	3-2
Grant-Assisted Parks and Recreation Facilities.....	3-2
Park Standards and Types .....	3-2

## Table of Contents

Local Schools .....	3-3
Jackson County.....	3-3
Regional Parks and Recreation Facilities.....	3-4
State Parks.....	3-4
Wildlife Preserves and Natural Areas .....	3-6
Museums .....	3-6
Equestrian Stables .....	3-7
Camps and Campgrounds.....	3-7
Public and Private Facilities with Recreational Benefits .....	3-8
Linear Recreation Facilities .....	3-8
Trails & Trail Planning & Programming .....	3-8
Natural Beauty Roads .....	3-9
Recreation Events and Programs .....	3-9
Resource Inventory.....	3-9
Topography .....	3-9
Water Resources .....	3-10
Transportation.....	3-10
Soils and Land Use .....	3-10

#### **4. Descriptions of the Planning and Public Input Processes**

Description of the Planning Process.....	4-2
Description of the Public Input Process .....	4-2
Recreation Survey.....	4-3
Recreation Committee Meetings.....	4-11
One Month Review Period .....	4-11
Public Hearing.....	4-12
Jackson County and the Region 2 Planning Commission.....	4-12
Other Trail Planning Efforts .....	4-12



## 5. Goals & Action Program

Goals and Objectives.....	5-2
Establish and Improvement of Non-Motorized Trails .....	5-2
Improve/establish a park for local use .....	5-3
Action Program .....	5-3
Extension/improvement of the Lakeland Trail State Park .....	5-3
Investigate the improvement of a Jackson County Park for local township residents .....	5-3
Accommodate bike lanes on state and county roads where feasible .....	5-3

## A. Demographics

Demographic Composition and Recreation .....	A-2
Population History .....	A-3
Population Projections .....	A-4
American Community Survey .....	A-5
Generations: 2009-2013 .....	A-6
Race & Ethnicity: 2009-2013 .....	A-7
Disabilities: 2009-2013 .....	A-8
Households & Families: 2009-2013 .....	A-9
Household Income: 2009-2013 .....	A-10

## B. Maps

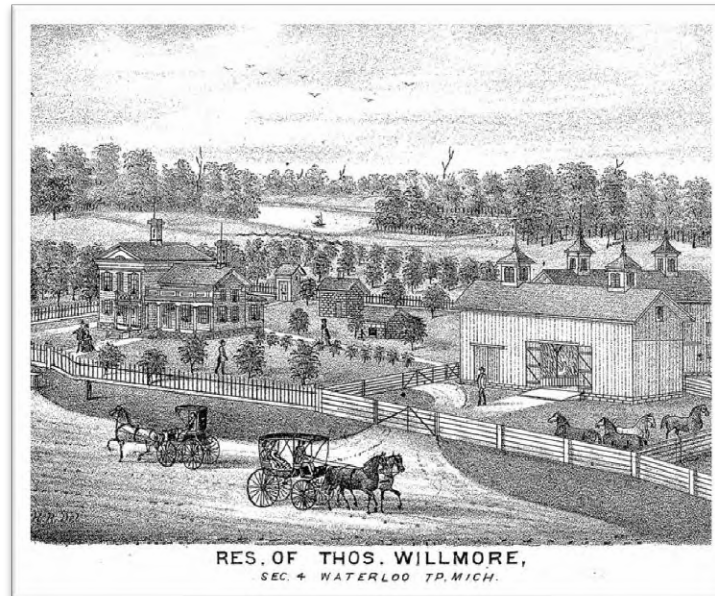
Base Map .....	B-3
School Districts .....	B-5
Parks & Recreation Facilities .....	B-7
Trail Network .....	B-9
Hydrology .....	B-11
Watersheds .....	B-13

## Table of Contents

Prime Farmland & Greenways .....	B-15
Action Program .....	B-17
“Blueways” Water Trails .....	B-19
Non-Motorized Trail Network .....	B-21
Route #1 of the Great Lake to Lake Trails .....	B-23
Iron Belle Trails: <i>Ironwood to Belle Isle</i> .....	B-25

### **C. Trails & Trail Planning & Programming**

Water Trails (“Blueways”) .....	C-2
GREAT Routes .....	C-2
Grand River Access Points .....	C-3
Jackson to Grand Haven .....	C-4
Non-motorized Trails .....	C-4
Regional Trailway Study .....	C-4
Statewide Trail Planning Efforts .....	C-5
Other Local Trail Planning Efforts .....	C-5



## Chapter 1

# Community Description

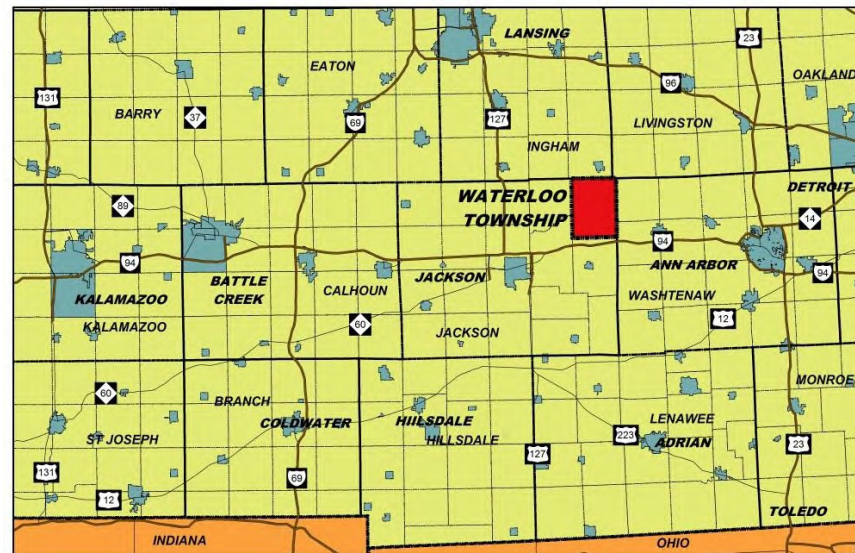
## Waterloo Township Recreation Plan

A priority of Waterloo Township is to maintain a recreation plan which responds to the recreational desires of its citizens and plans for enhancements to its parks and recreation programs. A sincere effort was spent in updating this plan which represents the projected needs for recreation facilities and services in the Township. For example, the plan provides a clear picture of the recreational opportunities available to residents regardless of who provides them. Nontraditional recreation opportunities such as historic districts/structures and shopping opportunities are catalogued as well as traditional parks and recreation facilities.

## Location

Waterloo Township comprises 47.6 square miles of northeastern Jackson County which is located in south-central Lower Michigan, close to the borders with Northwest Ohio and Northeast Indiana. Interstate Highway 94 (I-94) and United States Highway 127 (US-127) converge in Jackson County, earning the area the nickname of “Crossroads of Michigan.” Those roads connect Waterloo Township and the rest of Jackson County to Ann Arbor and Detroit to the east, Battle Creek and Kalamazoo to the west, and Lansing to the north.

**Figure 1-1  
Regional Location**



## **A Brief Socioeconomic Summary**

The demographic composition of the population of Waterloo Township has an effect upon its recreational needs. Pertinent demographic components are listed below along with a brief paragraph describing the local situation. Each of the components is described in greater detail in Appendix A of this document. Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic in 2020, some demographic results still reflect the 2010 Census.

### **Population History and Projections**

Waterloo Township's population was comprised of 2,869 people in 2019 according to the US Census Bureau estimates. The population density of Waterloo Township is 60.2 people per square mile.

### **Age and Gender of the Population**

The ACS estimated that males comprised 51% of Township residents in 2019. It was also estimated that the average Township resident (median age of 45.7 years) was older than the average resident (median age of 39.8 years) of the nation. The most populous generations in the Township are estimated to be those aged 45-64 in 2010 (35.7%), those aged 5-24 years in 2010 (26.3%) and those aged 25-44 in 2010 (21.8%).

### **Racial and Ethnic Composition**

The population of Waterloo Township is homogenous with few racial and ethnic minorities. For example, in 2019 an estimated 95.5% of Township residents were estimated to be white. Persons of African-American origin comprised 2.87%, .42% were Native American, .13% Asian-American, and .72% were of 2 or more races.

### **Disabilities of Residents**

Disabled individuals comprised a small but significant estimated segment of the population of the Township (14.5%) between 2009 and 2013. The ACS estimates that more people become disabled as they age. It is also interesting to note that it was estimated that a significant portion of Township residents 65 years of age or older (19.1%) had some type of ambulatory difficulty.

### **Household & Family Composition**

The ACS estimates that there were 1,169 households in Waterloo Township in 2019. Families comprised an estimated 76.1% of Township households during that time period and one-person households comprised 22.0% of households. Average household size was estimated

to be 2.5 people for the Township and average family size was estimated to be 3.03 people. There were also an estimated 77 seasonal or occasional homes in the Township, but no people living in group quarters.

## Income

The following data is reflected in local household, family, nonfamily and per capita ACS estimates in 2019.

- **Median Household Income** — Median household income was \$69,375 for Waterloo Township, 1.3 times the amount in Jackson County which was \$53,658; and 20 percent higher than the state of Michigan, which was \$57,144. National median household income was \$62,483.
- **Per Capita Income** — Per capita income was \$34,611 for the Township and the national per capita income was estimated to be \$34,103.

## The Health of Jackson County Residents

Obesity describes ranges of weight that are above healthy guidelines given a certain height. Body Mass Index is used to calculate an individual's ratio of height to weight. Generally, a person with a Body Mass Index score of 25.0 or greater is considered obese.<sup>1</sup> In 2020, 32% of Michigan residents were considered obese (the tenth highest in the nation),<sup>2</sup> with 36% of adults in Jackson County reporting being obese.<sup>3</sup> According to a report published by Michigan State University's Institute for Public Policy and Social Research and Institute for Health Care Studies, being overweight or obese substantially increases the risk for cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, hypertension, lipid disorders, stroke, gallbladder disease, osteoarthritis, sleep apnea, respiratory problems, psychological disorders, stress incontinence, and cancers of the endometrium, breast, prostate and colon.<sup>4</sup> In 2008, the Jackson Community Comprehensive Plan showed that a poor diet and physical activity were second only to tobacco as the greatest cause for actual death in the United States in 1990 and 2000. Furthermore, a publication by the World Health Organization states that physical inactivity and a poor diet are large contributors to being overweight and obesity.<sup>5</sup> According to the National Center for

---

<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020). Obesity and Overweight for Professionals: Adult: Defining – DNPAO - CDC. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/adult/defining.html>

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2014). Obesity and Overweight for Professionals: Data and Statistics -- DNPAO - CDC. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/adult.html>

<sup>3</sup> County Health Rankings. (2020). Adult obesity in Michigan | County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. Retrieved from <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/michigan/2020/county/snapshots>

<sup>4</sup> Kreulen, G. J. (2002). *Promoting healthy weight in Michigan through physical activity and nutrition (Informing the debate : health policy options for Michigan policymakers)*. East Lansing: Institute for Public Policy & Social Research and Institute for Health Care Studies at Michigan State University.

<sup>5</sup> World Health Organization. (2009). Unhealthy Diets & Physical Inactivity. Retrieved from [http://www.who.int/nmh/publications/fact\\_sheet\\_diet\\_en.pdf](http://www.who.int/nmh/publications/fact_sheet_diet_en.pdf)

Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, 25% of Jackson County residents reported being physically inactive,<sup>6</sup> placing it in the top 23 counties in Michigan for this measure. These statistics point to a need for more active recreational opportunities in all communities. Those opportunities may include providing more walkable neighborhoods as well as the provision of actual recreational opportunities such as athletic fields (e.g., soccer, baseball, etc.) and courts (e.g., basketball, tennis, etc.). Factors of particular relevance to community growth, development, and planning contributing to unhealthy weight according to the 2006 Jackson Community Report Card produced by the United Way of Jackson County include:

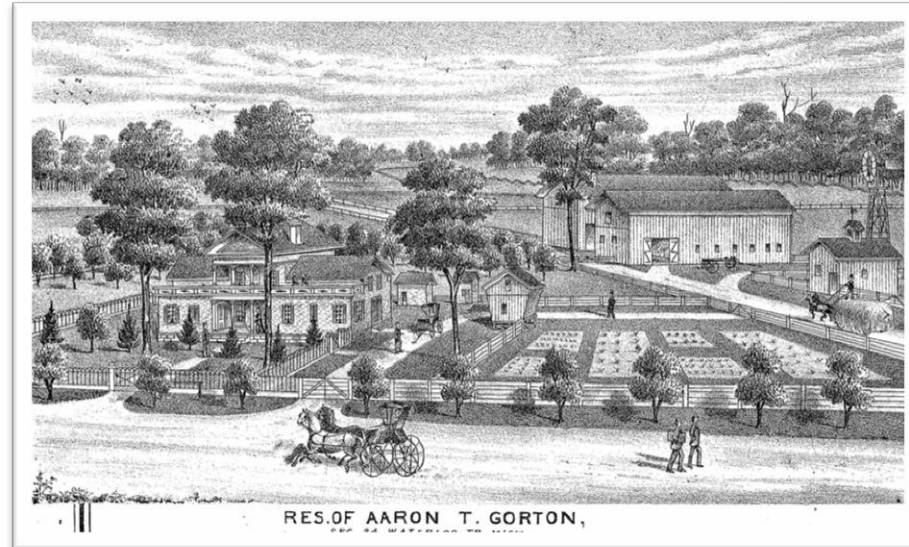
- “Inadequate community infrastructure limits the ability of people to be active. These include lack of accessible indoor and outdoor exercise facilities, neighborhood sidewalks, walking paths, and bicycle trails. Additionally, inclement weather, lack of adequate recreational opportunities, fear of unsafe neighborhoods, and unattractive/unpleasant local environments may prevent people from exercising.”
- “Programs and policies are necessary to promote smart community growth and the establishment of urban and rural environments supportive of physical activity. Active community environments provide access to safe favorable conditions for physical activity and promote the development of social support networks that encourage activity.”

The Michigan State University Report: *Promoting Healthy Weight in Michigan Through Physical Activity and Nutrition* (Kreulen, 2002), recommends cooperation among state and local units of government and residents in the promotion of active environments, including the following actions.

- “Develop walkable communities by widening and maintaining or building sidewalks, safe roadway crossings, and aesthetically pleasing areas.”
- “Encourage bicycling by developing, maintaining, and promoting the use of bike paths.”
- “Require [that] all urban planning and re-design incorporate the concepts of active community environments and thereby promote physical activity.”

---

<sup>6</sup> County Health Rankings. (2020). Physical inactivity in Michigan | County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. Retrieved from <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/michigan/2020/rankings/jackson/county/outcomes/overall/snapshot>



## Chapter 2

# Administrative Structure

Waterloo Township Recreation Plan



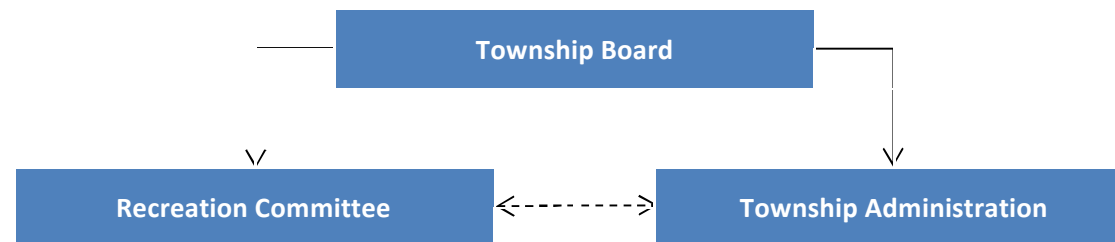
## Authorization

The authority to provide public park systems and recreation programs is granted by the State of Michigan. Waterloo Township's park system is established under the authority of Public Act 156 of 1917, *Recreation and Playgrounds (MCL 125.51 et seq)*. The act allowed for the creation of the Recreation Committee under the control of the Waterloo Township Board.

## Organizational Structure

The Recreation Committee is responsible for the initial planning of Waterloo Township parks and recreation facilities and making recommendations to the Township Board. The Waterloo Township Board of Trustees is responsible for constructing, maintaining, and administering any parks and recreation facilities developed during the 5-year planning period of this document. The Township's administration is responsible for the coordination of any recreation programming taking place in Township facilities. The Committee is also charged with studying various recreation needs, advising the Township Board on recreation issues and making appropriate budget requests (see the organizational chart).

**Waterloo Township Organizational Chart**



The following members comprise the Recreation Committee:

- 1 member of the Township Board appointed by the Board
- 4 Waterloo Township residents appointed by the Board

The Township Supervisor (or his/her designee) reports to the Waterloo Township Board. The Township currently does not employ people involved in parks and recreation. Any parks and recreation facilities developed by the Township will be maintained by its contractors. The Township will utilize individual volunteers and service groups to develop and maintain parks and volunteer to help with park cleanup.

## Parks and Recreation Budgeting

There is an annual operating/maintenance budget for parks and recreation of \$500, but that is unlikely to change until the Township constructs and operates a park and/or recreation facility. Any capital budgets will most likely be limited to the projects listed in the Action Program.

## Sources of Funding

Waterloo Township will utilize a variety of funding sources to maintain their park[s] and recreation facilities and programs:

- general tax fund dollars
- grants and donations awarded for specific projects

General fund tax dollars will be used by Waterloo Township for the maintenance of any parks and recreation facilities, including the cost of producing this Plan. Grants will be sought from various state, federal, and philanthropic sources for the acquisition of any parkland and the development of a specific park or facility (e.g., trails, playgrounds, picnic shelters, sports facilities, etc.). Donations from the general public and various service organizations for a specific park or facility will also be accepted. A portion of the local match required of most grants may also come from the general fund or donations. Grants for parks and recreational facilities may come from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources through the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund and the Land and Water Conservation Fund<sup>1</sup> Grants for trails (e.g., non-motorized transportation) are likely to come from the Michigan Department of Transportation through the Transportation Assistance Program<sup>2</sup>.

The Michigan Transportation Fund Act (Act 51) states that “a reasonable amount, but not less than 1% of” funds allocated to the state or a county, city, or village “shall be expended for construction or improvement of non-motorized transportation services and facilities.” That set-aside can be used to fund “an improvement in a road, street, or highway which facilitates non-motorized transportation . . . or improvement of a sidewalk or any other appropriate measure.” The Michigan Department of Transportation and the Jackson County Department of Transportation receive funding through Act 51. Coordination with those entities could result in the expenditure of Act 51 funds on non-motorized projects proposed within this document.

---

<sup>1</sup>This is a Federal program administered locally by the State of Michigan.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

## Relationships with Other Recreation Providers

Waterloo Township and Jackson County are not the only suppliers of parks and recreational opportunities to Township residents.

