

Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenways Plan

2024-2028

City of Grayling
Crawford County, Michigan

“The Heart of the North”



Prepared by; City of Grayling
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Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenways Plan 2024-2028 City of Grayling Crawford County, Michigan



Adopted by the City Council September 17th 2024

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CITY OF GRAYLING PARK, RECREATION, OPEN SPACE AND GREENWAYS PLAN

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CHAPTER 1 – COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

Regional Location

The City of Grayling is a small scenic city in Crawford County which is in the Northern Lower Peninsula of Michigan. The city is 2.2 square miles in area. Located approximately 200 miles North of Detroit; 85 miles south of the Mackinaw Bridge; 54 miles east of Traverse City and approximately 90 miles west of Harrisville and Lake Huron, see **Figure 1.1**. Commercial and industrial development is concentrated along M-72; M-93; Old US 27 and the Four Mile Road exit off I-75 (an interstate highway). Residential development is concentrated in the north half of the City. The City is surrounded by Grayling Township with land uses consisting of forests, residential and commercial. The Au Sable River is a focal point in the community, see **Figure 1.2**.

Figure 1.1: Location Map of Grayling

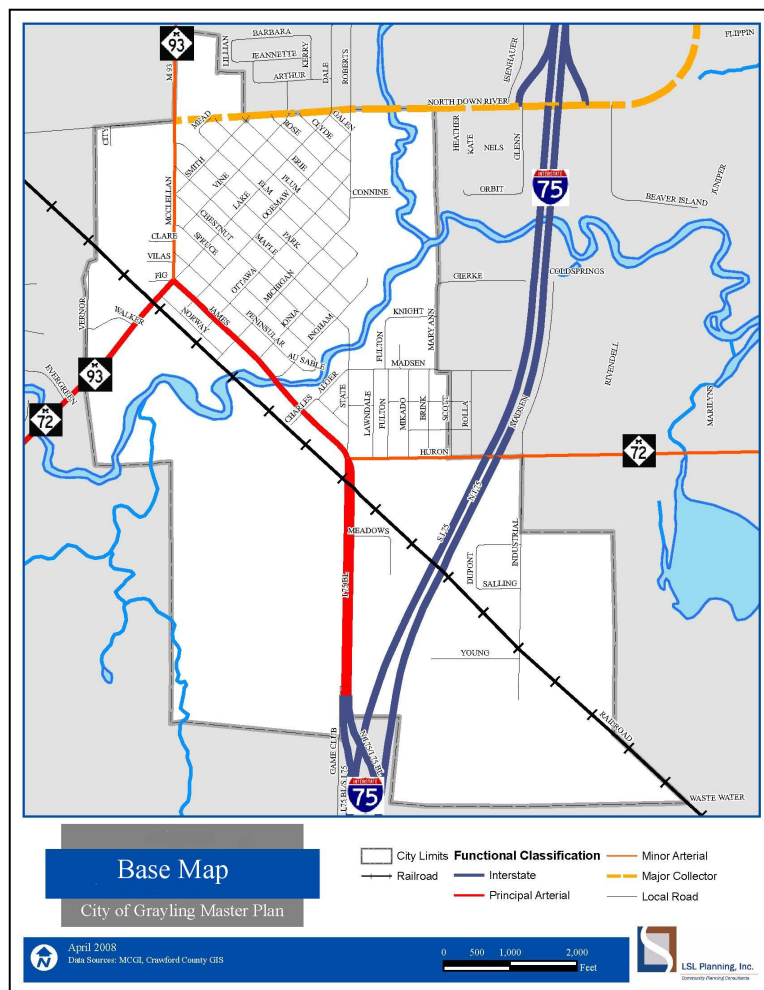
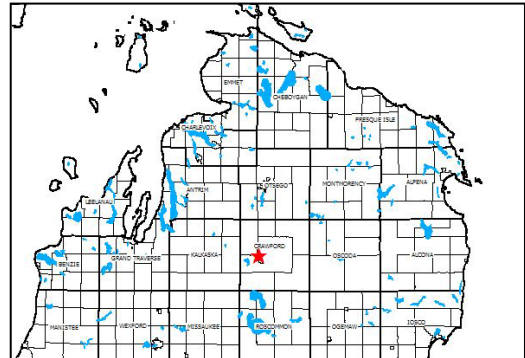


Figure 1.2: Base Map of City of Grayling

Social Characteristics

Population

According to the 2010 Census, the City of Grayling had a population of 1,884. **Table 1.1** compares the City of Grayling’s population to that of surrounding and similar communities in the area. In July of 2011, the U.S. Census Bureau estimated the City’s population at 1,876 residents. If this estimate is accurate, it would mean that the population has declined over the past eleven-year period.

While some of the surrounding areas have experienced growth, many of the City and Villages in northern Michigan have experienced similar population stagnation or even decline. Overall, Crawford County saw an estimated population decrease of < 1% since 2010.

	2000	2010	% Change	2011 Estimate	% Change
City of Grayling	1,952	1,884	-3.6%	1,876	-0.47%
City of Boyne	3,503	3,735	6.6%	3,746	0.28%
City of Gaylord	3,681	3,645	-1%	3,632	-0.35%
Village of Kalkaska	2,226	2,020	-10%	2,022	0.1%
Beaver Creek Twp.	1,486	1,736	16.8%	N/A	N/A
Grayling Twp.	6,516	5,827	-11.8%	N/A	N/A
Crawford County	14,273	14,074	-1.4%	14,014	-0.44%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Age

Age characteristics of the City assist in indicating economic, transportation, recreational, education, and other community needs. By examining the demographic mix of residents both now and in the future, Grayling can better plan for the future demand for community services and amenities. Study of the median age can provide a general gauge of residents’ ages, while a breakdown of ages is most useful when broken into three main categories: school age, labor force, and senior citizens, to gain a better sense of the needs and desires of the population. The median age in Grayling was 38.6

in 2010, which is lower than the County average of 47.7, but consistent with the state average of 38.9.

Table 1.2
Age Characteristics
City of Grayling, 2000-2010

Age Cohort	2000	2010	Age Group
Age 0 to 4	6.8%	6.6%	School Age
Age 5 to 19	22.3%	20.4%	
Age 20 to 34	15.0%	19.6%	Labor Force
Age 35 to 64	33.4%	32.7%	
Age 65 and older	22.5%	20.7%	Senior Citizens

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

As shown in **Table 1.2**, the largest population segment is comprised of those age 35 to 64, which suggests there are a significant number of residents and families with active needs such as improved recreation programming and increased community activities matched to their age.

Table 1.2 also reveals that the senior population is expected to grow as the baby-boomer generation ages and people are living longer due to improved health care. The share of the

retirement-age population is typically growing in relation to the other age groups. The City should consider additional services, targeted toward the emerging seniors, as this segment continues grow.

Sex, Race Ancestry

The racial composition of the City has remained fairly constant since 1990 with about 97% being white. Crawford County has a very small minority population and that statistic has changed relatively little over the last several decades.

Disability Status

Approximately 217 persons or 28% of the City population five years of age or older (1,884) were classified as disabled in 2009-2013 (Estimate from US Census Bureau). Of these, 130 people aged 21 to 64 were prevented from working by their disability. More than 65% of those aged 65 and over had a disability in 2000. If park and recreation facilities are not barrier free, many of these residents will be prevented from participating in recreational activities. The relatively high percentage of the civilian population that is disabled may also suggest recreational improvements that satisfy the specialized needs of people with less dexterity and mobility.

Households

Population change is only one of the factors that affects whether development will occur in a community and to what extent. The makeup of households in Grayling is changing. Although, families now have fewer children than those in the past, the average size of a household is slightly larger than in previous years. **Table 1.3** shows that the average household size increased between 2000 and

Table 1.3 Household Trends City of Grayling, 1990-2000			
	2000	2010	Percent Change
Number of Households	828	764	-7.7%
Average Household Size	2.24	2.27	1.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

2010, while the number of households has decreased. The average household size in 2010 for the City of Grayling was still lower than State and County averages, 2.49 and 2.31 respectively. In the future, as average household sizes continue to decrease, the number of households is expected to increase at a faster rate than the population, resulting in greater consumption of land as populations grow into smaller, and more numerous households. This trend may not be as significant in Grayling, where most of the residential land is developed. However, it may affect demographics in the future if residential redevelopment begins to combine the existing smaller lots into larger building sites.

Housing Occupancy

As of 2010, there were 890 housing units in the City of Grayling, a decrease of .6% since 2000. **Table 1.4** shows that housing vacancy rates in the City increased from 7.5% in 2000 to 14.2% in 2010, which is one of the lowest rates reported for all communities studied. This is partly due to the fact that many homes in the City, County and the region are seasonal vacation homes and possibly an increase in foreclosures. The City has a higher percentage of renter-occupied homes than most other areas studied, however the percentage of owner-occupied homes within the City of Grayling has decreased from 53.1% in 2000 to 47% in 2010.

Table 1.4 Housing Characteristics City of Grayling, 2010				
	Total Housing Units			Median Value
	Occupied Units		Vacant Units	
	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied		
City of Grayling	47.0%	53.0%	14.2%	\$76,200
City of Boyne	67.2%	32.8%	28.7%	\$134,200
City of Gaylord	45.3%	54.7	12.8%	\$86,800
Village of Kalkaska	50.1%	49.9%	14.2%	\$81,600
Beaver Creek Twp.	89.6%	10.4%	44.3%	\$115,100
Grayling Twp.	85.2%	14.8%	42.6%	\$108,700
Crawford County	82.1%	17.9%	45.8%	\$102,700

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 2010 Census

Housing Characteristics

As in many areas of northern Michigan, communities in Crawford County have a large percentage of seasonal housing units. The City of Grayling has a very low percentage of seasonal housing units (2.2%). Seasonal units are often located on rivers and lakes and can vary from excellent to substandard.

School Enrollment and Education Attainment

The City of Grayling is within the Crawford Au Sable School District located at 1135 North Old 27, Grayling, MI 49738, and Phone: (989) 344-3500. Schools within this District include:

Grayling Elementary School
306 Plum Street
Grayling, MI 49738

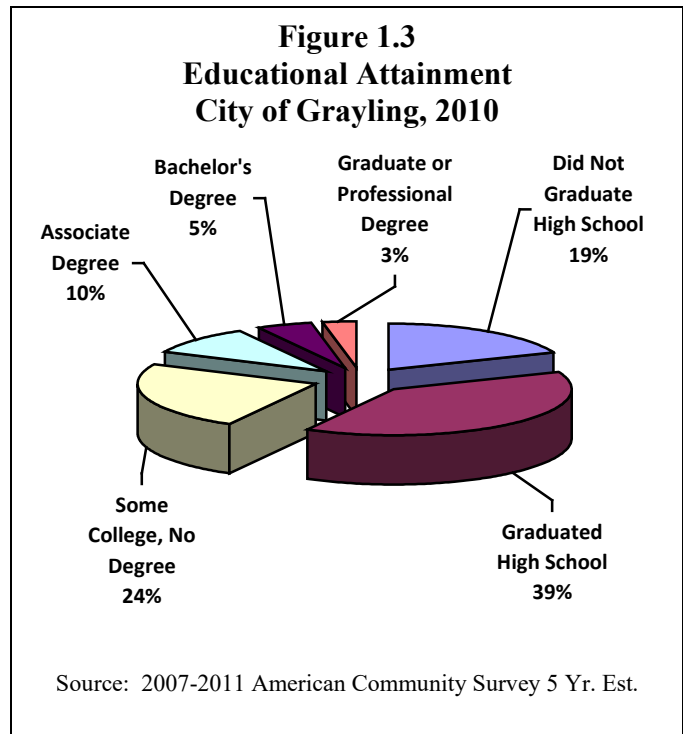
Grayling High School
1135 N. Old-27
Grayling, MI 49738

Grayling Preschool
306 Plum Street
Grayling, MI 49738

Grayling Middle School
500 Spruce Street
Grayling, MI 49738

The educational attainment for the City of Grayling residents, age 25 years and older, in 2010 was comparable to Crawford County figures; however, both are significantly lower than State figures for college degrees. Less than 20% of City residents have a college degree, and almost 60% of residents have had no college experience.

