

Appendix D

2016 Amendment to the *Mecosta County Recreation* *Master Plan 2014-2018*

Planning Process

For a variety of reasons, but much due to the 2008 recession, the condition of the Mecosta County Parks had deteriorated and all of the parks were becoming outdated. The Mecosta County Park Commission began a strategic planning process in October of 2015 to identify and prioritize needed and desired projects for upgrading and modernizing the county owned and operated recreational facilities.

A complete inventory of each county park and its facilities was performed. The proposed improvements listed in the current plan were reviewed. Those projects completed and deemed not currently desired were eliminated and new projects added. Concurrently, an examination of the Commission's finances and an analysis of the Mecosta County parks' market/patronage area were performed.

The Commission then organized the proposed future projects into a capital improvements schedule, identifying the projects to be completed, estimated costs to accomplish them, and named possible sources to fund the projects. Regular publicized meetings were held monthly. Park Commission members reported monthly to their districts and to the Board of Commissioners. Notices were sent to county municipal governments to gather their inputs.

The Mecosta County Park Commission and the County Board of Commissioners met jointly three times in open meeting to discuss the proposed projects and the methods proposed to finance them (including a possible millage request to county residents).

The Mecosta County Park Commission then put forth the 2016 Amendment to the *Mecosta County Recreation Master Plan 2014-2018* that includes the "Capital Improvement Schedule 2016-2021" and the "Market Analysis – Seasonal Registration."

The Mecosta County Park Commission approved the Amendment on the 3rd of March 2016 and sent the amendment to the Mecosta County Board of Commissioners for its review and deliberation. A notice was published on February 17, 2016 to solicit public review and a public hearing was held on the Amendment on the 3rd of March 2016. The Board of Commissioners then passed a resolution adopting the Amendment to the 2014-2018 recreation plan.

Mecosta County Park Commission
Capital Improvement Schedule
2016-2021

2016 Budgeted Capital Improvements

Park	Expense Description	Amount	Source of Funds
School Section Lake	Replacement of Family	\$10,000	Park funds
Veterans Park	Group Camp cabin furniture and rental cabin furniture		
	Roof replacement of 2 pavilions 6 cabins, and bathroom, refurbish interior of main bath house and 2 small bath houses, new grills and fire rings, new gas tanks, and art barn electric addition;	\$183,000	\$50,000 from Friends of SSLVP
	Re-roof concession building, new windows, and misc. carpentry. Add 2 new cabins		Park funds
	Subtotal	\$193,000	
Brower	New fire rings and grills	\$10,000	Park funds
	Replacement of cabin furniture including beds, mattresses, dressers, etc.	\$5,000	
	Subtotal	\$15,000	
Paris	Van and trailer to haul people to a tube launch north of Paris and drop off for tubing trips that end at Paris	\$12,000	Park funds
	Replacement of cabin beds, mattresses, and furniture	\$2,000	
	Replacement of manager trailer roof, replace hatchery roof, repairs to pond walls, tubes and tubing supplies for implementation of rental operation, and some new grills and fire pits	\$16,000	Park funds
	Subtotal	\$30,000	
Merrill-Gorrel	Replacement of cabin beds, mattresses, and furniture	\$2,000	
	New well, replacement of two roofs and addition of some new fire pits and grills	\$35,000	Park funds
	Subtotal	\$37,000	
	Total	\$275,000	