### Schools

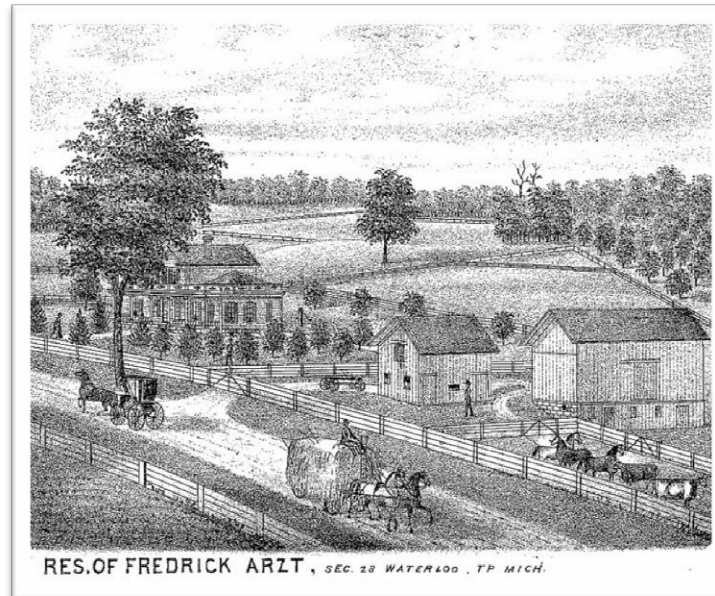
Local school districts are significant suppliers of parks and recreational opportunities to their students and boosters as well as the general public. The service areas of the following school districts extend into Waterloo Township:

- Chelsea School District
- Grass Lake Community Schools
- East Jackson Community Schools
- Stockbridge Community Schools

None of those districts maintain any parks or recreation facilities within Waterloo Township. Grass Lake Community Schools and East Jackson Community Schools are part of the Jackson County Intermediate School District (ISD) which provides educational services to residents and local school districts, including some recreation facilities. The Chelsea School District is served by the Washtenaw County ISD and Stockbridge Community Schools is part of the Ingham County ISD which provide similar services to their residents and local school districts.

### Local, County, State Government and Private Providers

Some of the townships surrounding Waterloo Township also maintain parks, trails, and recreation programs. Waterloo Township intends to participate with the other local governments within Jackson County in the planning for and provision of recreation facilities, including the Jackson County Regional Trailway Study 2002. The State of Michigan maintains a state recreation area which extends through Waterloo Township. Jackson County maintains 2 county parks within the Township. A variety of private entrepreneurs and quasi-public agencies also provide recreation facilities and programs in and around the Township. Please refer to Chapter 3 for a more detailed description of recreation facilities in Waterloo Township.



### Chapter 3

## **Recreation and Resource Inventories**

Waterloo Township Recreation Plan

In order to plan for future parks and recreation facilities it is important to prepare a complete inventory of existing resources and facilities. The following inventory is comprised of all known parks and recreation facilities and programs available countywide, not just those owned and managed by Waterloo Township. The parks, facilities, and programs were identified through local knowledge and review of current and historic documents and maps.

### Township Parks

Township parks are the primary source of recreation for many residents. Waterloo Township currently has a ½ mile footpath on the 8.5 acre site of the new Township Hall on Mount Hope Road (please see the following tables and maps). Waterloo Township also maintains Munith Community Park on South Main Street in Munith.

#### TOWNSHIP PARKS AND TRAILS

MAP KEY	NAME OF FACILITY	OWNERSHIP	FACILITY TYPE	AREA (ACRES)	SERVICE AREA	FACILITIES	BFA
A	WATERLOO TOWNSHIP HALL AND PARK	WATERLOO TOWNSHIP	TOWNSHIP OFFICE AND PARK	8.5	WATERLOO TOWNSHIP	LOCATION OF THE TOWNSHIP HALL AND PARK AND ½ MILE CLOSED LOOP FOOTPATH	N/A
F	MUNITH COMMUNITY PARK	WATERLOO TOWNSHIP	COMMUNITY	0.3	MUNITH AREA	PICNIC AREA AND PAVILION WITH FIREPLACE AND PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT	N/A

#### Barrier-Free Access

It is important that any recreation facilities built in conjunction with the Township Hall be accessible to people with disabilities. After all, it is estimated that 14.6% of Township residents had some type of disability between 2009 and 2013 according to the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS).

#### Grant-Assisted Parks and Recreation Facilities

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources has awarded no recreation grants to Waterloo Township.

#### Park Standards and Types

A park and recreation plan should also recognize and use appropriate park standards. The recommendation of the National Recreation and Parks Association (NPRA) is a minimum of 10 acres of parkland per 1,000 persons. Therefore, Waterloo Township should have 28.4 acres of parkland in order to meet the needs of the population in 2020. The 8.5 acre Township Hall site does not come close to meeting that standard. However, the additional 11,525.0 acres of parks and recreation facilities provided by schools, other governments, quasi-public agencies, and

private businesses exceed that standard. According to the NRPA, school facilities generally function as community parks.

### Local Schools

Waterloo Township students are served by 4 school districts. However, none of them have facilities located in the Township. The Chelsea School District, East Jackson Community Schools, Grass Lake Community Schools, and Stockbridge Community Schools also provide a variety of elementary, middle, and high school recreation facilities available to school-age residents of the Township as well as their families and friends. Schools provide a variety of recreational facilities such as elementary school playgrounds, middle and high school sports facilities, and gymnasiums. Because of those facilities, schools generally function as community parks.

### Jackson County

Jackson County's park system is comprised of 17 parks, most of the county parks are adjacent to water —providing opportunities for swimming, boating, and/or fishing— making them community facilities. Clear Lake and Portage Lake County Parks are located in Waterloo Township. Grass Lake, Little Wolf Lake, and Gillett's Lake County Parks are community facilities located in adjacent townships. Pleasant Lake, Sparks Foundation (i.e., the Cascades), Swains Lake, and Burns County Parks and the Falling Waters Trail are regional facilities available to Township residents.

#### JACKSON COUNTY

MAP KEY	NAME OF FACILITY	OWNERSHIP	FACILITY TYPE	AREA (ACRES)	SERVICE AREA	FACILITIES
C	CLEAR LAKE COUNTY PARK	JACKSON COUNTY	COMMUNITY PARK	5.5	JACKSON COUNTY	WATER ACCESS AND SWIMMING AREA; GREEN SPACE
D	PORTAGE LAKE COUNTY PARK	JACKSON COUNTY	COMMUNITY PARK	5.9	JACKSON COUNTY	WATER ACCESS, SWIMMING AREA, AND BOAT LAUNCH; GREEN SPACE; PICNIC AREA (INCLUDING GRILLS); PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT; AND PORTABLE TOILETS

## Regional Parks and Recreation Facilities

A variety of other public agencies and private entrepreneurs also provide recreational opportunities to Township residents.

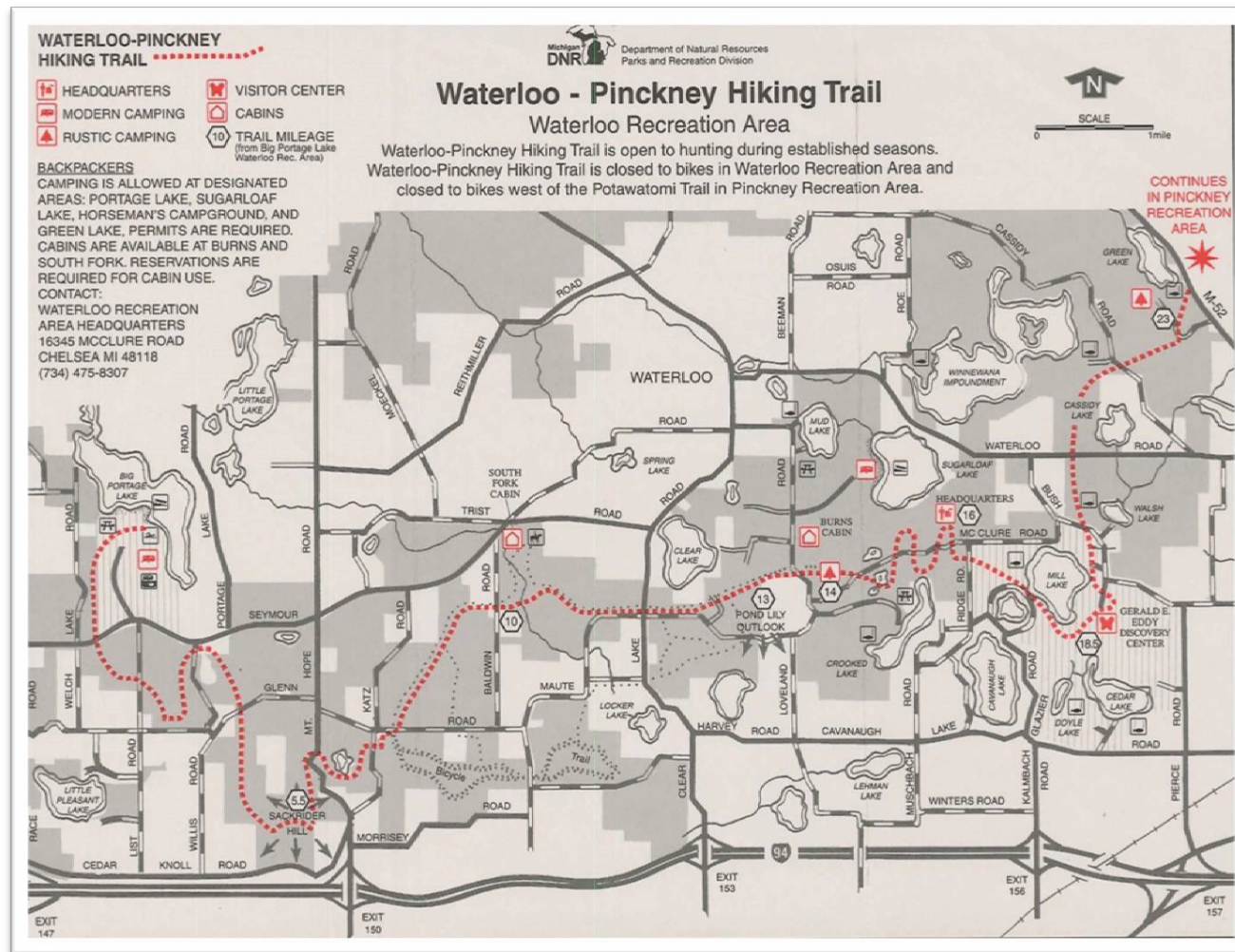
### State Parks

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR), a significant provider of regional parks and recreation facilities, several of which extend into Jackson County and a couple into Waterloo Township. The Waterloo Recreation Area provides facilities for winter sports, water sports, trails, horseback riding, picnicking, and playing (i.e., playgrounds). The Waterloo Game Unit (part of the Waterloo Recreation Area) provides opportunities for hunting.

#### STATE OF MICHIGAN

MAP KEY	NAME OF FACILITY	OWNERSHIP	FACILITY TYPE	AREA (ACRES)	SERVICE AREA	FACILITIES
E	WATERLOO RECREATION AREA (PORTION)	STATE OF MICHIGAN-DNR	STATE PARK	11,072.6	REGIONAL	PORTAGE LAKE MODERN CAMPGROUND, INCLUDING BEACH, BOAT LAUNCH AND RESTROOMS; HIKING TRAIL WITH PARKING; EQUESTRIAN TRAIL WITH HORSE TRAILER PARKING; AND BIKE TRAIL
1	LAKELANDS TRAIL STATE PARK EXTENSION (PORTION)	STATE OF MICHIGAN-DNR	STATE PARK	38.3	REGIONAL	CLEARED ABANDONED RAILROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY WITH PLANS FOR A MULTI-PURPOSE TRAIL

The Walter J Hayes State Park —located in the southeast corner of Jackson County— provides opportunities for boating, fishing, picnicking, metal detecting, swimming, and camping as well as playgrounds. The Sharonville State Game Area —which extends into the Townships of Grass lake and Norvell from Washtenaw County— provide other opportunities for hunting. The DNR also maintains 6 other boat launches in Jackson County, including Portage Lake in Waterloo Township.



WATERLOO RECREATION AREA MAP



### Wildlife Preserves and Natural Areas

Adjacent to the Waterloo Recreation Area —along Tophith Road— is a wildlife preserve purchased for the U.S. Government by Ducks Unlimited's Wetlands America Trust. Also adjacent to the Waterloo Recreation Area —along both sides of Katz Road, north of Glenn Road— is a private hunting preserve operated by the Waterloo Hunt Club. A designated National Natural Landmark, the Black Spruce Bog Natural Area, is on the north side of Waterloo-Munith Road, between Mount Hope Road and Parks Road.

#### WILDLIFE PRESERVES AND NATURAL AREAS

MAP KEY	NAME OF FACILITY	OWNERSHIP	FACILITY TYPE	AREA (ACRES)	SERVICE AREA	FACILITIES
G	DUCKS UNLIMITED PRESERVE	WETLANDS AMERICA TRUST	HUNTING PRESERVE	137.5	REGIONAL	PUBLIC HUNTING AREA
H	WATERLOO HUNT CLUB	PRIVATE	HUNTING PRESERVE	27.1	REGIONAL	FOX HUNTING AND HORSEBACK RIDING
n/a	BLACK SPRUCE BOG NATURAL AREA	STATE OF MICHIGAN-DNR	NATURAL AREA	120	REGIONAL	

### Museums

The Waterloo Area Historic Society operates the Waterloo Farm Museum American on Waterloo-Munith Road, adjacent to the Waterloo Recreation Area. The Society also conserves the Dewey School, a one-room school house on Territorial Road at Mayer Road.

#### MUSEUMS

MAP KEY	NAME OF FACILITY	OWNERSHIP	FACILITY TYPE	AREA (ACRES)	SERVICE AREA	FACILITIES
I	WATERLOO FARM MUSEUM	WATERLOO AREA HISTORIC SOCIETY	MUSEUM	2.6	REGIONAL	
J	DEWEY SCHOOL	WATERLOO AREA HISTORIC SOCIETY	MUSEUM	0.5	REGIONAL	

**Equestrian Stables**

Horse-N-Around operates a private stable within the Waterloo Recreation Area near its equestrian trails.

**EQUESTRIAN STABLES**

MAP KEY	NAME OF FACILITY	OWNERSHIP	FACILITY TYPE	AREA (ACRES)	SERVICE AREA	FACILITIES
K	HORSE-N-AROUND STABLES	PRIVATE	STABLE	N/A	REGIONAL	RIDING STABLE IN THE WATERLOO RECREATION AREA WITH ACCESS TO ITS EQUESTRIAN TRAILS

**Camps and Campgrounds**

There are four private campgrounds in addition to the Portage Lake Modern Campground (Waterloo Recreation Area). The Farmlane Campground provides a place for horseback riders to camp with their horses. The Four-Lakes Family Campground is adjacent to Little Portage Lake, the Locust Grove Co-Op is adjacent to Clear Lake, and Vining's Trailer Park is adjacent to Little Portage Lake.

**CAMPGROUNDS**

MAP KEY	NAME OF FACILITY	OWNERSHIP	FACILITY TYPE	AREA (ACRES)	SERVICE AREA	FACILITIES
M	FARMLANE CAMPGROUND	PRIVATE	CAMPGROUND	22.2	REGIONAL	A PUBLIC CAMPGROUND FOR PEOPLE AND THEIR HORSES WITH ACCESS TO EQUESTRIAN TRAILS
N	FOUR-LAKES FAMILY CAMPGROUND	PRIVATE	CAMPGROUND	24.5	REGIONAL	A SEASONAL PUBLIC CAMPGROUND WITH ACCESS TO LITTLE PORTAGE LAKE
O	LOCUST GROVE CO-OP	PRIVATE	CAMPGROUND	10.0	REGIONAL	A COOPERATIVELY OWNED SEASONAL FACILITY WITH ACCESS TO CLEAR LAKE
P	VINING'S TRAILER PARK	PRIVATE	CAMPGROUND	66.5	REGIONAL	A SEASONAL TRAILER PARK WITH ACCESS TO LITTLE PORTAGE LAKE

### Public and Private Facilities with Recreational or Health Benefits

Various other facilities provided publicly and privately also have recreational benefits:

- **Jackson District Library (JDL)** — The JDL’s 13 library branches provide access to books and other items of entertainment (e.g., audio books, CDs, DVDs, etc.). The Henrietta Branch is located nearby and the Carnegie Branch is located in Downtown Jackson.
- **5 Healthy Towns** — The nearby communities of Grass Lake, Chelsea, Dexter, Manchester, and Stockbridge and the 5 Healthy Towns Foundation (SHF) joined together to form the 5H Project which includes non-profit wellness centers in Chelsea, Dexter, Manchester, and Stockbridge. A senior center is located in the Grass Lake Township Hall and the Grass Lake Area has a wellness coalition.
- **Shopping and Eating** — Many people enjoy shopping and going out to eat. Consequently, neighboring communities are also recreation destinations because of their restaurants and/or shops. The proximity of those downtown areas to each other —as well as the various shops and restaurants scattered throughout the rest of the general area increase the opportunities for this type of activity.
- **Local Colleges** — There are several colleges which maintain campuses in Jackson County. Baker College’s local campus is located in Blackman Township. Jackson College’s main campus is located in Summit Township. Finally, Spring Arbor University’s main campus is located in the unincorporated village of Spring Arbor. Many colleges provide access to collegiate sports and athletic facilities as well as other recreational facilities and programs.

### Linear Recreation Facilities

The Lakelands Trail State Park has extended through Waterloo Township and into Henrietta Township and has developed a trailhead directly across from Munith Lion’s Park. That trail will be part of Michigan’s Iron Belle Trail and Route #1 of the Michigan Greenway Alliance’s proposed Great Lake to Lake Trails. There is a countywide effort ongoing which will connect to that trail. Various natural beauty roads are also located in the Township.

### Trails & Trail Planning & Programming

Networks of trails and “blueways” are continuing to develop throughout Jackson, sometimes connecting with other nearby systems. For example, Jackson County and the City of Jackson are partnering with other municipalities and governmental agencies as well as the Fitness Council of Jackson and other non-profit advocacy groups on the developing network of trails throughout the City and County. The Grand River Environmental Action Team (GREAT) has also developed a series of water trails within the Grand River and sponsors various “paddles” (i.e., canoe and kayak events) throughout Jackson County each year (please see Appendix C for more details).