The overall education level in the City increased between 2000 and 2010. For example, the proportion of residents that have a high school diploma rose from 78% in 2000 to 81% in 2010. Furthermore, the proportion of City residents that had at least some college education slightly increased from 41% in 2000 to 42% in 2010, and the proportion that had college degrees remained the same at 18%.



Labor Force and Employment Trends

Table 1.5 provides information relative to the types of industries that employ Grayling residents. Manufacturing, Retail Trade, and Service jobs have historically been the predominant employers. In 2010, the leading job class in the City was Services, employing 58.8% of residents. This typifies the nationwide trend over the last twenty years as the United States evolves into a more service-oriented economy and, more specifically, supports the tourist economy prevalent in Grayling.

In 2010, unemployment rates for the City were consistent with the County average of 13%, which was slightly higher than the State average of 12.7%. Since that time, the job market in Michigan has been on the rise and unemployment rates within the City, surrounding communities and the State overall, continue to slowly decline. The State Department of Labor and Economic Growth reports Unemployment rates for the County on a monthly basis. **Table 1.6** provides the monthly reports from March 2017 to March 2018. It shows the trend common for tourist-based communities, with the lowest unemployment during the late summer months and the highest rates during the winter months. Overall, the County averaged an unemployment rate of 6.84% during this period.

Located in the very heart of Michigan’s prime tourist and recreational wonderland, Crawford County and Grayling, in particular, have experienced relatively little growth and lag significantly behind the State of Michigan in economic prosperity and well being. One reason is the very large acreage of

surrounding State-owned land and the absence of strategically located developable land. An area south of Grayling has been recently developed and is showing a positive

Industrial Class	Percent
Agriculture/Natural Resources	1.9%
Construction	6.3%
Manufacturing	1.9%
Transportation/Warehousing/Utilities	2.9%
Wholesale Trade	1.7%
Retail Trade	12.0%
Financial, Real Estate	4.0%
Services	58.8%
Public Administration	10.5%
<i>Source: 2007-2011 American Community Survey</i>	

Month	County Rate	State Rate
March, 2017	7.7	4.7
April, 2017	6.6	3.8
May, 2017	6.3	3.8
June, 2017	6.5	4.5
July, 2017	7.3	5.4
August, 2017	6.4	5.0
September, 2017	5.6	4.5
October, 2017	5.3	4.2
November, 2017	6.0	4.0
December, 2017	7.3	4.3
January, 2018	7.9	5.1
February, 2018	8.2	4.9
March, 2018	7.9	4.5
<i>Source: State of Michigan</i>		

impact on the economy in Grayling and surrounding areas. The new development has also brought more people to the area to live and recreate.

Little new growth, low median income, a high incidence of poverty, relatively high unemployment, and higher percentages of people with disabilities all contribute to a perpetually depressed economy that make it difficult to satisfy both tourist and resident recreational needs.

Tourism is considered by many to be the centerpiece of the Crawford County economy with such industries as retail trade, the arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodations, and food services accounting for 26% of all jobs in the County. About one-third of City residents are employed in these same tourist related industries. Recreation improvements are needed to strengthen the tourist attraction and, therefore, the economy of the region while satisfying the needs of the resident population.

Physical Characteristics

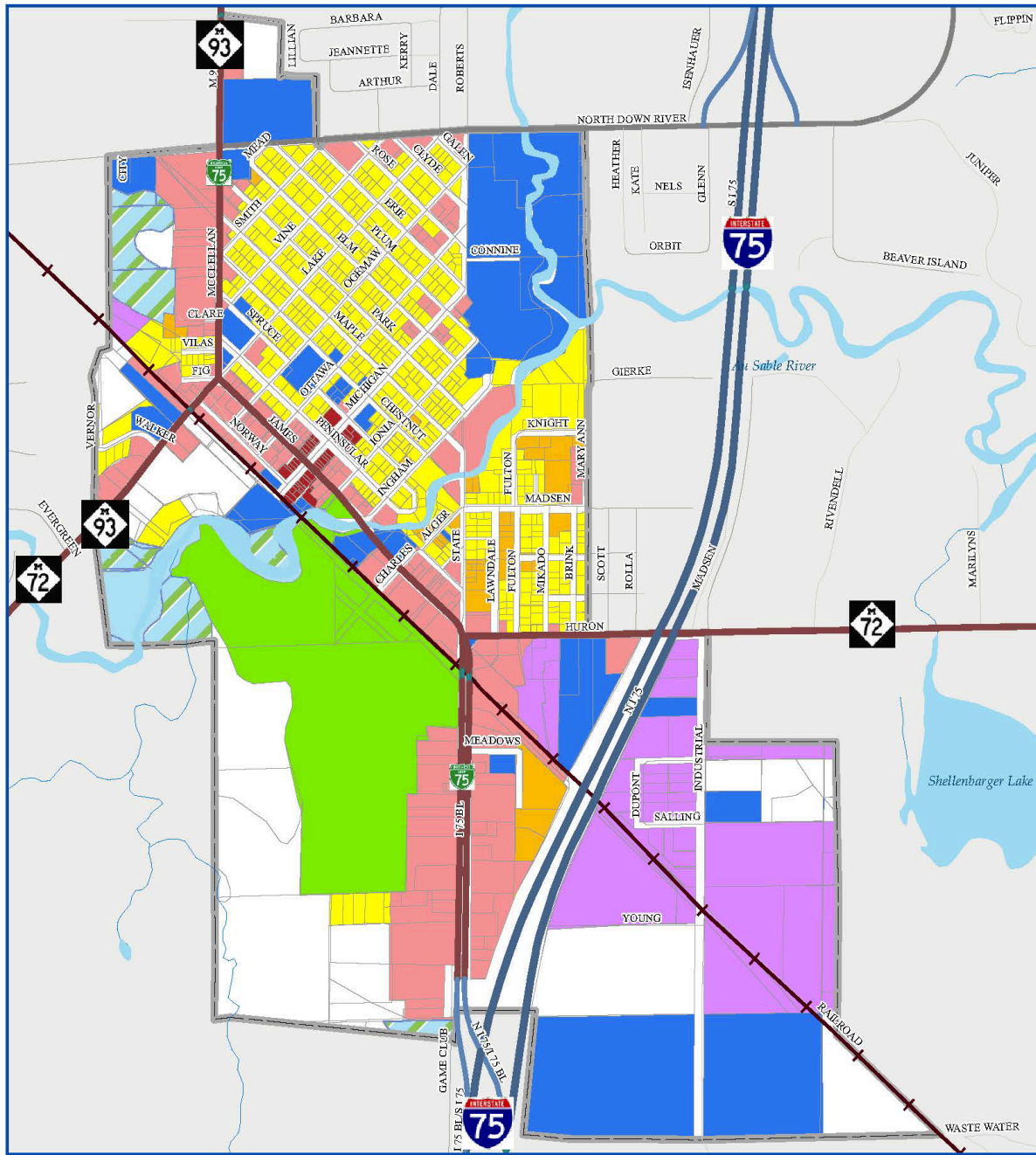
The City of Grayling is primarily residential with a concentrated older downtown that has recently gone through a revitalization of its sidewalks, sewer system, potable water system, street lighting, and landscaping. One unique attribute of the City is the presence of the Au Sable River, a world class trout fishing stream and popular canoeing river. The City has a rich history as a small lumbering and resort town and as a tourist destination for recreation enthusiasts. Fishing, hunting, canoeing, camping, biking, snowmobiling and hiking are all popular activities. The area is also known for the Hartwick Pines State Forest, with its old growth pine forests, and Camp Grayling, a training camp for National Guard and other state and national defense personnel.

Land Use and Zoning

This section discusses the types of land uses that currently occupy the City of Grayling. The existing land uses in the City were developed during the City's 2014 Master Plan, see **Figure 1.4**. The map shows residential land uses are concentrated in the northern half of the community. Commercial uses are found along major highway corridors and within the downtown business district. Industrial land uses are primarily located in the southeastern quadrant of the City and along its northwestern edge. Institutional and recreational lands are located throughout the community.

Zoning ordinances are established and enforced by the City within its limits. There are 11 zoning districts designed and coordinated to address the City's future needs while protecting the small-town atmosphere, see **Figure 1.5**. Land designated for recreational land use is located in the southwest quadrant and along the Au Sable River. Commercial land uses are designated along major highway corridors and within the downtown business district. Consistent with existing land uses, residential zoning districts are located in the northern portions of the City. The Industrial zoning district is located in the southeastern quadrant of the City and along its northwestern edge.

