

Packet

**January 24, 2023, Joint Township Board
and Parks Committee Special Meeting**

Consent

Minutes

PENINSULA TOWNSHIP

13235 Center Road, Traverse City MI
49686 www.peninsulatownship.com
Township Board Special Meeting
January 10, 2023, 2:30 p.m.
Township Hall
Minutes

1. **Call to Order** by Chown at 2:34 p.m.

2. **Pledge**

3. **Roll Call**

Present: Achorn, Sanger, Shanafelt, Rudolph, Chown

Excused Absence: Wunsch, Wahl

4. **Citizen Comments:** none

5. **Approve Agenda**

Shanafelt moved to approve the agenda with a second by Sanger.

Motion approved by consensus

6. **Conflict of interest:** none

7. **Consent Agenda:** none

8. **Business**

1. Interview and appoint candidates for the Peninsula Township PDR Selection Committee

Cram: per section six of PDR ordinance #23, amendment #3, the township board will appoint a five-member selection committee. We received ten letters of interest, which are included in your packet. Interviews have been scheduled in alphabetical order. Each applicant will have ten minutes, and our last interview will be via zoom. There is also a copy of section 6 in your packet. In part, it says, "The selection committee shall consist of residents and/or property owners of the township chosen to provide equitable representation of geographical and agricultural interests." A full copy of the PDR ordinance is included as well. I look forward to starting work with the committee at the end of January or first part of February.

Chown: thank you all for applying to serve on the PDR selection committee. We are grateful to have this tremendous level of interest. Let's have each candidate begin by introducing themselves and telling us why they'd like to serve on this committee.

Dennis Arouca, 850 Neahtawanta Rd: I came to live here full time after retiring from a career in law and business, mostly in law firms, manufacturing, and other types of industrial activities. I started falling in love with Old Mission Peninsula in 1978 when I married my wife, whose family co-founded a cottage colony here in 1890. They've been consistent residents throughout. That love affair continued not only with my wife but with

Old Mission Peninsula. When we retired from our working careers, we built a full-time home here. I'm very active in the community generally; I'm not someone to just hunt and fish and play golf all the time. I've had a lot of fortunate breaks along the way; people helped me a lot. It's time for me to give back to my community and try to keep it as good as it is and hopefully make it better. Currently, I'm a board member of the Grand Traverse Economic Development Corporation (EDC), am on the board of the Grand Traverse Manufacturing Council, and on the board and an investor in Northern Michigan Angels Investor Group. I've done a couple of agricultural activities along the way. Unfortunately, the EDC has not gotten as active on the agricultural front as I'd like; it's obviously a very important industry here as well as in the state. There's a group of siloed agricultural interests, there's a group of industrial interests, and there's a group of retail interests. A group like ours comes together with a vision on all of it. I also think I'm qualified to serve on this committee because I've already done so. I served in 2017 to 2018 at the tail end when there were several hundred thousand dollars still to be allocated. I'm very familiar with the ordinance and the process by which applications are reviewed, scored, discussed, debated, then recommended to the township board. I also happen to think that PDR is one of the most important things we can do to promote the long-term economic and sustainable health of our township. PDR not only preserves open agricultural space but also helps our farmers be financially successful by essentially reducing the costs of what it takes to actually farm. I think that's an underappreciated aspect of the program. The PDR program isn't just about preserving everybody's viewsheds; it's also meant to help the farmers stay in farming and prosper. I was listening to the news the other day about global challenges with inflation and food prices. I was shocked to learn that when we go to the store, 15% of the total cost of the commodity we buy is actually on the farm. The rest is processing and agriculture and marketing and sales and all that. It just means more pressure to try to [implement] this program as well as we possibly can.

Shanafelt: what do you feel will be the biggest challenges for the committee itself?

Arouca: the program doesn't start until a farmer raises a hand to apply. Is there enough demand? Taxpayers have voted to tax themselves to build a fund. There is still a need for good communication to make sure a flow of people are raising their hands. I think we had a handful still in the cue in 2018, but circumstances change. That's more than four years ago.

Shanafelt: what do you feel will be your biggest challenge if you're elected to the committee?

Arouca: I hope we have access to the same talented staff we had before. We were fortunate to have Laura Rigan from the conservancy in a job that's funded by American Farmland Trust. She did a lot of the heavy lifting and compilation, provided a lot of insight. We citizens will have different skills.

Shanafelt: what do you think might derail the work of the committee?

Arouca: I'm at a loss. If no one comes forward, we won't have much to do. Last time around we were pretty good at developing consensus. The vote to do this a third time was tremendously strong; the citizenry really supports it. If we do a good job of communicating and making sure people understand the pros and cons, I think we'll be successful.

Rudolph: you're involved in a lot of other activities. This one will be pretty active initially to get off the ground. Can you commit to meeting a few times a month?

Arouca: absolutely. I have a busy schedule but I will be rolling off some of those boards, and I like the work.

Sanger: it's a very comprehensive resume. Thanks for applying.

Cram: to answer a comment, I have been keeping a list of interested agricultural operators. There are people ready to step up and apply once we get the program rolling.

Chown: that is my understanding as well, that there is a robust list of farms and farmers who are interested in selling their development rights.

Angela Baldyga, 9707 Montague Rd: I'm originally from Grand Rapids but I've been here off and on for 30 years, full time for about 20 years. My husband and I own one main farm and a farm at our house as well. I have spent the majority of the last 20 years raising kids and being on school fundraising committees, things like that. I have a lot of energy. One of my kids is now in college and I have a lot of free time on my hands. Frankly, I just think I would be good at this so I thought I would step up.

Rudolph: it's going to be a lot of work getting this rolling. Will you be able to participate in meetings a few times a month?

Baldyga: absolutely. I work part time in the city, I drive my kid who can't drive yet. Other than that, I have a lot of free time and would love to help Peninsula Township move forward with this program.

Rudolph: what is it specifically about the PDR program that attracts you?

Baldyga: as farmers, it's interesting to know what's happening on the inside of this program, not that we would be applying for it. I've always been interested in it. I worked twenty years ago at the conservancy as an intern, where I worked on easements and things like that for two to three years. I have a base of knowledge and serious interest.

Shanafelt: can you detail a bit more how your experience makes you an appropriate member of the committee?

Baldyga: I have a degree in geography and environmental studies with a base of knowledge through that. I worked at the conservancy for about two and a half years where I was in communications and education and did a lot of organizing of easements and deeds that were in different places. I also did a little bit of monitoring of easements. I have a base knowledge through that and also being out here for the last 20 years. My husband runs the farm, so I don't have a lot of experience with other farmers in the community. I would love to get to know the other farmers and learn more about the program and how we can help save agricultural land.

Shanafelt: what do you think will be the most challenging thing for the committee?

Baldyga: choosing which properties [to purchase development rights from]. The ranking system doesn't seem difficult, but there's so much wonderful land to protect. I think it's going to be difficult to rank those farms and come to a consensus on that ranking. If we do it analytically like we should, it should be easy but I don't know that it will be.

Shanafelt: if appointed, what do you see as your biggest challenge on the committee?

Baldyga: I guess it would be that same thing, as well as if you feel a personal frustration. I

would try to stay analytical, but if you feel strongly about one piece of property over another, I think that might be difficult. But of course you just move past that. You do what's best for the committee and the community.

Shanafelt: what do you think could derail the work of the committee?

Baldyga: I honestly don't think anything could derail the committee. As long as we work together as a community like we should, it should move forward beautifully. It's a great program. It was set up beautifully, and it should work.

Chown: can you give us an example of a time when you worked with a group to come to a consensus?

Baldyga: I've been working with kids and schools for a long time. I would say that happens on a daily basis in any situation when you're working in a classroom. Right now I work at a dance studio. It's just making decisions on a daily basis as a group so that everybody agrees.

Rebecca Couch, 17259 Tompkins Woods Rd.: my maiden name is Ligon; I'm a fifth generation agricultural worker here on the Old Mission Peninsula. I grew up on a cherry and apple farm north of here. My family sold our farm's development rights through the PDR program long ago in the 1990s. I'm very passionate about being able to help other people have the same opportunity we did. It gave us an infusion of cash. I think that puts me in a unique situation. I don't have a conflict; I don't have a farm in this vetting process. I also work in agriculture, but I don't work with grapes. I don't have any ties to a winery, grape growing, or processing, but I do work in agriculture. I think that's a little unique. I'm excited to be able to help the community. As soon as I came back to town, I started helping Eric [Dreier] water the trees at Bowers Harbor Park and then I started coming to the agricultural committee meetings to give my input. I'd like to continue to help the community.

Chown: how old were you when your family sold the development rights on your family's farm?

Couch: I was in high school. It was a big deal. It gave us money to be innovative and keep the farm in the family, so I remember when it happened.

Chown: so it was a very positive experience for your family. You now live just a few miles north of the family farm?

Couch: I do, probably a mile. I can see my dad's barn whenever I go for a walk. It feels really nice. It was my great-grandparents' barn.

Chown: can you give us a little more information on what experiences you have that would make you a valuable member of the PDR selection committee?

Couch: I have a master's degree in community health education and have worked in numerous professional capacities. I worked for Oregon State Extension Service for years. In that job, I worked as a liaison to the community and built relationships with key stakeholders. Then I went on to work for Eastern Michigan University for several years. During my time there, I helped draft policy. I created the tobacco-free campus policy that still exists today. I served as a representative for the student body for the board of directors for the college. Then I went on to work for them in a professional capacity after

my master's was done. I also worked for the University of Michigan doing outreach for a program in the department of psychology. I traveled the state, met with veterans, built relationships, and spoke publicly about our programs across the state. I have a background in building relationships with key stakeholders. In this case, it might be people in different parts of the agricultural and residential community. I'm good at analyzing information and looking at things analytically. Part of this job is being able to look at different locations and properties around the peninsula. I see that there's a ranking system. We need to be able to look at that analytically and keep detailed records and communicate clearly with members of the committee. I'm good at those things.

Shanafelt: can you give us an example of how you are effective at analysis?

Couch: my master's dissertation is about the effectiveness of a program to reduce anxiety and depression in military and veteran spouses. I analyzed years of data about the program and the intervention I conducted, then presented that analysis about the effectiveness of reducing anxiety and depression in that population in order to achieve my degree. So that's doing the actual numerical crunching to look at different effectiveness data rates. I can do that and I can also communicate that information effectively.

Sanger: I was unaware that you served on the agriculture committee; can you tell me why you applied?

Couch: I didn't serve on the committee but I came to as many meetings as I could, and I frequently spoke and gave input.

Sanger: what was your motivation to come forward?

Couch: I manage two farm stands, one just up the road. I work for Ben and Jen Bramer. I grow vegetables and the things we sell. I wanted to give input to the new agricultural [farm processing] zoning [ordinance]. It's important. I'd like to be able to own agricultural property myself, and my dad's farm is 80 acres, which is a big chunk. Succession doesn't always work the way we think it should, so I may or may not have the opportunity to own that particularly land, but it's important to me that other young farmers get a chance to farm on this beautiful peninsula.

Shanafelt: what do you think will be the most challenging thing for the committee?

Couch: this is really my first foray into living here as an adult. I've been surprised at the passionate, divided feelings I've noticed. I talk to a lot of members of our community as they come buy produce, and I see that many people are passionate about continuing agriculture on the peninsula. I hope we can come together and that there aren't strong divided feelings but that we can all see that PDR is a great way to continue to [protect] agricultural land on the peninsula. That might be a challenge, but hopefully everybody can see that the peninsula is worth working together for.

Shanafelt: if you're appointed, what do you think your biggest personal challenge will be as a member of the committee?

Couch: I'm wondering when it will meet. In the summer, I work a lot of hours growing vegetables, 12-hour days. It was suggested that I apply by my employers, so I do have their support to take time out of my day to do this. That will probably be my biggest challenge.

Shanafelt: do you see an issue with meeting twice a month?

Couch: I can meet that obligation.

Shanafelt: anything you see that might derail the work of the committee?

Couch: I hope not. We've re-upped this millage multiple times and it's worked well in the past. I re-read the history of the program. People in the township are passionate about it. It was innovative. People want to continue the program. I think we should have no problem as we continue to work through what is, I think, the third iteration? It should be smooth sailing, I hope. I'm optimistic.

John Dolton, 10862 Eagles Landing Dr.: my wife and I moved to the peninsula in 2011. I retired fully in 2019. Looking at the ordinance itself, it says the committee is to represent "geographical and agricultural interests," and I'm hearing a number of folks who have a long background in terms of third-generation farmers or families who have lived on the peninsula for a very long time. That's not the case with me. I suppose I represent the residents. My family does go a long way back in Michigan. My grandfather was a physician in Detroit. In the 1930s, he bought 640 acres on Douglas Lake. When the property tax got too much, he sold more than 500 acres to the University of Michigan. They have a biological station there also known as Bug Camp. I spent my entire career in public service. I worked for the Colorado Housing Finance Authority in various positions, including CFO. It was a public entity created to assist low to moderate income folks in buying homes and helping small businesses grow. Public service, community service, is very important to me. I'm on the ZBA. I've been in front of this board a couple of times to apply for the planning commission and township board, so my interest in public service continues. I think it's remarkable how successful the PDR program has been. The foresight that went into creating it initially, how successful it's been to date, and the fact that the community has supported it once again. It's important for our entire community. In my time on the ZBA, I've shown myself to be a thoughtful, balanced person who's respectful of the process. I don't approach anything with an agenda other than to do what's best for the community.

Rudolph: any conflict with meeting a couple times a month?

Dolton: not at all. I've found myself not having enough to do.

Shanafelt: what do you see as being the most challenging thing for the committee itself?

Dolton: I see the process in terms of scoring is well laid out. I guess where I see a couple of potential challenges is when you have properties that score equally, then we have to prioritize. Another challenge is when you might have disagreements in terms of assessed values, where the property owner might not agree with a particular assessment that came in. Some negotiation or additional assessment might be needed to close that.

Shanafelt: for you on the committee, what do you see as your challenge?

Dolton: not to come in with an agenda, making sure we're being fair and balanced and working with the facts on the ground.

Shanafelt: what do you think might derail the work of the committee?

Dolton: hopefully nothing but it could happen if people did come in with an agenda and the work were politicized in an unfortunate way.