### Natural Beauty Roads

The following roadway segments, designated as Natural Beauty Roads, provide excellent locales (i.e., many traverse the Waterloo Recreation Area) for viewing the colorful leaves of autumn and other natural features:

- List Road — Glenn Road north to Seymour Road
- Baldwin Road — Glenn Road north to the beginning of pavement
- Green Road — Clear Lake Road east to Loveland Road (Washtenaw County)
- Maute Road — Leach Road northeast to Clear Lake Road
- Glenn Road — List Road east to Maute Road
- Katz Road — Mt. Hope Road northeast to Seymour Road
- Camp Road — Maute Road east to Clear Lake Road
- Willis Road — Waterloo Township Line north to Seymour Road

### Recreation Events and Programs

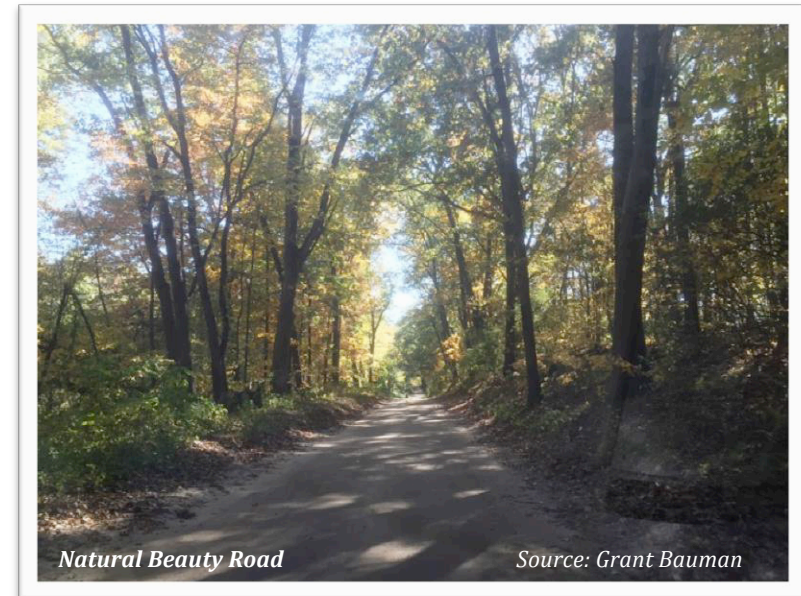
The Township of Waterloo has made its facilities available for indoor exercise classes since the completion of the Township Hall. Many of the institutions listed above also provide a variety of recreation programs. Contact them directly in order to identify their individual offerings.

### Resource Inventory

In addition to recreation facilities, Waterloo Township is also home to a wide variety of cultural and natural resources.

### Topography

Topography in Waterloo Township ranges between 904 and 1,162 feet above sea level. The highest elevation is located in Section 1 (T2S,R2E) of the Township, on both sides of Green Road and east of Clear Lake Road (see the Topography Map). The Township's lower elevations are located in the vicinity of the Portage River, and Little and Big Portage Lakes. The lowest points are located underwater in Sections 30 and 31 (T1S, R2E) of the Township, along its eastern border and north of Big Portage Lake.



### Water Resources

The Upper Grand River Watershed drains the overwhelming majority of Waterloo Township although the Huron River watershed does extend into the Township to the north and east (see the Hydrology Map). The Headwaters of the Portage River, the Portage Lake-Portage River, and Orchard Creek sub-watersheds of the Upper Grand River Watershed cover the majority of the Township. In addition to the Portage River and its tributaries, Waterloo Township is also blessed by many lakes and wetlands. For example, Little and Big Portage Lakes and Clear Lake are located in the southern portion of the Township and Markle Lake is located to the northeast. Wetlands also exist throughout the Township.

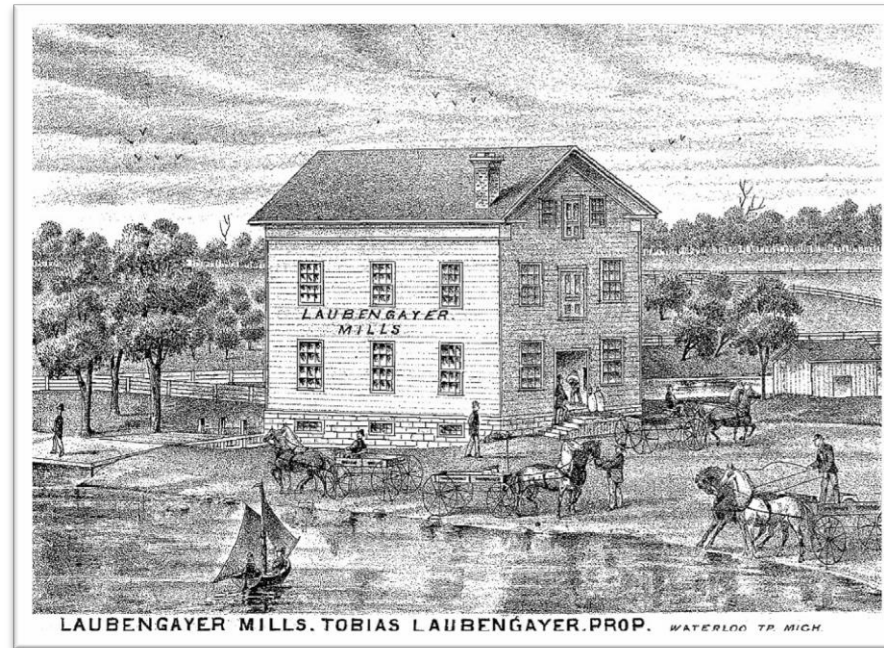
### Transportation

Interstate 94 (I-94) is located a mile south of the Township in northern Grass Lake Township. Michigan Highways M-106 and M-52 traverse the northwestern and northeastern corners of the Township, respectively (see the Transportation Map). Portage Lake/Coon Hill, Mt. Hope, and Clear Lake/Waterloo-Munith/Parks Roads are the primary county roadways traversing Waterloo Township north to south. Portions of Territorial, Waterloo-Munith, and Seymour Roads are the primary county roadways traversing Waterloo Township east to west. The majority of the remaining roads are classified as county local roadways although private roads do serve some properties.

### Soils and Land Use

The types of soils found in Waterloo Township are important to its development. For example, the 2000-2025 edition of the Jackson Community Comprehensive Plan identifies lands suitable for agricultural preservation as well as the establishment of greenways (see the Prime Farmland & Greenways Map). Most of Waterloo Township is included in that plan's 'Agricultural Preservation Area' which identifies parcels of land eighty (80) acres or more in size with soils classified as prime or unique for agricultural production by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Significant portions of the Township are also included in 'Greenways' which generally follow "wetland areas, drainage ways, and forested lands", including the Waterloo Recreation Area. The countywide plan did not identify any areas recommended primarily for residential, commercial, or industrial land uses within the Township.





#### Chapter 4

## Descriptions of the Planning and Public Input Processes

Waterloo Township Recreation Plan



## Description of the Planning Process

The development of this edition of the *Waterloo Township Recreation Plan* included the following steps:

- The Township recognized the need to update the Recreation Plan.
- Cost analysis was completed and the Parks & Recreation Committee decided to update the plan within the department.
- The Recreation Committee conducted a survey of Waterloo Township Area residents and park and recreation consumers. Surveys were made available through the Township's website and the Township office.
- The Recreation Committee utilized the input collected from the various public involvement efforts and the information collected from various online resources.
- The Recreation Committee provided the updated Plan for public review on September 13, 2022.
- The Recreation Committee held a public meeting for comments on October 11, 2022. There was also an opportunity for public comment at the Waterloo Township board meeting on October 25, 2022. No public comment was received.
- The Waterloo Township Board then voted to adopt the Plan on October 25, 2022.



## Description of the Public Input Process

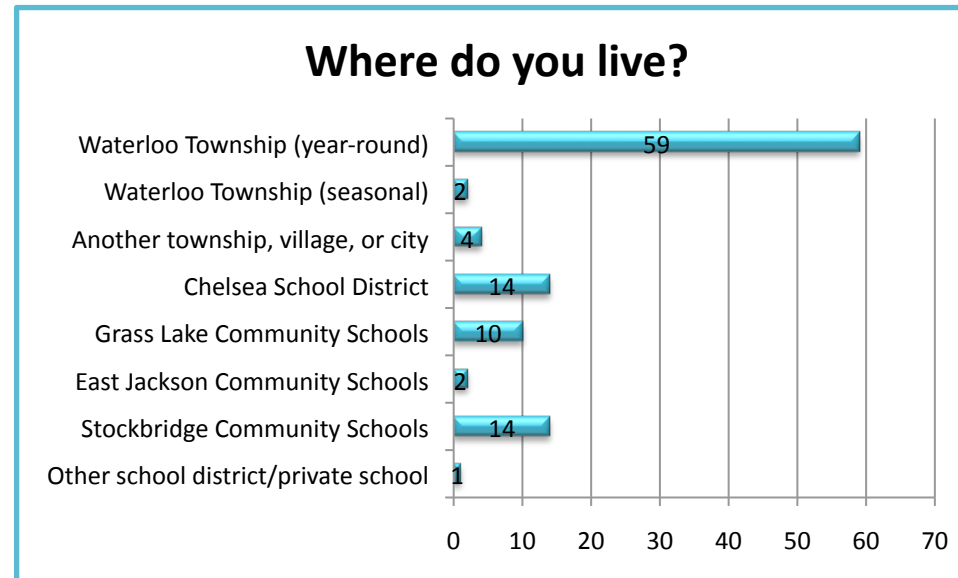
A variety of methods were employed to incorporate public input into the development and updating of this Recreation Plan:

### Recreation Survey

An online survey was conducted from March 1, 2020 through March 31, 2020, supplemented by paper surveys which were available through May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The 70 responses can be summarized as follows:

- **Where do you live?**

Year-round residents of Waterloo Township (69.5%) comprised the majority of respondents (n=61). An additional 3.4% were seasonal residents. Those living in another municipality accounted for 25.4% of respondents.

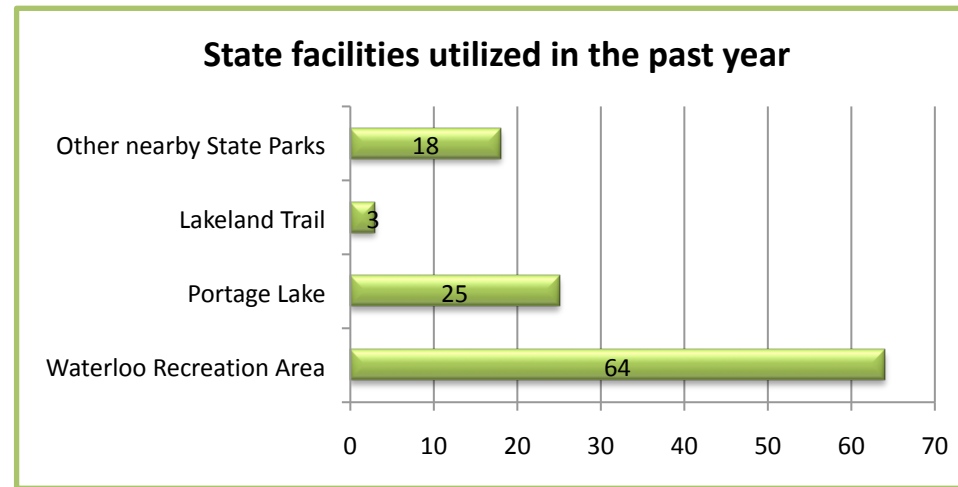


Residents living within the jurisdiction of the Stockbridge Community Schools (28.8%) comprised the largest segment of respondents. Residents living within the Chelsea School District (16.9%) comprised the next largest segment. Residents living within the jurisdiction of the Grass Lake Community Schools (11.9%) comprised the third largest segment of respondents. Only 1.7% of respondents lived within the jurisdiction of the East Jackson Community Schools.



- **What State of Michigan parks and/or recreation facilities have you utilized in the past year? (select all that apply)**

The clear majority of respondents (92.3%) utilized the Waterloo Recreation Area within the last year (n=52). Many respondents (42.3%) also traveled the nearby Lakeland Trail State Park. A significant portion (17.3%) of respondents used the Michigan Department of Natural Resources' (DNR's) boat launch on Big Portage Lake.

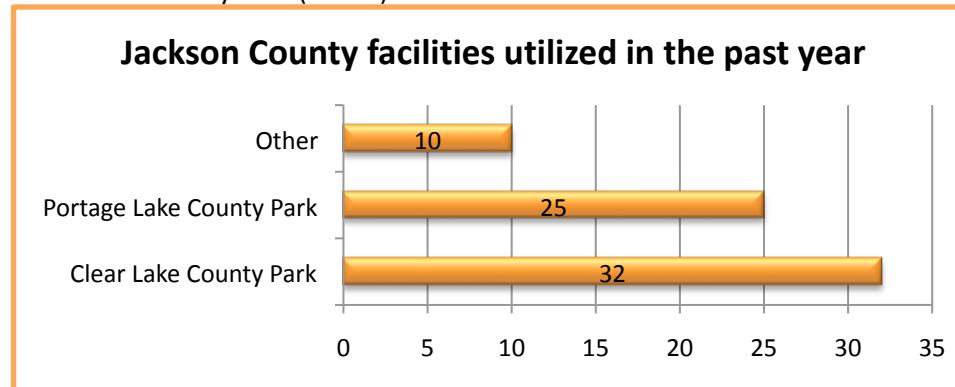


Other nearby State Parks which were used:

Ionia
Bruin Lake
Halfmoon Lake
Green Lake
Watkins Lake
Sharonville Game Area
Fort Custer Rec Area
Hudson Mills Kensington
'Pinckney Rec. Area, Brighton Rec. Area'

- **What Jackson County parks and/or recreation facilities have you utilized in the past year? (select all that apply)**

Few of the survey respondents (45.0%) answered this question (n=27). Most of the respondents to this question visited Portage Lake County Park (70.4%) and Clear Lake County Park (59.3%).

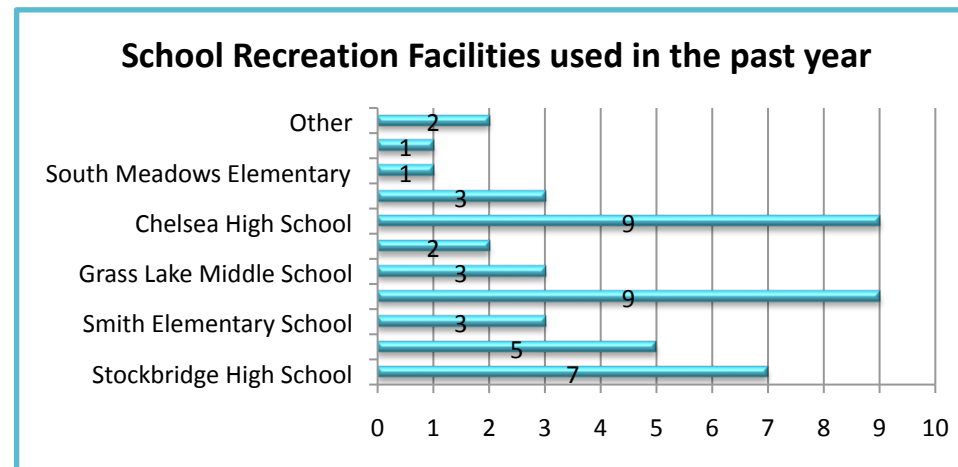


Other recreation facilities also provided by respondents

Grass Lake County Park
Cascades County Park
Ella Sharp Park
Lakeland Trail
DTE Energy Trail
Falling Waters Trail
Dexter Bike Trail
Bike/Pedo Trail along Huron River Drive

- What school recreation facilities have you utilized in the past year? (select all that apply)**

Few of the survey respondents (45.0%) answered this question (n=26). Most of the respondents to this question (66.2%) used Stockbridge Community Schools recreation facilities. A significant segment of respondents (23.9%) utilized Chelsea School District facilities. Recreation facilities from Grass Lake Community Schools were also used by 9.9% of respondents. No respondents utilized recreation facilities provided by the East Jackson Community Schools (removed from the chart).



The following nearby school facilities also provided by the respondents:

---

Old Chelsea High School

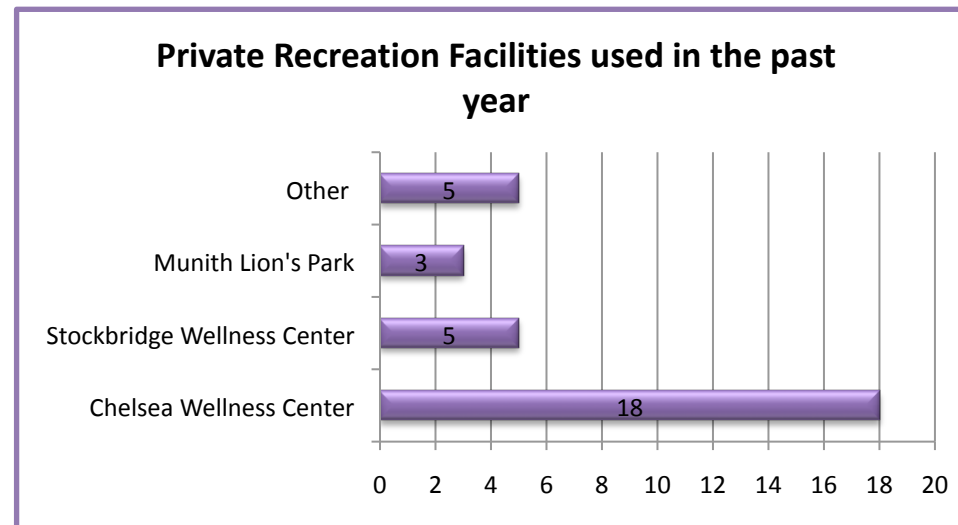
---

Dexter Police Concert

---

- **What wellness or recreation facilities/classes have you utilized in the past year? (select all that apply)**

Few of the survey respondents answered this question (n=33). Many of the respondents to this question visited the Chelsea Wellness Center (54.5%) The Waterloo Golf Course (30.3%), the Stockbridge Wellness Center (27.3%), and the Township Hall (21.2%) were also very popular.