Figure 1.4: Existing Land Use



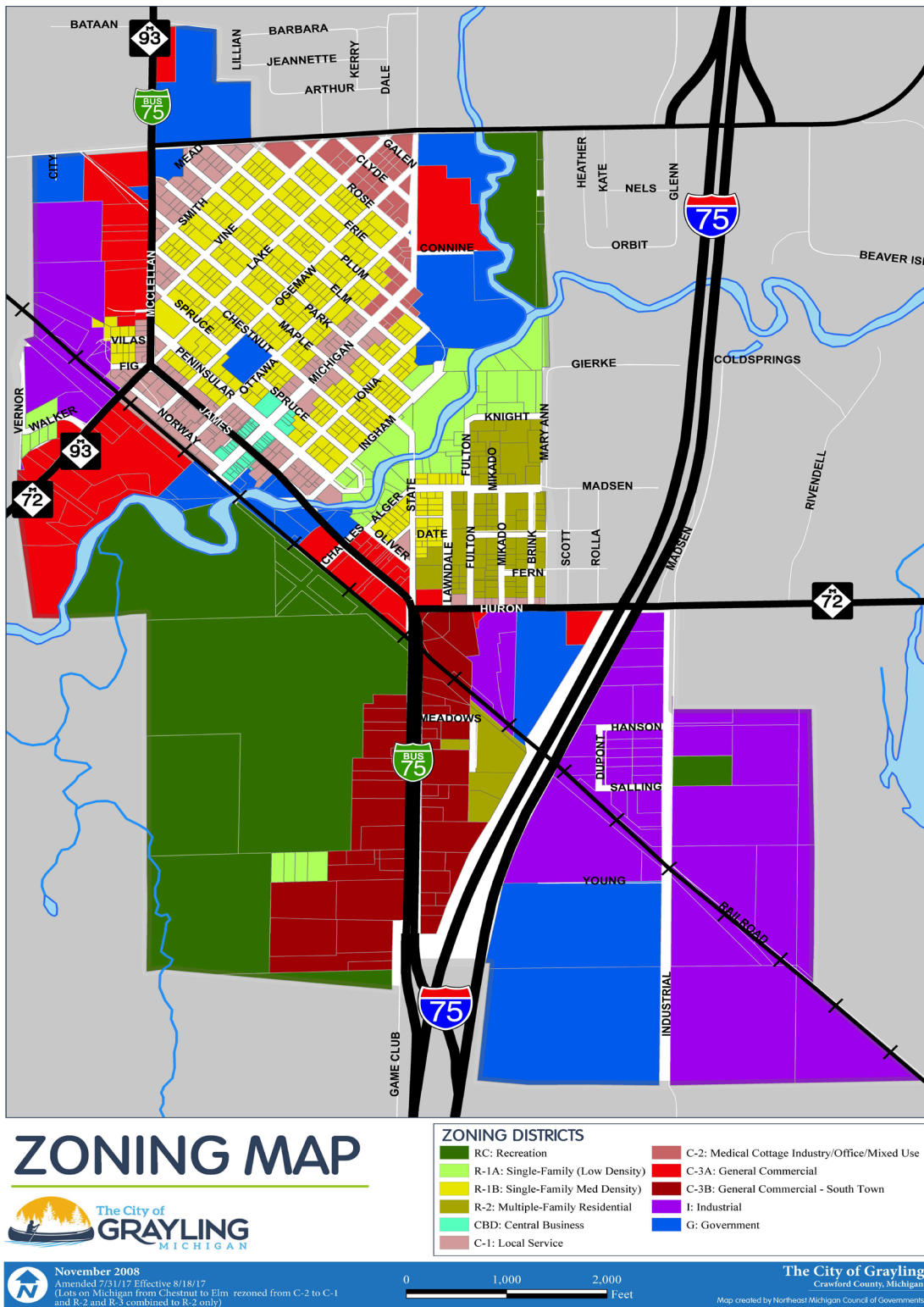
Map Two
Existing Land Use
 City of Grayling Master Plan

- Single Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Commercial
- Central Business District
- Industrial
- Vacant
- Institutional
- Recreation
- Wetlands (wooded and non-wooded)
- Lakes and Rivers

January 2014
 Data Sources: MCGI, Crawford County GIS
 Wetland boundaries are approximate and should be verified by official survey for site-specific matters.



Figure 1.5: Zoning Map



Natural Resources

The woodlands, open spaces, wildlife, water, and rolling hills are several key resource values that draw people to both recreate and live in the area. Abundant public lands offer access to thousands of acres of recreational lands for hunting, hiking, wildlife viewing and snowmobiling. Lakes, creeks and streams, especially the Manistee River, Au Sable River and Lake Margrethe provide opportunities for fishing, boating and water sports. Special recreation areas such as the Mason Tract are additional draws to the area.



A rural landscape, abounding with views of forestlands and wetlands, typifies the community character of the area. Forestlands are important to the local economy; recreational use and production of forest goods bring dollars into the Community. Many long-time visitors decide

to move to the area upon retirement. These renewable yet priceless resources warrant special considerations when planning for future growth.

The protection and wise use of these natural resources are central to maintaining a sustainable community. Along with planning for the built-up infrastructure like roads and utilities, a community needs to plan for the green infrastructure; the forests, wetlands, farmland and water. Development, without consideration of carrying capacity of the land, can have long term negative impacts on the resources. When planning for future growth, the community must identify environmental constraints, such as wetlands, steeply sloped areas, ecological corridors and ground water recharge zones. This chapter will analyze the physical environment to assist local officials in developing a desired future of the City. Natural resources addressed include topography, soils, water, vegetation and wildlife.



Topography

Most of the land is nearly level or gently rolling. Local differences in elevation are slight, in a few places exceeding 100 feet, although the hills and plateau-like ridges appear to rise above adjacent sand plains when viewed from a distance. Slopes of hilly land are both long and expansive or, where the relief is choppy, smooth and rounded. There are no steep slopes except along watercourses.

The northern part of the county consists of three broad highland plateaus, having a general north-south direction, three complementary broad sand valleys, and a wide

sandy plain on the east. The central part, from eastern to western boundaries, is a wide level sand plain through which the Au Sable River and its tributaries have cut valleys. Several detached swells or ridges, irregular in outline but having general east to west trends, characterize the southern part of the county. Here the general relief is gently rolling or moderately hilly. Level sand plain and swamps intervene between masses of higher land. The highest elevation, ranging from 1,300 to 1,480 feet above sea level, can be found on kame moraines in the southeastern parts of the county. The lowest elevation of 1,010 feet above sea level, noted on USGS quadrangle maps, is located in the eastern edge of the County where the main branch of the Au Sable River flows into Oscoda County.

Soils

The soils of the study area are generally sandy with low fertility and low moisture-holding capacity. When planning for types and intensity of land uses, soil types and slopes are two important factors that determine the carrying capacity of land. The construction of roads, buildings and septic systems on steeply sloped areas or areas with organic and hydric soils require special design considerations. In addition, costs for developing these sensitive areas are greater than in less constrained parts of the landscape. If developed improperly, the impacts to natural resources can be far reaching.

The Natural Resource Conservation Service completed a detailed soil survey of Crawford County. A digital or computerized version of the soil survey maps was acquired from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, MIRIS program. Using information contained within the published soil survey book, a series of maps are presented that depict hydric soils, steep slopes, soils with building limitations and soils with septic system limitations.

Hydric Soils and Steeply Sloped Areas

Figure 1.6 is a color thematic map that classifies hydric soils and soils on steep slopes. Lower density and less intensive development should be directed to these areas with severe building constraints. Hydric soils are saturated, flooded or ponded during part of the growing season and are classified as poorly drained and very poorly drained. Hydric soils have poor potential for building site development and sanitary facilities. Wetness and frequent ponding are severe problems that are difficult and costly to overcome. Sites with high water tables may be classified as wetlands and a wetlands permit would be required to develop these areas.

Within the study area hydric soils are mainly located adjacent to streams and lakes. The largest concentrations of hydric soils are found in Grayling Township on the eastern and western perimeters of the City of Grayling. Note the green areas or hydric soils are typically drained by creeks and streams that in turn empty in the major rivers and lakes. This connectivity of riparian wetlands and surface water features can be seen throughout the landscape.

Hills and steeply rolling terrain may provide opportunities for spectacular views of the landscape. However, steeply sloped sites have severe building constraints, are more difficult and costly to develop. Maintenance costs tend to be higher on steeply sloped terrain. Special design standards such as erosion control measures, limiting size of disturbed areas, retaining natural vegetation, revegetation, slope stabilization and on-site retention of water run-off from impervious surfaces would all serve to minimize resource impacts. According to information presented in the Crawford County Soil Survey areas with slopes 18 percent and greater are minimal within the study area. Of greatest concern are steeply sloping hillsides adjacent waterways. Steeply slopes areas are depicted in red on **Figure 1.6**.

Forestry

Figure 1.8 shows forest types in the County. Note the predominance of pine and oak depicted on the 1978 MIRIS forest cover map in Crawford County. The abundance of Jack Pine and Oak forests dramatically increase the wildfire hazard for Crawford County. In addition, note the prevalence of northern hardwoods in Maple Forest Township and northern Frederic Township.

The majority of forestland in the county is in public ownership - 52 percent state owned and 16 percent federally owned (**Figure 1.8**). Most of these lands are managed under a multi-use concept, which is directed toward recreation. The use of military forestland is not geared toward commercial forest production. Some areas have been determined as refuge areas for the endangered Kirtland's Warbler. The next largest ownership class is in individual ownership 32 percent.

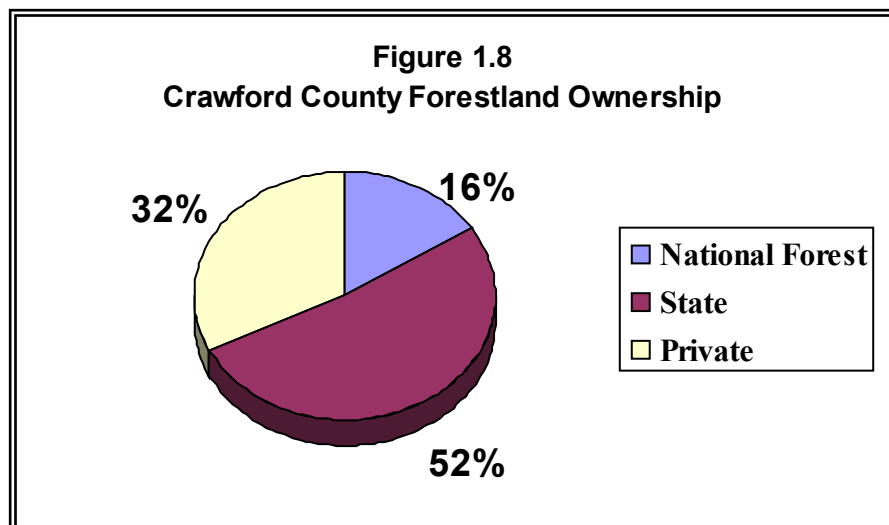


Figure 1.6

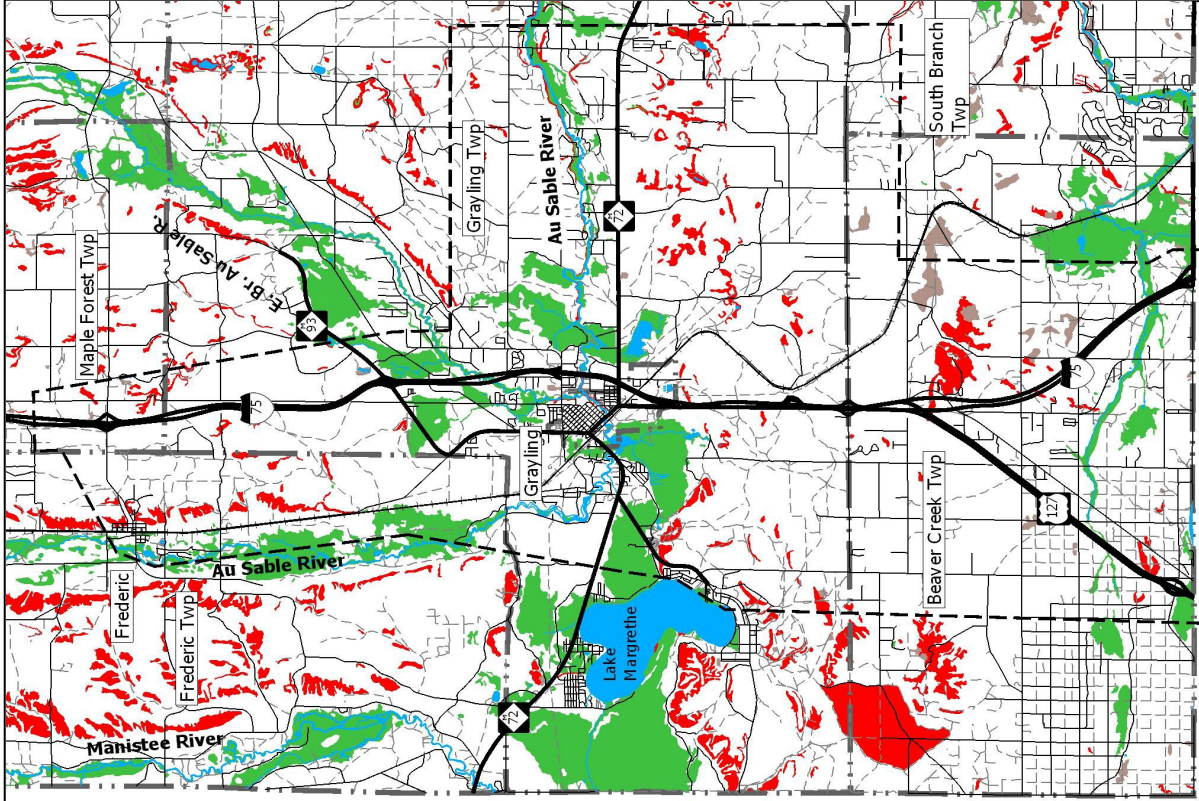
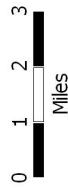
GRAYLING AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