Chown: can you tell us about a time when you assisted a group to reach consensus?

Dolton: in some ways, I feel that way every time we meet as the ZBA. It's about balance,

being respectful of all members' viewpoints, listening intensely to what the applicant wants and why they want it. Our goal is to make sure we're meeting the needs of the community. The ordinance is there for a reason.

Sanger: what key element could you contribute to the committee?

Dolton: perhaps a slightly different perspective. My history is a little different. I'm a resident; I have no agriculture business interest.

Eric Dreier, 12434 Peninsula Dr.: you guys have a great problem: a lot of qualified people. Just as a plug for Rebecca Ligon, I was her math and science teacher. She is one of the finest students I had and I can assure you that she's three standard deviations above the norm at the very least. Thank you for considering my application. It's gratifying to apply for what I consider to be a landmark program. This was the first purchase of development rights program of any township in the nation. I worked on that first one in 1994 and then the second one and this last one. You can see through the progression of those three elections that while there might have been some reservations at the beginning, it still [passed] by a solid majority. In addition to working on the three PDR millages, I was on our parks committee and continue to volunteer for the parks. In my career working as public school administrator, I came to appreciate the necessity of public bodies, in school districts or townships, working in an open and transparent way. Because our citizens have put a lot of faith in this program, it would be incumbent upon those who have the honor to serve to recognize that to maintain that support, we must be transparent in every aspect. I also work for the National Park Service as a volunteer doing work on the North Country Trail and have been a past board member of one of our local credit unions.

Rudolph: initially there will be meetings at least twice a month; are you able to commit to that?

Dreier: yeah. There's a lot to learn. I have the availability. I am a year-round resident.

Chown: you haven't served on the selection committee before, but you were actively involved in the campaigns?

Dreier: right. I was interested but at the time heavily involved in work and didn't have the time. I'm glad to see so many qualified applicants because I think they had to reduce the number of people last time because they couldn't get enough.

Shanafelt: what do you feel will be the biggest challenge for the committee?

Dreier: the biggest challenge is that we will have more interest than money. It's a good problem. We wouldn't be here if there was money left over and not enough interest.

Shanafelt: what will the challenge be for the committee in that context?

Dreier: we have some things we've learned from the two previous rounds in terms of demand to participate in the program and not enough money. I think it'd be very hard for somebody who comes sincerely to the committee and has a good case, a desirable piece of agricultural land that we would like to see protected, and we don't have the resources because we've used up the money. We've seen it happen.

Shanafelt: in that context, what would you see as your personal challenge as a committee member?

Dreier: I think showing empathy and understanding to that farmer, keeping

communication up to date on what the committee is doing, what challenges it is facing and has addressed. I was a public school administrator. You always had a situation where you had more demand for the service than you were able to provide.

Shanafelt: do you see anything that might derail the functioning of the committee?

Dreier: in terms of the actual functioning, no. I think the people volunteering for this are not the ones with the loud voices. They're the people willing to sit down and do the analytical work. We're going to have to get to know each other and learn how to work together. I'm optimistic. It won't be 80 miles an hour on a smooth road, but we can expect people to come in with pretty pure hearts. If they do have an agricultural background or they own a farm, those are valuable insights.

Chown: do you consider yourself a consensus builder, and can you give an example of when you overcame disagreements to figure something out?

Dreier: yes, I would consider myself a consensus builder. Even at times when you don't agree with the majority, you want to get stuff done. You have to be able to work with that. I was the chairperson of our science department here at the Traverse City schools; that comprised about 50 teachers, part time and full time. Science is an expensive program to run and has a limited budget. As the chairperson, what I think I was successful at was rather than doling out this money [over the long term], trying to solve a quantitative problem, we did better by targeting those assets to get higher qualitative outcomes. Then the next year, [we'd] roll it over to the next need.

Cristin Popelier Hosmer, 17593 Shii Take Trail: I purchased my home in 2007 with my husband Brian, the winemaker at Chateau Chantal and Hawthorne Vineyards. We've been in the wine industry out here for the last 15 years. Before that we went to Michigan State University, where I studied agricultural economics. The best way to make money farming is to take whatever you grow and turn it into alcohol. That's what I've been teaching at Michigan State for the last seven years. I also teach for an organization called VESTA, which is a national organization made up of 22 different community colleges and universities. I am currently listed as the instructor for nine different programs. I sell my grapes and flowers locally and am also a yoga teacher. I have a son, age 11, and an Australian shepherd.

Chown: can you tell us why you're interested in serving on the PDR selection committee?

Hosmer: I think the viability of agriculture is the most important issue on Old Mission Peninsula today. The future of farming is at a crux where we're either going to continue to enhance the viability or not. PDR is one of the tools in the toolkit. It's known statewide as well as nationally as being one of the best programs in the country. When I moved here in 2007 and attended my welcome to the neighborhood party, Rob Manigold and at the time Penny Rosi were on the township board and Gordon Hayward [was the planner]. They all said, "Hey, you worked on land policy initiatives; you should get on the planning commission." At that time, I thought the planning commission had more to do with PDR than it does, but I didn't understand how the process worked. I worked on the planning commission for six years and the zoning board as the PC member for two. I'm very familiar with the program. I've been following it since I was an undergrad. I first learned about it in

probably 2000. It's the envy of the country, and I think it's probably the most impactful thing I could do in order to preserve, protect, and promote agriculture on this peninsula.

Rudolph: sounds like you're really busy. We need a commitment of a couple times a month to get things rolling. Do you see a problem?

Hosmer: absolutely not. I'm self-employed. I have a very flexible schedule with the exception of Tuesday evenings this semester, when I teach. Most of my courses are in the evening. If our time for meeting is during the day, I'm fully available.

Shanafelt: what do you see as the biggest challenge for the committee?

Hosmer: there's only a certain amount of money available, and I'm assuming there's still a backlog of applications that exist. So, first, how to get through the backlog of current applicants. How to address any changes in the PDR ordinance with any new criteria that have been introduced, the old versus the new, because I understand there was a change in July. I think the committee needs to hit the ground running on what is currently there and codify what the mission and goals are, what the budget is. What information and details do we need? How does this committee get started? Is it by starting with a backlog of applications or starting from scratch? I think it kind of boils down to that.

Shanafelt: if you are appointed, what do you see as your biggest challenge?

Hosmer: the criteria and using my analytical brain to compare apples to oranges or farm to farm. There's only a certain amount of money available; we want to spend that money wisely. We're at this tipping point. We've got about 4,500 acres already preserved; we have 10,000 to 12,000 acres identified. We're only about halfway there. What is the biggest bang for our buck we can get with the funds that are coming in? If our goal is to preserve 6,000 to 7,000 more acres, how are we going to do that most effectively and efficiently?

Shanafelt: do you see anything that might derail the work of the committee?

Hosmer: people have opinions on what is the most important thing to do first, but as long as we have a solid set of criteria for decision making and we can use our analytical brains and not our personal passions, then I think we will move forward effectively. And use Robert's Rules of Order.

Chown: can you give us an example of a time when you had to use consensus to solve a problem?

Hosmer: I was on the planning commission for six years and the zoning board for two. At the monthly meetings, we used consensus to make decisions. I think one of the best things that came out of my early work was what went into what is now called the Regional Land Transportation Plan. We all sat down at a meeting between everyone in Grand Traverse County, Leelanau County, and Benzie County and looked at all the roads and transportation. One of the things that clearly came from Peninsula Township is that we truck 60 million pounds of fruit off this peninsula to the other end of the county and even further. This township was very clear to that organization and that organization understood just how important that trucking pathway is to our vital agricultural community. I do have some questions for you guys. You recently updated the purchase of development rights ordinance. What changed in July versus the previous version?

Cram: there were two changes. The ranking criteria, the priorities, changed. The other

thing that changed was...

Achorn: the financial.

Cram: the financial changed but John Wunsch reminded me of one important thing. I can't think of it.

Hosmer: how is the criteria information collected? A spreadsheet, a report, does the owner provide that information, do we ask questions of the applicant?

Cram: those are things the selection committee will be working on, finalizing the process. I will create forms based on the ordinance on how each property is ranked.

Hosmer: then we would be given the application information? I found some older data from 2015 that indicated we've spent about 18 million to date. Does anyone know how much we've actually spent and the number of properties that have been put into PDR?

Chown: we have all that info. I didn't bring it with me today. I think it's on the website.

Hosmer: I couldn't find it. Maybe I looked in the wrong place.

Chown: to date, we've preserved 55% of the 9,600-some acres of land identified in the agricultural preservation zone. That leaves 4,000-plus acres at risk of development that we hope this committee will have the chance to assess.

Hosmer: do we know what the approval rates have been in the past? Has everyone that's applied been approved, or what is the number of approved?

Cram: I would have to do some digging.

Hosmer: I'd love to know how many applicants we've had in the past, how many we've approved, and what our approval rates are. The last question is, what kind of budget are we're looking at in 2023 given what's coming in from the PDR money?

Cram: it will accumulate over time. Some of it was spelled out in the ordinance update as far as when we reach a certain amount, it rolls over to enforcement. But I don't know if we broke it out specifically as to how much we would have in the first year.

Hosmer: so it's not based on fiscal year?

Achorn: it will most likely be a bond offering. The proceeds from the bond will fund the purchases of development rights.

Hosmer: and then we'll pay back the bond with the PDR funds as they're collected.

Shanafelt: so your money would be available upfront.

Achorn: there are about a million dollars right now in the account, plus the new millage that is coming in the winter tax. The ordinance is very careful to protect the funds that will be needed in the future for monitoring enforcement. That money will not be available immediately. There will be some for an immediate purchase.

Chown: unfortunately, no one on the board right now was here when the last cycle wrapped up. I'm sure we can find the information. Thanks for spearheading that.

Cram: I forwarded everyone a copy of amendment #3. Section 14 talks about the different accounts that will be set up and how they will be funded.

Hosmer: if I were to be appointed, I would hope we would go through this stuff and have a historical work session on what's happened in the past and what the goals are for the future. A visioning session, a team-building vision session, as a way to start.

Susan Tarczon, 15763 Smokey Hollow Rd.: we have lived on the peninsula for about 32

years. I am a retired commercial banker. I worked in various banks in town for the last 30-some years. I've been involved in the PDR campaign program from the start. I worked on the campaign initially as well as the second time and then this most recent one. I was also involved in the ordinance rewrite committee and worked with the finance group that came up with some of the numbers in terms of the bonds and how much we should plan to allocate for future monitoring enforcement. I also worked on the last election committee, which was a pretty short duration because we had just a little bit of funding left. We ended up acquiring just one farm, I think. I have limited experience in terms of working on the selection committee itself other than having done that for the last session. I'm passionate about the program. The first time we went campaigning, I took my little and now 30-some-year-old child with me door to door promoting the program. I'm proud of us for coming up with a program, for being the first in the nation to do this. It's a way of putting our money where our mouths are and being willing to help farmers and citizens protect the viewshed and continue to allow farmers to farm and help them make it economically feasible.

Cram: I remembered the other big change to the ordinance: we updated it so it allowed for matching funds to be introduced.

Rudolph: the time commitment might be twice a month to start. Are you able to make that?

Tarczon: my schedule is flexible now that I'm retired. I'll be gone a couple weeks in April, but other than that I am happy to commit.

Ahorn: from your experience, can you answer some of the questions that we were unable to? Being involved in the first and second rounds, do you recall how the bonding went?

Tarczon: I was only involved in the last selection committee; there wasn't a bonding situation then. I was involved in the finance committee this time around, determining that we would potentially be pursuing a bond, but I don't have the numbers at my fingertips. I'm sure we have that recorded. I also would want the selection committee to go back and go, "Alright, how did this work before? What's the process?"

Shanafelt: what do you see as being the biggest challenge to the committee?

Tarczon: what we just touched on, getting all of us knowledgeable about the process and then coordinating that with applicants and making sure we're following the rules. Being completely transparent as members of this committee and then just following through. It's always about consensus. You're working on a committee with other people and you don't always get to have exactly what you want, but we need to come together and make it work so that we can move quickly. One of the issues we talked about in the finance group and rewriting the ordinance was timing. There's some rules and regulations related to bonding and spending that money in a period of time. The committee needs to act promptly, both from the landowner's standpoint but also from the bonding standpoint so we meet that criteria.

Shanafelt: what do you see as the biggest challenge for yourself?

Tarczon: making sure we have coordination between how we get the financing or other financing that comes through from a funding standpoint and then getting it allocated quickly enough to meet that criteria. I see that being my role as well as the committee's in

general as the most important thing.

Shanafelt: do you see anything that might derail the work of the committee?

Tarczon: the rewrite of the ordinance really helps streamline the process in terms of making it very clear what the committee is supposed to apply to make the choices. The committee just needs to follow the procedures and then apply the criteria. The ordinance re-write is a really good improvement. I feel great that the folks in the township have re-upped this. They're committed to it. I'm excited to see it implemented, hopefully for the last time, to get the rest of the property that's available under conservation.

Chown: I believe the goal was to raise enough money to purchase the development rights of all the farms that are identified in the agricultural preservation zone, should those landowners express interest in selling their development rights. I'm hopeful that is the case and that we won't have to [pass another millage] because we've run out of money. We want to finish the job this round.

Rick Vida, 9941 Center Rd.: I've lived on the peninsula for 22 years. About 15 years ago, I volunteered as a backup for the zoning board of appeals, which led to about 11, 12 years on the committee and eight years as the chair. I thoroughly enjoyed that. If anybody's ever been on the ZBA, they know it's not necessarily a forgiving position. About three years ago, I said, "Well, I think I served my time" and resigned. When I saw this email, I thought, "Here's a different way to serve the community." So I threw my hat in the ring.

Rudolph: as this gets started, the time commitment will probably be to meet twice a month. Do you think that will be a problem?

Vida: not really; we don't have plans to leave this winter.

Shanafelt: beyond ZBA experience, what other experience might contribute to your role on the committee?

Vida: when I lived in Chicago, in the town of Barrington, I was on a committee for street enhancement to enhance the beauty of the city landscape. I'm not a big political animal. As far as civil experience, that's about it.

Shanafelt: what would you see as the biggest challenge for the committee as a whole?