The following nearby wellness centers and recreation facilities/classes were also provided by respondents:

---

Waterloo Township Hall

---

Breathe Yoga Studio in Chelsea

---

Dexter High School Arboretum/concert

---

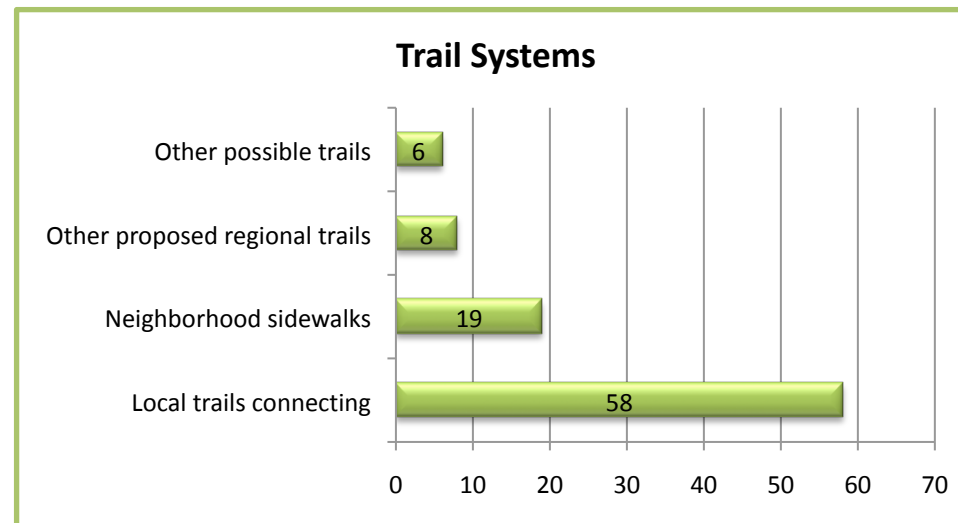
Dexter Wellness Center

---

Waterloo Hunt Club

- State, county, and local governments in the surrounding area are developing a regional trail system to serve their residents and the visitors traversing their communities. Should Waterloo Township support this ongoing effort by participating in the following projects (utilizing existing Township income and grants)? (select all that apply)

Almost all of the respondents (94.3%) selected local trails connecting destinations to the trail system (n=53). Most respondents (81.1%) were also in favor of extending the Lakelands Trail State Park and there was also support for developing a trailhead park for that pathway (60.4%). Substantial support was also voiced for other proposed regional trails (43.4%) and neighborhood sidewalks (34.0%).



The following possible trails were also identified by respondents:

---

Bicycle lanes along roads

---

Equestrian trails

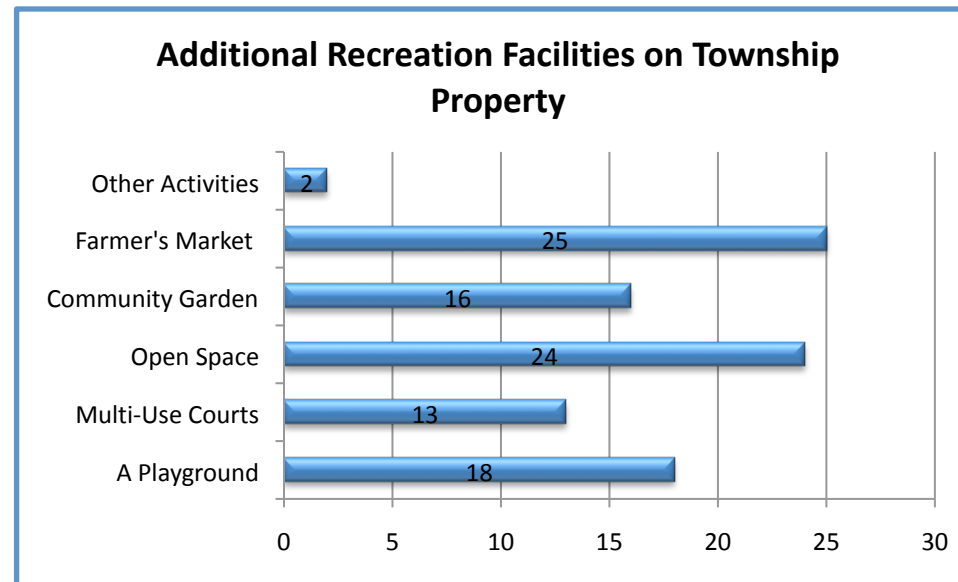
---

Local bike trails and connectors

---

- **Waterloo Township has developed a Township Hall which has room for a park. A one-half mile, closed loop Footpath was added in 2019. In addition to the new footpath and indoor exercise classes, what recreation facilities should be installed at the Township Hall's property (select all that apply).**

Over half of respondents (n=50) chose a walking trail, open space, and picnic area (56.0% each) as well as a playground and community room (54.0%). Multi-use courts (30.0%) and a community garden (26%) also received significant support.



The following other facilities were also suggested by respondents:

---

Pavilion and picnic tables

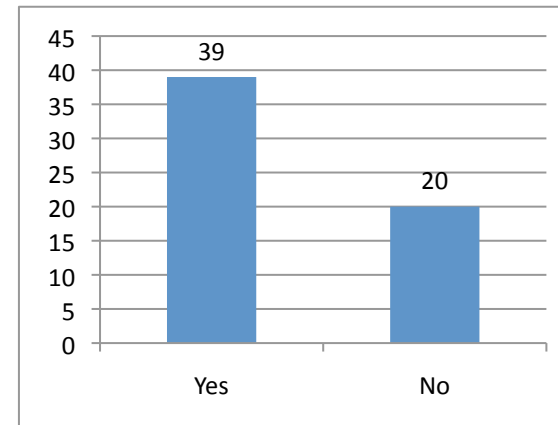
---

Informal Workshops

---

- **Should the Township work with County and State officials to provide local recreation facilities in the Waterloo Recreation Area and/or Portage and Clear Lake County Parks (utilizing existing Township income and grants)?**

Most respondents (84.0%) were in favor of collaboration with Jackson County Parks and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Only 16.0% of respondents were against such potential partnerships (n=50).



- **If the answer to [the previous] question [ ] was yes, please list the desired recreation facilities and locations.**

Fixing driveway and lot at Clear Lake (6)
Continued maintenance at Clear Lake
Year round pool
Equestrian trails (3)
Canoeing at local lakes (2)
Children's park in Waterloo
Restroom
Bicycle trails

(continued)

- **If you have further comments, please provide them here:**

---

Residents would appreciate more, at least one more, port-a-potty restroom at Portage Lake County Park

---

We have horses and would love to see more trails open and maintained

---

Any improvement that would increase the communities connection, knowledge and appreciation of the ecology and nature in the area would be great – interspersive trail, tree id, habitat restoration with access

---

Have concerns about damage to trails along Green/Loveland Road. Damage to Green Road by new mining. This severely affects the recreation activities of the horse camps that surround the area.

---

I was not aware of exercise classes at the Township Hall. Maybe you should publicize more

---

Washtenaw County is doing a lot with land preservation through groups like Legacy Land Conservancy. There could be potential opportunities in Waterloo Township to preserve lands, possible for public use and recreation, and restoring native plants and animals

---

We need bicycle trails and paths along all the roadways. We should charge a bike license fee to pay for these bike lanes and make our roads safer for all

---

The parks are both in dire need of improvements (Portage Lake County Park and Clear Lake) to the beaches and continued work on the playground equipment, road access, and parking areas

---

We have beautiful county parks. Trail funding should be funded exclusively with funds fundraised by the initiating “interest” groups. Township residents should not be burdened with the costs of forming, maintaining, purchasing, leasing trails. Funds should be raised by interest groups demanding the amenities. Funds raised by special interest fund parks like: and adopt-a-park fundraiser program. Trails created should be funded by each special interest group

---

I have been president of the Waterloo Horsemen Association for 10 years now. We have made major improvements to the campground and the trails. I have many ideas that would prosper Waterloo Township and business: board walk, trail expansions to businesses, etc.

---

Please keep WRA rural. Nothing that will increase taxes

---

Please continue to provide horse trails and dual-use horse/pedestrian trail. Please allow users to utilize power tools and mowers to clear trails to keep these trails open.

---

Please support the equestrian use of trails. Horse opportunities are why I moved to Waterloo

---

Bikes on major and busy roads are very dangerous even with police monitoring. They need to be discouraged. A bike lane on these roads would be great.

---

Connecting to bike path along M-52 would be nice. Dangerous to ride a bike around the Waterloo area roads

---

Clear Lake County Park could be more usable if able to have more access to the beach or other general upgrades to refresh

---

I live next to the Clear Lake Park and have a few comments. We have had items stolen from our property and would like the fence on both property lines repaired as it's falling down and non-functional. Clear Lake Park looks terrible and is an eyesore

---



### Recreation Committee Meetings

All meetings of the Recreation Committee are open to the public.

### Public Review Period

The Recreation Plan was submitted for public review and comment beginning on September 13, 2022. The Plan was available for review in the Township offices as well as online at <https://waterlootwpmi.gov>.

### Public Hearing

A public hearing on the *Waterloo Township Recreation Plan* was held to solicit comments before the Plan was sent to the Township Board for adoption.

### Jackson County and the Region 2 Planning Commission

The Township must provide a copy of the Recreation Plan to the Jackson County Parks Department and the Region 2 Planning Commission, transmitted after adoption by the Township Board.

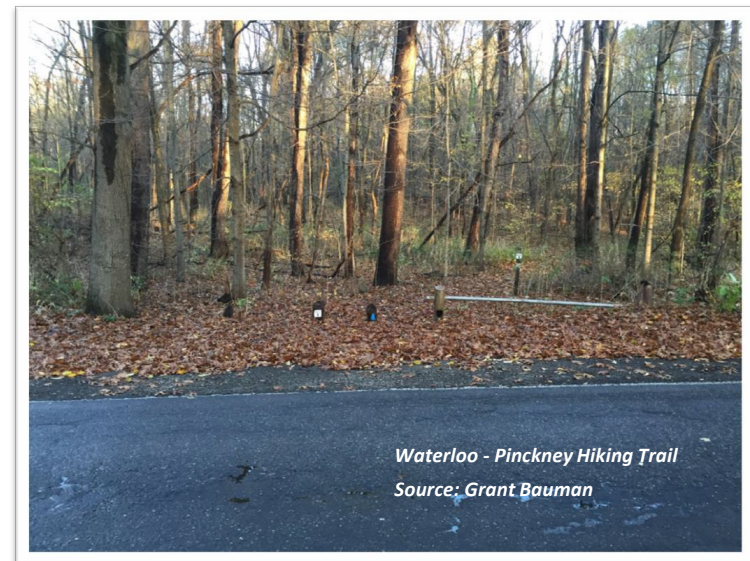
### Other Trail Planning Efforts

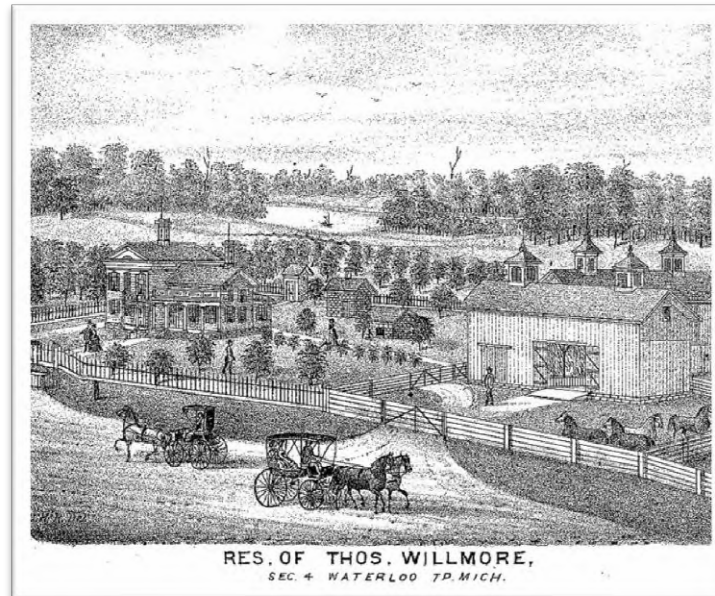
Several local, state, and national trail planning efforts also impact the Waterloo Township Area.

- Jackson County Regional Trailway Study
- Iron Belle Trail
- Route #1 of the Great Lake to Lake Trails
- Huron Waterloo Pathways Initiative



Summaries of those efforts are located in Appendix C.





## Chapter 5

# Goals & Action Program

Waterloo Township Recreation Plan

## Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives were developed for the joint recreation plan:

### #1

#### Establish and Improve Non-Motorized Trails

- Lakeland Trails State Park extension
- Other regional trails, including bike lanes
- Local nature/cross-country trails

### #2

#### Improve/establish a park for local use

- Within an existing park and/or
- On the grounds of the Waterloo Township Hall

Input into developing the goals and objectives listed above included:

- existing recreation facilities available to Township residents, regardless of the provider
- the health, age, and disabilities of Township residents
- responses from the survey and the other opportunities for public comment

### Establish and Improve Non-Motorized Trails

Michigan's Departments of Transportation (MDOT) and Natural Resources (DNR) are working on extending the Lakelands Trail State Park through Waterloo Township southward to Blackman Township. That trail is part of the Iron Belle Trail —Governor Snyder's showcase trail traversing Michigan's Upper and Lower Peninsulas— and Route #1 of the Michigan Greenway Alliance's Great Lake to Lake Trails. Almost all of the respondents (94.3%) to the recreation survey question regarding trails selected local trails connecting destinations to the trail system. Most respondents (81.1%) were also in favor of extending the Lakelands Trail State Park and there was also support for developing a trailhead park for that pathway (60.4%). Substantial support was also voiced for other proposed regional trails (43.4%). The Waterloo Area is also popular with bicyclists.

**Improve/establish a park for local use**

With the presence of the Waterloo Recreation Area and 2 county parks there is no lack of parkland in Waterloo Township. Most survey respondents (84.0%) were in favor of collaboration with Jackson County Parks and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) when asked if “the Township [should] work with County and State officials to provide local recreation facilities in the Waterloo Recreation Area and/or Portage and Clear Lake County Parks (utilizing existing Township income and grants”. Only 16.0% of respondents were against such potential partnerships. ‘Write-in’ responses to the question also included remarks regarding Clear Lake County Park.

**Action Program**

The following projects are proposed for the current 5-year planning period. Please note that the projects are not prioritized, but simply organized by park or use (i.e., activity).

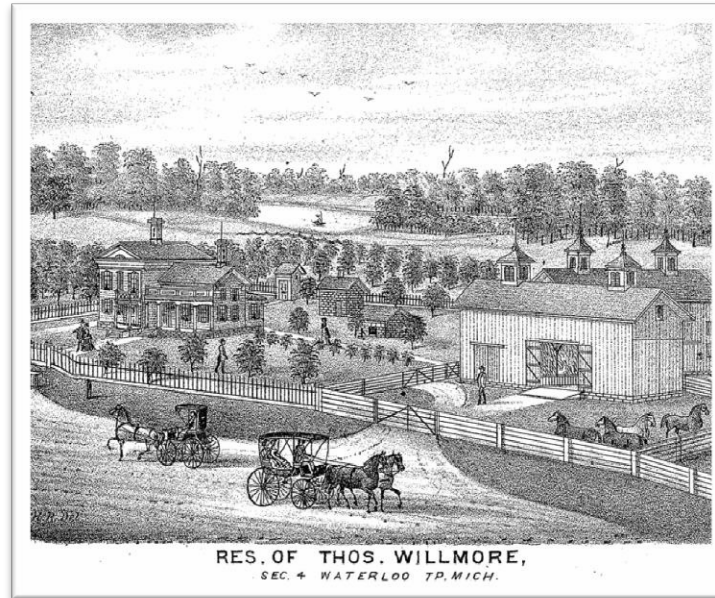
- 
1. Identify a more densely populated area in the Township to establish and develop a playground
  2. Investigate the improvement of a Jackson County Park for local township residents
  3. Accommodate bike lanes on state and county roads where feasible in cooperation with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and Jackson County Department of Transportation (JCDOT)
- 

**Investigate the improvement of Jackson County Parks for local township residents**

The location of park facilities within an existing park is an objective under the “Improve/Establish a Park for Local Use” goal. Clear Lake County Park was identified as a possible location for a local recreation area.

**Accommodate bike lanes on state and county roads where feasible**

Other regional trails, including bike lanes, is an objective under the “Establish and Improve Non-Motorized Trails” goal. Bike lanes have been identified for various roadways within the Township which can be installed as part of planned road improvements within the Waterloo Area.