SOILS CONSTRAINTS MAP

- UNIMPROVED ROADS
- CO. ROADS
- RAILROADS
- HIGHWAYS
- - - Study Area

HYDRIC SOILS & STEEP SLOPES

- SLOPES 18% & GREATER
- HYDRIC SOILS
- HYDRIC SOILS IN MAPPING UNIT
- WATER
- Other



DATA SOURCE:
NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION SERVICE
MICHIGAN CENTER FOR GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

MAP BY:
NORTHEAST MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Fish and Wildlife Resources

The predominance of forested land and availability of surface water makes Crawford County the home to many species of fish and wildlife. White-tailed deer are abundant and popular for hunting. Raccoon, fox, gray and black squirrels are also abundant and an important game source for hunters. Coyote, red fox, porcupine, badgers, skunks, red squirrels and woodchuck are also found in the area, as are beaver, muskrat, mink and otter. Black bear and bobcat are still found in the area in limited numbers. The wild turkey, once a native Michigan species, have been re-introduced in the area and are thriving so well that hunting of these birds is allowed.

Crawford County is home to several endangered bird species. The rarest of these is the songbird known as the Kirtland Warbler. The only-summer nesting area of this bird is found in the immediate vicinity of Crawford and Roscommon Counties. This warbler winters in the Bahamas Islands. Bird watchers from all over the world come to the area to view and study this rare bird. Other endangered species found in Crawford County include the bald eagle, osprey and pileated woodpecker.

Several species of fish are found in the lakes and rivers of Crawford County. Brook, rainbow and brown trout are found in the county's rivers, either singly or in combination. The lakes in the county contain walleye, blue gill, perch, bass and pike.

Climate

Crawford County's climate is humid continental and is not strongly influenced by the climate moderation typical of areas nearer the great lakes. The most noticeable lake influence is the increased cloudiness and snowfall during the fall and winter months.

Temperature data shows the county to have had the following extremes: the highest recorded temperature of 100 degrees F and the lowest recorded of 39 degrees F below zero. Moderately warm temperatures with an average of 8 days exceeding 90 degrees F dominate summers. The average high daily temperature in July is 81 degrees F, with



Figure 1.7

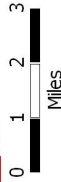
**GRAYLING AREA
TRANSPORTATION STUDY**

FOREST COVER MAP

- UNIMPROVED ROADS
- CO. ROADS
- RAILROADS
- HIGHWAYS
- Study Area

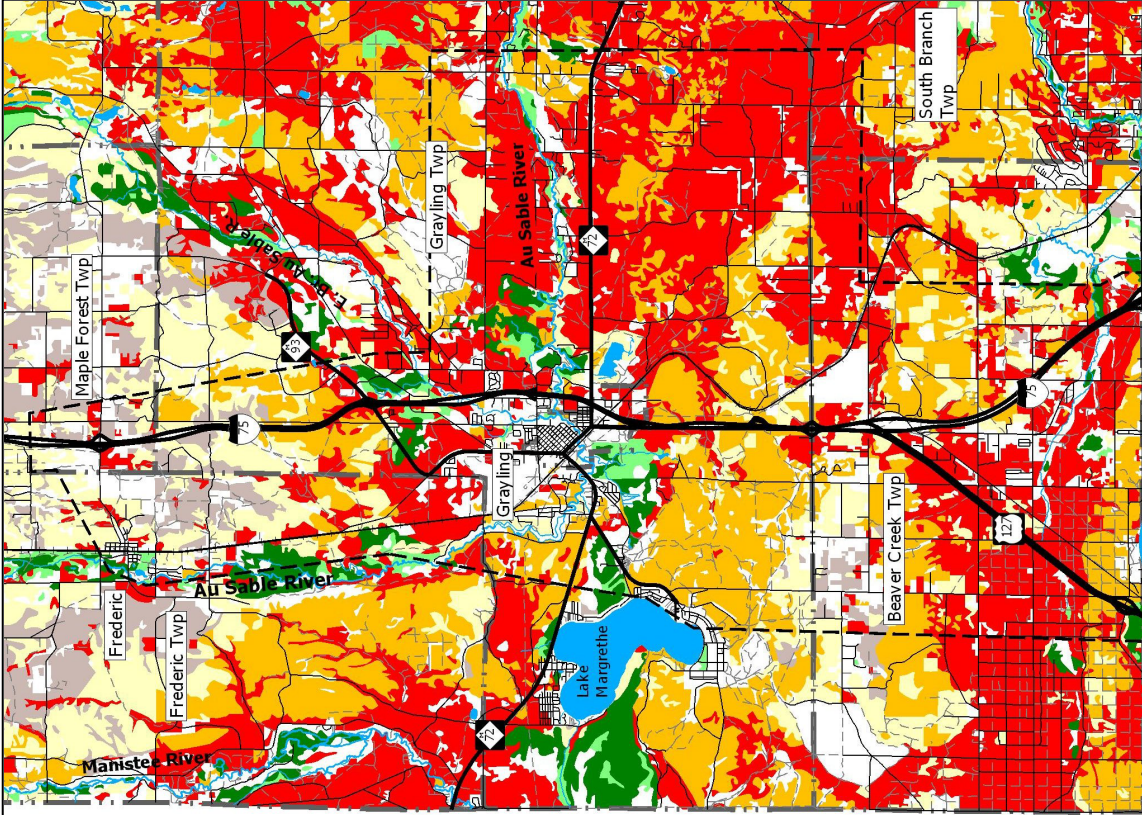
COVER TYPES

- Aspen, Birch
- Central Hardwood
- Lowland Conifer
- Lowland Hardwood
- Northern Hardwood
- Other Upland Conifer
- Pine



DATA SOURCE:
MICHIGAN CENTER FOR GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

MAP BY:
NORTHEAST MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS



An average daily low temperature of 54 degrees F. An average, 26 days a year are below zero degrees F. The county's daily average high temperature in January is 26 degrees F, and the average daily low temperature is 9 degrees F. The county's average growing season is 110 days. Precipitation is well distributed throughout the year with an average of 32 inches of rain per year and an average annual snowfall of 93 inches.

Transportation

Lumbering was responsible for the City of Grayling's early growth and development. Grayling during and after the lumbering boom, was an important railroad center and was at the junction of the Michigan Central, Manistee and Northwestern Railways. The Grayling area and points north and south continue to be served today by Lake States Railroad. The I-75 expressway gives the City accessibility via motor vehicles from the north and south. Grayling is just 5 miles north of the northern termination of I-127 that joins into I-75. The primary east-west artery is M-72 which connects the City of Grayling with Traverse City and Lake Michigan to the west and Harrisville and Lake Huron to the east. In addition, Grayling is served by a military airport facility.

Local transportation is assisted by the Crawford County Transportation Authority bus system. Crawford County Transportation Authority, also know as Dial-a-Ride, supports all of Crawford County including the City. Biking is being encouraged as a mode of transportation within the City. A planning grant was obtained to design bike paths throughout the city. Over the past 15 years a group called the "Crawford County Non-Motorized Path Committee" has obtained funds through donations and grants to build several non-motorized paths from the City to the High school and Hartwick Pines to the north and to Hanson Hills Recreational Facility to the west.

Groundwater Resources

Groundwater can be found in the deep glacial deposits of sand and gravel throughout the county. The availability of groundwater appears consistently good, ranging from 400 to 500 gallons per minute from wells ten inches in diameter. Ground water provides the only source of potable water for the county. Because of the deep sand and gravel underlying the county, the aquifer is quite vulnerable to contamination from surface and subsurface discharges.

Surface Water Resources

Lakes and streams in the county are popular tourist attractions and are heavily used in the summer and winter months. Canoeing and fishing are very popular on the Au Sable River, with swimming and boating being popular on the larger lakes (**Figure1.9**). The county has a total of 53 lakes that are one acre or larger. The largest body of water in the Crawford County is Lake Margrethe, with a surface area of 1,928 acres. Except for the western and southern parts of Crawford County, the study area is located in the Au Sable River watershed. The Au Sable River is the primary water resource, with the main branch and east branch traversing the area. The Au Sable is rated as a "Blue-Ribbon" trout stream and is designated as a Michigan Natural River. The gentle slope of the

terrain and the porous glacial outwash plains, consisting mostly of the sandy porous soils type that encourages infiltration of the precipitation delivered to the basin, assures the river system a steady contribution of cold groundwater throughout the year. The generous flow of cold, clear water offers some of the most productive and fishable trout waters in the country.