Vida: I don't have a full understanding of exactly how the process works to approve funding and purchase the development rights. I think that probably represents the biggest challenge. How do you justify the amount of money to justify the purchase to the landowner?

Shanafelt: given that you are appointed, what do you see as your biggest challenge?

Vida: I don't see an issue. Working on the ZBA for as long as I did, there were a few issues when some of the board members would disagree, but we always worked it out. I was pretty proud of that.

Shanafelt: do you see anything that might derail the process?

Vida: not to my knowledge. I think you're going to pick the best people to serve. I see us working together. I think everyone's trying to focus on the same issue, to do the right thing.

Achorn: what about your non-public background that might add to the committee?

Vida: I had a dual major in college, in accounting and finance. I worked in real estate for 35

years, primarily in the mall business. I have a lot of experience in real estate and either managing or leasing or developing or redeveloping property. I think that brings a positive to the table.

John Wunsch, 17881 Center Rd.: my experience with PDR is more along the lines of collaborating and developing the program, co-authoring the legislation for both versions [of the PDR ordinance], and running the campaigns to get the millages passed. I have not served on the selection committee. I have followed its activity from something of a distance. I'm aware of the structure and expectations through having helped design the programs. Additionally, before we had a program, I led a group that studied all the existing programs around the nation. We spoke to government officials, members of the press, general residents, and farmland owners. I think that was the best way to really get a feel for how these programs best function, what some of the potential pitfalls could be, and what the strengths were. I first heard of these programs when I was on the East Coast. It was about 1988, then when I moved here and heard people talking about it, that inspired me to get involved. I think it's important to also have a feel for the function of the farms here. Growing up on one of the farms and working on that farm since I was very young until I was about 40, and owning some farmland at this point, although I don't work on it anymore, helps me to have perspective on what the purpose is, which is to preserve the resource. The purpose is not to preserve a particular farm operation. It is to make sure that, whatever happens, we have the resource, the land. My inspiration is to see what I have been a part of and loved all my life continue in perpetuity.

Rudolph: regarding the time commitment of a couple times a month, do you see any issue with your availability?

Wunsch: no. I don't travel, really. I have a business I run five days a week, so I'm around. As the owner of the business, I do have enough staff that I can 99% of the time leave whenever necessary. For something this important, I would make sure it's 100% of the time. I would intend to be there straight through.

Sanger: you mentioned something about preserving the property as opposed to the business. Can you expand on that?

Wunsch: certainly we need to do a lot of the work that we've been doing to improve and ensure that every possible option that fits is available to support the farms on the peninsula. We need to support every operation everywhere we can, but this program's purpose is to make sure that the land is not developed to the point that it can't be farmed. While as a total community and township we want to support every operation and encourage better farm market opportunities and better roadside stand opportunities, that's separate from this program, which really is about making sure that, assuming the landowner's willing, the property can be put under a conservation easement. So whether it's the next owner or 10 owners down the road, we have the resource, the land available in a workable condition.

Sanger: let me follow up. You were active in the rewrite this summer. Do you feel the ordinance as written today accomplishes that objective?

Wunsch: I think the ordinance as written today is a fabulous step in the right direction.

There are probably some tweaks that, as we go forward, we're going to need to make. We had to get it done; it's been a tough lift. I have an open mind to some possible improvements. I think the biggest improvement is going to be, as Jenn [Cram] has called it, "the missing middle." We've got to have farm markets, we need to make sure our roadside stands are not only compliant but really workable. I'm a proponent for a co-op winery situation so that every winery doesn't have to invest a huge amount of money for a production facility. [I envision] a centralized location where multiple winery owners can collaborate to have a tasting room. I also am a proponent of looking at other forms of agritourism. The hayrides, the farm-on-farm experience, whether that's in the form of what's called WWOOF, work on farm programs... There are so many things over the next few years. Jenn can only move so fast; we as a community can only reach consensus so quickly. I feel like the work has just started. That farm processing [amendment #201] we passed is step one. The PDR is there to keep the opportunity, the land, so we can use all these tools, but we need a lot of tools. Back to the first question, I see improvements we can make in the ordinance.

Shanafelt: what do you see as being the potential biggest challenge for the committee?

Wunsch: we built in a new primary scoring rubric with matching funding, so in an initial round of applications, a landowner will likely say, "Yeah, I like this federal match program." Another will say, "I'd like to donate some of the value and use it as a tax write off." And a third one might say, "There's a neighborhood here that really wants to see this farm preserved and they're pulling together a fundraiser as a match." So they start out scoring on that basis. We'll be using a professional to negotiate this, and then the landowner sees details and might say, "Oh, with a federal program, there's more restriction. I don't want to federal match." And the one who was going to do donation says, "Yeah, I'm still going to do it but the person who was going to raise some private money decided they weren't up for that." You're going to rescore once that happens. I do not foresee farms that score high enough to be in an initial batch falling out of the batch, but it's possible. But I do see a reshuffling. I think the biggest challenge will be dealing with that. It will likely be two steps forward, one step back, then we can move on.

Shanafelt: if you are appointed, what do you see as being your biggest personal challenge working with the committee?

Wunsch: you just never know what you're gonna run into. I guess my biggest challenge is to always be open minded and prepared. I think that's usually part of being in a successful committee. We all have life pressures, we all have expectations of what we're going to do today, but something that happened at work in the morning might distract you. You show up and there's a problem you didn't expect. The challenge is to stay calm, focused, and ready for whatever comes up with an open mind. Don't let any unexpected developments stop you.

Shanafelt: what might derail the work of the committee?

Wunsch: hopefully nothing. There will be the challenge that we comprehend and understand the flow of the bond process so that we are ready. We need to use the bond quickly enough to avoid penalties but we're ready to move forward. Should there be the possibility that enough people on the committee have conflicts that we fall below a

quorum, I wouldn't expect it to fully derail us but we would have to find new applicants. For me, whatever might derail us is temporary; we'll get past it.

Chown: it might not be allowed, but has there ever been an alternate appointed to the selection committee?

Cram: the ordinance does say that ex-officio members can be appointed as well.

Sanger: there's probably so much detail that continuity is an issue, but it's worth evaluating. I would think continuity is very important in terms of attendance.

Wunsch: I doubt it will be an issue. I was reaching for unexpected.

Fred M. Woodruff, 4824 Forest Ave. (via zoom): I've always been a supporter of the PDR program as a way to manage development in an active and mutually agreeable way with respect to property owners. I recall serving on the selection committee in one of the earlier iterations. I had a few questions in terms of how the town board is going forward. Do you anticipate bonding against the tax revenue to generate substantial funding to acquire and develop rights? I'm interested in how you see the role of the selection committee. Would it be considered a reactive organization, simply reviewing applications and scoring, or is the selection committee with the guidance of professionals going to be proactive in seeking out particular properties that might score well on a priority basis? My interest in raising funds for protecting open space and farmland in the township would certainly [rise] to a new level if I could be involved with the selection committee, helping it to partner with local nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies with my background as an attorney in the state of Michigan.

Cram: as to the first question about bonding, yes, that is the plan. If you look at the updated PDR ordinance amendment number three, section 14 talks about how the chart of accounts is going to work and the bonding and all those things. A finance committee supported the work of the PDR study group that helped to draft the amendments to that zoning ordinance, and then we worked with Marge Achorn, our treasurer, to bring that to life. She's in the process of setting up those charts of accounts.

Woodruff: that's great. I think that initially bonds were not used.

Cram: a new ranking system has been developed that allows for very analytical review. One of the other perks of the updates to the PDR ordinance is that it introduced the ability to utilize matching funds from either federal or state organizations. That would also play into how the properties are ranked. If you're looking at two properties that might have similar [rankings], if one property can bring forward matching funds so that the PDR fund can go further, that property might score a little bit higher. With regard to the role of the committee, the role will evolve. I am new as the director of planning and helping to manage this program, so we'll be working together to develop the process. Laura Rigan will be assisting via the land conservancy as well. The primary role of the committee will be to rank and prioritize the properties for acquisition and make recommendations to the board. But in order to get to that place, we'll need to roll up our sleeves. I would like to set up whoever eventually takes my place so they don't have to do as much digging as I've had to do to get up to speed. We will document the process for perpetuity.

Rudolph: regarding the time commitment, would meeting twice a month for the first six

months or so be feasible?

Woodruff: we're selling our house here in Texas. Our current plans are to come back as soon as the house sells, but in any event, probably in early April. When will the committee become active? I certainly could consider coming back or participating via zoom.

Cram: I'm hoping to get started as early as the end of January, but the first part of February is probably realistic. We need to get moving to get the word out to the community.

Woodruff: will my involvement via zoom be an issue?

Cram: it's helpful having in-person meetings, but it won't disqualify you.

Shanafelt: how does your experience make you a good candidate for the committee?

Woodruff: I was a former real estate lawyer. My practice centered around raising funds and acquiring projects and negotiating arrangements among various parties. I worked many times for a government unit, with someone who wanted to take a project and tried to assemble the package to fund it. My background is real estate and finance. Subsequently, I've been involved in the grant-making side as a private foundation executive and most recently with the conservancy on raising funds to acquire open space projects in Peninsula Township. The latest one was the Hoffman Farm project, which involved the state raising money and then the property owner contributing some of the development rights that were going to be acquired. It's sort of a pattern as to how the PDR program could move forward with matching funds from state and nonprofit sources.

Shanafelt: what do you see as the biggest challenge for the committee?

Woodruff: prioritizing the properties. I know we have an analytical scoring system. The ranking permits the committee to be proactive in seeking matching funds, but that will be a challenge. It's not like the old PDR program.

Shanafelt: if you are appointed, what do you see as a personal challenge working on the committee?

Woodruff: well, I'm getting on in years. Staying sharp?

Shanafelt: do you see anything that might derail the work of the committee?

Woodruff: not really. I'm still trying to figure out how this process will run parallel to some of the other land use regulation challenges the township faces, the winery lawsuit in particular. The pressure for development in the township is increasing. The Traverse City area has been identified as a very desirable place to live, and Peninsula Township is probably one of the more desirable areas within the Traverse City area. I guess [it could be challenging] to identify property and negotiate arrangements for private property owners who probably are going to be under more and more pressure to sell their property, and maybe the historic acquisition of development rights values are going to increase, so we'll need to figure out how to work through that.

Chown: thank you, Fred. That ends the interview portion of this meeting. We are grateful for everyone's time. We have extremely qualified and passionate applicants, so choosing five from the 10 who applied will be hard. What is the pleasure of the board?

Rudolph: I wish we could appoint ten people. We have very qualified people here. This is an astonishing community.

Shanafelt: I spent the weekend going over this. It was extremely difficult. What a good problem to have.

Sanger: it is tough but I've come to some conclusions and recommend my slate of five. Dennis Arouca has already served and really adds quite a dimension in terms of background and history. Rebecca Couch brings another dimension, history, and is a very skilled and highly motivated person. Eric Dreier has a proven history with the township and not only as a resident; I've seen him on the parks committee. He's worked on three PDR programs. Susan Tarczon certainly brings a high financial dimension. I'm very much aware of the work she did as a banker on previous programs. I think her background in the PDR implementation is going to be essential. She is probably one of the major components of putting together a group that can [hit the ground running] with her background in the finance aspect. I certainly would be remiss for not recognizing the contributions of John Wunsch. John was one of the first people I met when I offered to help with the program back in 2002 on the renewal. John is really the architect behind the program. He provides the glue in my mind that keeps this group together.

Ahorn: I came up with the same five for those reasons and some others. When I listen to John Wunsch, I need his assistance to make sure his entire thought process is followed. He knows the ins and outs. He's never been on the selection committee. Now he would be following the rules and regulations and analysis and bonding thought processes that he went through with the bankers. I am just flummoxed by the amount of expertise he would carry on the committee.

Chown: because we have so many qualified candidates, it makes sense to elevate certain criteria. Experience with the PDR program is, to me, incredibly important. I want to continue to have those individuals serve who already have a proven track record. I also think it's important to acknowledge individual commitment to this program, whether they've served on past PDR selection committees or not. We have folks who worked tirelessly to promote this program in this township. I like all the candidates you named. I agree with all of them, but I also think Fred Woodruff is a very strong candidate. John Dalton is a superb candidate. Eric worked tirelessly to promote the PDR program through three iterations. I'm very comfortable with your slate but I wish we could appoint some alternates. That's why I mentioned that earlier.

Rudolph: I agree with you, Dave, on Dennis, Eric, Susan, and John, but I'm at a loss for the next level. I like John Dolton; he's had a lot of experience on the zoning board of appeals. I know he's able to work through very difficult situations. I like Rebecca very much. She has the agriculture background as well. The only other person on the list who has the ag background is John Wunsch. Fred is a neighbor and friend and a very capable person who has had a lot of interest in the PDR program. So I have a very difficult time trying to make this choice.

Sanger: I would add, the ordinance suggests we have a balance between agriculture and residential. That played into my choices.

Rudolph: that would put Rebecca at the top then.

Shanafelt: I agree with Rebecca, Susan, and John. The previous experience on the selection committee is useful, but I think one person there is enough, so it's either Susan

or Dennis in my mind. It's good to bring in some other perspectives. I thought Cristin was interesting, mainly because of her breadth of experience as well as depth and working on different committees as well as in the township. She was on my slate, as was John Dolton for similar reasons. I think John brings a very different perspective than anyone else we talked to today. So my slate is Cristin, John Dolton, Rebecca, Susan, and John Wunsch.

Sanger moved to appoint Dennis Arouca, Rebecca Couch, Eric Dreier, Susan Tarzcon, and John Wunsch to the selection committee with a second by Achorn.

Shanafelt: I would like to sub out Dennis with Cristin.

Sanger: I have a hard time with that. Dennis worked on the last PDR. He has very impressive experience and background in the community. I think he brings a skillset to the community in terms of experience. Nothing against Cristin; I'm aware of her experience on the planning commission and zoning board. But when I look at Dennis's resume, it's hard to not recognize that he's a major pillar of the community and any expertise that you look at. And I'm delighted to see a man of his credentials applying for this position.

Shanafelt: okay, I understand Dennis. As you rank Eric compared with John Dolton compared with Cristin, how do you see Eric rising to the top of those three?