Appendix A

## Demographics

Waterloo Township Recreation Plan

## Demographic Composition & Recreation

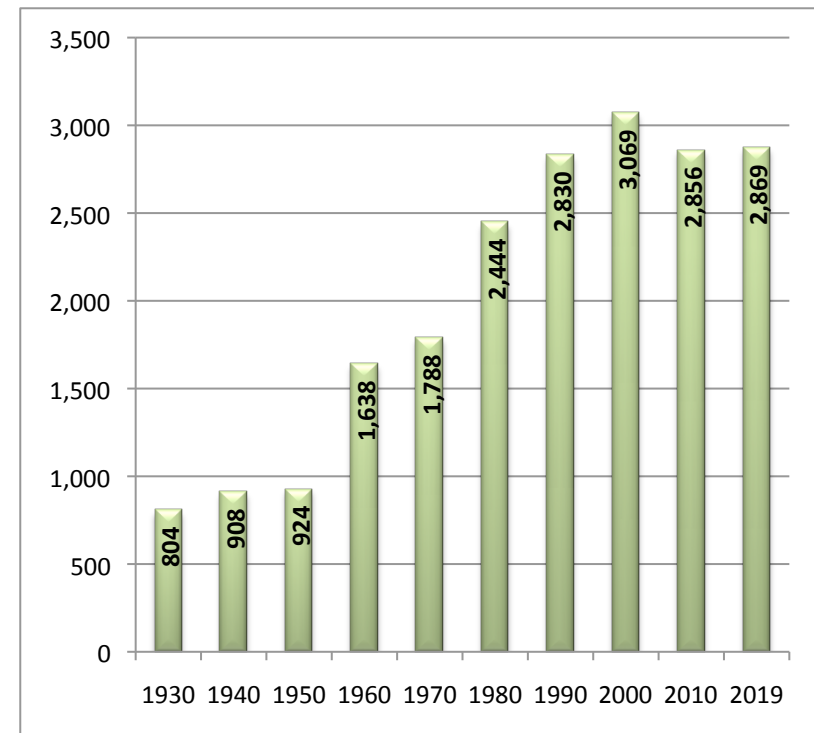
---

The demographic composition of Township residents has an effect upon their recreational needs. For example:

- **Population History & Projections** – establish the need for general recreational facilities (standards for which are based upon the size of the population)
- **The Gender of the Population** – further refine the need for general recreational facilities balanced among various age group interests
- **Household & Family Composition** – further refine the need for general recreational facilities balanced between family-oriented and individual activities
- **Racial & Ethnic Composition** – further refine the need for general recreational facilities balanced among the various interests of racial and ethnic groups
- **The Disabilities of Residents** – establish the need for special recreation facilities and disability accommodations to general recreation facilities
- **Income** – helps to illustrate the need for publicly-funded recreational facilities

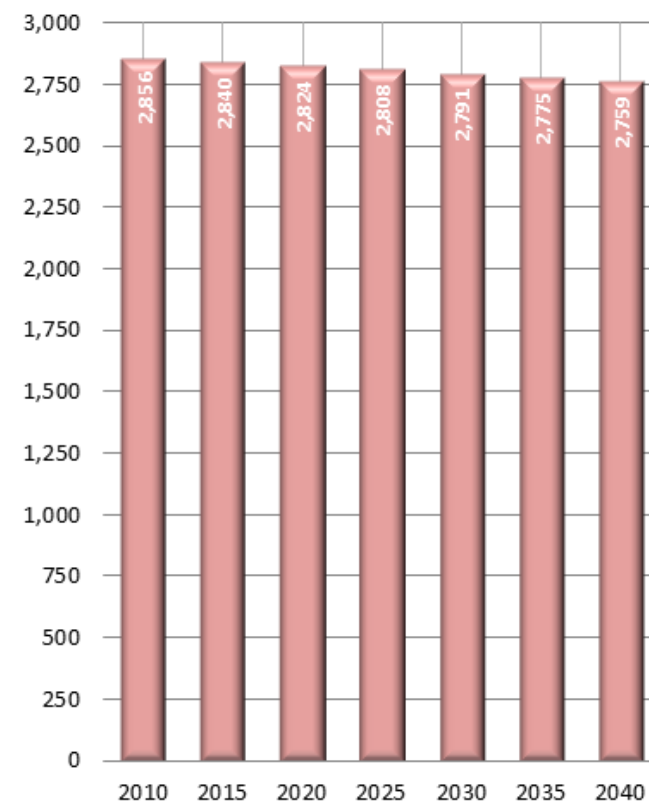
## Population History

- The population of Waterloo Township was comprised of 2869 people in 2019, according to U.S. Census estimates
- The adjacent figure shows:
  - Steady population increases occurred between 1930 and 1950 – an average of 7.5% per decade
  - Significant population increases occurred between 1950 and 1960 – 77.3%
  - Steady population increases occurred between 1960 and 1970 – 9.2%
  - Significant population increases occurred between 1970 and 1980 – 36.7%
  - Steady population increases occurred between 1980 and 2000 – an average of 12.8% per decade
  - The population decreased between 2000 and 2010 – 6.9%
  - Modest increase estimated between 2010 and



## Population Projections

- The population projections utilized in this plan were developed for the Jackson Area Comprehensive Transportation Study (JACTS)
  - The 2040 projections are grounded on historic census trends and Regional Economic Models Inc. (REMI) forecasts
  - REMI data is based upon Cohort Survival methodology and local factors/input
  - The projections are then “straight-lined” in 5-year increments between 2010 and 2040
- Utilizing that information, it is reasonable to expect that:
  - Population in the Township will decrease -3.4% by 2040
  - The 2015 population for the Township is projected to be 2,840 residents
    - The American Community Survey (ACS) estimates that the population was 2,846 people between 2009 and 2013*
  - The population is projected to be 2,824 in 2020 and 2,808 in 2025



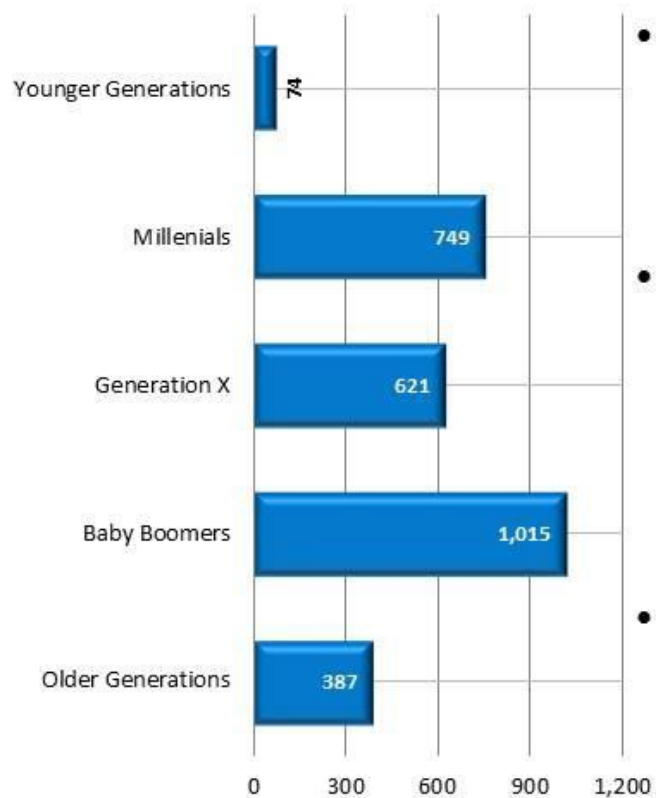


## **American Community Survey (ACS)**

---

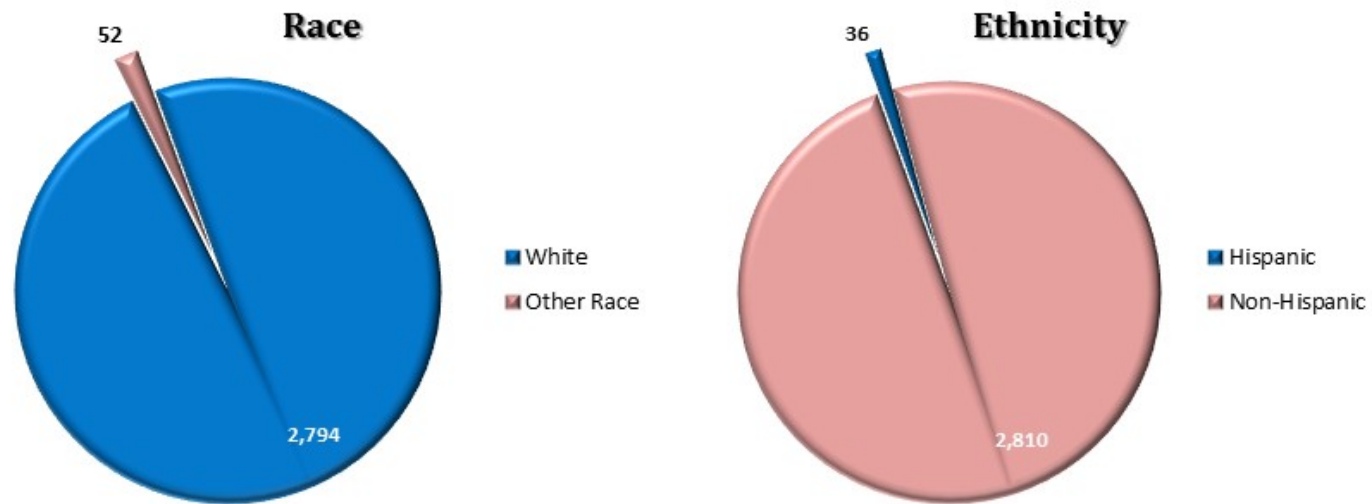
- The use of estimates provided by the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) provides more up-to-date demographics
- Reporting jurisdictions the size of Waterloo Township are provided five-year average estimates on a regular basis
- The reporting period available and utilized for this plan is 2009-2013

## Gender: 2009-2013



- The estimated median age of Waterloo Township residents was fairly high when compared to the national median
  - 44.3 years for Township residents
  - 37.3 years nationally
- The adjacent figure illustrates Waterloo Township's estimated generations:
  - 35.7% -- 'Baby boomers' (people 45-64 in 2010)
  - 26.3% -- 'Millennials' (people 5-24 in 2010)
  - 21.8% -- 'Generation X' (people 25-44 in 2010)
  - 13.6% -- Older generations (people  $\geq 65$  in 2010)
  - 2.6% -- The younger generation (people  $< 5$  in 2010)
- Finally, it is estimated that males comprised 54.9% of the Township's population

## Race & Ethnicity: 2009-2013



The population of Waterloo Township is homogenous with few racial and ethnic minorities

- An estimated 98.2% of the Township's population was white
- An estimated 1.3% of the Township's residents considered themselves Hispanic

## Disabilities: 2009-2013

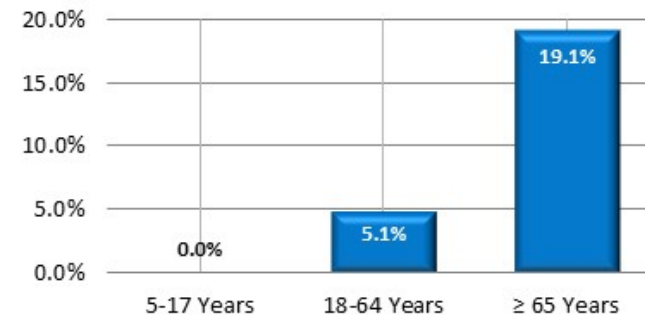
Disabled residents are a significant component of Waterloo Township's population

- An estimated 14.5% of Township residents are disabled
- < 5 years
  - An estimated 0.0% were disabled
- 5-17 years
  - An estimated 8.3% were disabled
  - An estimated 0.0% had an ambulatory disability
- 18-64 years
  - An estimated 13.6% were disabled
  - An estimated 5.1% had an ambulatory disability
- ≥ 65 years
  - An estimated 29.7% were disabled
  - An estimated 19.1% had an ambulatory disability

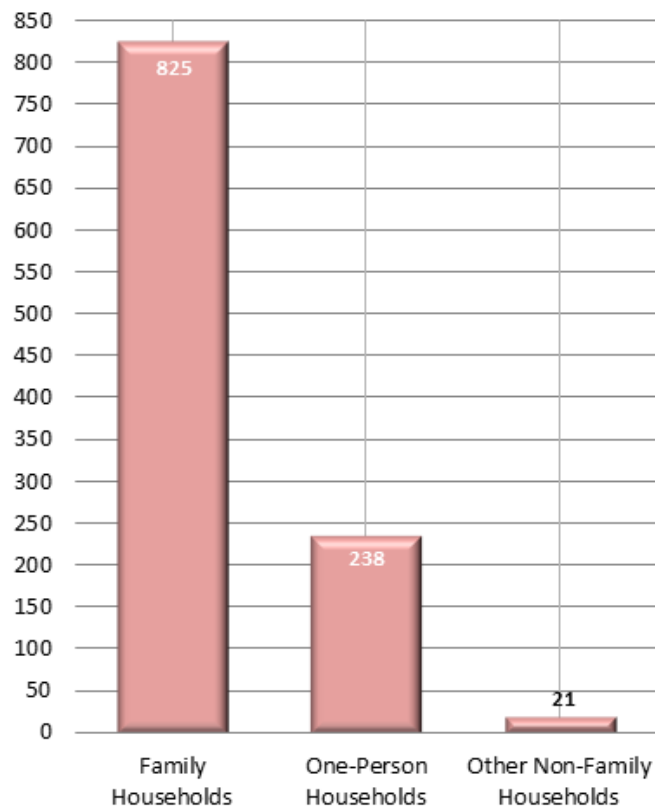
**Some Type of Disability**



**Ambulatory Disability**

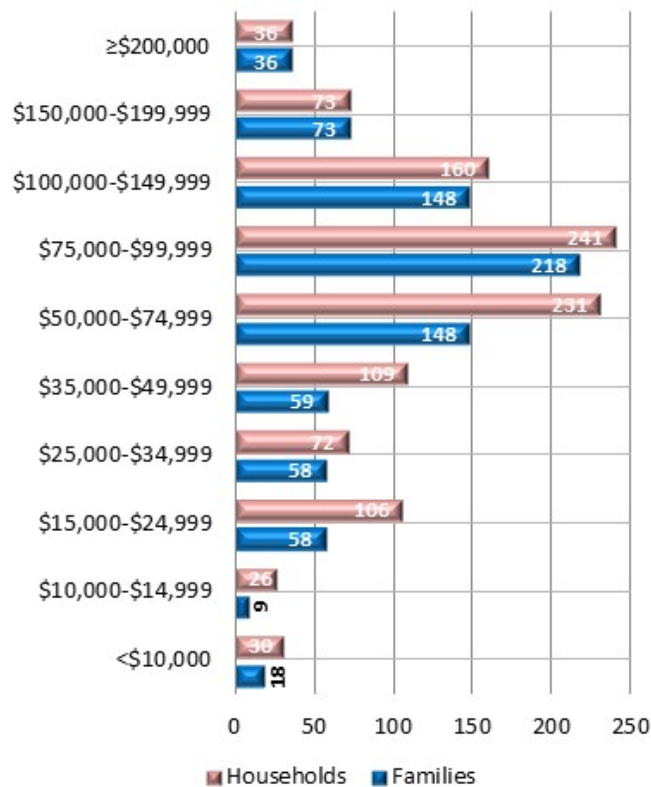


## Households & Families: 2009-2013

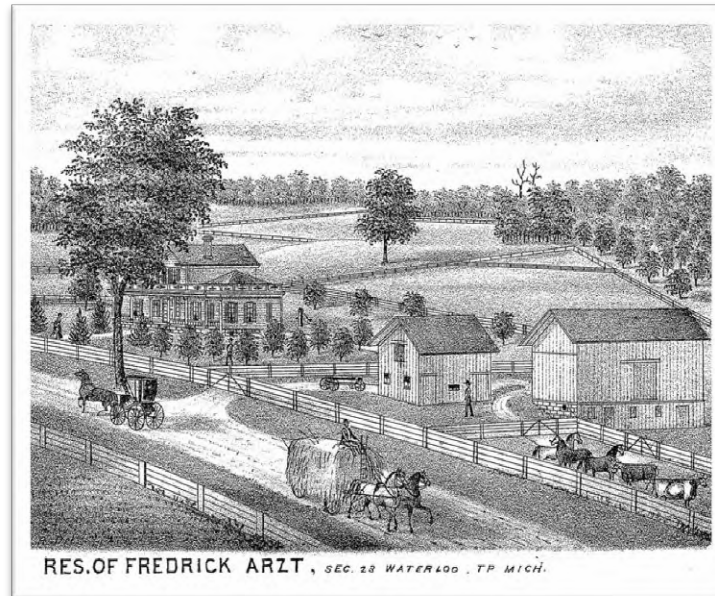


- Most people live in the estimated 1,084 households in Waterloo Township
- Families comprised an estimated 76.1% of households
- An estimated 22.0% of households were comprised of a single person
- The remaining estimated 1.9% of households were other non-family households
- Estimated average household and family size was 2.63 people and 3.03 people, respectively
- *There were an estimated 77 seasonal or occasional homes (i.e., households) potentially increasing the population by up to 203 people (i.e., 7.1%) at times*
- *Group quarters (e.g., nursing homes, etc.) were home to an estimated 0 people*

## Household Income: 2009-2013



- Median and mean household income:
  - Township -- \$70,217 and \$81,036 (please see the ACS note)
  - Nation -- \$53,046 and \$73,487
- Median and mean family income:
  - Township -- \$83,750 and \$91,919 (please see the ACS note)
  - Nation -- \$64,719 and \$85,588
- Per capita income:
  - Township -- \$31,087 (please see the ACS note)
  - Nation -- \$28,155