CRAWFORD COUNTY

WATER RESOURCE MAP

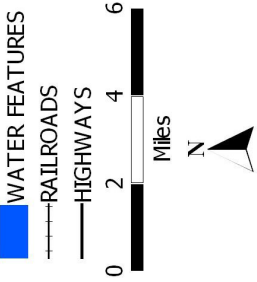
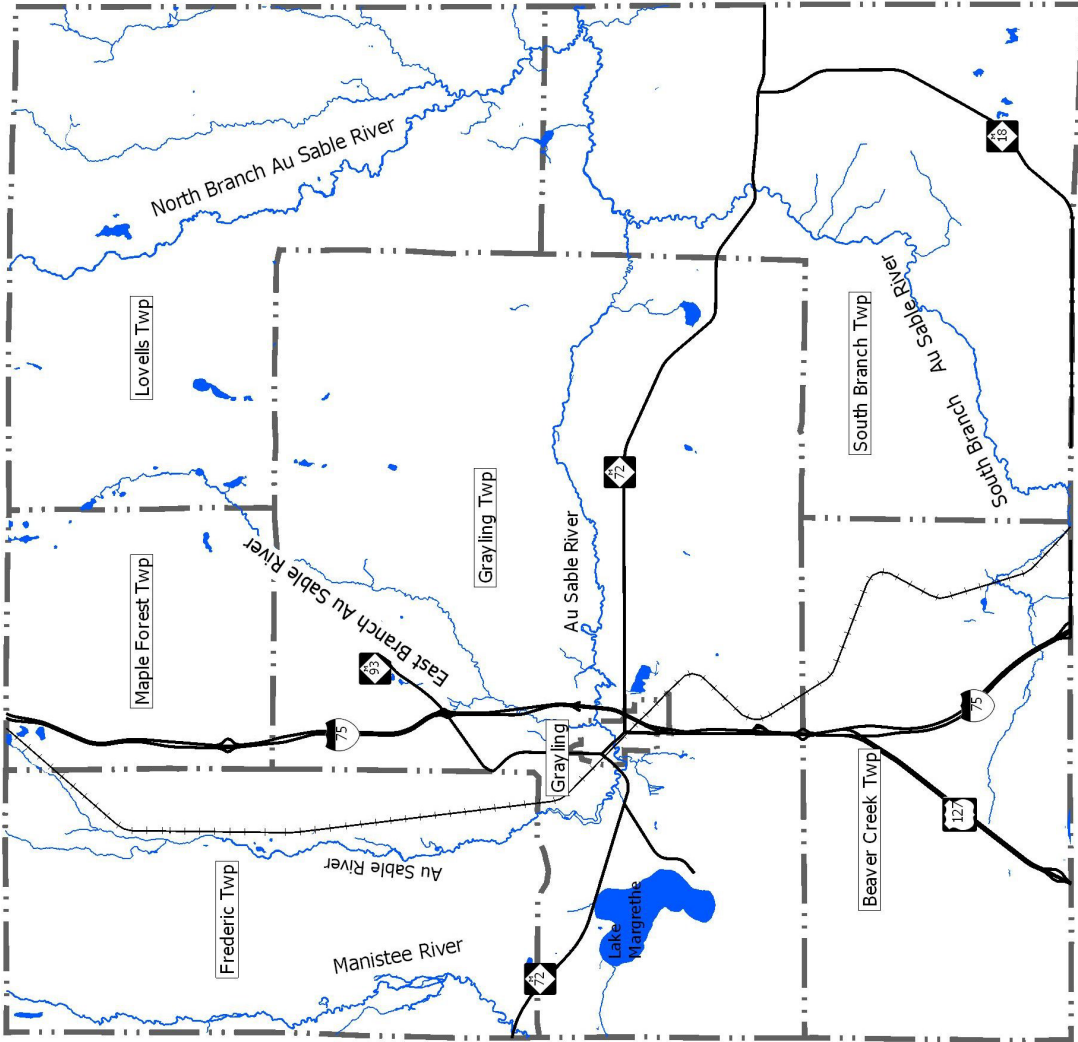


Figure 1.9



DATA SOURCE:
MICHIGAN CENTER FOR GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION
MAP BY:
NORTHEAST MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS



CHAPTER TWO: ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

Standard Operational Procedures

The City of Grayling City Council operates under an administrative structure consisting of a manager and five Council Members. Except for the manager, the positions are elected by registered voters of the city. The mayor is appointed by the City Council to a two-year term. The Treasurer and Clerk are appointed by the City Manager. Council Members are elected by registered voters of the City to a four-year term. Bylaws adopted by the City Council determine the order of business and method of conducting regular City business. For issues that require a vote to make a determination, a simple majority of the City Council is required.

The Grayling City Council controls the development and administration of parks and recreation within the city.

Table 2.1 Grayling City Council - 2024	
Heather Forbes	Mayor
Jack Pettyjohn	Mayor Pro-Tem
McKenzie Nelson	Council Member
Dennis Sloan	Council Member
Roger Moshier	Council Member
Source: City of Grayling	

Table 2.2 Grayling Planning Commission - 2024	
Vacant	Chair
Liam Gosling	Vice-Chair
McKenzie Nelson	City Council Liaison
Rich Doe	Member
Matthew Gross	Member
Vacant	Member
Joey Contreras	Member
Source: City of Grayling	

City of Grayling Organizational Chart

CITY RESIDENTS

CITY COUNCIL
Heather Forbes, Mayor
Jack Pettyjohn, Mayor Pro-Tem
McKenzie Nelson
Roger Moshier
Dennis Sloan

DDA/GRAYLING MAIN STREET
 MAIN STREET MANAGER

CITY MANAGER
Erich Podjaske

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS
PLANNING COMMISSION
PROPERTY TAX BOARD OF REVIEW
INCOME TAX BOARD OF REVIEW
WAGE COMPENSATION COMMISSION
DDA

HOUSING COMMISSION

DPW
 DIRECTOR
Erich Podjaske

PUBLIC
 SAFETY

CONTRACTED

OFFICE

ASSESSOR
Chris Verlac

 ATTORNEY
Rich Jaskowski

 AUDITOR
**Anderson,
 Tackman & Co.**

CLERK
Lori McGeorge

 TREASURER
Jenny Maples

 CEMETERY DIRECTOR
Ben Yoder

 ZONING ADMINISTRATOR
Ben Yoder

SYSTEM
 OPERATORS
Dan Benson
Corey Wyskiel
Josh Carlson
Rick Rawlings
Marvin Forbes
Mike Anderson
Paul SanCartier

PUBLIC SAFETY DIRECTOR
Erich Podjaske

 POLICE CHIEF
Amanda Clough

 FIRE CHIEF
Rodney Vandecasteele

Funding

Funding for the City's current recreational activities, programs and facilities comes from the City's General Fund, grants and gifts. In November of 2002, City voters approved an initiative to use City income tax for capital improvement projects. Funding from this source can now be used for recreational projects.

Relationships with Other Agencies

Numerous groups within the city are involved with the improvement and operation of the recreational facilities in Grayling. The majority of these organizations are operated on a volunteer basis. The organizations and special interest groups that assisted to provide recreation opportunity in Grayling are:

1. City Manager
2. City of Grayling City Council
3. Crawford County MSU Extension
4. Grayling Residents
5. Grayling Recreation Authority
6. North East Michigan Council of Government (NEMCOG)
7. Grayling Sportsplex
8. Crawford AuSable Soccer
9. Grayling Junior Viking Football
10. Little League Baseball
11. Crawford AuSable Athletic Director
12. Grayling Senior Center
13. MSU Ext. 4-H
14. Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts
15. Crawford County Commission on Aging (Senior Center)
16. Grayling Mainstreet
17. Grayling Promotional Agency (GPA)
18. Grayling Rotary
19. Grayling Regional Chamber of Commerce
20. Grayling Visitors Bureau

The City of Grayling participated with the Crawford County Recreation Plan as it was being developed. The city provided input and was available at the Public Input session for the County Recreation Plan.

CHAPTER THREE: RECREATIONAL INVENTORY

This section contains a comprehensive list and short descriptions of the various recreational facilities and programs that are currently available to City residents at both the regional and local levels. Public recreation facilities and programs and private/commercial recreational facilities are included in these lists.

City of Grayling Recreational Facilities

The following local Recreational Facilities inventory is a complete list of public, private and school facilities located within the City of Grayling. This inventory is an important component of the Parks and Recreation Plan and should be studied when making decisions related to the provisions of public recreation opportunities.



It must be noted that recreational facilities located on school grounds are included in this inventory. As in many communities throughout the State of Michigan, the local school district provides valuable recreational opportunities that otherwise would not be available to local residents. Private recreational facilities are also included in the inventory. These can relieve the demand on the use of public facilities and can include golf courses, clubs, etc.

Au Sable River City Park

This neighborhood park is located on a parcel of land that surrounds the Au Sable River, fronting the I-75 Business Loop. Residents, especially the youth use the park frequently. This park is also a popular spot for people driving through town to stop and recreate. Features at this park include; a playscape; including toddler equipment, handicap swing, basketball court, pavilion/picnic facilities, access points for fishing and restroom facilities and also Wi-Fi is available.

In 2007, the City in conjunction with the Department of Natural Resources made some major improvements to the park. These improvements include: The major renovation of a building that sits on the property creating a “Nature Center” and public restrooms. A new ADA compliant bridge was constructed over the Au Sable River, a fishing pier and a kayak launch was also constructed. We added a walking path that brings both sides of the park together and allows easy access to both sides of the park for walkers and bikers alike. Attention was given to the parking lots that surround the park, making them more user friendly.

The Au Sable River City Park is a valuable community facility, as well as an important tourist destination. The annual Au Sable Canoe Marathon, a 120-mile canoe race, begins very near this location and ends in Oscoda. This event draws more than 10,000

people to the City of Grayling. Many of the activities that take place prior to the marathon occur in the park. Other community events that are held in the park are the Annual AuSable River Fine Arts and Crafts show, the Rotary Barbeque, Chamber of Commerce Kids Day, and various concerts that are held throughout the summer including a 4th of July Celebration.

Ownership: City of Grayling

Type: Neighborhood Park

Size: 3 acres

Barrier Free Accessibility: 3



City Concrete Skate Park



In 2004 the city created a new skate park next to the City offices/City Police department. The skate park is located within walking distance to the Elementary and Middle schools. The park is well lit and is used from April to the end of October (weather permitting). The availability of the park is solely dependent on the weather. During warm weather the rink is used for roller skating, rollerblading, skateboarding, BMX bike riding and scootering.

Ownership: City of Grayling

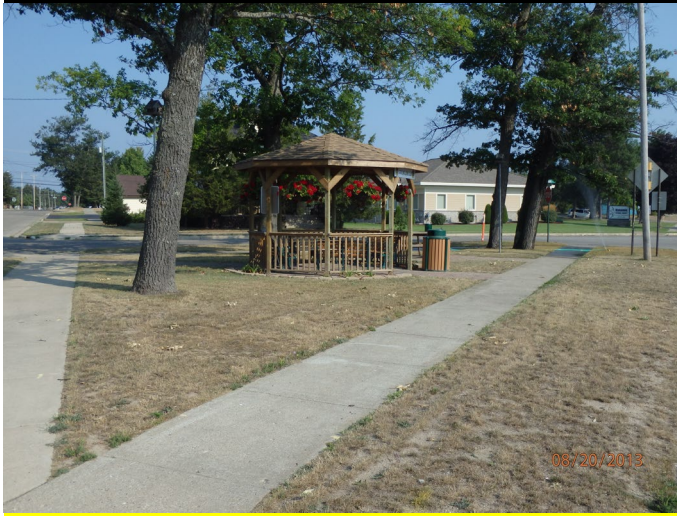
Type: Skate Park

Size: 1 acre

Barrier Free Accessibility: 3

Charles Moore Memorial Park

The Charles Moore Memorial Park is a small triangle piece of land located across the street from Grayling Munson Hospital. (The park was dedicated to Charles Moore in 1973.) Sidewalks and roads surround the park. On this small quaint piece of property there sits a bench with a memorial plaque and a gazebo & drinking fountain. The hospital staff and walkers that pass by use this park.



Ownership: City of Grayling
Type: Mini Park
Size: 1/10 acre
Barrier Free Accessibility: 3

Bike Path through the City

The bike paths through the city were created. Most of the paths were created on the existing roadways by painting a designated area for bikers.

Ownership: City of Grayling

Type: On-Street Bike Trail

Size: 12,600 feet

Barrier Free Accessibility: 3



Au Sable River Canoe Launch

The Au Sable River Canoe Launch includes a barrier free walkway down to the public canoe launch. The walkway and canoe launch were constructed in the fall of 2018, made possible by grant funding from Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) and funding from the City of Grayling.