Sanger: Eric has worked in the formulation, the capsulizing, of the program for the voters. He has worked on all three campaigns going back to 1992. I think that's experience we need. Eric understands the PDR program much like John Wunsch. Those two guys have worked hand in hand for the last 30 years on the program. I'm aware of John Dolton and I support John in his appointment to the zoning board. I've been impressed with his work, but John doesn't have the background in the program to be able to land on his feet. That's my main concern.

Shanafelt: so the basis of your slate leans heavily towards understanding and experience with PDR.

Sanger: I would add further, there is going to be a big thrust of activity in 2023. What drives me is that this group is going to be very busy this year.

Achorn: I go for the experience because they are going to start off running.

Shanafelt: okay, I understand.

Chown: we have a motion and a second. May I call the vote?

Rudolph: can I confirm who is on the motion?

Sanger: Dennis Arouca, Rebecca Couch, Eric Dreier, Susan Tarczon, and John Wunsch.

Roll call vote: yes – Sanger, Shanafelt, Rudolph, Chown, Achorn **Passed unan**

Chown: it's very humbling to have so many excellent candidates. We thank all of you.

Achorn: I think the first amendment to the PDR ordinance will be to add the opportunity to appoint additional people for substitutes.

Board Discussion

9. Citizen Comments: none

10. Board Comments

Rudolph: this is one of the toughest things we've had to face. It's heartwarming that we have so many qualified people who are interested in working on township matters like this.

Achorn: I'm humbled that we have so many volunteers who are so experienced and

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Township Board Special Meeting
Laura Martin, Recording Secretary

talented.

Chown: thank you all again.

11. Adjournment

Sanger moved to adjourn with a second by Rudolph.
consensus

Motion approved by

Adjourned at 4:47 p.m.

Business

Draft 2023
Peninsula Township
Parks and Recreation Plan

Peninsula Township 2023 Parks and Recreation Plan



Plan Adopted: January 24, 2023

2023 plan prepared by:

Land Information Access Association (LIAA)
Traverse City, Michigan
231-929-3696
www.liaa.org



Peninsula Township

2023 Parks and Recreation Plan

Peninsula Township Parks Committee

Mike Skurski – Chair
Michele Zebell – Vice Chair
Ronessa Butler – Secretary
Pete Dahl – Member
Mary Beth Milliken – Member
Dave Murphy – Member
Becky Chown – Member and Township Board Representative

Peninsula Township Board of Trustees

Isaiah Wunsch – Supervisor
Becky Chown – Clerk
Margaret Achorn –Treasurer
W. William Rudolph – Trustee
David K. Sanger – Trustee
Armen Shanafelt – Trustee
Warren L. Wahl – Trustee

Contributors

Jenn Cram – Township Planner
Lola Jackson – Transcribing Secretary
Ginger Schultz – Lighthouse Manager
Chris Rieser – Peter Dougherty Society/Old Mission Peninsula
Historical Society
Jane Boursaw – Old Mission Gazette

Peninsula Township 2023 Parks and Recreation Plan

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Appendices

- A. Pelizzari Natural Area Management Plan (as previously adopted)
- B. Bowers Harbor Park Expansion Plan (as previously adopted)
- C. Funding Feasibility Study
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 - Recreation Plan legal notices and meeting minutes
 - Official resolution of the Peninsula Township Board dated 1/24/2013
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 - Copy of letter transmitting adopted plan to regional planning organization dated 1/__/2023
- F. Mission Point Lighthouse Visitor Numbers
- G. Post-Completion Self-Certification Reports

Introduction

This 2023 Peninsula Township Parks and Recreation Plan identifies the township's highest recreation priorities and provides a road map for the implementation of the recreation goals and objectives identified by the Peninsula Township Parks Committee, the community, and other township boards and committees. The plan was developed according to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Guidelines for the Development of Community Parks and Recreation Plans (revised 04/26/2021) and is organized as follows:

- A. **Introduction.** The intent of a community park and recreation plan is to create an inventory of existing facilities and resources, identify community recreation and open space needs, and set a plan of action for a five-year period. This plan includes information that is required for a plan to be approved by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Grants Management staff. Information contained in the plan will be used in scoring applications.
- B. **Community Description.** Community description and planning considerations include information regarding the township's population, natural features, and adopted plans. The intent of this section is to provide a context for the plan that will assist in establishing goals. The description of the planning and public input process summarizes the 2017 and 2022 public input processes for both the previous 2018 plan and the 2023 plan, respectively.
- C. **Administrative Structure.** This section summarizes the process used to make recreation decisions and discuss budgeting and revenue.
- D. **Recreation Inventory.** This section itemizes the township's existing recreation facilities and identifies the needs of each park individually.
- E. **Goals, Objectives, and Action Program.** This section describes proposed recreation goals and improvements and itemizes specific implementation activities as part of a capital improvement schedule.
- F. **Post-Completion Self-Certification Reports**

Related Plans

Several adopted plans guide township activities and decision making. These plans were used in the development of goals, objectives, and action items in this recreation plan:

- 2022 Draft Peninsula Township Master Plan
- 2021 Kelley Park Lease
- 2019 LIAA TART Report
- 2019 Citizen Survey
- 2018 Five-Year Parks and Recreation Plan
- 2017 Bowers Harbor Expansion Concept Plan
- 2010 Pelizzari Natural Area Management Plan
- Old Mission Peninsula Scenic Heritage Route/Pure Michigan Byway
- Mission Point Lighthouse Park Strategic Plan

Notable Projects

Bowers Harbor Park Expansion and Bowers Harbor Park Improvement Project

In 2016 and 2017, Peninsula Township worked with Beckett & Raeder, Inc., and Gourdie-Fraser, Inc., to design the proposed layout for an expansion area at Bowers Harbor Park. The final approved plan, adopted in June 2017 and amended to the 2018 Five-Year Parks and Recreation Plan, includes more formal trails and amenities. Some of those improvements include pavilions, grills, picnic tables, scenic overlooks, bathrooms, etc. as noted on the 2018 and 2019 Bowers Harbor Grant Application Request Maps. Other proposed and board-approved amenities include an expanded trail network, improved parking lot, benches, a signage kiosk, interpretative trail signage, litter/recycling bins, a dog park, pet refuse collection facilities, pickleball courts, basketball courts, and a bicycle rack.

Pelizzari Expansion and Formalizing Access to the Hemlock Wing

Expansion of Pelizzari Natural Area (PNA) is underway. The first phase of the expansion is a purchase option of a 14.24-acre parcel, partially funded through the fund balance from the original millage to secure PNA, with the balance to be raised by the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy. Although this first parcel is not adjacent to the original PNA, positive discussions are ongoing with the necessary parties to tie the parcels together. An informal and heavily-used access point near the hemlock wing of PNA crosses private property. Discussions here are also underway to formalize legal access.



Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Renewal

As a general law township, Peninsula Township has limited taxing authority, and millage requests are challenging endeavors. The township's Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Program is supported by millage and was successfully renewed for a third time in August of 2022. Discussions took place between parks committee members and the PDR committee as to the compatibility of a joint millage effort that would also support parks. Between ballot language complexities and concerns about two millage requests at once, the decision was made to forgo a parks millage in 2022. As the parks committee develops its own funding plan, this recent PDR millage approval must be considered. By state law, a parks millage effort will require an independent ballot committee without township endorsement or engagement, so a citizens' group would have to lead the initiative.

Kelley Park Boat Launch Project

As of this writing, conversations and planning continue regarding the installation of both a motorized and non-motorized boat launch at this location.

Mission Point Lighthouse and Nearby Grounds

In 2018, the elected parks commission was dissolved and a parks committee was appointed that no longer oversees lighthouse operations. In 2019, a committee consisting of members of the township board, Old Mission Peninsula Historical Society, and other community members continued to oversee the restoration of the lighthouse. Based on old photographs, the committee also proposed additional historic renovations to include a replica boathouse and barn plus ADA walkways and toilet facilities, an expanded parking lot, viewing platform, and other toilet facilities. Due to a large increase in visitors, the committee may need to explore shuttle services to moderate automobile traffic.

Community Description

Peninsula Township is the northernmost township in Grand Traverse County and comprises nearly all of the Old Mission Peninsula, a narrow strip of land extending approximately 16 miles into Grand Traverse Bay. The peninsula is renowned for its rich agricultural heritage and natural beauty, with a wide variety of recreational opportunities for both residents and visitors. These recreation assets — the township's shoreline, water access, public roads affording scenic views, historic resources, natural areas, and other facilities — contribute to the township's high quality of life and its popularity as a desirable place to live and visit.

The township is made up of about 17,755 acres of residential, agriculture, commercial, public facilities, undeveloped and agricultural land. Approximately 1,192 acres, or 6.7 percent, are public, of which 855 acres, or 4.8 percent, are either owned or operated and maintained by the township (the remaining amount is owned and maintained by either the county or the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy). Residential density is highest in the southern one-third of the peninsula, with over half the township's population residing south of Wilson Road. The northern two-thirds of the peninsula are made up of significant areas of orchard, vineyard, forest, and open land, with residential, agricultural, and commercial areas centered around Mapleton. There are only 28.5 acres of commercially zoned land on the peninsula, and they are centered almost exclusively around Mapleton. Meanwhile, parks, designated open space, public facilities, and institutional uses (including the Old Mission Peninsula School, township hall and offices, cemeteries, the community library, and a variety of non-township recreational facilities) are found throughout the township.

Population

With its 43 miles of coastline, forests, rolling hills, orchards, vineyards, and beaches, Peninsula Township is well known as a thriving agricultural community, vacation destination, seasonal residential community, and high-quality year-round place to live. Driven in large part by these qualities, the township's population has increased over the last several decades. As of 2020 (the latest information available), the township's estimated population was 6,026. (www.census.gov).

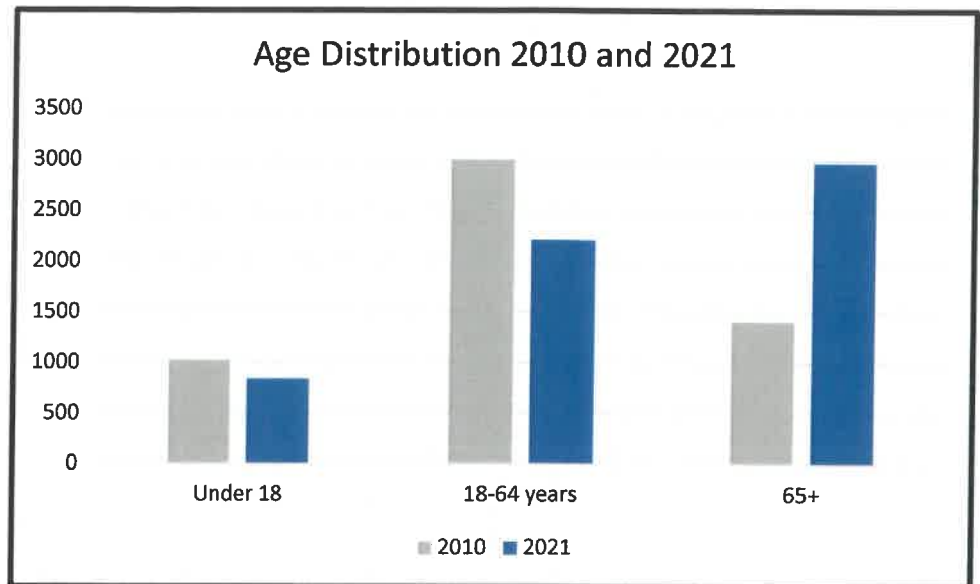
The U.S. Census Bureau shows that Peninsula Township's population differs in several respects from county-wide trends and is markedly different from state demographics.

Statistics suggest professionals and entrepreneurs who work in the Traverse City area, and those who are able to telecommute, are moving to Peninsula Township.

Quick Demographic Facts (Source: 2021 American Community Survey):

Median Age 57.1	Sex: 54% Female 46% Male
Race: 95% White 3% Two or more races 2% Hispanic	Income: \$59,825 per capita income \$112,375 median household income

	2010	2021
Under 18	1024	840
18-64 years	3002	2213
65+	1407	2973
TOTAL	5433	6026



When planning for recreation facilities, the community's growth trends, age, and income levels are important to consider. With a growing population, the township's parks experience increased usage. Higher visitation levels mean more frequent maintenance and upkeep, parking concerns, and, in some cases, needs for park expansion. As aged populations increase, recreation needs for this segment of the recreation marketplace must be addressed. Both active recreation facilities like ball fields and beach facilities and passive recreation facilities like walking and boating facilities are popular assets in the community. Barrier-free access to recreation is a high priority for the township and is particularly important for an aging population, as is expanding access to more park opportunities for anyone needing barrier-free amenities.

Tourism and Seasonal Residents

A special consideration in Peninsula Township is the fact that the population increases substantially over the summer months, with many households and families residing in the township only during this period. Beyond seasonal residents, summer tourism brings additional visitors to the township, including both day-trippers and those on extended visits who come to enjoy the peninsula's recreation facilities, water access, and natural areas.

As noted in the recreation inventory, the peninsula includes a variety of recreation facilities that continue to experience increases in usage from both residents and visitors. Water access, historic facilities, and trail networks are popular destinations for visitors. For example, Mission Point Lighthouse welcomed approximately 46,000 visitors in 2017, and the township is featured in many tourism advertisements.

Physical Features

Peninsula Township and the surrounding area are primarily rural in nature. Traverse City, which serves as the region's population, employment, commercial, and service center, borders the township on the south. City boundaries extend a short distance onto the Old Mission Peninsula, which ranges from one to four miles wide and extends about 16 miles into Grand Traverse Bay, dividing it into two arms, East Bay and West Bay. The township is surrounded by water on three sides and boasts 43 miles of shoreline within its boundaries. The topography consists of rolling hills, air drainage swales, and ancient sea shelves and wetlands, with steep slopes located throughout the township. The combination of rolling hills, a microclimate arising from the tempering presence of the two bays, and the wide presence of Emmet-Leelanau sandy loams and loamy sands result in ideal conditions for fruit production, primarily cherries, grapes, and, increasingly, apples.

Transportation

The township's road network consists of some county-maintained roads along with some private roads and one Michigan State Highway, M-37, which is a designated Michigan Scenic Heritage Route.