2017 Capital Improvements

Park	Expense Description	Amount	Source of Funds
School Section Lake Veterans Park	Reconfigure existing seasonal lots	\$25,000	Park funds
	Provide water service to reconfigured lots	\$25,000	
	Provide sewer service to reconfigured lots	\$90,000	Loans/Millage
	Upgrade to 50 amp to reconfigured lots	\$75,000	
	Construct new bath house	\$115,000	
	Construct 20-30 boat tie ups at west shore	\$20,000	Park Funds
	Renovate concession building interior	\$35,000	Friends of SSLVP
Subtotal		\$385,000	
Brower	Construct dock and 30 boat slips on Deep Channel	\$150,000	Park funds Grants Loans/Millage
	Construct two cabins	\$45,000	
	Add 30-40 slips at Shallow Channel in lieu of tie ups	\$100,000	
	Subtotal		\$295,000
Davis Bridge	Construct 30 primitive campsites	\$75,000	Park funds Grants Loans/Millage
	Install 20-30 boat slips	\$50,000	
	Parking lot improvements	\$50,000	
Subtotal		\$175,000	
Paris	Accessibility improvements at Ponds	\$20,000	Park funds Grants Loans/Millage
	Hatchery Building Renovations	\$50,000	
	Repairs to Ponds and Channels	\$25,000	
Subtotal		\$95,000	
Merrill-Gorrel	Correct drainage problems	\$55,000	Park funds Grants Loans/Millage
Subtotals		\$55,000	
Total		\$1,005,000	

2018 Capital Improvements

Park	Expense Description	Amount	Source of Funds
School Section Lake Veterans Park	Renovate beach playground and add watersport features	\$60,000	Park funds Grants Loans/Millage Friends for SSLVP
Subtotal	Add two new cabins	\$45,000	
		\$105,000	
Brower	Develop event field (stage, electric service, and access roads)	\$75,000	Park funds Grants Loans/Millage
	Construct camp store	\$100,000	
	Upgrade campsites with sanitary service	\$200,000	
	Expand water distribution system and wells	\$100,000	
	Construct two new cabins	\$45,000	
Subtotal		\$520,000	
Paris	Rehabilitate Hatchery Building interior for events (commercial kitchen, etc.)	\$150,000	Park funds Grants Loans/Millage
	Repairs to ponds and channels	\$25,000	
Subtotal		\$175,000	
Merrill-Gorrel Subtotal	Reconfigure campsites	\$50,000	Park funds
		\$50,000	
Total		\$850,000	

2019 Capital Improvements

Park	Expense Description	Amount	Source of Funds
School Section Lake Veterans Park	Develop 10 full-service camp sites at Point	\$75,000	Park funds Grants Loans/Millage
Subtotal	Add two new cabins	\$45,000	
		\$120,000	
Brower	Add two new cabins	\$45,000	Park funds Grants Loans/Millage
	Develop trailhead for Hardy Pond Bicycle Trail	\$25,000	
	Construct two new pavilions	\$175,000	
Subtotal		\$245,000	
Davis Bridge	Upgrade campsites water, sewer, and electric	\$150,000	Park funds Grants Loans/Millage
	Develop as trailhead for Hardy Pond Bicycle Trail	\$25,000	
	Construct bath house	\$175,000	
Subtotal		\$350,000	
Paris	Fill east ponds and develop area for events/trailhead	\$50,000	Park funds Grants Loans/Millage
	Develop as trailhead for White Pines Rail Trail and water trail	\$100,000	
Subtotal		\$150,000	
Merrill-Gorrel	Construct two new cabins	\$45,000	Park funds
Subtotal		\$45,000	
Total		\$910,000	

2020 Capital Improvements

Park	Expense Description	Amount	Source of Funds
School Section Lake Veterans Park	Develop 40 new full- service campsites in Pines	\$250,000	Park funds Grants Loans/Millage
	Construct new bath house	\$150,000	
Subtotal		\$400,000	
Brower	Develop 20 rustic campsites and trails on bluff north of Deep Channel	\$85,000	Park funds Grants Loans/Millage
	Construct two new cabins	\$45,000	
Subtotal		\$130,000	
Davis Bridge Subtotal			
Paris Subtotal			
Merrill-Gorrel	Upgrade campsites to full-hookup	\$250,000	Park funds Grants Loans/Millage
Subtotal		\$250,000	
Total		\$780,000	