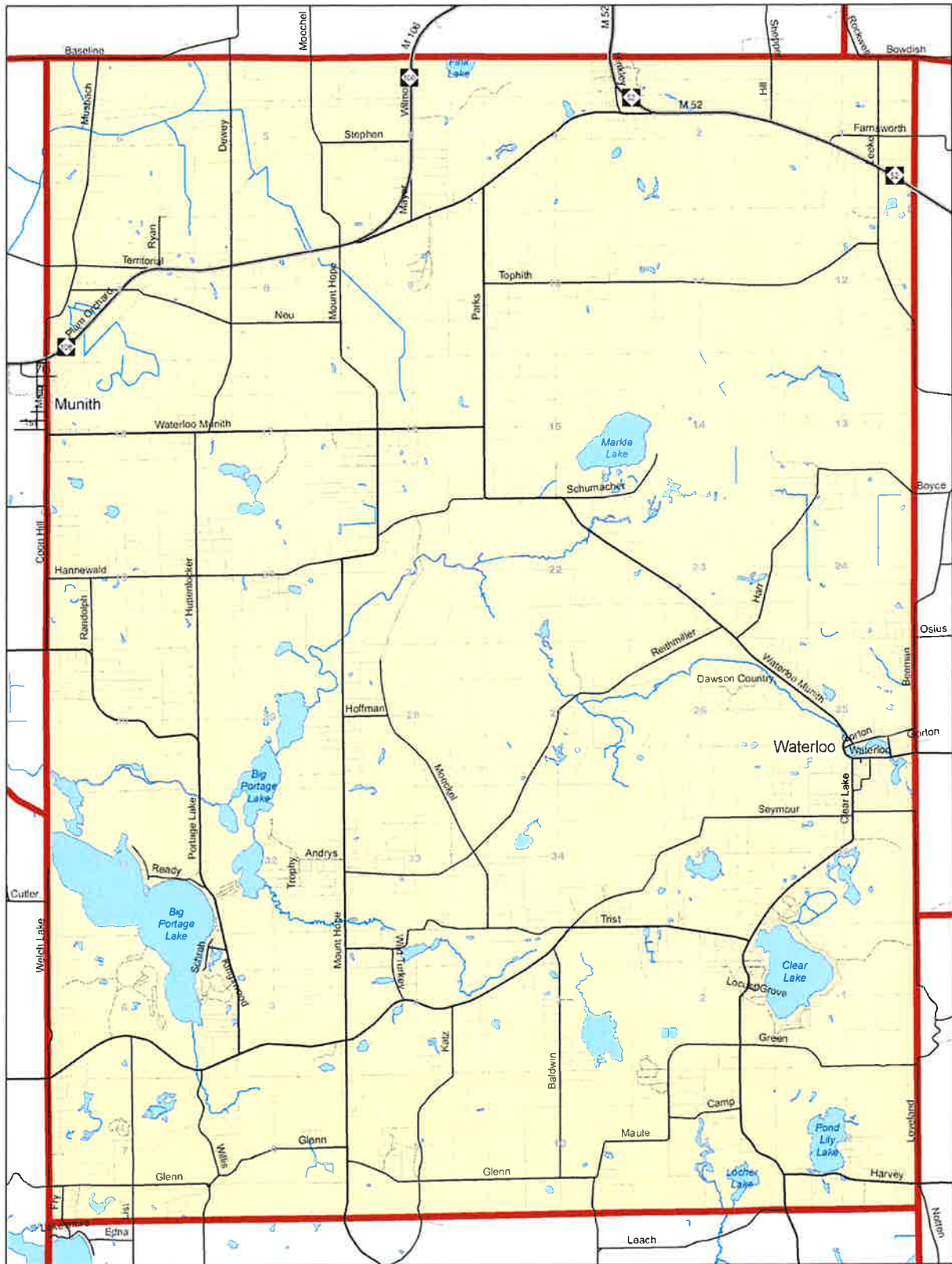


Appendix B

## Mapping

Waterloo Township Recreation Plan

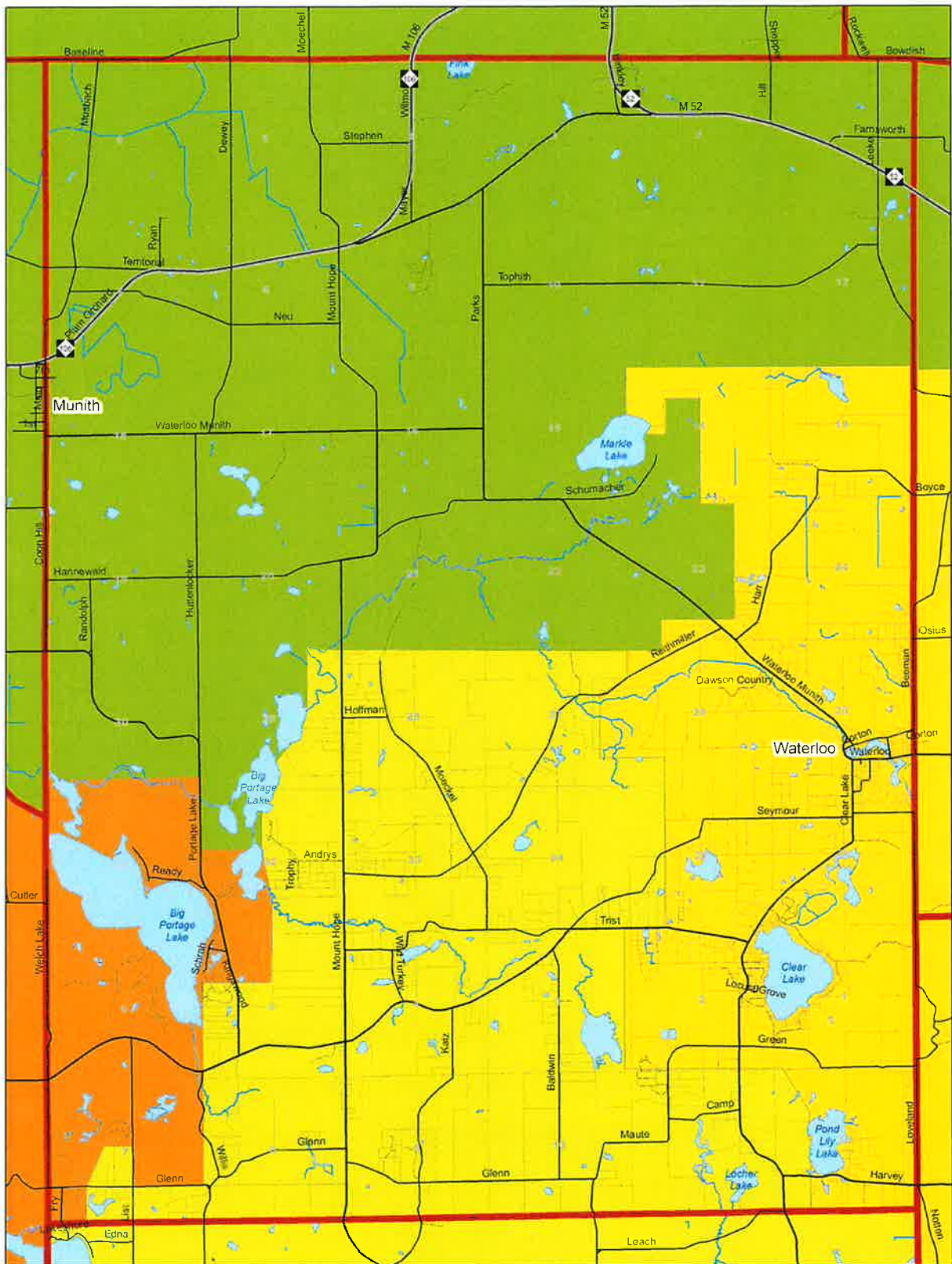




Legend

# **Base Map** Waterloo Township Recreation Plan



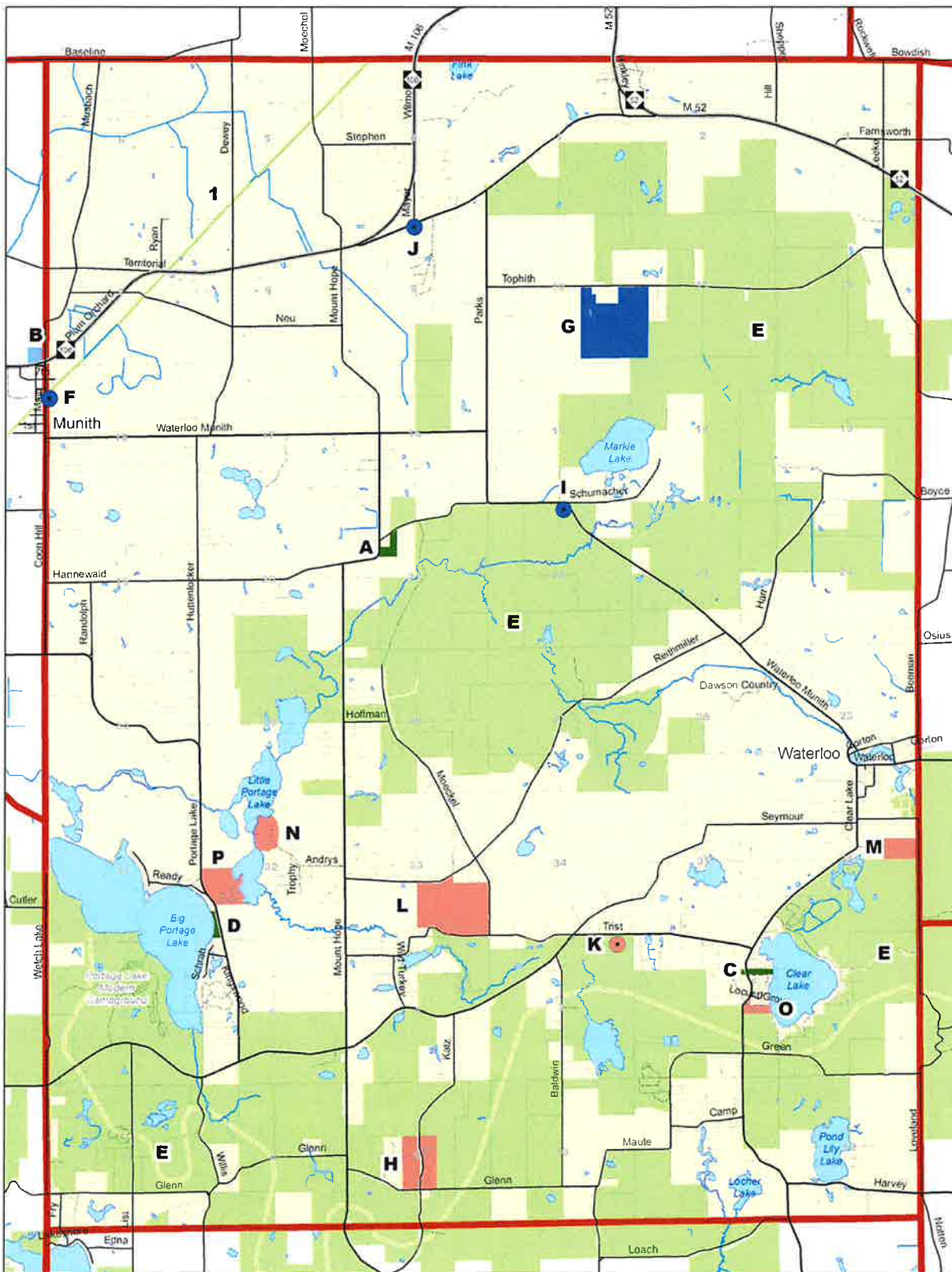


## Legend

- Stockbridge Community Schools
- Grass Lake Community Schools
- Chelsea School District
- East Jackson Community Schools

# School Districts

Waterloo Township Recreation Plan



## Legend

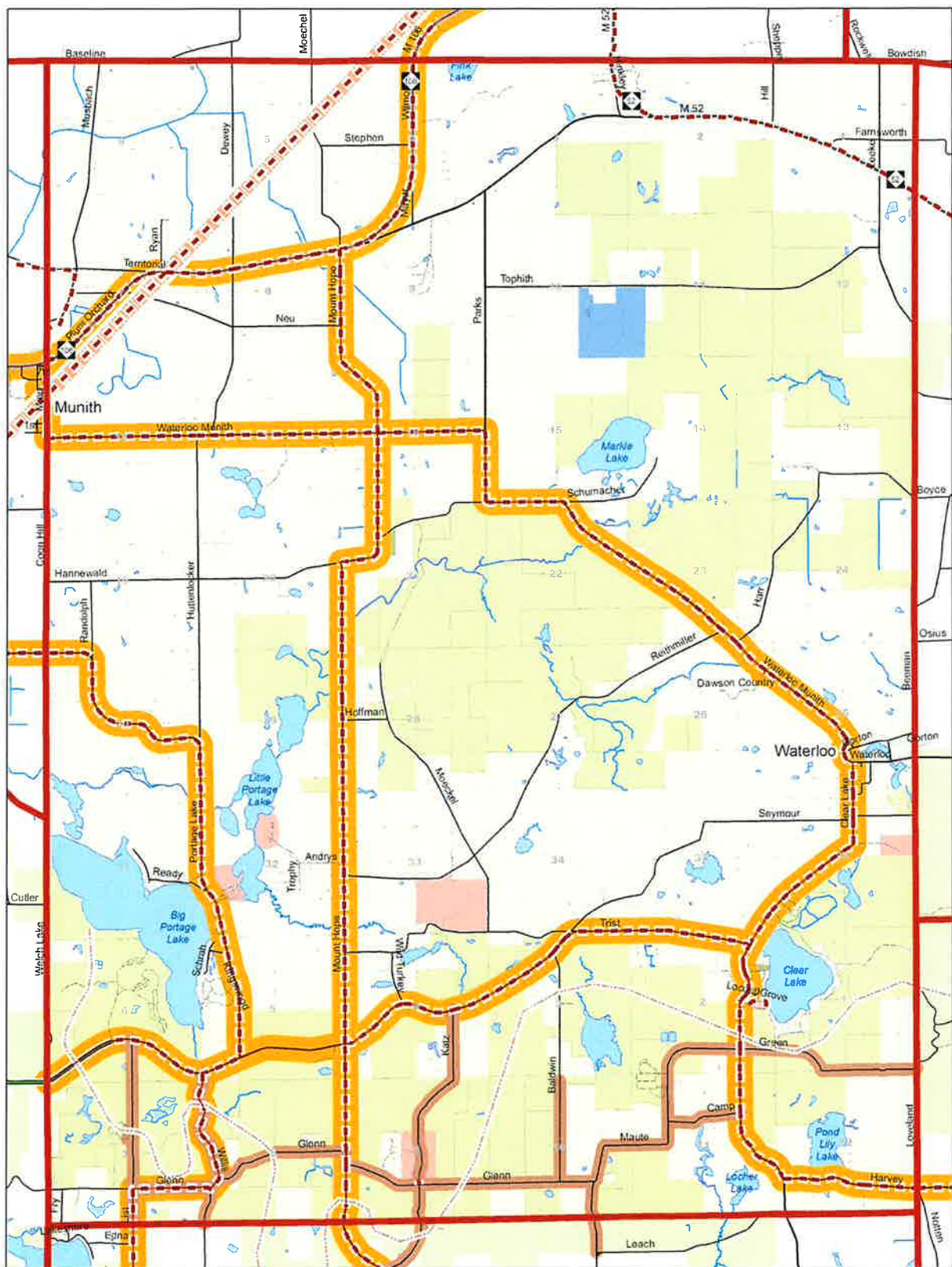
- Municipal & County Parks
- State Recreation Facilities
- School Recreation Facilities
- Quasi-Public Recreation Facilities
- Private Recreation Facilities

# Parks & Recreation Facilities

Waterloo Township Recreation Plan







## Legend

- Proposed Multi-Use Pathways
- Existing Bike Lanes
- Existing Rustic Hiking Trail
- Iron Belle Trail
- Route #1 - GLTL Trails
- Natural Beauty Roads
- Proposed Bike Lanes

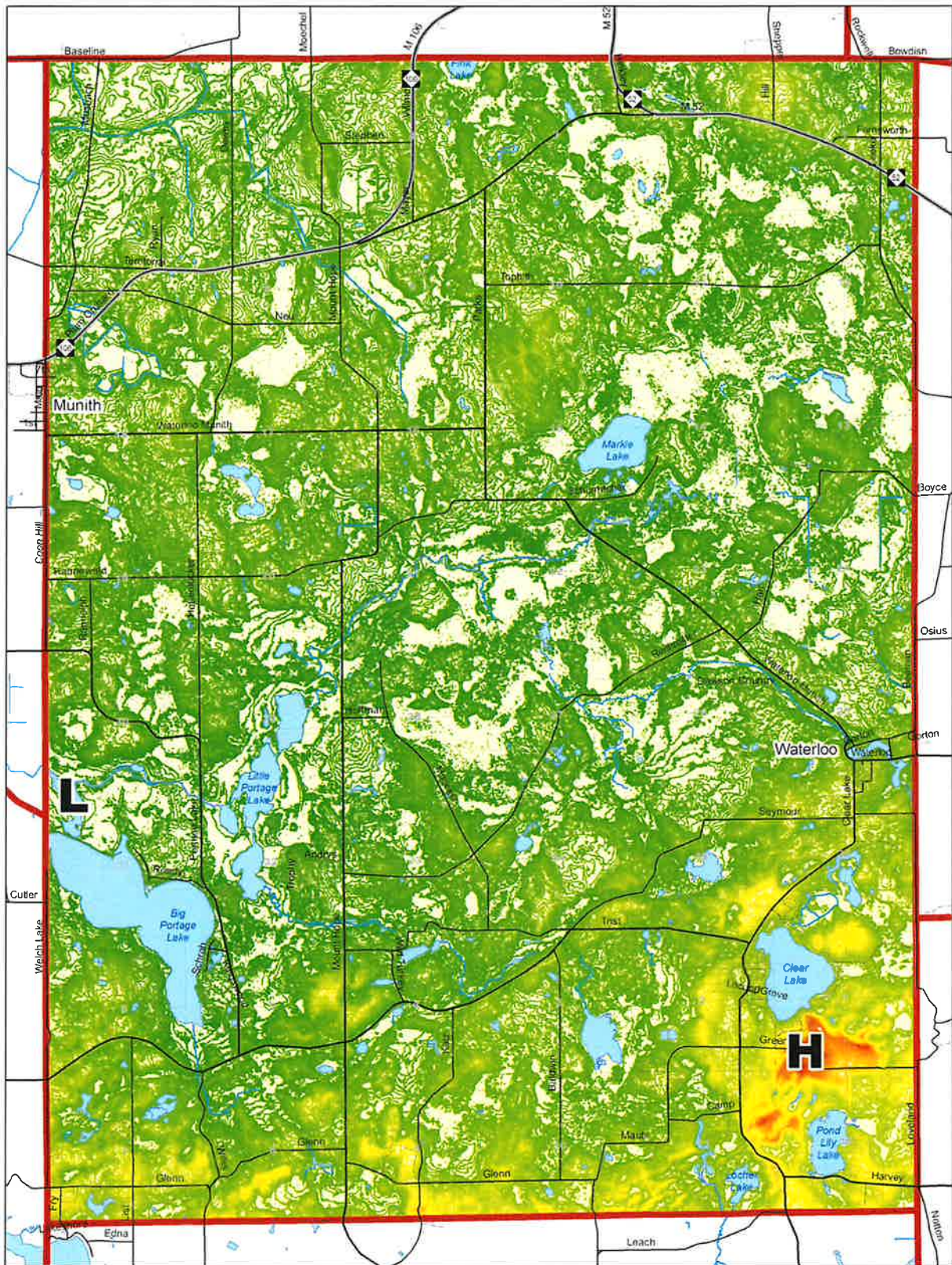


# Trail Network

Waterloo Township Recreation Plan







## Legend

904	944	984	1054	1124
914	954	994	1064	1134
924	964	1004	1074	1144
934	974	1014	1084	1154
		1024	1094	1162
		1034	1104	
		1044	1114	

**Region 2**  
Planning Commission

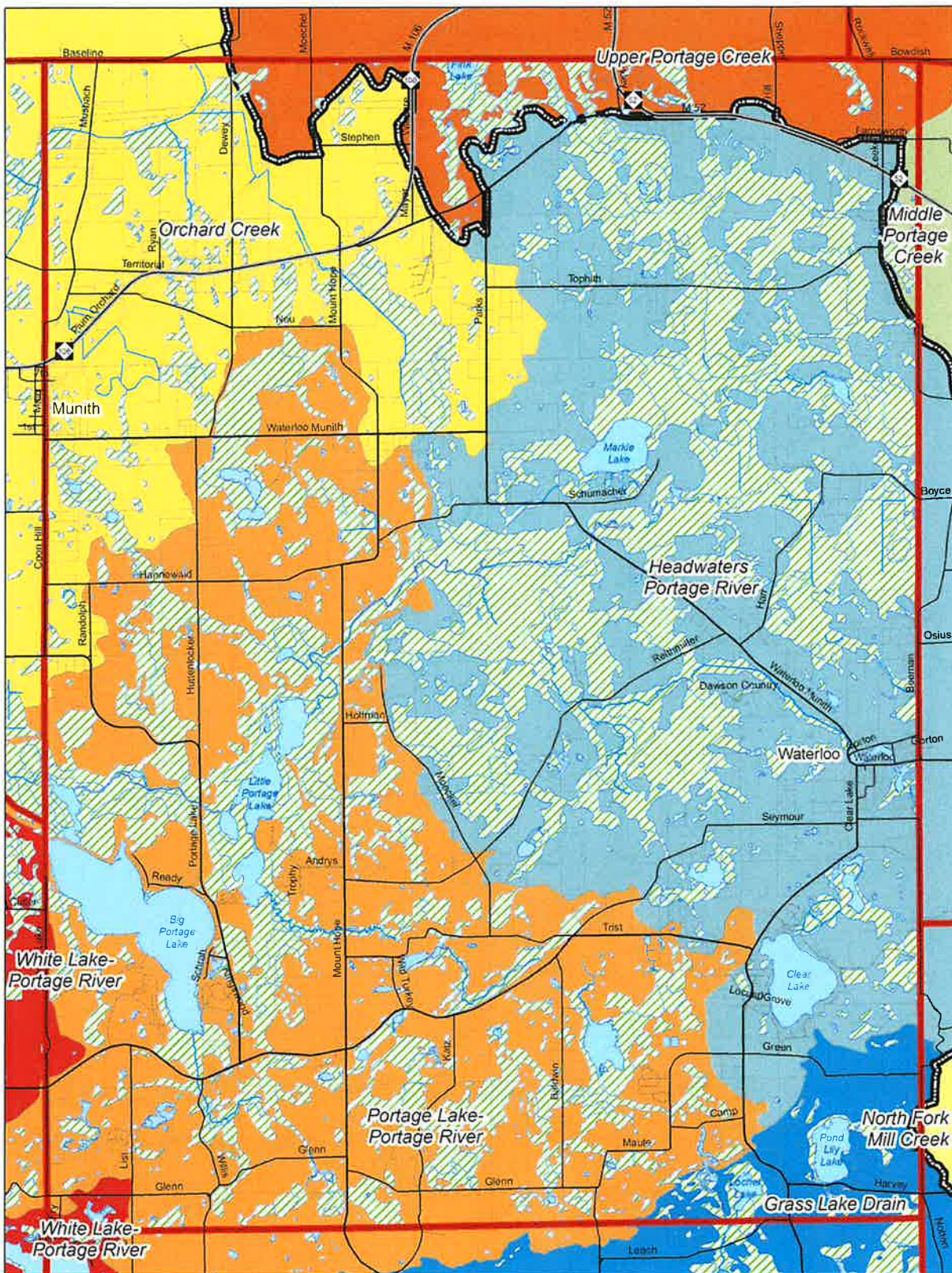
## Topography

Waterloo Township Recreation Plan



B-11





## Legend

- Upper Grand River/  
Huron River Watershed Border
- Rivers & Streams
- Lakes and Ponds
- Wetlands