One of the most popular recreational activities is to drive along M-37 for stunning views of rolling hills, open space, orchards, vineyards, and Lake Michigan. Bluff Road (located along the shore of East Grand Traverse Bay), Peninsula Drive (located along the shore of West Grand Traverse Bay), and East Shore Road (starting on the south end near the Northwestern Michigan College and TC Central High School campuses, extending north to the DNR boat launch) are popular routes for bikers and runners because of their more intimate views of the water.



Personal automobile is the primary means of transportation in the township. However, because of its scenic qualities, the township's road network doubles as a popular route for bicyclists, runners, and walkers.

The township is also served by the Bay Area Transportation Authority (BATA) with dial-a-ride (reservation) service, and numerous private taxi and van companies.

The 2019 citizen survey indicates there is a high demand and need for a township-wide non-motorized transportation option. In response to the survey, a non-motorized transportation committee made up of residents and township staff formed with the goal of increasing recreational opportunities that make travel safer and including but extending beyond the parks. Additionally, there is an emphasis to direct non-motorized travelers to destinations closer to the southern end of the peninsula and nearer the city. This overall effort would support efforts to expand recreation opportunities in the area and reduce traffic on M-37.

Agricultural Preservation

Preservation of the township's scenic views and rural landscape is essential to the recreational opportunities provided by the township, which is a recreation destination for residents throughout the Grand Traverse region as well as for tourists from throughout the state and beyond. In 2017, the Mission Point Lighthouse guestbook recorded visitors from all 50 states and the District of Columbia in addition to visitors from U.S. territories and numerous foreign countries.

In recognition of the need to preserve this landscape, Peninsula Township has identified about 9,000 acres of farmland and scenic views to be preserved or protected in the township as part of its master plan. In 1994, voters approved a millage to fund the Peninsula Township Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) millage for agricultural land and scenic views. In 2002, voters increased the PDR millage to 2 mills. In 2022, they again voted to extend the program for another 20 years through 2041.



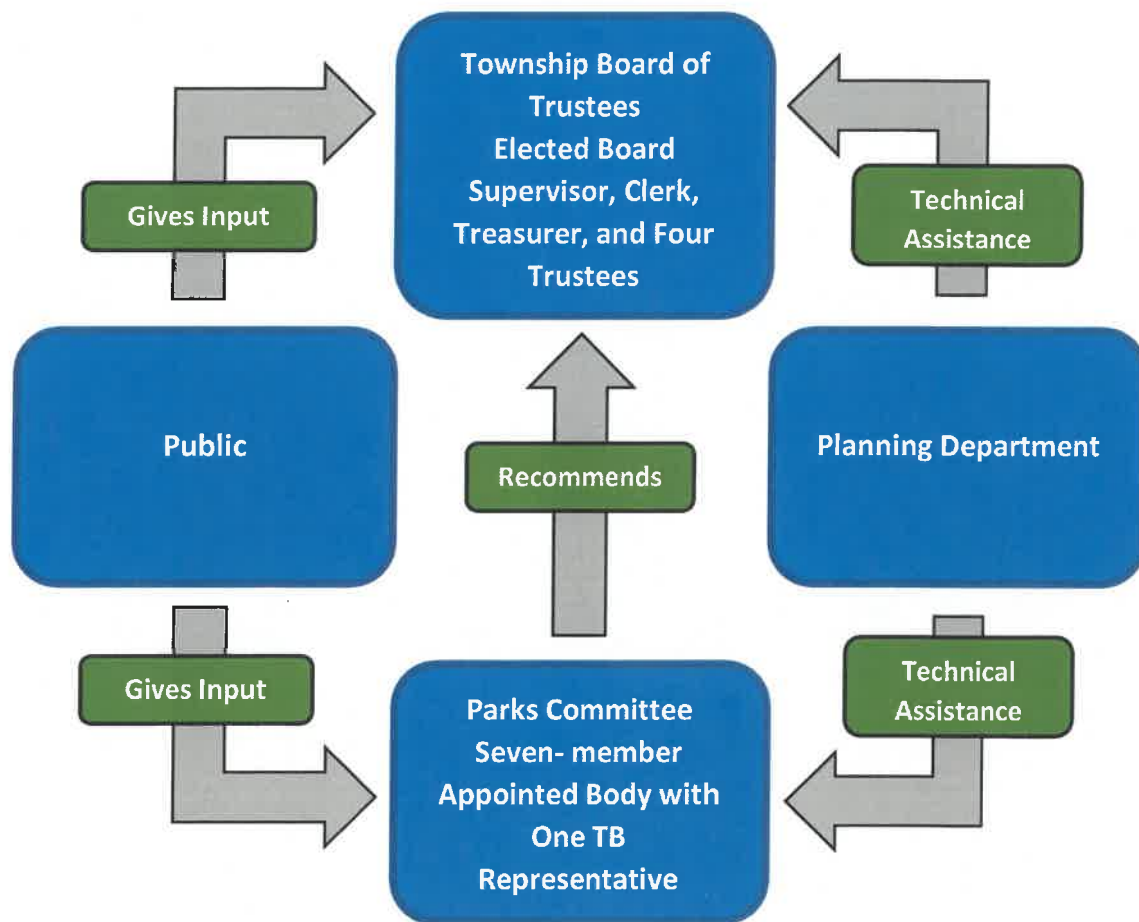
Administrative Structure

Role of Commissions, Committees, and the Township Board: The seven-member Peninsula Township Board is elected to adopt township budgets, approve contracts, adopt policies, and oversee staff. Parks and other township assets are managed in general by the township board, which administers the park budget through its treasurer and clerk.

Parks Committee: Peninsula Township has an appointed parks committee that oversees the development and operations of parks in addition to facilitating recreation programs. The parks committee makes recreation programming recommendations and decisions as well as budget recommendations to the township board. The parks committee has an independently managed budget approved once per fiscal year by the township board.

Planning Commission: The Peninsula Township Planning Commission is appointed by the township board to develop the township's master plan, develop and administer the township's zoning ordinances, and to make recommendations to the township board on a variety of land use issues.

Staff: Parks are maintained by joint parks/township buildings and grounds staff. One year-round contractor and proposed part-time individual staff member offer support when required. Additionally, the director of planning assists with parks committee support and projects as needed.



Description of Planning and Public Input Process

Recreation Planning Standards used by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) make recommendations for the number, type, and design of active recreation facilities. These standards were considered along with public input and other identified needs in the recreation planning process.

The last Peninsula Township Parks and Recreation Plan approved in 2018 began with meetings held from the summer of 2017 into the winter of 2018 to discuss and develop the plan timeline, content, and goals and encourage leadership participation and public input. The parks committee began to revise the 2018 plan in the first quarter of 2022. This process began with the development of a Funding Feasibility Study (Appendix C) to detail the budgetary needs of the parks system. This process expanded to include public input and to gain a further understanding of parks system needs. The project was discussed throughout the calendar year that followed.

The township's recreation needs were assessed through a variety of avenues, including consideration of demographic trends; review of public input; input from township boards, commissions, and staff; review of past recreation plans and other adopted township plans; site-specific planning efforts; and consideration of state and federal recreation facility guidelines.

Following the review of the 2018 plan and the development of park goals based on the public input received during the creation of the funding feasibility study, the parks committee worked to create an amended draft plan and develop an expanded set of goals, objectives, and action programming.

Recreation Plan Comment Period

The draft 2018 Peninsula Township Parks and Recreation Plan was first released for public review on November 1, 2017, at a regular Peninsula Township Parks Committee meeting. Comments were received at the regular meeting of the committee on December 6, 2017, and again at the special meeting on December 20, 2017, in accordance with the Michigan DNR's required 30-day review period.

Public open houses for the amended 2023 Peninsula Township Parks and Recreation Plan were held on February 23, 2022 (at the township hall, 8150 Center Road) as well as on March 2, 2022 (at First Congressional Church, 6105 Center Road). Surveys were also available online from February 14–March 15 for public input. The 2023 draft plan was made available to the public on December 14, 2022, and a public meeting was held by the parks committee the same day. Two well-advertised public hearings were held January 10, 2023, during a regular township board meeting, and January 24, 2023, during a special township board meeting.

Comments received for both the 2018 and 2023 plans are on file with the township.

Public input was used to refine the goals, objectives, and activities for the 2023 plan. A summary of these public comments is included in Appendix D.

Public Hearing and Adoption

2018 Peninsula Township Parks and Recreation Plan – The parks committee voted in support of a resolution to adopt the plan at a public hearing held on January 8, 2018. The township board acted on the plan at a public hearing on February 13, 2018. Legal notices, meeting agendas, and minutes are included in Appendix E.

Amended 2023 Peninsula Township Parks and Recreation Plan – The township board acted on the plan at a public hearing on January 24, 2023. Legal notices and meeting minutes are included in Appendix E.

Budget and Grants

The township's general fund is the primary source of funding for parks, with approximately \$65,000 budgeted for the 2022 fiscal year to cover maintenance, utility costs, some improvements, and general upkeep. General fund dollars are allocated yearly for recreation usage through the budget process by the township board following consideration of parks committee budget recommendations.

Some parks produce revenue in order to cover maintenance and upkeep costs. Some proceeds can only be used for such activities within the park that generates the revenue. For example, fees charged for special events, tours, and the Lighthouse Keeper Program provide a source of revenue to cover some maintenance costs at Mission Point Lighthouse Park. A gift shop was opened at the lighthouse in 2009 and is a growing source of revenue for lighthouse maintenance and activities. Likewise, pavilion rental at Bowers Harbor Park produces a small revenue stream that allowed for repairs and maintenance at that park. Donations on-site by the public also provide revenue. The purchase of Pelizzari Natural Area was funded by a millage passed in November 2008. The millage provided funding to cover improvements that allowed for safe public access to the park. Funding for additional improvements is expected to come from grants and other fundraising activities.

Further, some fundraising is conducted by volunteers for improvements and upkeep on some sites. The Dougherty Historic Home Site is entirely funded by private 501 (c)(3) fundraising efforts. Grants have been sought and obtained to provide upkeep for the nearby Replica Church in the village of Old Mission. The Mission Point Lighthouse Friends 501(c)(3) organization works to support otherwise unfunded lighthouse needs. The Old Mission Peninsula Historical Society 501 (c)(3) also provides volunteer labor and funds for the upkeep of the Hessler Log Cabin and Replica Church near the Dougherty Historic Home Site. Both the Dougherty Historic Home Site and Mission Point Lighthouse have received significant grants through the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

Volunteers

Volunteers play an important role in the development and upkeep of the parks. Volunteers provide assistance at Mission Point Lighthouse Park through the Lighthouse Keeper Program and have also taken responsibility for the long-term maintenance and other needs at the Dougherty Historic Home Site. Volunteers have been instrumental in the planning and ongoing improvements and upkeep of Pelizzari Natural Area, Bowers Harbor Park, Mission Point Lighthouse, and many of the township's other trail systems.

Relationship with School Districts, Other Public Agencies, and Private Organizations

The parks committee has expressed interest in maintaining healthy relationships with these organizations and works diligently to keep communication lines open with the public.

Status Report for All Grant-Assisted Parks and Recreation Facilities

Peninsula Township has received grant assistance from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. The following is a summary and status update:

- TF87-273 – Haserot Beach Park Expansion: the acquisition was successfully completed and the park is open to the public.
- TF95-149 – PDR Easement Acquisition: the acquisition was successfully completed and the scenic viewshed remains open for public enjoyment.
- TF13-086 – Bowers Harbor Park Expansion: the acquisition was successfully completed and the park is open to the public. In 2017, a professional planning consulting firm created a development plan for the area, which has

been partially implemented. The parks committee's annual budget will continue to fund the implementation of the plan. The Bowers Harbor Park plan is incorporated in this document as Appendix B.

Current Park Budget

The parks committee hired the Land Information Access Association (LIAA) to conduct a Funding Feasibility Study (Appendix C) that was completed in early 2022. The intent of the study was to establish a baseline for the township's current operating and maintenance needs as well as to determine what would be necessary to continue to maintain the parks at their current levels. The parks committee also conducted both in-person and online public input surveys to gain insight about what residents would like to see prioritized. The report included:

- Inventory and summary of all parks and recreation facilities (including non-township owned/operated)
- Summary of past planning efforts and studies
- Assessment of current operations and budget
- Recommendation of needed operations and maintenance items to maintain the parks system
- Comprehensive list of potential future capital improvement projects
- Summary of public input survey findings

It was noted in the study that Mission Point Lighthouse Giftshop generates revenue that can only be spent in that park. Revenues and expenditures for that park are tracked as separate budget items in the township general ledger to assure compliance with statutory requirements that prohibit funds raised through the activities to be spent outside its boundaries. For this reason, the budgets below show revenues and expenditures from all the parks in the township with Mission Point Lighthouse Park broken out separately.

In addition to maintenance and operations, an estimate was prepared for all the potential capital improvement projects the township would like to pursue. ***These improvements are well outside the scope of funding available to the township through taxes and other revenues and will likely require grant funding to complete.*** The summary included in this section shows an estimate for each park (except Mission Point Lighthouse Park). More details about the additional financial resources needed to maintain the day-to-day operations of the parks as well as the potential capital projects and cost estimates can be found in the 2022 Peninsula Township Parks Funding Feasibility Study (Appendix C).

Revenues and expenditures were estimated based on annual averages over two years and are adjusted for an increase or decrease in certain line items in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall, it is estimated that parks usage has increased and will continue to do so since the pandemic compelled many people to seek safe outdoor recreation activities.

Parks Budget

During the COVID-19 pandemic, some budget numbers were not reflective of a typical year of park usage as revenues were generally down while park usage was higher during that time. The following budget numbers are adjusted annual revenues and expenditures for fiscal years 2020-21 and 2021-22.