Ownership: City of Grayling

Type: Public Canoe Launch

Barrier Free Accessibility: 3

Beal Plantation

Planted in 1888, it may be the oldest documented tree plantation in North America

With 40 species of trees, the purpose of the planting was to determine and demonstrate how well various trees and shrubs could be established and grown on dry, sandy soils. Not only was this the first real forest planting in Michigan, it particularly reflects a first and very early recognition of how to recover from the era of exploitative logging, and to manage forest resources intelligently and with a view to the future. As a reflection of early forest restoration consciousness, it is a reminder of past mistakes, as well as the potential to renew, manage, and use our forests wisely for all time. A short nature trail wends its way through the plantation. It is located within the city limits of Grayling. Head east on M-72 to Industrial Park Road and turn right. The parking lot can be seen on the left just a few hundred yards from the turn. The plantation is handicapped accessible and offers a self-guided tour.



Ownership: DNR/State of Mi

Type: On-Street Bike Trail

Size: 12,600 feet

Barrier Free Accessibility: 3

Figure 3.1: Recreation Facilities Map



Other Recreational Facilities within City of Grayling

Kids Fishing Stream

This mini-park is located within the City, between Grayling Elementary School and Grayling Munson Hospital. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has designated **approximately** 2,077 feet along both sides of the Au Sable River as a Fishing area for children 16 and under. The DNR stocks the fish to encourage this activity. A sign stating that only children can fish in the location is on the site. This area is monitored by the DNR.

- Ownership:** Crawford County
- Type:** Mini Park
- Size:** 2077 feet along both sides of the Au Sable River
- Barrier Free Accessibility:** 2

Grayling Elementary School

The school has an indoor gym that is open to the public for basketball games when school is not in session. This site offers playground equipment and a kidscape that is often used by the children.

- Ownership:** Crawford Au Sable Community Schools
- Type:** School Park
- Size:** 3 acres
- Barrier Free Accessibility:** 2

Grayling Middle School

The school has an athletic field, which is available to the public when school is not in session. The City once maintained an ice-skating rink for the public. Over the years the ice rink became more cost to repair than it was worth. There is a potential for the City of Grayling and Grayling Middle School to partner together for a new rink setup potentially. An indoor gym is open to the public for basketball games when school is not in session.

Ownership: Crawford Au Sable Community Schools

Type: School Park

Size: ½ acre

Barrier Free Accessibility: 2

Grayling Fish Hatchery

In 1914, Rasmus Hanson obtained this property through timbering rights. In 1916, he formed an outdoor group call the Grayling Fish Hatchery Club. The original purpose of the hatchery was to save the nearly extinct Grayling fish species, once so prevalent to the Au Sable River. Although that effort failed, the Grayling Fish Hatchery club successfully planted Brook and Brown Trout in the River system. After 10 years of operation, in 1926, the Grayling Fish Hatchery was sold to the State of Michigan for \$10,000.00. The State operated this facility until the late 1960's when it was closed down.

In 1983 the Grayling Fish Hatchery was reopened and was run by the County of Crawford. A committee that was selected by the Crawford County Board of Commissioners ran the hatchery from 1983 to 1993. The fish hatchery was visited by an average of 38,000 tourists each summer. In 1994 the operation was turned over to the Grayling Recreation Authority. In 2012 Harrieta Hills Trout Farm LLC began leasing the hatchery. In 2018 the Anglers of the Au Sable formed a non-profit group to keep the Grayling Fish Hatchery as a tourist and educational attraction.

Presently, 11 ponds have approximately 45,000 trout in a variety of sizes ranging from fingerlings to trophy fish. The on-site sale of fish food permits the public to feed the trout. There is also a museum and picnic area.

Ownership: Crawford County

Type: Special Use

Size: 30 acres

Barrier Free Accessibility: 3



Original Grayling Fish Hatchery - 1925



Grayling Senior Center

The Grayling Senior Center offers a variety of activities at the Grayling Michigan Senior Center including trips, card and other games, Bingo, pool, aerobics, line dancing and crafts and meals.

Ownership: Crawford County Commission on Aging

Type: Public Recreation Use Facility

Devereaux Memorial Library



The Devereaux Memorial Library and reading garden are located at 201 Plum St., near the Elementary school. The Crawford County Library System offers a full array of modern library services. Beyond a great print collection, enjoy music CDs, DVDs, computer labs, and Wi-Fi throughout the building. The library will be adding on an additional 4,332 square feet to the existing building, the expansion will accommodate the ever-growing needs of the library.

Ownership: Crawford County Library

Type: Private Recreation Use Facility

Barrier Free Accessibility: 4

American Legion Lounge and Lanes

The bowling alley in Grayling is owned and operated by the American Legion. The bowling alley is used by old and young alike. During the winter month's groups of local patrons participate in bowling leagues.

Ownership: Private

Type: Private Recreation Use Facility

Grayling Country Club

This eighteen-hole golf course and driving range is located on the I-75 loop in Grayling. In the wintertime, parts of the golf course are groomed for cross-country skiing. Parts are also used to connect to the snowmobile trails.

Ownership: Private

Type: Private Recreation Use Facility

Size: 180 acres

Barrier Free Accessibility: 2



Recreational Facilities Outside of the City of Grayling

Hanson Hills Recreation Area

Large Park/Open Area that is located on State Land. Area is close to town, with bordering neighborhoods. It consists of a Ski Lodge, Downhill Ski run, Nordic Ski trails, and Tubing Hill, Mountain Bike and Hiking Trail System. The recreation area includes Playground Area, Softball and Soccer Fields, Archery Facility, Disc Golf Course, Horseshoe Pits, Fishing Pond and Picnic Area.

Ownership: Grayling Recreation Authority

Type: Large Urban Park/Natural Resource Area/Sports Complex Private Recreation Use Facility

Size: 277 acres

Barrier Free Accessibility: 2

Crawford County Sportsplex (fairgrounds)

This complex located in Grayling Township, offers a concession stand, soccer, football and little league ball fields, and rest rooms.

Ownership: Crawford County

Type: Sports Complex

Size: 30 acres

Barrier Free Accessibility: 2

Canoe Liveries

Table 3.1 Canoe Liveries in Grayling	
Borcher's AuSable Canoeing	AuSable River, Grayling
Carlisle's Canoes	AuSable River, Grayling
Penrod's	AuSable River, Grayling
Shel-Haven Canoe Rental	Manistee River, Grayling

Non-motorized Recreational Components



There are two major non-motorized corridors in Crawford County, the Old-27 corridor and the Au Sable River Corridor. Water trails are synonymous with Crawford County given three branches of AuSable River flow through the county and the Au Sable River Canoe Marathon begins in the City of Grayling. The Black Bear Gran Fondo held in July starts and ends at Hanson Hills Recreation Area and meanders back and forth across the river valley following local roads and state highways through Crawford and Roscommon Counties. There are a number of routes and loops limited only by road quality and lack of on-road facilities, such as paved shoulders, that would improve rider experience.



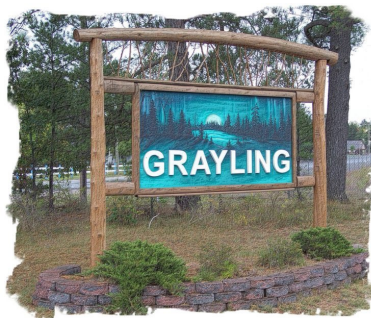
A co-marketing of peddle and paddle recreational adventures is an increasing tourism draw to the area. The Grayling Area Paved Pathway System (Grayling Bicycle Turnpike) is over 11-mile-long with six miles of extended shoulder from Grayling to the Hansen Hills Recreation Area.



A grade separated paved pathway runs from Grayling Township north to Hartwick Pines State Park. The City of Grayling has implemented a marked and designated bike lane system consisting of striped lanes and shared use facilities. This network connects residential areas to commercial areas and the Grayling Area Paved Pathway System. The Crawford Parks and Recreation Commission developed a

Countywide trails and pathways plan called, “A Vision for Crawford County, Trails and Pathways.” Key to developing non-motorized recreation is to connect

points of interest within the City and connect the City to points of interest in Crawford County and adjacent



counties. Grayling could serve as a non-motorized hub if the potential of the Old-27 and Au Sable River corridors are fully developed.

Greenways and Open Space

The City of Grayling and surrounding communities would benefit from planning for interconnected Greenways. Greenways are corridors of land

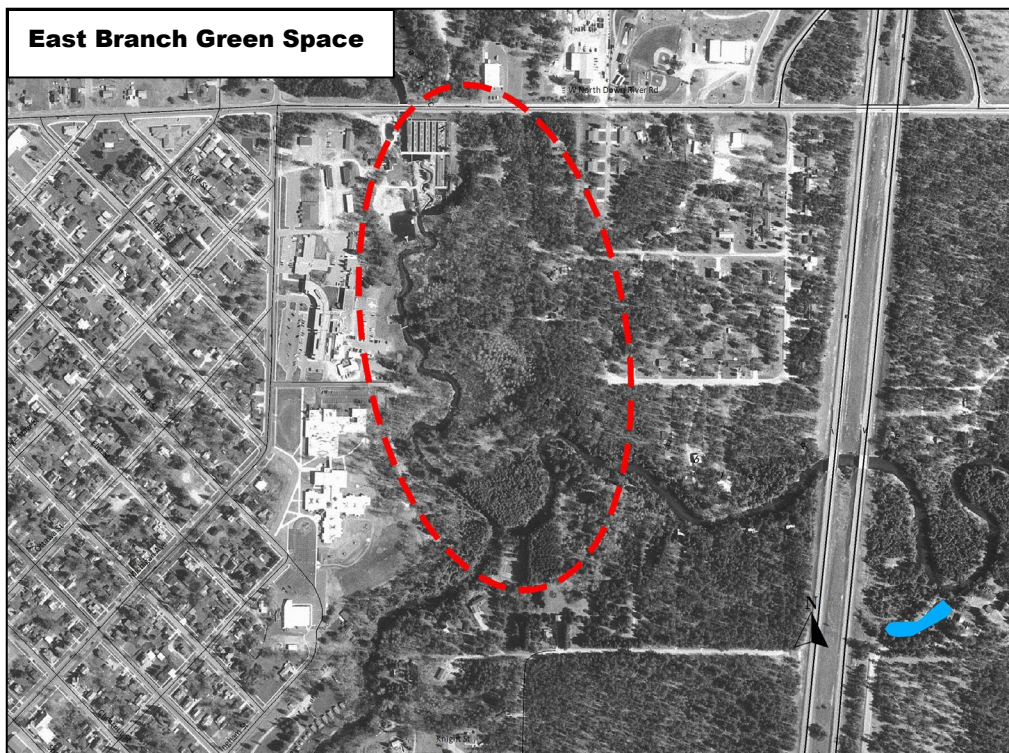
recognized for their ability to connect people and places together and are used for recreation or environmental preservation. These ribbons of open space are located within linear corridors that are either natural, such as rivers and streams, or manmade, such as abandoned railroad beds and utility corridors. Greenways, as vegetated buffers protect natural habitats, improve water quality and reduce the impacts of flooding in floodplain areas. Greenways may contain trails, which enhance existing recreational opportunities, provide routes for alternative transportation, and improve the overall quality of life in an area. Greenway trails can be paved or unpaved, and can be designed to accommodate a variety of trail users, including bicyclists, walkers, hikers, joggers, skaters, horseback riders, and those confined to wheelchairs.