2021 Capital Improvements

Park	Expense Description	Amount	Source of Funds
School Section Lake Veterans Park	Construct new boat launch, docks, and boat slips on south side of Point	\$150,000	Park funds Grants Loans/Millage
Subtotal		\$150,000	
Brower	Add two new cabins	\$45,000	Park funds
Subtotal		\$45,000	
Davis Bridge			
Subtotal			
Paris			
Subtotal			
Merrill-Gorrel	Upgrade campsites to full-hookup	\$250,000	Park funds Grants Loans/Millage
Subtotal		\$250,000	
Total		\$445,000	

Market/Patronage Analysis
Seasonal Registrations

Seasonal Registrations Summary – Mecosta County Park System – 2015

County	Brower Park	Paris Park	School Section	Merril-G	Total
Allegan	5	-	2	-	7
Barry	2	-	-	1	3
Berrien	-	-	-	-	-
Clare	-	-	-	3	3
Clinton	1	-	1	3	5
Eaton	1	1	1	4	7
Genesee	-	-	-	1	1
Gratiot	2	-	13	1	16
Ingham	-	-	-	1	1
Ionia	3	-	4	3	10
Isabella	-	-	11	6	17
Kalamazoo	-	-	-	-	-
Kent	46	3	9	3	61
Lapeer	-	-	-	1	1
Livingston	-	-	-	1	1
Manistee	-	-	1	-	1
Mason	-	-	-	-	-
Mecosta	6	3	10	6	25
Midland	-	-	3	2	5
Montcalm	9	-	13	5	27
Newaygo	5	1	-	1	7
Osceola	1	-	1	4	6
Ottawa	9	1	1	-	11
Saginaw	-	-	1	1	2
Shiawassee	-	-	-	1	1
Van Buren	-	-	-	-	-
Wayne	-	1	-	-	1
Wexford	-	-	-	-	-
Out of State	-	2	-	2	4
Total	90	12	71	50	223

“Seasonals” are specific to a park, since they are individual and specific sites “reserved for the season.”

The table shows that the park enjoying the greatest number of seasonal reservations is Brower Park, almost a third more than any other park. School Section has almost half again more than Merrill-Gorrel Park. Paris Park has a very small number compared to the others.

Brower is the largest of the parks and has the lion’s share of seasonal users. School Section Lake Veterans Park has a large group of season users from all over central Michigan mostly from Mecosta County and its neighboring counties. We have been told that at Merrill-Gorrel there is an established cadre of campers who come each year and organize social activities and maintain a neighborhood feel. This is very positive.

Paris Park has only 12 seasonals. Is this because the park is so much smaller, or there is less to do there? Paris Park may need more facilities which appeal to the market place or more regular programming/events to draw more seasonals.

2015 Seasonals Ranked by Patronage – Mecosta County Parks

Counties	Range of Seasonal Reservations	Tier Total	
Montcalm	27		
Mecosta	25		
Kent	61	First Tier 28-61	113
Gratiot	16		
Isabella	17		
Ottawa	11		
Ionia	10	Second Tier 8-16	54
Allegan	7		
Eaton	7		
Clinton	5		
Newaygo	7		
Osceola	6		
Midland	5	Third Tier 4-7	37
Saginaw	2		
Clare	3		
Barry	3		
Genesee	1		
Livingston	1		
Shiawassee	1		
Ingham	1		
Lapeer	1		
Manistee	1		
Mason	1		
Out of State	4	Fourth Tier 1-4	<u>19</u>
Total			223

This table displays the Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Markets for the Mecosta County Park System. Based on just seasonal reservations alone, the following counties are in the Prime Target Market Area: Montcalm, Mecosta and Kent.

From this table, the Secondary Market Area appears to be Gratiot, Isabella, Ottawa and Ionia counties. The others fall in the Tertiary Market Area. It is surprising that neighboring Newaygo is in the lower group, even though it is next door. It may be possible that since Newaygo County also has a very appealing park system, those citizens there prefer to patronize their local parks rather than come to Mecosta Parks for seasonal camping.