

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Section 4

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Determining a Vision

Through a statement of long-range goals and objectives, the County's commitment to future recreation needs can be determined by setting long-range goals and objectives, the County is taking a major step in its recreation planning.

To adequately state the objectives of contemporary recreation planning, it is necessary to think in broader terms than merely the provision of space for outdoor active sports or passive activities in natural surroundings. To develop a plan for a viable recreational system within Lenawee County requires a new look at the concept of recreation.

The general goal of recreation is to provide the space, facilities, programs and opportunity for county residents to meet their recreational needs. The provision of recreation facilities should be accomplished through the interaction of state, county, city, village, and township governments and the private sector. Coordinated planning among these partners is essential in assuring a system of adequate recreational facilities that provide citizens of the County with diverse choice and maximize the potential for their utilization.

The formulation of goals is one of the more difficult tasks facing those who are charged with deciding upon some aspect of the future environment. A good portion of this difficulty has to do with the fact that most stakeholders are not oriented to the future because of the obligations of day-to-day activities which confront them. This is not to say that more time should necessarily be spent stargazing; rather, it is to say that stakeholders should not be afraid to set their sights on what may seem to be remote and then strive to achieve those goals.

After establishing goals, it is necessary to translate them into specific actions. In other words, what actions are needed to achieve our expressed goals? To do this, it is necessary to develop other kinds of statements, which are called objectives. To illustrate this concept, consider the following:

Goals involve such considerations as equal opportunity; full employment; an end to pollution; decent, safe and sanitary housing for every family; etc. There is seldom any serious disagreement with goals, although there may be some differences of opinion regarding the methods employed to achieve them.

Objectives can best be described as approaches to achievement. They are somewhat more concrete and may be specific with regard to a particular locality. An example of an objective would be: "All local governments in Lenawee County should concentrate all of their available resources for recreation in projects which are aimed at tourists". There may be those that agree with this statement, but on the other hand there may be a substantial segment of the population which believes that the cities and townships should develop parks for local use and depend on the county, federal government, and the private sector to meet the needs of the tourist. If this is indeed the case, then the above statement becomes an "issue of the day" which can only be resolved by the legislative machinery of local government.

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Goals and Objectives

The following list of goals and objectives are deemed appropriate for Lenawee County by the Lenawee County Parks and Recreation Commission. They are based upon previous studies, observation of the types of recreation projects which are being planned by other local units of government, the community opinion survey, analysis of inventory data, and the standards in this plan.

Goal #1— *Provide all residents of Lenawee County with park and recreation areas and activities that meet acceptable standards, thus providing wholesome and safe leisure time opportunities.*

Objectives:

- Maintain and improve the physical quality of existing facilities and grounds through aggressive renovations and repair projects.
- Identify and incorporate ADA accessibility guidelines, as appropriate; including but not limited to a park that specifically addresses the needs of the elderly, disabled and special needs.

Rationale:

“Maintenance and Upkeep” was identified as a contributing factor in the decision of 26% of community opinion survey respondents who visit parks other than those owned by Lenawee County (Q#6b). Other respondents commented on recent improvements at both Gerber Hill and Taylor Road Parks (Q#5).

The American Community Survey estimated that 15.6% of residents countywide have some type of disability between 2013 and 2017. An estimated 50% of those residents had an “ambulatory difficulty.” Several county parks are listed on accessforall.disabilityconnect.org an app maintained by DisAbilities Connections that provides accessibility reviews.

Goal #2— *Increase park visitor usage and tourism at county park facilities and expand recreational opportunities through cooperation and collaboration with public and private partners.*

Objectives:

- Seek out opportunities for special events in County parks.
- Improve advertising and communications with communities.
- Promote community awareness of County Parks.
- Work in cooperation and collaboration with state, local and private sector partners to enhance access and options to recreational facilities

Rationale:

One community opinion survey respondent suggested ‘*better publicity of their existence*’ while another commented on the ‘*need to know what the parks offer*’ (Q#5). Only 7% of respondents visited a county park for “organized sports” and only another 8% visited for “another type of event” (Q#6); write-in responses to that question included “reunion” and “wedding.” Only 17% of respondents said “yes” when asked if they were affiliated with a club or organization that may be interested in using, or had used, a county park (Q#7). Finally, 74% of respondents indicated that they visit other parks regularly (Q#4a).

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By cooperating with state, local and private sector partners, access to and the variety of recreational facilities can be expanded. Sharing resources reduces the cost for any one entity while increasing the overall opportunities. An example of this cooperation is the extension of the Kiwanis Trail into the City of Tecumseh. Cooperation on the part of Lenawee County, the cities of Adrian and Tecumseh, and the townships of Adrian and Raisin, resulted in a grant award to extend the Kiwanis Trail into the city limits of Tecumseh.

Incorporation of the Connecting Lenawee Non-motorized Plan, the Kiwanis Trail Master Plan, and River Raisin Plan (**attachments A-C**) into the Lenawee County Parks and Recreation Plan positions Lenawee County to collaborate with public and private partners to extend these services to county residents.

Goal #3— *Continue to preserve, protect, and enhance the natural resources in Lenawee County and the recreational opportunities that they provide.*

Objectives:

- Preserve and protect open space and significant natural features.
- Work in cooperation with other entities.

Rationale:

When asked what types of activities they participated in while visiting a county park, 45% of community opinion survey respondents identified “walking trails,” 11% identified “fishing,” and 15% identified “birdwatching” (**Q#6**). Write-in responses included: “picnicking” (7), “walking/hiking” (5), “sledding” (1), “running” (1), “biking” (2), and “boat launch” (2). All of those responses support the need for preserving, protecting, and enhancing the natural features found in county parks.