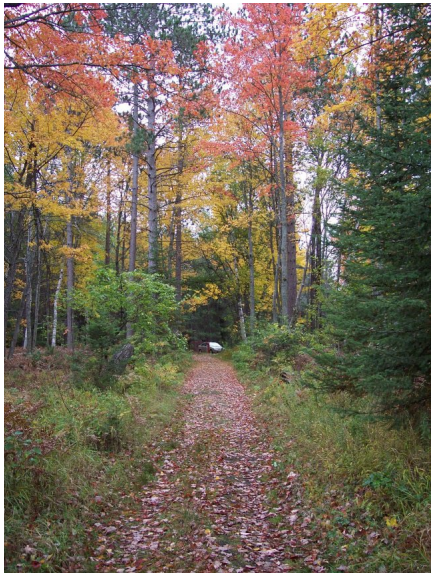
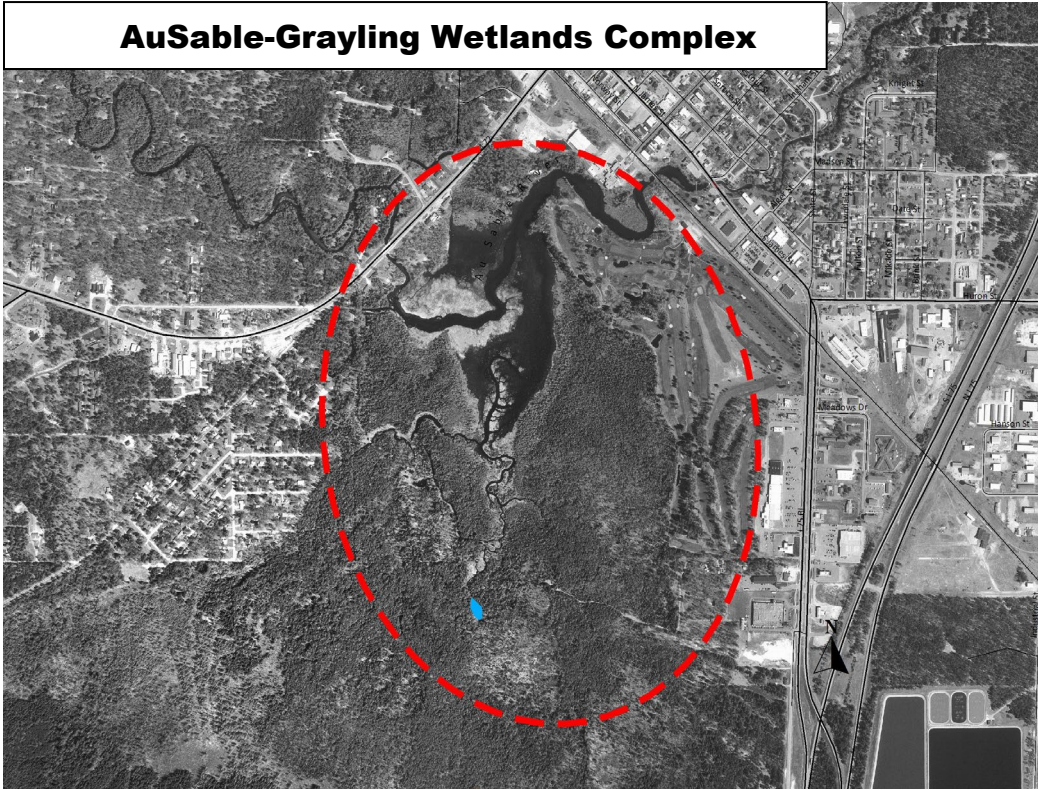
Trails and greenways provide a variety of benefits that ultimately affect the sustainability of a region's economic, environmental, and social health. These benefits include:

1. Creating Value and Generating Economic Activity
2. Improving Health through Active Living
3. Clear Skies, Clean Rivers, and Protected Wildlife
4. Protecting People and Property from Flood Damage
5. Enhancing Cultural Awareness and Community Identity¹

The AuSable River forms the backbone of the community's greenway system. The river is a nationally recognized recreational asset. The creation of linear parkways and trails along the AuSable presents opportunities to connect parks, schools, institutional facilities, residential areas and the downtown. Natural areas within the City offer a close-by escape from the hustle and bustle of urban life, where residents can enjoy beauty of nature, mixed with the sounds of birds and running water. Complementing the linear features are areas of open space, which include the golf course and adjacent undeveloped wetlands to the west, the W. J. Beal Plantation, parks and cemeteries. Manmade linear features include rail corridors, non-motorized trails and designated bicycle routes. The constructed features also serve to connect people to their community.



¹ Greenways, Inc. Planning and Design for Open Space, Parks, Trails and Alternative Transportation. www.greenways.com



State Owned Recreational Properties

Nearly 70 percent of Crawford County’s total acreage (including water) is owned by the State of Michigan (49.8%), the federal government (10.8), or the military (8.4%). Much of the State and federal lands are managed for recreation under the multi-use concept. Facilities include improved campgrounds, primitive campsites, boat access sites, fishing sites; mountain bike trails, hiking trails, snowmobile trails, and canoe access points. Other popular activities include hunting, fishing, swimming, and cross-country skiing. **Table 3.2** lists the state parks, state forest campgrounds and USFS campgrounds.

Table 3.2 State & Federal Recreational Facilities in Crawford County		
Facility	Amenities	Location
North Higgins Lake State Park	210 campsites, trailer station, cabins, boat access, fishing, trails, museum, pavilions, conference center	Beaver Creek Township
Goose Creek State Forest Trail Camp	9 campsites, canoeing, hiking, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, fishing	Frederic Township
Manistee River Bridge Campground	23 campsites, canoeing, fishing, canoe access	Frederic Township
Upper Manistee River Campground	30 campsites, 10 walk-in sites, canoeing, fishing, group camp for canoeists	Frederic Township
AuSable River Canoe Camp	13 campsites (5 are canoe access only) hiking, picnicking, fishing, wildlife viewing	Grayling Township
Burton's Landing Canoe Launch	12 campsites, canoeing, fishing	Grayling Township
4 Mile State Forest Trail Camp	50 campsites, horse camp, horseback riding, boat launch, fishing, canoeing, hiking, wildlife viewing	Grayling Township
Hartwick Pines	100 campsites, hiking, mountain bike trails, fishing, logging museum & camp, Interpretive Center	Grayling Township
Keystone Landing Campground	18 campsites, canoeing, fishing, canoe launch	Grayling Township
Kneff Lake Campground	26 campsites, boating, fishing, swimming, picnicking	Grayling Township
Lake Margrethe Forest Campground	37 campsites, boating, swimming, fishing, boat ramp	Grayling Township
Wakeley Lake Area Federal Forest	4 walk-in campsites, limited fishing, trails	10 miles southeast of Grayling
Sheep Pasture Campground	3 campsites, canoeing, fishing	Lovells Township
Jones Lake State Forest Campground	42 campsites, boating, swimming, fishing, small-boat ramp	Lovells Township
Shupac Lake Campground	30 campsites, boating, boat ramp, swimming, fishing	Lovells Township
Canoe Harbor Campground	44 campsites, canoeing, fishing, group campsites (2)	South Branch Township
Connor's Flat Campground	Canoeing, boat access, fishing	South Branch Township
Rainbow Bend Forest Campground	6 campsites, canoeing, fishing, canoe access, canoe group camping sites	South Branch Township
White Pine State Forest Canoe Camp	Open area campsite, canoe access only, fishing, wildlife viewing	South Branch Township

Privately Owned Recreational Public Facilities



Miscellaneous

Boys & Girls Camps
Golf Courses
Miniature Golf
Marina
Shooting Range

Resorts, Cabins & Motels

In addition to the campgrounds already listed, Crawford County has numerous resorts, cabins and motels that are utilized by fishermen, hunters and other sports enthusiasts for overnight accommodations. Most of these facilities are located in and around the Grayling and Frederic area.

Regional Recreational Opportunities

The amounts and types of recreation opportunities, which are available in neighboring counties, are highly variable. All neighboring counties have an ample supply of state and/or federal lands, much of which can be used for recreational activities, including hunting, fishing, hiking, wildlife viewing, etc.

The closest neighboring community to the major population of Crawford County is Roscommon (Roscommon County). Roscommon has a variety of recreational facilities including a community recreation/fitness center. They also have an outdoor ice rink, a soccer field and tennis courts. Roscommon is approximately 15 miles from Grayling. Higgins Lake and Houghton Lake both provide recreational water opportunities.

To the north, Gaylord (Otsego County) has several recreational facilities that are open to the public. The Sportsplex offers an indoor ice rink and swimming pool. There are several ski lodges, groomed cross country ski trails, golf courses, a bowling alley and theatre complex. The travel distance from Gaylord to areas in Crawford County vary from about 20 minutes to close to one hour.

Oscoda County, to the east, is a very rural county with few recreational facilities beyond state and federal lands and campgrounds and the Au Sable River. The area does offer a major golf/cross country ski resort. The travel distance from Crawford County to Oscoda County ranges from 30 minutes to more than one hour.

Kalkaska County is located to the west of Crawford County. Located within the City of Kalkaska are a variety of recreational opportunities. The area has a roller-skating rink, an archery course and a sportsplex called “Kaliseum”. They also have an assortment of sports teams such as Little League, soccer and softball. Kalkaska is a 30-minute drive from Grayling, but is over an hour from other portions of the county.

Inventory Procedures

This inventory was established from the previous City of Grayling Recreation Plan 2015-2019. The current members of the Parks Committee reviewed this list and added additional public and private sources. Finally, the list was also compared to the list that was established in the 2009-2013 County Recreation Plan.

Status Report on Grant-Assisted Recreational Facilities

The City of Grayling has received and successfully completed one grant through the DNR recreation grant funds program in 2003. The grant was closed in 2007.

Grant #	Park Name	Scope Item and Current Condition
TF03-064	Grayling River Park	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Restrooms 2. Add 20 parking spaces 3. Shoreline pathway improvements 4. Fishing pier and pilings 5. Canoe/kayak staging site 6. Boardwalk 7. Pedestrian bridge (ADA approved)

Grayling Canoe Launch

Assessment of Existing Recreational Facilities

The City of Grayling needs to determine if it has recreational facilities both in types and quantities that meets the needs of its residents. The approach was to compare existing facilities to state standards. **Table 3.3** shows the comparison of existing to state recommended standards. The column titled “number needed within the City” show where deficiencies exist.

