

COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

Schoolcraft Township is located in northeast Houghton County. A portion of the township borders Keweenaw County and Lake Superior.

The township is largely rural but has one main population center—the Village of Lake Linden. The total land area for the township is approximately 41 square miles. The township was once home to many small farms carved out of the forestlands. Only a few of the farms operate today and most of them could be classified as hobby farms as their owners raise livestock as a secondary source of income.

Forest covers a majority of the township and provides jobs in the logging industry as well as providing recreational opportunities. Large white pine trees once populated the township and along with thick stands of hardwoods supported a thriving timber industry. Township forestlands are now into their second and third generations of growth and the logging industry is past peak production. Recreation on those forest lands plays a larger role annually as more people establish second homes in the township, a trend that has been seen for the past three decades.

Copper mining once played a huge role in the township and in the founding of Lake Linden. But the mines closed in the 1960s; remnants of the mining industry can still be seen in and around the township, and the township has one site that has been designated by the Keweenaw National Historical Park as a “Cooperating Site” because of its historical value.

The majority of residents of the township work in and around Houghton, Hancock, and Calumet area.

Tourism is a growing segment of region’s economy and will likely increase in importance in the future. For Schoolcraft Township, winter and snowmobile enthusiasts have long played a major role in the economic recreation mix.

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

Schoolcraft Township develops and maintains its own recreation facilities as directed by the township board. The township supervisor serves as primary recreation director and planner. Major initiatives are discussed with any and all members of the public who wish to participate in recreational matters and then voted on by the township board. The township annually budgets \$15,000 for the operation and maintenance of parks and recreation facilities. Additional funds are budgeted for development of new recreation projects and facilities as funds are available.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING PROCESS AND PUBLIC INPUT

Public involvement for the recreational portion of this plan included public outreach by the township supervisor and public meetings.

Public Outreach

Supervisor Joel Keranen regularly visits with citizens in the township and talks about anything they want to talk about. Recreation projects are a subject mentioned by constituents, as the township has quality facilities.

Public Charrette

The township held a public charrette from 9 am to noon, Wednesday, December 12, 2018, to hear ideas from the public.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A primary goal of Calumet Township's recreation programs is to create and improve recreation facilities for residents and visitors.

Goal 1 - Facility Maintenance and Improvements

Maintain Township parks and recreation facilities to provide the public with safe, useable, and attractive recreational opportunities.

Objectives:

1. Replace/upgrade aging facilities and equipment;
2. Remove barriers to universal access;
3. Provide signage to each park or facility;

Goal 2 – Obtain a steady flow of public input through personal contacts and public meetings to encourage new ideas for recreation facilities and services.

Be open to public input at every opportunity. Encourage the average citizen to engage with township officials on what they want to see in terms of recreation facilities or recreational programming.

Objectives:

1. Promote citizen input. Township officials at every level should engage with the public to hear how to make recreation a better experience for everyone.
2. Continue to collaborate with public civic organizations and other community groups who volunteer to assist the township maintaining, creating, or improving recreation facilities and services.
3. Continue to seek grants from the State of Michigan and continue to ask local groups and individuals to fund the local match requirements for those grants. Use township general funds for local match purposes as a last resort.
4. Board's Recreation Committee becomes an important element in recreation planning.

Goal 3 - Accessibility

Improve existing recreation facilities to increase ADA accessibility where appropriate.

Objectives:

1. Make accessibility improvements based on facilities based on input from citizens and the Michigan DNR.

Goal 4 – Social Engagement

Promote recreational programming and recreation facilities that also help people socially engage. People who are socially engaged are healthier, happier, and live longer.

Objectives:

1. Continue to work with community groups and individuals who promote activities that encourage social engagement.
2. Continue to sponsor and host community recreation and sporting events.

Schoolcraft Township is responsible for the operations and maintenance of the recreational facilities.

The following recreation inventory describes the types and location of recreational facilities currently available. Accessibility assessments and rankings are provided for each site based on the parameters outlined by the DNR:

- 1 = None of the site elements meet 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design
- 2 = Some
- 3 = Most
- 4 = All
- 5 = The facility meets the Principles of Universal Design

Schoolcraft Township Recreation Facilities

The township has several recreation facilities available for residents and visitors:

Day Park and Rustic Campground

The park and its facilities were opened to the public in 1998. The township obtained ownership of the land from the State of Michigan. The park is clearly gaining popularity from residents and visitors. During warm summer days, it is not unusual to see the park's parking lot filled to capacity. Park users can be found along the entire stretch of sandy beach along Lake Superior. Among the park's amenities are picnic tables, barbecues, fire pits, children's play area, rest room, drinking-water well, and handicap-accessible area.

Accessibility assessment = 3: Most of the park meets accessibility guidelines

Schoolcraft Township Baseball Area

The Township owns a recreation area on Cemetery Road. The area has a baseball diamond that is regularly used by organized programs serving kids in the region. New fencing and playground equipment was installed during the summer of 2004. The area also has a basketball court. The Township is considering a number of improvements at the baseball area, including

installation of playground equipment; improvements to basketball court; new bleacher seating for the baseball area; new dugouts; and barrier-free improvements.

Accessibility assessment = 1: None of the baseball area meets accessibility guidelines

Big Traverse Boat Launch

Schoolcraft Township developed and owns the boat launch at Big Traverse Bay. A parking lot, located across the road from the launch provides a convenient area for recreational boaters to park their vehicles and trailers. A restroom is also available in the parking lot. In 2002, the township spent approximately \$15,000 on rebuilding the fishing pier and dock wall. New concrete sidewalks and rip-rap were installed.

Accessibility assessment = 2: Some of the boat launch meets accessibility guidelines

OTHER RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Schoolcraft Township residents have access to recreation activities and facilities in the Village of Lake Linden, including:

- Village park with playground equipment, restrooms, and picnic facilities, basketball, horseshoe pit, volley ball courts, tennis, sheltered pavilion, baseball diamond. Located on Torch Lake and M-26 on eight acres.
- Village campground with more than 20 campsites, potable water, sanitation station, restrooms with shower facilities.
- Swimming area next to campground. Changing rooms available.
- Boat dock with launch. Approximately 500 feet of dock area with parking lot and picnic area.

ACTION PROGRAM

Action Program projects include:

Day Park and Rustic Campground

Improvements at the Township's Day Park and Rustic Campground is the township's top priority in terms of recreational projects. A variety of project are being looked by the township including a new playground area in the Day Park; new pavilion in Day Park; new community gathering area with fire pit in Rustic Campground; new flush toilets or pit toilets in the Day Park and Rustic Campground; new camp sites in campground; new well house in camp ground; new barrier-free access improvements in both the Day Park and the Campground.

Big Traverse Boat Launch

Make improvements as needed at the Township's boat launch at Big Traverse Bay. A parking lot, located across the road from the launch provides a convenient area for recreational boaters to park their vehicles and trailers. Among possible projects are a restroom at the launch; dock wall improvements; dock improvements and miscellaneous projects that provide more recreation opportunities for visitors.