Residents of one municipality are apt to work/attend school, shop, and/or recreate (at least partially) in other municipalities. Many of those activities will occur within urban areas such as the Clinton-Tecumseh-Adrian Urbanizing Corridor. Rural residents will often travel to such an area or a nearby town in order to satisfy many of those needs. Consequently, it is beneficial for neighboring municipalities, the county, and their private sector partners to cooperate whenever possible.

Goal #4— *Establish staging areas for a variety of programs that would be beneficial to the residents of all ages of the County.*

Objectives:

- Coordinate current programs that are presently being offered through the auspices of the school districts, various leagues, and municipal parks and recreation departments.
- Develop facilities for additional activities, especially of long nature adaptable to leagues, for age levels not presently being served; (e.g. pickleball, etc.).
- Develop staging areas for self-improvement year-round program for all ages in nature study, physical fitness, outdoor individual sports, and enrichment programs.
- Develop more facilities for children’s leagues (e.g. soccer, football, tennis, etc.).
- Develop more staging areas for birdwatching, photography, and other activities.

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Rationale:

The American Community Survey illustrates the wide spectrum of ages of its residents. ‘Generation Z’ and younger (people less than 15 years of age in 2017) comprised 18% of the countywide population and 19% of the population of Rural Lenawee County. ‘Millennials’ (people between 15 and 34 years of age in 2017) comprised 25% of the countywide population and 27% of the population of the Clinton-Tecumseh-Adrian Urbanizing Corridor. ‘Generation X’ (people between 35 and 54 years of age in 2017) accounted for 26% of the countywide population and 27% of the populations of the Irish Hills-Devils Lake Recreational Area and Rural Lenawee County. ‘Baby Boomers’ (people between 55 and 74 years of age in 2017) comprised 25% of the countywide population and 31% of the population of the Irish Hills-Devils Lake Recreational Area. The ‘Silent Generation’ and older (people 75 years of age or older in 2017) comprised 7% of the countywide population and 8% of the population of the Irish Hills-Devils Lake Recreational Area.

Goal #5— *Improve and expand administrative and personnel management in the area of the County’s park and recreation delivery system.*

Objectives:

- Explore the potential for a full or part time park and recreation manager/director/curator.
- Explore the potential for private sector involvement.
- Develop policies for contracting with the private sector to deliver some recreation services traditionally performed by park department employees.
- Develop cooperative recreation programs with local units of government and school districts.
- Involve area residents in the planning of proposed facilities and programs.

Rationale:

A dedicated manager of the County’s parks and recreation system and cooperative relationships with municipal governments, the private sector, and local residents are all needed in order to adequately address the other goals and objectives listed in this plan. For example, many of the “variety of programs” called for (see Goal #4) could be provided through public-private partnerships amongst the municipalities, institutions and stakeholders which comprise Lenawee County. A dedicated manager of the County’s parks and recreation system would also help to improve its financial management (see Goal #6) and to coordinate with other park and recreation providers.

Goal #6— *Improve and expand financing management in the area of the sources of revenue and the way funds are spent.*

Objectives:

- Develop a mechanism for receiving/implementing estates, trusts, donations, and memorials.
- Develop a policy to establish and implement fees and charges.
- Develop a “Gifts Catalog” that identifies ways that donations can help parks and recreation facilities in Lenawee County.
- Develop strategies for budget monitoring to maintain cost efficiency.
- Develop a creative and unique acquisition process “scrounging”.
- Develop land conservation and preservation techniques.
- Explore fund-raising methods.
- Set up a long-range program for application for land and water grants.

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Rationale:

Park system “upkeep/maintenance” (see Goal #1) was an important issue highlighted in the responses to the citizen opinion survey. Part of the reason behind these responses is a lack of financial resources. The lack of those resources will also impact the ability of the County to provide a variety of recreation programs (see Goal #4). The various objectives under this goal will help to address this shortfall in funding. A dedicated manager (see Goal #5) would help facilitate the implementation of those objectives and to develop needed partnerships to improve its financial management and to coordinate with other park and recreation providers.

Goal #7— *Improve and expand maintenance management in the areas of quantitative maintenance, qualitative maintenance, standards establishment, equipment availability, personnel, and scheduling.*

Objectives:

- Develop a “maintenance impact statement” which set forth the dollar costs to the County Parks and Recreation Commission and taxpayers of operating and maintaining a proposed facility or programs.
- Develop energy planning management.
- Maintain and preserve conservation.

Rationale:

A dedicated manager (see Goal #5) would help facilitate the financial management practices (see Goal #6) needed to develop a “maintenance impact statement.” The partnerships needed to develop an energy plan and other conservation activities (see Goal #3) also need to be developed by a dedicated manager or other public official.

Goal #8— *Support greenway systems as a means of preservation and linkage of existing parks.*

Objectives:

- Explore options of the Irish Hills Lakes Greenway which traverses Deep, Dewey, Little Stone, Dotys, Washington, Mud, Marrs, Wolf, Allens, Meadow, Kellys, Killarney, and Iron Lakes.
- Explore options of the Bean Creek Greenway which traverses Bean Creek, Mallory Lake, Devils Lake, and Round Lake.
- Explore options of the River Raisin Greenway which traverses the River Raisin, Wolf Creek, Black Creek (tributary of Wolf Creek), and the South Branch of the River Raisin.
- Explore options of the Black Creek Greenway which traverses Black Creek and Lake Hudson.

Rationale:

Community opinion survey respondents were asked what types of outdoor activities they enjoy. Hiking and biking were the top answers (Q#6), supporting the need for a connective and linear system of greenways. Fishing, swimming and birdwatching were also very popular and further bolster the need for greenways. The greenways proposed in the above objectives will connect groups of adjoining lakes and waterways as well as nearby municipal and county parks. These projects will require intergovernmental and public-private partnerships (see Goal #5).