The following is a summary of the budget:

Average Annual Revenues for all Parks	
Description	Revenue
Parks & Large Event Fee	\$ 6,200
Interest	\$ 30
Rental Income	\$ 1,100
Total Revenues	\$ 7,330

Average Annual Expenditures for all Parks	
Description	Expenditure
Per Diem	\$ (6,565)
Liability Insurance	\$ (2,406)
Workers Comp	\$ (78)
Employer Social Security	\$ (602)
Supplies	\$ (323)
Park Signs/Lighthouse Signs	\$ (2,000)
Seeding and Planting Services	\$ (246)
Audit Fees	\$ (475)
Contractual Services	\$ (50,198)
Recording Secretary	\$ (1,500)
Noncom. Public Wat. Sup. Fee	\$ (1,127)
Printing & Advertising	\$ (2,000)
Electricity	\$ (2,243)
Street Lighting	\$ (1,353)
Repairs and Maintenance	\$ (16,000)
Memberships and Dues	\$ (504)
TOTAL	\$ (87,620)

The following is a summary of the cost if all the proposed capital improvements listed in the 2022 Funding Feasibility Study:

Park	Total Capital Improvements	Total Annual Maintenance Cost (incl. Capital Improvements)
Bowers Harbor Park	\$2,207,140	\$80,310
Archie Park	\$23,400	\$4,454
Haserot Beach	\$30,000	\$9,760
Kelley Park	\$708,000	\$47,788
Pelizzari Natural Area	\$472,575	\$7,542
Old Mission State Park	\$104,450	\$25,240
Hessler Log Cabin	\$11,000	\$2,350
Dougherty House	\$275,000	\$2,667
TOTAL	\$3,989,115	\$172,771

Lighthouse Budget

The Mission Point Lighthouse Park budget is managed separately from the rest of the township parks due to several unique factors. The lighthouse offers tours and has a gift shop, both of which generate revenue. No other park in the township generates this type of revenue and the proceeds from any funds raised as a result of these operations must be spent within the property boundaries.

Similar to the numbers provided for the entire parks system, the revenues and expenditures below are estimated annual averages based off of the 2019-20, 2020-21, and 2021-22 fiscal years. The nine months of data available for the 2022-23 fiscal year was extrapolated and used in the average estimates shown below as well. This methodology was used due to the unusual decrease in revenues and continuance of regular expenditures seen during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Average Annual Revenue (Lighthouse)	
Description	Annual
Interest	\$ 239
Keeper Program	\$ 6,169
Lighthouse Tours	\$ 95,434
Donations	\$ 11,438
Miscellaneous	\$ 676
TOTAL REVENUES	\$ 113,956

Average Annual Expenditures (Lighthouse)	
Description	Annual
Lighthouse Manager	\$ (19,859)
Liability	\$ (5,773)
Workers Comp	\$ (134)
Medical/Life Insurance	\$ (6,572)
Health Savings Account	\$ (467)
Employer Social Security	\$ (1,316)
Pension	\$ (2,530)
Postage/Shipping	\$ (135)
Supplies	\$ (2,099)
Keeper Quarter Supplies	\$ (223)
Lighthouse Signs	\$ (761)
Grounds	\$ (745)
Museum Displays	\$ (1,201)
Heating Fuel	\$ (1,819)
Credit Card Fees	\$ (225)
Audit Fees	\$ (149)
Contractual Services	\$ (12,557)
Background Checks	\$ (160)
Sanitation Services	\$ (9,461)
Security	\$ (633)
Website	\$ (438)
Com/Telephone	\$ (2,146)
Noncom. Public Wat. Sup. Fee	\$ (159)
Mileage	\$ (1,360)
Community Activities	\$ (1,151)
Legal Notices	\$ (113)
Printing & Advertising	\$ (3,224)
Electricity	\$ (1,710)

Repairs and Maintenance	\$ (4,230)
Memberships and Dues	\$ (325)
Education and Training	\$ (823)
Depreciation / Depletion	\$ (1,517)
Capital Outlay/Misc Expenditures	\$ (949)
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ (84,965)

Lighthouse Gift Shop

Average Annual Revenue (Gift Shop)	
Description	Annual
Interest	\$ 359
Gift Shop Sales	\$ 94,776
Lighthouse Sales Tax	\$ 5,686
Memo Sales	\$ 2,020
LHGS Discounts	\$ (1,399)
LHGS Refunds	\$ (621)
Donations	\$ 1
TOTAL REVENUES	\$ 100,823

Average Annual Expenditures (Gift Shop)	
Description	Annual
Temporary Employees	\$ (2,920)
Gift Shop Manager	\$ (20,032)
Liability Insurance	\$ (1,589)
Workers Comp	\$ (183)
Medical/Life Insurance	\$ (6,974)
Health Savings Account	\$ (750)
Employee Social Security	\$ (1,534)
LHGS St Pd to MI	\$ (5,805)
Sales Tax Discount	\$ 41
Pension	\$ (2,604)
Supplies	\$ (2,063)
Merchandise for Lighthouse Gift Shop	\$ (51,204)
Banking Supplies	\$ (232)
Credit Card Fees	\$ (3,545)
Legal Fees	\$ -
Audit fees	\$ (163)
Website	\$ (36)
Com/Telephone	\$ -
Cash Short/Over	\$ 6
Postage/Supplies	\$ (97)

TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ (99,684)
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Accessibility Assessment

An accessibility assessment is used to provide a general review of a park to determine whether or not additional work may be required to make the park more accessible for persons who may not be able to access certain facilities without accommodations. Accessibility assessments included in this document are based on the Michigan DNR's "Barrier-Free Accessibility Requirements for Parks" guidelines.

The township has not completed an Americans with Disabilities Act transition plan. A review of the facilities in the parks was conducted by the parks committee to assign a grade to each park to indicate the level of accessibility.

The accessibility standards as referenced by the DNR in the "Guidelines for the Development of Community Parks and Recreation Plans" (revised 04/26/2021) are as follows:

Grade	Condition/Standard
1	Every amenity within the park is accessible
2	Most amenities in the park are accessible
3	Some amenities within the park are accessible
4	Most amenities within the park are not accessible
5	No amenity within the park is accessible

The parks committee followed the DNR recommendation to use the New England ADA center checklist (ADAChecklist.org) and the [2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design](#) to apply grades to each park/historical resource.

Grade	Park	Notes
3	Archie Roadside Park	The beach is accessible by stairs but there is no ADA access.
2	Bowers Harbor Park	
3	Haserot Beach	
0	Robert & Colleen Kelley Park	Park not graded
3	Mission Point Lighthouse Park	
4	Old Mission State Park	
4	Pelizzari Natural Area	
2	Replica Church	
2	Hessler Log Cabin	The entry door is too narrow for wheelchair access.
1	Peter Dougherty House	Historic home has been retrofitted to comply with accessibility requirements

Recreation Inventory

Peninsula Township offers a number of passive and active recreation opportunities. The following data provides an inventory of existing recreational facilities within Peninsula Township as well as needs or issues that may need to be addressed at each facility. The inventory also includes information on state-funded improvements or expansions to a facility in the past.

Data was gathered from the 2018 Peninsula Township Parks and Recreation Plan, township staff and officials, and site visits. A map of the entire park system is available later in this plan.

Archie Roadside Park

Archie Roadside Park is a small park located on M-37 near Gray and Bluff roads. The park includes stairway access to East Bay that requires crossing M-37, which at times is a very busy and dangerous road. The park is utilized by a variety of people, including bicyclists, and as a staging area for tours of Old Mission Peninsula. Kayakers and scuba diving classes also use the parking area and carry their gear across M-37 to the shore access. Public input indicates a need for picnic tables at the park as well as some general improvements to the water access stairway and improving the park's overall appearance.

Within township limits, Archie Park provides the only public access to East Bay south of Old Mission, with the exception of the DNR launch site at the intersection of East Shore Road and M-37. Therefore, keeping this beach open to the public is important.

Acres: 1.7

Facilities:

- Pedestrian water access (no ADA access to water), stairs to beach, and safety signage and equipment (rescue ring/rope)
- Accessible vault toilet
- Parking area
- Water pump
- Swing sets
- Grills
- Temporary toilets (during busy season)



Bowers Harbor Park and Bowers Harbor Park Expansion

Bowers Harbor Park is an 81.6-acre community park. The park was recently expanded as a result of a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant, which added nearly 59 acres to the original 22-acre park. In 2017, the elected parks commission (later dissolved and replaced by the current parks committee in 2019) recommended adoption of the Bowers Harbor Park Expansion Plan, which is included herein by reference as "Appendix B".

This park's paved walking trails are an important universally accessible recreation opportunity. In order to enhance that opportunity, with assistance from the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy and grant funding from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, the township acquired what is called the Bowers Harbor Park Expansion (included in the

acreage figure) to allow for additional passive recreational uses, including expanded walking/jogging trails and open space. Located adjacent to Bowers Harbor Park on Devil's Dive Road, this addition has sensitive habitat, including wetland areas. A comprehensive development plan for Bowers Harbor Park and Bowers Harbor Park Expansion was developed and adopted in 2017 but has yet to be implemented.

Most of the park's facilities meet accessibility guidelines. Park facilities include:

Acres: 81.6

- Tennis courts (2)
- Volleyball court
- Softball/baseball fields
- Soccer fields
- Playground equipment
- Picnic pavilions (3) with electrical outlets, grills, tables
- Accessible toilets (3)
- Parking area
- Paved walking path
- Well
- Irrigation
- Storage building
- Basketball court



Resources:

- [2018 Peninsula Township Parks Plan](#)
- [2017 Bowers Harbor Park Expansion Plan](#)
- <https://www.peninsulatownship.com/parks1.html>
- <https://www.traversecity.com/listings/bowers-harbor-park/448/>

Haserot Beach

One of two locations for a township-managed improved public beach access is located at Haserot Beach on Old Mission Harbor. This park includes a swimming area, playground equipment, parking, picnic areas, and a vault toilet and is popular for swimming, boating, kayaking, and diving. Usage of the park for these activities continues to increase.

Haserot Beach attracts both residents and visitors for swimming. The deep harbor is also often used by scuba divers as an important archaeological dive site and is popular as a day anchorage for boaters.

Parking is a serious concern at Haserot Beach due to the heavy usage. In public input received for development of the updated parks and recreation plan, parking, high visitation levels, and motorized boat usage conflicts were cited as persistent issues that need addressing. A boat ramp was destroyed in a storm in 2019. Subsequently, the township board voted not to replace this launch and to instead install a new boat launch at nearby Kelley Park.

Because of the demonstrated need for additional access areas and parking, the township has explored the possibility of implementing soft launching, picnicking, parking, and toilets in cooperation with the DNR site at the nearby Robert & Colleen Kelley Park. This property would help accommodate the large numbers of visitors to Haserot Beach during the summer months.

Previous Grants: In 1989, Peninsula Township acquired two parcels to expand to Haserot Beach, with funding provided in part by the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. The properties are used as an area for playground equipment adjacent to the beach and the (now destroyed and no longer usable) boat landing.

Some of the park's facilities meet accessibility guidelines. Park facilities include:

Acres: 2.2

- Playground equipment
- ADA-compliant vault toilet
- Swimming area
- Waste containers
- Parking area
- Basketball court
- Storage building
- Well



Resources:

- [2018 Peninsula Township Parks Plan](#)
- <https://www.peninsulatownship.com/parks1.html>

Robert & Colleen Kelley Park

Robert & Colleen Kelley Park is a DNR-initiated Trust Fund acquisition project located on Mission Road and Old Mission Harbor in close proximity to Haserot Beach.

With assistance from the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy and Peninsula Township, the park was originally purchased by the DNR in order to install a deep-water boat launch, but the DNR subsequently concluded in the summer of 2017 that Kelley Park might be best suited as an improved water access location for non-motorized carry-down boats such as kayaks, canoes, and paddleboards that do not require a dredged channel. However, a strong push from citizens identified Kelley Park as a preferred location for a motorized launch instead of nearby Haserot Beach, which had become a very busy destination for swimming. In 2021, the DNR approved a 30-year lease with the township for a launch for both motorized and non-motorized watercraft at Kelley Park. There is no cost for the lease, but the township will be responsible for property upkeep and improvements.

Acres: 6.9

Facilities:

- U-shaped driveway
- Location for future boat launch
- Buried utilities that will be removed by the township



Resources:

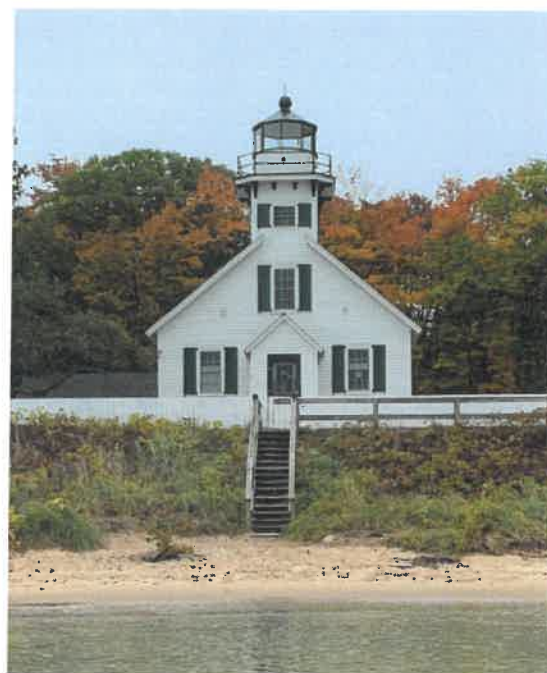
- [2018 Peninsula Township Parks Plan](#)
- <https://www.peninsulatownship.com/parks1.html>
- <https://www.oldmission.net/2020/09/kelley-park-boat-launch-dnr-rejected/>
- <https://www.traverseticker.com/news/old-mission-gets-its-new-boat-launch/>

Mission Point Lighthouse Park

Mission Point Lighthouse Park consists of 5.38 acres surrounding Mission Point Lighthouse. It includes a wide variety of recreation facilities, including historic buildings, picnic areas, and trails and is linked through trails with the 679-acre Old Mission State Park, including the Murray Road and Ridgeway Road trailheads. Beach access is available in several locations throughout Mission Point Lighthouse Park.

Because of its location at the tip of the peninsula where M-37 culminates, and as the site of the historic lighthouse, this park is heavily used and continues to welcome increasing numbers of users. The park includes historic buildings and barrier-free trails, which make it attractive as a year-round facility for hiking and skiing.

Usage at the park has increased substantially since Mission Point Lighthouse opened to the public for tours in 2008. A gift shop opened and regular programming began in 2009. The museum and gift shop are open May through October. Volunteers assist with maintenance, tours, and gift shop sales through a Lighthouse Keeper Program.