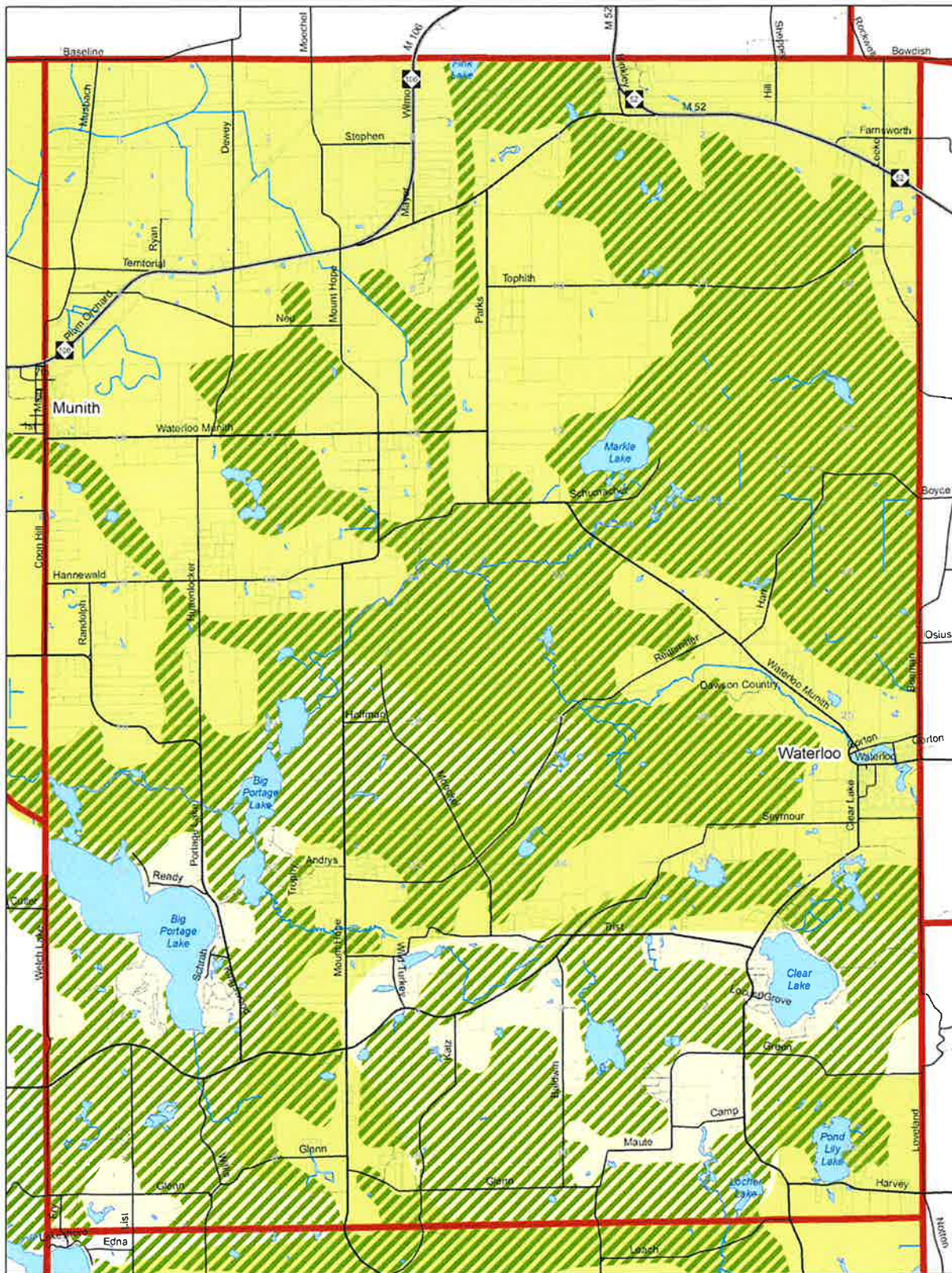


## Watersheds

Waterloo Township Recreation Plan







## Legend



Greenway

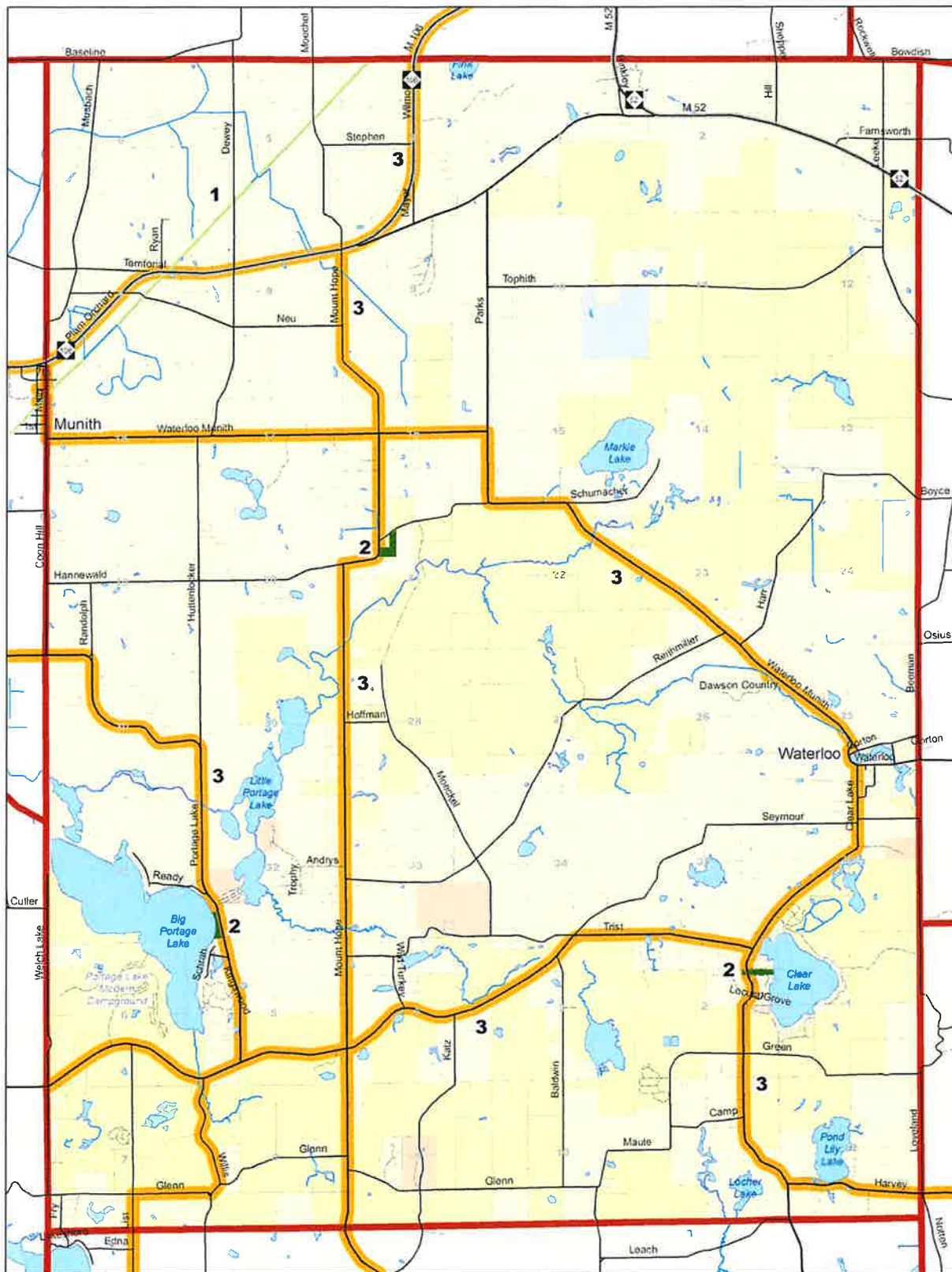


Agricultural Preservation Area

# Prime Farmland & Greenways

Waterloo Township Recreation Plan





## Legend

- 1** Lakelands Trail Extension
- 2** Township Hall & County Parks
- 3** Proposed Township Bike Lanes

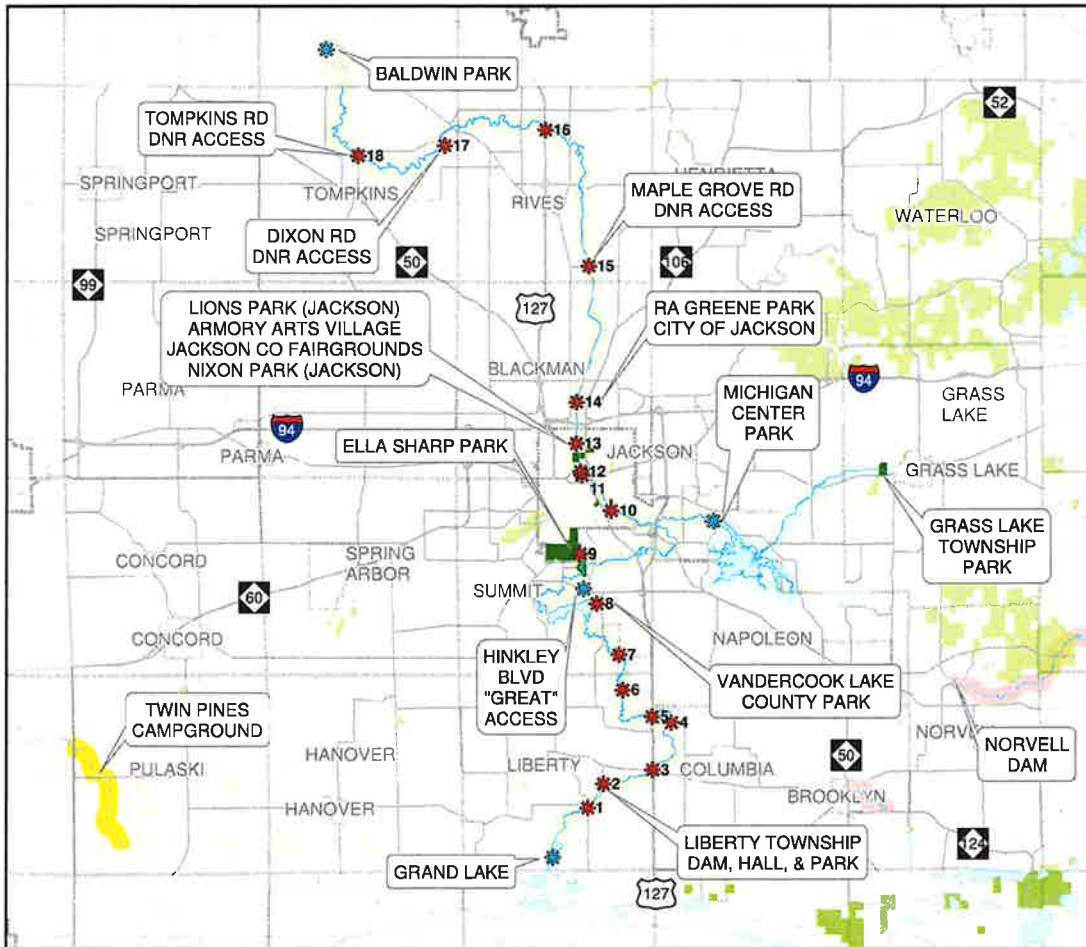
# Action Program

Waterloo Township Recreation Plan

**CITY OF JACKSON &  
JACKSON COUNTY  
JOINT RECREATION PLAN**

**MAP C-1**

**"BLUEWAYS"  
WATER TRAILS**



- LAKES & PONDS
  - RIVERS & STREAMS
  - \* "GREAT" ACCESS POINTS
  - NEARBY PARKS
  - 1/4 MILE BUFFER
  - "GREAT" ROUTES
  - OTHER GRAND RIVER ROUTES
  - RIVER RAISIN ROUTES
  - KALAMAZOO RIVER ROUTES
- SOURCE(S):  
 - MICHIGAN GEOGRAPHIC DATA LIBRARY  
 - "GREAT" & THOMAS GILBERT  
 (WWW.GREAT-MI.ORG)



**CITY OF JACKSON &  
JACKSON COUNTY  
JOINT RECREATION PLAN**

**MAP C-2**

**NON-MOTORIZED  
TRAIL NETWORK**

**PROPOSED STATEWIDE TRAILS**

IRON BELLE TRAIL  
ROUTE #1 - GLTL TRAILS

**2002 TRAILWAY STUDY  
AND CITY DESTINATION-  
BASED BIKE ROUTES**

**MULTI-USE PATHWAYS**

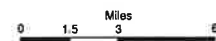
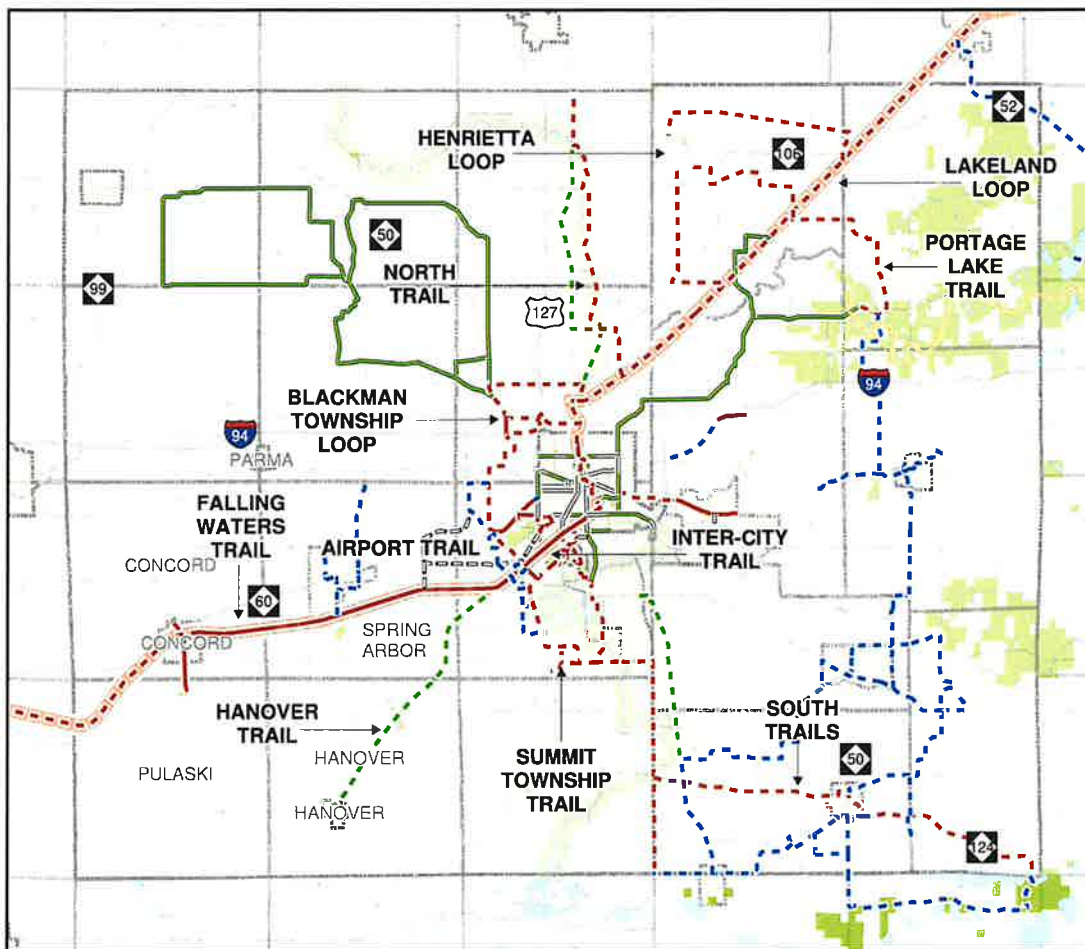
- CURRENT
- - - PROPOSED
- . - . - ALTERNATE (PROPOSED)

**BIKE ROUTES**

- POSTED ROUTES
- EXISTING LANES
- - - PROPOSED LANES

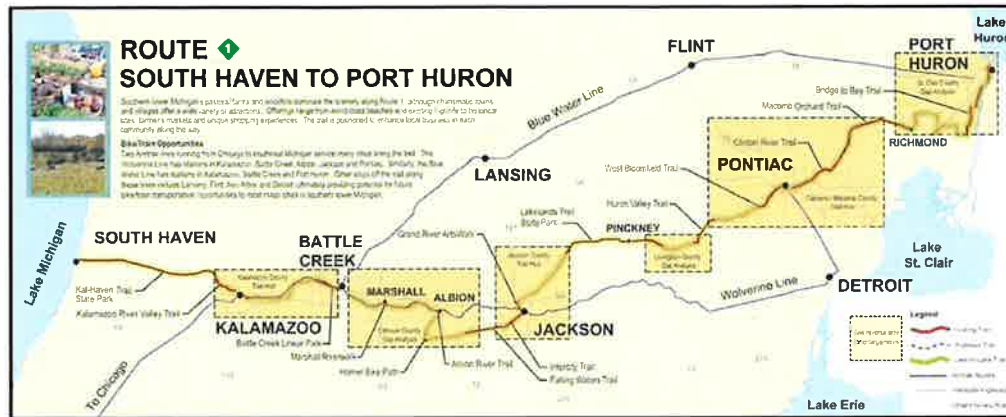
**OTHER PROPOSED PATHWAYS**

- . - . - PROPOSED MULTI-USE PATHWAYS
- - - PROPOSED BIKE LANES
- PROPOSED RUSTIC TRAIL



# Route #1 of the Great Lake-to-Lake Trails

Waterloo Township Recreation Plan



*The Great Lake-to-Lake Trails* project began in 2009 with a generous grant to Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance from the Kresge Foundation to accelerate the development of cross-state trails. Anticipated outcomes include enhanced tourism, transportation, health and fitness and economic development opportunities. Stakeholder identification and collaboration on a multi-agency level is ongoing. A marketing/branding strategy and recommended next steps are included in the planning effort.