The beaches adjacent to the lighthouse and in the nearby vicinity are designated by the State of Michigan Coastal Management Program (MCMP) as being within a High-Risk Erosion Area (HREA). This means that the shorelines in this area have been receding over time. Increased usage of the lighthouse area can contribute to erosion in this sensitive area and action is needed to reduce access to these beaches to help mitigate the erosion. Higher visitation levels also create a greater interest and need for improved internal and external access to the lighthouse and grounds.

Renovation of the lighthouse building to historically accurate conditions is in continual progress. Largely through grants from SHPO, the lighthouse building has been repainted (after lead paint abatement), reinsulated windows have been added, and the foundation has been shored up to mitigate the effects of aging and a poorly prepared original foundation. Historic sidewalks have been exposed or resurfaced. In addition, the former concession stand building has been moved to its original site. Its foundation has been strengthened, insulation added, and new siding and roofing are in progress.

A Historic Structures Report, commissioned through the State Historic Preservation Office, serves as the strategic plan for Mission Point Lighthouse and grounds. This serves as a working document for the committee responsible for overseeing the lighthouse to guide activities relative to the buildings, programs and grounds.

The very large influx of visitors has put stress on the parking lots and pit toilets. Planning for flush toilet facilities is seen as essential and is in progress.

Most of the park's facilities meet accessibility guidelines. Facilities include:

Acres: 6.7

Resources:

- [2018 Peninsula Township Parks Plan](#)
- <https://www.peninsulatownship.com/parks1.html>
- <https://www.omphistoricalsociety.org/>

- Hessler Log Cabin – Located on the grounds of Mission Point Lighthouse Park, this cabin was built between 1854 and 1856 by pioneers Joseph and Mary Hessler
- Cross-country ski trails
- Beach access
- Historic lighthouse with visitor center and gift shop
- Vault toilets (2); proposed accessible vault toilets (3)
- Temporary toilets during busy season: (6)
- Parking lots (2)
- Picnic areas
- Swimming areas
- Hunting (per DNR regulations)
- Building and well house

Old Mission State Park

Old Mission State Park consists of 679.3 acres that are connected to Mission Point Lighthouse Park through hiking and skiing trails. The State of Michigan DNR owns the property and leases the land to the township. The township is responsible for all maintenance and management of the park. A separate gravel parking area, picnic area, and accessible vault toilet are available at the Ridgewood Road Trailhead. Another parking area is located at the Murray Road Trailhead. Barrier-free trails link these parking areas and trails to Mission Point Lighthouse Park.

This park is by far the largest park under the township's management (comprising nearly 80 percent of all township-managed parkland) and it is not township owned but rather leased from the state and managed at the township's expense.

The majority of trails prohibit motorized vehicles; however, motorized vehicle access is permitted on the east-west two-track that bisects the northern portion of the park. Hunting is permitted in some areas of the park per DNR regulations.

Murray Road Trailhead

The Murray Road Trailhead is part of Old Mission State Park and provides access to the 12 miles of hiking trails that link Old Mission State Park and Mission Point Lighthouse Park. Trails are for passive use only, and motorized vehicles are prohibited.

Some of the facilities meet accessibility standards.

Ridgewood Road Trailhead

The Ridgewood Road Trailhead is part of Old Mission State Park and provides access to the 12 miles of hiking trails that link Old Mission State Park and Mission Point Lighthouse Park. Trails are for passive use only, and motorized vehicles are prohibited.

A barn located near the Ridgewood Road Trailhead is currently leased by the township for storage of parks-related maintenance equipment. The lease is due to expire in the near term, and additional storage facilities will be needed.

Some of the facilities meet accessibility guidelines. Facilities available at the trailhead include:

Acres: 679.3

- Parking
- Hiking trails
- Barrier-free trails
- Hunting
- Vault toilet (Ridgewood Road Trailhead)
- Emergency vehicle access (Ridgewood Road Trailhead)



Pelizzari Natural Area

Pelizzari Natural Area was purchased in 2009 following approval of a millage in 2008 as well as \$500,000 raised in private donations. The funding also assisted in some improvements such as the construction of the parking lot, orchard removal, soil remediation, trail building, informational kiosk, signage, border fencing, invasive removal, and plantings, benches, and multiple Eagle Scout projects.

The park consists of 62 acres of woodlands, meadows, wetlands, and shoreline in the southern end of Peninsula Township. Improvements including trail building, property cleanup, and master planning began in 2009 shortly after the property was purchased. With improvements still ongoing, the natural area now offers about three miles of trails and abundant opportunities for hiking, trail running, snowshoeing, and birdwatching while preserving and maintaining important wildlife habitat, wetlands, and sensitive shoreline areas.

Expansion of PNA is a high community priority due to usage near the densest population center and the desire to protect nearby forested lands for public use. Fundraising is underway for a 14.24-acre parcel under purchase option; discussions on other land acquisitions/easements are in progress.

A future development and management plan for Pelizzari Natural Area was developed in 2010 and is incorporated into this park's master plan as "Appendix A".

An accessible boardwalk in the hemlock wing of the southeast section of the park is planned with work pending grant application outcomes. Accessible trails near the parking lot are also desirable but less appealing to users at this stage until more vegetation returns.

The parks committee has envisioned an accessible trail loop in the upper meadow. Accessible trails are a high priority for future improvements at the park and are a goal identified in its management plan. Facilities include trails and a parking area.

Acres: 61.8

Facilities:

- Parking lot
- Kiosk
- Boundary fencing
- Waste container and dog waste bag dispenser
- Some property line and parking lot fencing
- Wayfinding signage

Resources:

- [2018 Peninsula Township Parks Plan](#)
- <https://www.qtrlc.org/recreation-events/preserve/pelizzari-natural-area/>
- <https://www.oldmission.net/2018/08/pelizzari-family-omp-history/>
- Dave Murphy, Peninsula Township Parks Committee



Historic Resources

Replica Church

Acres: 0.1

This small historical site owned by Peninsula Township has recently been discovered by the public since the parks committee installed historic markers. Situated across the street from the nearby Dougherty House, this replica church was renovated in 2019, and the Old Mission Peninsula Historical Society is in the process of updating the exhibits.

Hessler Log Cabin

The Hessler Log Cabin is located on Mission Point Lighthouse Park grounds. The cabin was built by Old Mission settlers in the 1850s and was moved to its current location in 1992. The home has been restored as an historical resource and includes a display of furnishings that are historically accurate to the mid-nineteenth century. The log cabin is managed by the Old Mission Peninsula Historical Society. Maintenance and upkeep are funded through donations that are managed by the township's parks committee budgeting process.

All of the cabin's facilities meet accessibility guidelines. Facilities include:

Acres: the cabin is located on Mission Point Lighthouse Park property

- Historic display
- Log Cabin days programming

Dougherty Historic Home Site

Acres: 14.7

This home was built in 1842 by Reverend Peter Dougherty, a Presbyterian minister, with the help of a Chippewa village headed by Chief Aghosa. In 2006, the property was deeded to Peninsula Township and became part of the Michigan Historic Preservation Network. In 2011, the home and land were placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The



Peter Dougherty Society, organized as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, worked tirelessly to restore, maintain, and display the home and grounds.

Today, the site is an historical, cultural, educational, and community center and museum. The grounds include the Heritage Trail and Disabled Trail as well as gardens that reflect farming in the late nineteenth century. The home and property continue to be maintained by volunteers through the Peter Dougherty Society, but the township is responsible for utilities, insurance and major capital needs.

Non-Township-Owned/Operated Recreation Facilities

Recreation opportunities in the township include facilities or parks outside of township ownership. The State of Michigan, Grand Traverse County, the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, and the City of Traverse City all maintain land and facilities accessible to the public for hiking, swimming, picnicking, boating, camping, and other activities. State, local, and conservancy-owned recreation areas located within Peninsula Township are as follows:

DNR Boat Access

Two boat launches owned by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) are available in Peninsula Township. The first is located on East Bay along Center Road, just north of East Shore Road. The boat launch site includes vehicle parking and an outhouse. The facility is heavily used in the summer months. A second boat launch is available at Bowers Harbor on Peninsula Drive. Vehicle parking is available.

Both the East Bay and Bowers Harbor launches are Boating Access Site facilities as defined by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

State of Michigan – M-37 National Scenic Byway

M-37 has been designated by the State of Michigan as the Old Mission National Scenic Byway. The Scenic Byway offers driving tours, scenic views, and historical site identification/ interpretation for visitors.

The scenic byway creates some opportunities in terms of recreational coordination.

County and State Roads

County and state roads on Old Mission Peninsula are the most heavily used assets in the township for recreation. Whether for walking, running, regionally sanctioned running races, school sports teams in training, or cycling, Peninsula Township's roadways are magnets for recreation, in large part due to the scenic nature of shoreline roads as well as roads affording scenic views and adjacent to farmland. Among the most heavily used roads for recreational purposes are M-37, East Shore Road, Bluff Road, Peninsula Drive, Seven Hills Road, and Smokey Hollow Road. A non-motorized transportation committee was created in 2020 as the result of a mandate from the 2019 citizen survey emphasizing the need for such work. The committee is actively seeking grants and collaborating with a range of stakeholders to emphasize safety and best practices in the use of roadways as well as exploring off-road options.



Grand Traverse County – Power Island

Power Island is a 202-acre property located in the west arm of Grand Traverse Bay about two miles from the Bowers Harbor Boat Launch. The island includes forest and beach areas and is used primarily for its beaches and picnic areas. A primitive campground is located on Bassett Island, which is connected to Power Island via an isthmus. Features include:

- Swimming
- Picnic area
- Restrooms
- Campsites

Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy – Pyatt Lake: The Bill Carls Nature Preserve

The conservancy-owned Pyatt Lake: The Bill Carls Preserve offers hiking, skiing, snowshoeing, and bird watching opportunities in a unique habitat consisting of wooded dune and swale with a variety of animal and plant species. The 140-acre natural area is located off Neah-ta-wanta Road in the northwest corner of the township. Activities at the natural area include:

- Hiking, snowshoeing, skiing
- Hunting
- Birdwatching

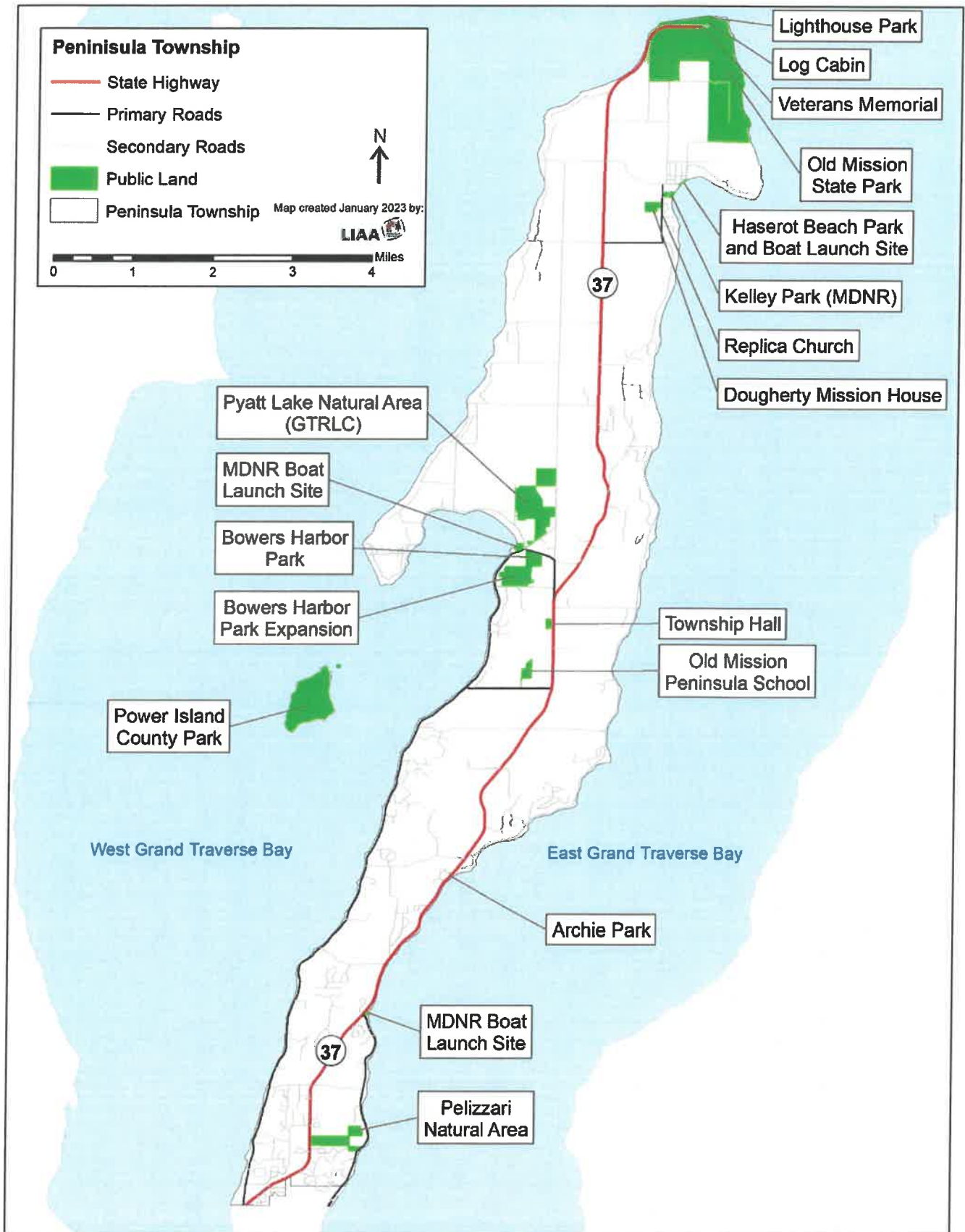
Nearby Recreation Opportunities

Many recreation facilities are available outside of township boundaries within Grand Traverse County, including facilities or parks operated by the City of Traverse City, Grand Traverse County, State of Michigan, and Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, including beaches, playgrounds, downhill skiing facilities, campgrounds, natural areas, and a county-owned civic center that includes a public pool and hockey rink. Private recreation opportunities are abundant as well, including golf courses, marinas, and skating rinks.