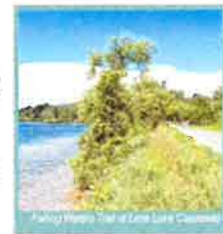
Michigan ranks #1 in the country with 2,478 miles of open rail-trail. With connecting non-rail-trail miles,

there are well over 3,000 miles of multi-use trail for hiking, bicycling, running and often snowmobiling, horseback riding and ORV use, operated by state, county, township, city, village or nonprofit entities. Michigan is now at the enviable point of being able to connect long stretches of trail corridor across the state. Many of the east-west cross-state trail routes can be connected from one Great Lake to another in the foreseeable future. A system of five Great Lake-to-Lake Trails is envisioned for promoting Michigan's tourism and nonmotorized transportation assets. Route 1 extends from South Haven to Port Huron and is comprised of 15 trails totaling 178 miles already in place. Many opportunities for thematic promotion will present themselves as these trails are connected to each other. For a current map of Michigan's multi-use trail system, see [www.michigantrails.org](http://www.michigantrails.org).

## Jackson County Trail Hub

Three named trail segments combine to create 15.7 miles of nearly continuous trail through Jackson County. The Falling Waters Trail enters Jackson from the southwest to become the Intercity Trail. It transitions to the Grand River ArtsWalk following a 1/8 mile gap along the Grand River. The ArtsWalk passes through Artway Arts Village and continues north along the Grand River.

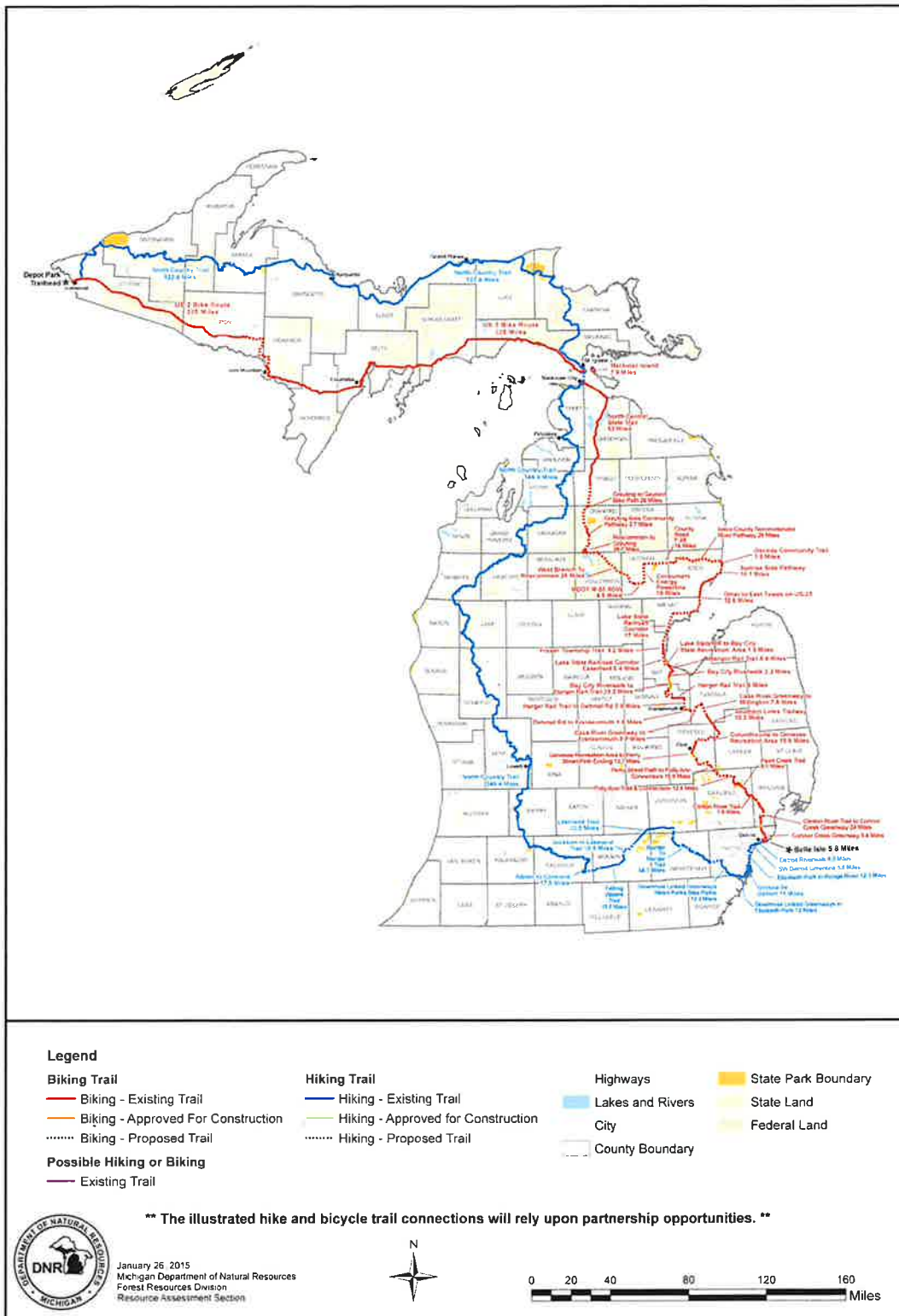
The gap from here to Lakelands Trail is filled by a proposed route north and west of the State Prison, partially using existing roadways and an incomplete segment of the Lakelands Trail State Park.

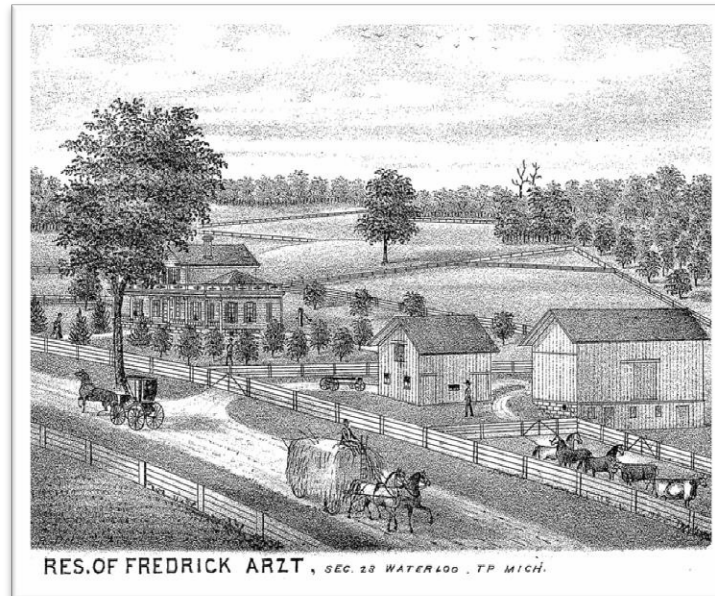


The *Great Lake-to-Lake Trails* concept and the above graphics are the creation of the *Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance*.

# Iron Belle Trail: *Ironwood to Belle Isle*

Waterloo Township Recreation Plan





Appendix C

## **Trails & Trail Planning & Programming**

Waterloo Township Recreation Plan

Waterloo Township is partnering with other municipalities and governmental agencies as well as the Fitness Council of Jackson and other non-profit advocacy groups on the developing network of trails throughout Jackson County and beyond. This appendix provides a countywide context of current trail planning efforts.

## Water Trails (“Blueways”)

Various blueways exist (in some fashion) along waterways in Jackson County.<sup>1</sup> Water trails are maintained along the Grand River as it traverses Jackson County. Smaller blueways are also located along portions of the River Raisin and the Kalamazoo River (please see Map C-1).

### GREAT Routes

The Grand River Environmental Action Team (GREAT) has twelve (12) routes (i.e., trips) along the Grand River as it flows through Jackson County. GREAT also sponsors canoe and kayak “paddles” each year which utilize those and other routes (please see Map C-1):<sup>2</sup>

#### ■ Southern County Routes

- **Trip 1.** Grand Lake to Liberty Dam. *Access Point 1.*
- **Trip 2.** Liberty Dam to US-127 (Meridian Road). *Access Points 1 -3*
- **Trip 3.** US-127 (Meridian Road) to Reed Road. *Access Points 3 & 4*
- **Trip 4.** Reed Rd. to Vandercook Lake Park. *Access Points 4 - 8*

#### ■ Jackson Metro Routes

- **Trip 5.** Vandercook Lake County Park to Ella Sharp (City) Park. *Access Points 8 & 9*
- **Trip 6.** Ella Sharp (City) Park to High Street. *Access Points 9 & 10*
- **Trip 7.** Michigan Center to Lions Park. *Access: Points 13*
- **Trip 8.** Lions Park to Maple Grove Road. *Access Points 13 – 15*

#### GREAT

*The Grand River Environmental Action Team (GREAT) sponsors canoe and kayak “paddles” each year which traverse the Grand River and other defined water trails (i.e., “blueways”) throughout Jackson County. Please visit [www.great-mi.org](http://www.great-mi.org) to learn more about future “paddles” and other GREAT events. The synopsis of Trips and Access Points which comprise this section of the Appendix is based upon information obtained from GREAT (please see Map C-1).*

<sup>1</sup> These routes (i.e., trips) are shown for informational and planning purposes. The Grand River Environmental Action Team (GREAT) points out that there should be no water trails unless there is a commitment to perform the needed maintenance (i.e., chain saw cutting) to keep the routes open for paddlers. At this point, GREAT rotates cutting 3 of the 12 routes each year for its monthly public paddles—in addition to the annual clean-up within the City of Jackson—and these are only done a month prior to an event. To solve this blocking issue, GREAT suggests that local governments should undertake this maintenance along the stretches of the river within their jurisdiction in the spring of each year.

<sup>2</sup> Please note that fluctuating water levels and maintenance issues may cause difficulties for any of the trips. Fallen trees and limited clearance under bridges are of particular concern.



### ■ Northern County Routes

- **Trip 9.** Maple Grove Road to US-127 (State Road is adjacent). *Access Points 15 & 16*
- **Trip 10.** US-127 (State Road is adjacent) to Dixon Road. *Access Points 16 & 17*
- **Trip 11.** Dixon Road to Tompkins Road. *Access Points 17 & 18*
- **Trip 12.** Tompkins Road to Baldwin Park (Onondaga). *Access Point 18*

### Grand River Access Points

GREAT also developed the following access points (please see Map C-1):

#### Grand River Access Points

ACCESS POINT	NOTES FROM GREAT
1. LIBERTY DAM	GOOD ACCESS & PARKING (ASK AT STORE)
	2. CULVER RD. GOOD ACCESS & LIMITED PARKING
3. US-127 (MERIDIAN RD.)	GOOD ACCESS & PARKING
	4. REED RD. LIMITED PARKING & OK ACCESS
5. US-127 (MERIDIAN RD.)	GOOD ACCESS & PARKING AT THE NEARBY MDOT COMMUTER LOT
	6. LOOMIS RD. PARKING ON ROAD & ACCESS
7. DRAPER RD.	ACCESS & PARKING ON ROAD
	8. VANDERCOOK LAKE COUNTY PARK ACCESS & PARKING
9. ELLA SHARP (CITY) PARK	GOOD ACCESS & LIMITED PARKING
	10. HIGH STREET GOOD ACCESS & PARKING
11. GRAND RIVER (CITY) MEMORIAL PARK	DOWNTOWN JACKSON
	12. THE TOY HOUSE ACCESS & PARKING
13. LIONS (CITY) PARK	ACCESS THROUGH LOCKED GATE & PARKING
	14. R.A. GREENE (CITY) PARK GOOD ACCESS & PARKING
15. MAPLE GROVE ROAD	DNR BOAT LAUNCH
16. US-127 (STATE ROAD IS ADJACENT)	ACCESS & PARKING VIA STATE ROAD ON BOTH SIDES (NORTH/SOUTH) OF THE RIVER
17. DIXON ROAD	DNR BOAT LAUNCH
	18. TOMPKINS ROAD DNR BOAT LAUNCH

## Jackson to Grand Haven

An August 21, 2015, Mlive post announced a Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) initiative to facilitate a “locally-led, bottom-up” effort to create a 252-mile Grand River blueway from Jackson County through Ottawa County at Grand Haven.<sup>3</sup>

## Non-motorized Trails

Jackson County partnered with other municipalities in 2002 to develop the *Jackson County Regional Trailway Study*. That document has been used as a guide ever since and various municipalities have expanded upon the basic “stick” network as part of their recreation planning efforts. The Falling Waters/Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Equity Trail Corridor also serves as the backbone for a developing statewide trail as it traverses Jackson County.

## Regional Trailway Study

The parks departments of Jackson County and the City of Jackson; the townships of Blackman, Spring Arbor, and Summit; the Falling Waters Trail Committee; and the Lakelands Trail effort joined together to develop the *Jackson County Regional Trailway Study* which was completed in 2002. The Study is comprised of the following “stick” network of trails throughout the County (please see Map C-2):<sup>4</sup>

- Lakelands Trail – 15.4 miles
- Henrietta Loop – 19.9 miles
- Portage Lake Trail – 6.5 miles
- North Trail – 7.6 miles
- Blackman Township Loop – 8.0 miles
- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Equity Trail – 7.5 miles
- Airport Trail – 5.5 miles
- Falling Waters Trail – 11.5 miles
- Hanover Trail – 8.9 miles
- Summit Township Loop – 7.2 miles
- Ella Sharp Park Trail and Cascades Park – 4.4 miles
- South Trail – 19.5 miles

---

<sup>3</sup> 250-mile Grand River water trail across Michigan under development, Garret Ellison, 8/21/15 edition of *The Grand Rapids Press* via Mlive ([http://www.mlive.com/news/grand-rapids/index.ssf/2015/08/grand\\_river\\_water\\_trail.html](http://www.mlive.com/news/grand-rapids/index.ssf/2015/08/grand_river_water_trail.html))

<sup>4</sup> Please refer the attached map as well as the full study for greater detail.

- Connection to Existing Trail on Page Avenue – 0.3 miles

### Statewide Trail Planning Efforts

There are two statewide trail planning efforts which impact Jackson County and its developing network of non-motorized trails:

- **Route #1 of the Great Lake-to-Lake (GLTL) Trails.** The Michigan Greenways Alliance proposes the development of a series of trails which provide five non-motorized connections among the Great Lakes once they are developed. Route #1 will eventually connect Port Huron (Lake Huron) and South Haven (Lake Michigan), traversing Jackson County along the way. This opportunity increases the significance of the emerging trail network within Jackson County to statewide significance (please see Map C-3).
- **Iron Belle Trail.** Governor Snyder unveiled the routes of his showcase trail, which links Belle Isle Park in the City of Detroit with Depot Park in Ironwood (located along the Wisconsin border in the western Upper Peninsula) in early 2015. The hiking portion of the Iron Belle Trail will follow the current route of the North County Scenic Trail, traversing Jackson County along the way. This opportunity increases the significance of the emerging trail network within Jackson County to national significance (please see Map C-4).<sup>5</sup>

These trails utilize the primary non-motorized corridor planned for Jackson County. For example, the existing Falling Waters/Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Equity Trail Corridor will be utilized by the Iron Belle Trail and Route #1 of the Great Lake-to-Lake Trails as they traverse Jackson County. The planned extension of the Lakelands Trail Corridor into Jackson County will also serve as part of that backbone.

### Other Local Trail Planning Efforts

Municipalities within Jackson County have also engaged in non-motorized trail planning with the aim of supplementing the network defined in the *Jackson County Regional Trailway Study*.

**Local Recreation Plans.** Various municipalities have also proposed local expansions of the “stick” network proposed in the Trailway Study. Those plans include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- Heart of the Lakes Area
- Grass Lake Area
- Leoni Township
- Village of Concord
- Summit Township
- Blackman Township

---

<sup>5</sup> The North County Scenic Trail stretches from eastern New York to central North Dakota.



The City of Jackson has also continued to refine the non-motorized pathways proposed within its boundaries. The Destination-Based Bike Routes Map includes existing and proposed non-motorized lanes and trails and signed bike lanes. The map also identifies the destinations they are designed to inter-connect.

**Intergovernmental Cooperation.** The above listing of municipal plans illustrates that the spirit of intergovernmental cooperation that created the original Trailway Study is still active in trail planning for Jackson County. For example, the *Heart of the Lakes Area Recreation Plan* covers the Village of Brooklyn and the Townships of Columbia, Napoleon, and Norvell. The *Grass Lake Area Recreation Plan* covers the Village of Grass Lake and Grass Lake Charter Township.

**Public-Private Cooperation.** Cooperation between the public and private sectors is also active in the sphere of trail planning. For example, one of the strategies contained in the ‘Arts, Recreational, and Cultural Opportunities’ component of the *Jackson County Strategic Plan* is to “continue to improve the non-motorized System in the Jackson Community.” Current activities listed under this strategy are:

- “Help facilitate the update of the *Jackson County Non-Motorized Transportation Plan*” (i.e., the *Jackson County Regional Trailway Study*)
- Develop the Sparks Park/Inter-City Trail Connector
- Develop more statewide connection trails (Lakelands Trail to Stockbridge)

The Arts, Recreation, and Culture (ARC) Strand of Jackson 2020 helped to develop the ‘Arts, Recreational, and Cultural Opportunities’ component of the *Jackson County Strategic Plan*. The Parks, Recreation, and Environment Workgroup within the ARC Strand is involved in implementing those activities in cooperation with its mix of members from the public and private sectors as well as the general public.