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Maps



Archie Park (1.7 acres)

-  Park Boundary
-  Property Boundaries






Peninsula Township

0 25 50 75 100 Feet



Bowers Harbor Park (81.6 acres)

-  Park Boundary
-  Property Boundaries
-  Walking Trails



Peninsula Township

0 200 400 600 800 Feet



LIAA 



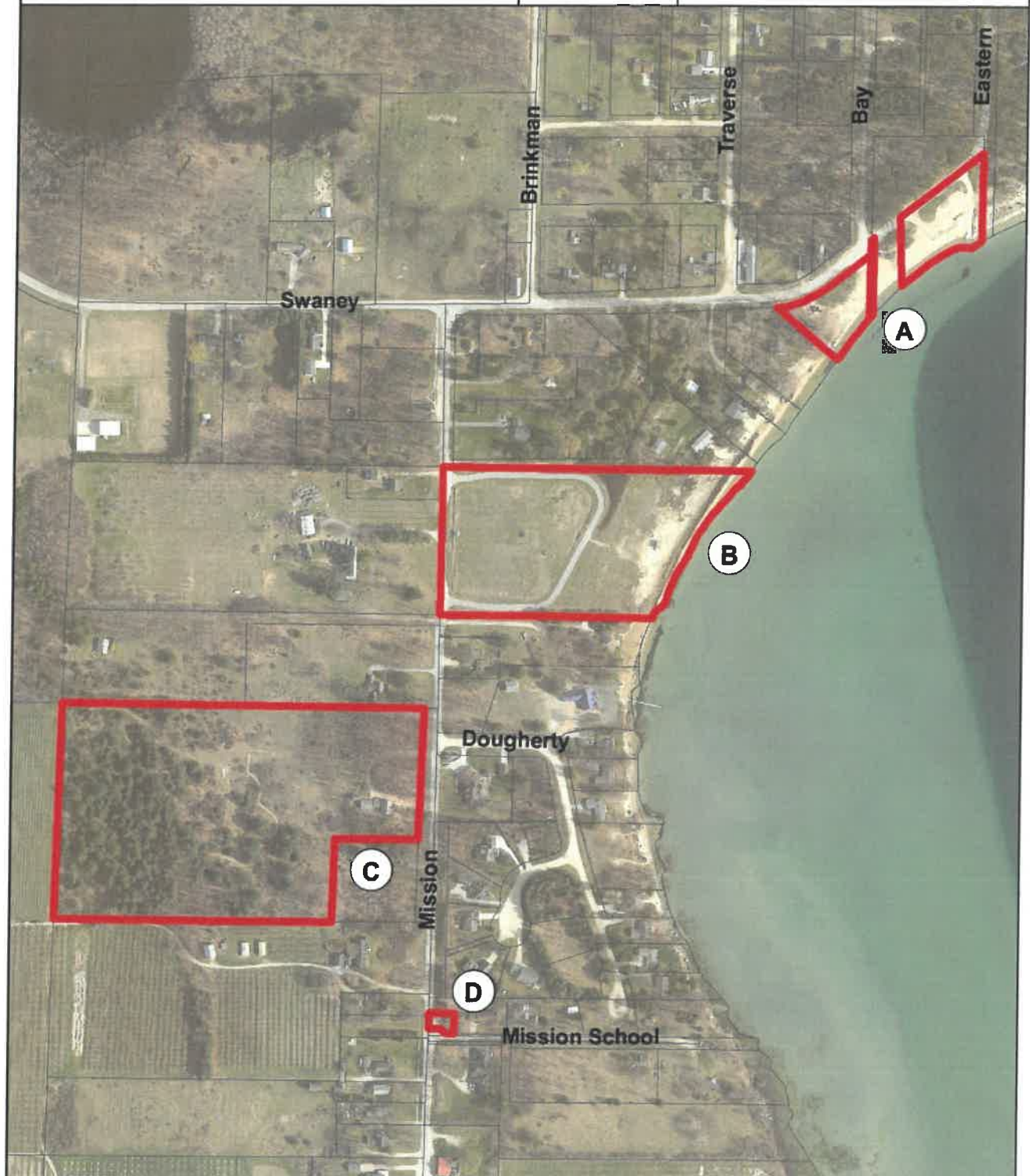
- A) Haserot Beach (2.2 acres)
- B) Kelley Park (7.9 acres)
- C) Peter Dougherty House (14.7 acres)
- D) Replica Log Mission Church (0.1 acres)

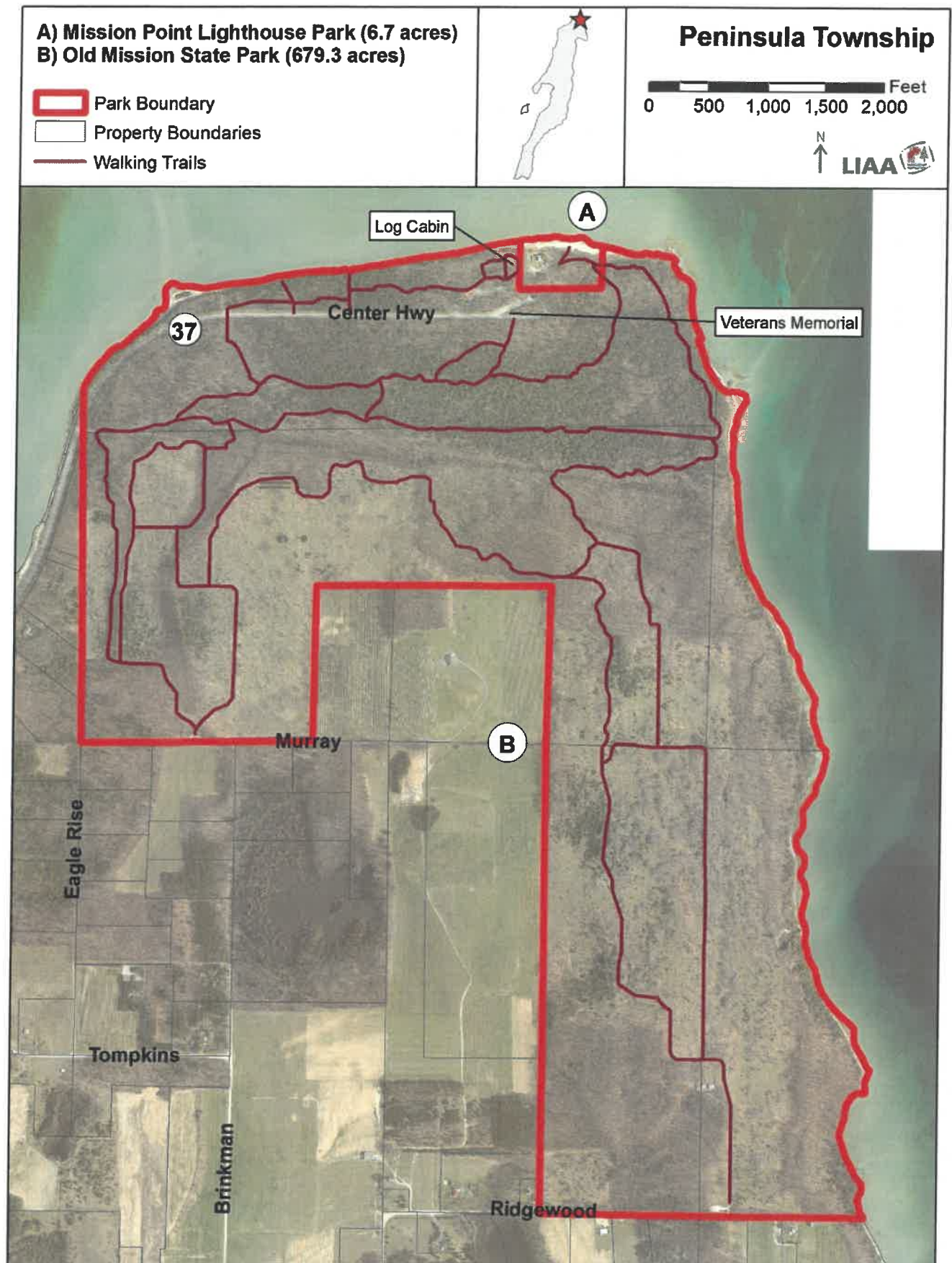
 Park Boundary
 Property Boundaries






Peninsula Township

0 200 400 600 800 Feet





Pelizzari Natural Area (61.8 acres)

-  Park Boundary
-  Property Boundaries
-  Walking Trails



Peninsula Township

0 250 500 750 1,000 Feet



Goals, Objectives, and Action Program

Peninsula Township Parks Committee Mission Statement:

Provide a geographically balanced park system that benefits the health and quality of life of all residents and visitors through careful planning. Support and enhance the recreational, environmental, historic, educational, and restorative experiences at Peninsula Township parks to encourage community use and involvement.

Recreation Plan Goals and Objectives

GOAL #1: Provide a variety of recreation opportunities within the parks for all ages, interests, and abilities.

Objective 1: Retrofit existing or build new facilities to accommodate accessibility needs, including ADA bathrooms, pavilions/picnic spaces, trails/boardwalks, parking spaces, and signage

Objective 2: Provide year-round recreation opportunities

Objective 3: Upgrade/replace existing or provide new playground equipment

Objective 4: Provide space for pets

GOAL #2: Develop and implement a cohesive communication plan.

Objective 1: Signage – park identification, facilities, and navigation

Objective 2: Continue to develop public engagement opportunities to provide information and gain feedback for continued or new park programming

GOAL #3: Achieve a thoughtfully planned, managed, and connected township-wide parks system.

Objective 1: Develop park management plan for each park in the township

Objective 2: Evaluate and consider appropriate staff/volunteers to manage park system

Objective 3: Continue to develop and maintain well-organized volunteers

Objective 4: Plan for safe, non-motorized, township-wide connectivity of the parks system and transportation routes throughout the township that encourage safe walking and biking

Objective 5: Evaluate, maintain, and address access for emergency vehicles and services

Objective 6: Pursue grant funding when appropriate for construction of new facilities and acquisition of property

Objective 7: Maintain relationships with regional partners such as the Traverse Area Recreation and Transportation (TART) Trails Network and the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy

Objective 8: Evaluate and implement a financial plan for long-term support of park and historic facilities through both public and private funding

General Parks Actions

- Review budget and operational capabilities on an annual basis
- Install new cohesive and improved signage throughout the entire township for all parks and recreation facilities
- Evaluate and manage environmental resilience issues such as non-native species, shoreline development and protection, and forest health
- Work with appropriate groups on connectivity planning
- Document history of each park

Bowers Harbor Park and Expansion

- Implement the 2017 Bowers Harbor expansion plan, including a one-mile accessible trail/loop
- Update/replace playground equipment
- Construct a new accessible pavilion
- Build new accessible and plumbed bathrooms
- Construct a dog park
- Build new pickleball courts
- Install new basketball NBA half-courts
- Repair and update tennis courts

Haserot Beach

- Improve existing parking lots (either crushed stone or pavement)
- Remove old boat launch

Kelley Park

- Add/improve parking (crushed stone or pavement)
- Install new accessible bathrooms
- Construct new gazebos or pavilions
- Install a new boat launch with a hull-washing station
- Install a fish cleaning station

Archie Park

- Add a bus shelter (in coordination with BATA)
- Install a new bike repair station
- Add pedestrian crossing signage

Pelizzari Natural Area

- Continue working to add expansion area(s)
- Add accessible trail(s)
- Install boardwalk in hemlock wing (protect sensitive environment)

Mission Point Lighthouse Park

- Explore shuttle feasibility versus a major expansion of the parking lot
- Explore the installation of a small UA parking area for launching canoes and kayaks
- Build replica barn (site of historic barn) or utility building
- Retrofit existing trail(s) for universal accessibility and sustainability
- Remove trails that are unsustainable or dangerous

Old Mission State Park

- Maintain existing trail system through coordinated effort managed by the township
- Develop and maintain a managed forestry plan
- Maintain/improve emergency vehicle/service access trails
- Improve trail/directional signage

Hessler Log Cabin

- Update/improve interior lighting

Peter Dougherty Home Site

- Restore/build historic barn
- Update museum displays and informational signage
- Investigate development of an antique apple orchard

Replica Church

- Update museum displays and informational signage

Resolution 01-24-23 #1

Adoption of the 2023 Peninsula Township Five-Year Parks and Recreation Plan

Peninsula Township, Grand Traverse County, Michigan
RESOLUTION 01-24-23 #1

ADOPTION OF THE 2023 PENINSULA TOWNSHIP FIVE-YEAR PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN

At a meeting of the Peninsula Township Board, Grand Traverse County, Michigan, held at the Peninsula Township Hall on the 24th day of January 2023, at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: _____

ABSENT: _____

The following was moved by _____ and seconded by _____.

WHEREAS, the Peninsula Township Parks Committee is made up of representatives from Peninsula Township; and

WHEREAS, Peninsula Township has undertaken a planning process to determine and forecast the recreational and natural resource conservation needs and desires of its residents over the coming five-year period covering the years 2023 through 2027; and

WHEREAS, the Peninsula Township Parks Committee began the process of revising and updating the 2018 Peninsula Township Five-Year Parks and Recreation Plan in accordance with the most recent guidelines developed by the Department of Natural Resources and made available to local communities; and

WHEREAS, residents of the township expressed opinions, asked questions, and discussed all aspects of the parks plan during its development; and

WHEREAS, the Peninsula Township Parks Committee has developed the plan as a guideline for improving recreation and enhancing natural resource conservation for Peninsula Township; and

WHEREAS, the final draft plan was available for public review and inspection for a period of at least 30 days; and

WHEREAS, public hearings noticed consistent with Act 267 of 1976 were held at Peninsula Township Hall on January 10, 2023 and January 24, 2023 at 13235 Center Road, Traverse City, MI 49686 to provide an opportunity for all residents to express opinions, ask questions, and discuss all aspects of the 2023 Peninsula Township Five-Year Parks and Recreation Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Peninsula Township Board hereby adopts the

YEAS: _____

NAYS: _____

Meeting Moderator

STATE OF MICHIGAN)
) ss
COUNTY OF GRAND TRAVERSE)

Becky Chown, Township Clerk
Peninsula Township