Table 3.3: Existing Recreational Facilities Compared to State Standards

Recreational Opportunity	Number located within City	State Standards	Number needed within City	Location Notes
Mini Park	2	.25 to .05 acres/1000	0	Charles Moore Park, and Kids Fishing Stream,
Park/Playground	2	1.0 to 2.0 acres/1000	1	Au Sable River Park, Elementary School
Community Park (1)	1	5 to 8 acres/1000	1	Au Sable River Park is approx. 3 acres in size but has been considered a community park for the purposes of this plan
Basketball	3	1/5000 & ¼ -1/2 mile	0	Elementary School, Au Sable River Park, Middle School (indoor)
Handball/Racket Ball	1	1/20000 & 15-30 min travel time	0	Grayling Fitness Center
Ice Hockey <i>Indoor/ Outdoor</i>	0	Depends on Climate	1	Closest facilities are 30 minutes away in Kalkaska and Gaylord
Tennis	0	1 Court /1000 & ¼ -1/2 mile	2	Closest facility is Grayling High School approximately 5 miles from the City. There are 4 courts.
Volleyball	1	1 Court /5000 & ½ -1 Mile	1	Indoors at the Middle school gym. No outside facilities
Baseball	0	1/5000 & ½ - 1 Mile	0	Grayling Sports Complex is approximately 4 miles from the city.
Soccer	0	1/10000 & 1-2 Miles	0	Located at the Crawford County Sports Complex approximately 4 miles from the city
¼ Mile Running Track	0	1/20000 & 15-30 min. travel time	0	Located at Grayling High School approx. 5 miles from the City
Softball	0	1/5000 & ¼ - ½ Mile	0	May be a softball field at the Crawford County Sports Complex
Multiple Recreation Court-Basketball, Volley ball, Tennis	0	1/10000 & 1-2 Miles	0	Grayling Middle School Gym within the City, and Grayling High School could be considered Multiple Recreation, however, neither offers inside tennis. Both have limited usage for individuals who are not involved in school sport activities
Trails <i>Biking Hiking</i>	2	1 system/region	1	Bike trails currently go from the City to the High school and Hartwick Pines to the north and from the City to Hanson Hills Recreational area to the West of the City. Need to develop trails and non-motorized facilities to the south and east. Beal Plantation

Recreational Opportunity	Number located within City	State Standards	Number needed within City	Location Notes
Swimming Pool	1	1/20000	1	Ramada Inn & Super 8 Motel allows day use. Closest swimming Pools are Gaylord and Kalkaska both approx. 30 minutes from the City of Grayling
Beach Access	0	½ to 1 hour travel time	0	Many beaches are within ½ hour of Grayling. There is no beach accesses within the City of Grayling
Archery Range	1	1/50000 & 30 min. travel time	0	Range is located at Hanson Hills Recreation Area approximately 5 miles from the City. There is also an Archery Range in Waters MI. Approximately 20 miles from Grayling.
Combination Skeet & Trap field	1	1 per 50,000 & 30 min. travel time	0	Firing range is approximately 4 miles from the City, near Hanson Hills.
Golf	1	1 per 50,000	0	A Private 18-hole golf course is located within the City on the South side of the City.
Community Center	0		1	Currently we do not have a Community Center in Grayling. The City would be interested in contributing to a joint venture with the County, however is too large of a project for the City to take on without the support of our surrounding Townships
Ice Skating Rink	0	N/A	0	
Band Shell	0	N/A	1	Planning on building in the AuSable River Park.
Pavilion	1	N/A	1	
Shuffle Board	0	N/A	2	
Skate Board Park	1	N/A	1	Behind City Hall.
Disc Golf	2	N/A	0	Located at Hanson Hills Recreation & Grayling Township Park
Source: City of Grayling				

CHAPTER 4 – DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

Schedule

February 2018	Heidi Farmer, Member of the Parks & Recreation Committee instituted the updating of the City Parks & Recreation Plan 2020-2024.
June 2018	The Committee agreed to continue working on Master Plan at their next meeting.
July 2018	The Committee divided up the Master Plan into sections for review and to make changes as needed.
November 2018	The Committee made recommendations on items to be updated in Chapter 3: Recreational Inventory of the Master Plan.
August 2019	A Public Input session to review and discuss the Community Plan's Goals, Objectives and Action plan was held and no public attended.
August 2019	The Committee will review the Master Plan make any notes for changes, additions and/or deletions and bring back to the next meeting. Consensus of the committee was to meet at 6:00 PM on Monday, September 23, 2019 for a Master Plan Work Session.
September 2019	The Committee held a Work Session to go over the Goals and Objectives of the Master Plan.
2020	The Committee held a Work Session to make recommendations
2023	Finalized the plan
May 2014	The Committee motioned to send the Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenways Draft Plan 2020-2024 to NEMCOG for review.
December 2014	The Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenways Plan for 2020-2024 was resubmitted to NEMCOG for review again.
January 2015	The Committee received a completed Draft 2014-2019 Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenways Plan to review before the Public Input Session is scheduled for February 19, 2015.
February 2015	A Public Input Meeting was scheduled and no public attended.

May 28, 2015

A Public Hearing was held and no public attended. The Parks & Recreation Committee recommend adoption by the City Council.

Public Input

Along with the organizations involved in the City of Grayling Recreation Plan development, the city used the survey results from the 2013 City's Community Survey associated with its Master Plan Update to base initial public input, Caring for Crawford Kids Activity Survey 2008 and the Crawford County Recreation Survey 2008.

Public Input Session

A public input session was held on May 22, 2024 to determine public response to the draft plan. No public attended.

Public Hearing

A public hearing was held after the 30-day review to determine public response to the 30-day review period.

Public Hearing

A public hearing was held after some changes were made and the Parks & Recreation Committee recommend adoption by the City Council.

Dear Community Member,

The City of Grayling is in the process of updating their Master Plan. The Master Plan is the base for building/improving the City. Your answers will help influence programs to be done in the City. We are asking if you would please complete this survey and return it to City Hall by Sept. 19th 2013. You may hand deliver or mail your survey to 1020 City Blvd., Grayling, MI 49738. If you have any questions please call 348-2131

Thank you for your assistance in helping to plan Grayling’s future!

Doug Baum
City Manager/Police Chief

SECTION ONE: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

This survey consists of six sections. If you choose to give your name and address we will not share your information with anyone. Individual survey responses will be kept private and only survey totals will be made public.

Are you a... (please check only *ONE* box) **(136 Responses)**

- 58.82% A resident of the City of Grayling
- 23.53% A business owner in the City of Grayling
- 5.88% Both a business owner and resident in the City of Grayling
- 11.76% Neither a business owner nor a resident in the City of Grayling

1. If a business owner, is your business in “downtown” Grayling? (42 responses)

Yes 30.95% No 69.05%

2. How long have you owned your business? (38 responses)

Average of 19.37 years

3. What type of business do you own? (40 responses)

Retail 20% Professional Services 40% Restaurant 5% Trade/Contractor 5% Other 30%

4. Do you belong to: (Check all that apply) (47 responses)

Downtown Development Authority 8.51% Grayling Regional Chamber of Commerce 57.45% Grayling Promotional Association 19.15%
Other 14.89%

RESIDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

1.1 How long have you lived in the City of Grayling? (96 responses)

Less than 2 years 3.13% 2 to 7 years 14.58% 8 to 15 years 17.71% Over 15 years 64.58%

1.2 Do you rent or own your home? (87 responses) Rent 1.15% Own 98.85%

1.3 How many people live in your household? (177 people / 101 responses) Average of 1.75

1.4 Are you a registered voter in the City of Grayling? (99 responses) Yes 87.88% No 12.12%

1.5 What is your occupational status? (93 responses)

Retired 49.46% Working 45.16% Domestic Homemaker 0% Other: 5.38%

1.6 If working and you reside in the City, where are you employed? (46 responses)

City of Grayling 47.87% Elsewhere in Crawford County 13.04% Neighboring County 13.04% Camp Grayling/Mates 4.35% Other 21.74%

1.7 What is your age? (88 responses) Under 19 0% 19 to 29 1.14% 30 to 39 13.64% 40 to 49 7.95% 50 to 59 26.14% 60 or over 51.14%

SECTION TWO: CITY PROGRAMS & SERVICES

2.1 Of the following enforcement issues, which is of greatest concern to you? (141 responses)

- 24.11% Property maintenance (i.e. mowing the lawn, painting the house, et.)
- 17.02% Removal of unlicensed vehicles
- 49.65% Demolition of unsafe, obsolete residential and commercial buildings
- 9.22% Other _____

How strongly do you agree/disagree with the following statements about City policies? Please circle your response.

Policy	Responses	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2.2 I would support garbage collection user fees.	126	9.52%	15.87%	26.19%	15.08%	33.33%

2.3	The city should encourage additional business enterprises that will provide a competitive marketplace and make available more choices of goods and services.	135	62.22%	28.15%	7.41%	1.48%	.74%
2.4	The City should concentrate on supporting and maintaining existing, established businesses.	132	45.45%	31.81%	19.70%	2.27%	.76%
2.5	I support the City's efforts to revitalize the central Business district (i.e. Michigan Ave.) through additional shopping, restaurants and night life	135	49.63%	31.11%	15.56%	2.22%	1.48%
2.6	The City should attract Big Box retail stores.	130	30%	29.23%	21.54%	10%	9.23%

SECTION THREE: CITY PARKS

3.1	Should the Parks program in Grayling be expanded? (129 responses) Yes 55.04% No 44.96%	3.4	Does the City need additional indoor recreational facilities? (121 responses) Yes 61.16% No 38.84%
3.2	Does the city need Pocket Parks? (111 responses) Yes 34.23% No 65.77%	3.5	If yes, recommendations:
3.3	Should access to the river be preserved to allow for public? Utilization? (132 responses) Yes 96.21% No 3.79%		

SECTION FOUR: RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

4.1	If the expected population growth of Grayling is greater than what can be accommodated in current housing, which ONE of the following do you think should be built to best accommodate them? (166 responses)	4.2	In order to promote more housing development should the City aggressively pursue purchasing of existing, obsolete residential properties for sale to private developers? (116 responses)
	36.75% Single-family residences		Yes 60.34%
	13.86% Duplex residences		No 39.66%
	24.70% Apartment dwellings	4.3	Do you think there are enough housing options available for for senior residents? (118 responses)
	10.84% Mixed-use (i.e. 2 nd floor residential over business)		Yes 47.56% No 52.54%
	13.86% Townhouses		

How strongly do you agree/disagree with the following statements about residential development in the City of Grayling? Please circle your response.

Strongly	Policy	Responses	Strongly	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
			Agree	Disagree		
4.4	The City should pursue programs to encourage and Support single-family home ownership.	130	31.54%	39.23%	22.31%	4.63% 2.31%
4.5	Multiple-family housing should be built in the same 18.60% Neighborhoods as single-family ownership.	129	3.88%	17.05%	32.56%	27.91%
4.6	I prefer to see existing homes restored rather than Seeing them torn down and rebuilt.	130	23.85%	33.08%	30.77%	9.23% 3.08%
4.7	The City should accommodate future population growth, Even if it means developing multiple-family homes.	116	15.52%	25.87%	31.03%	21.55% 6.03%
4.8	Homes on larger lots are needed to attract more residents To the City, even if they are more expensive to purchase.	130	4.62%	25.38%	49.23%	16.92% 3.85%

SECTION FIVE: TRANSPORTATION

5.1 Would Grayling benefit from increased access to I-75?

(134 responses) Yes 68.66% No 10.45% Unsure 20.90%

5.2 Would access to I-75 at North Down River Road in both the North and South directions be beneficial?

(135 responses) Yes 71.85% No 11.11% Unsure 17.04%

5.3 Do you...(check one) (116 responses)

72.41%	Drive to work
2.59%	Take public transportation
7.76%	Bike or walk
17.24%	Other _____

How strongly do you agree/disagree with the following statements about transportation in the City of Grayling? Please circle your response.

Strongly Disagree	Policy	Responses	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral Disagree
5.4	The City should pursue additional walking paths. 6.02%	133	23.30%	25.56%	26.32% 18.80%
5.5	The City should enhance bike utilization along City streets 5.93%	135	21.48%	27.41%	27.41% 17.78%
5.6	The City should pursue additional bike paths 7.46%	134	23.13%	26.12%	29.10% 14.18%
5.7	Traffic congestion is a problem in the City 4.51%	133	24.06%	30.88%	22.56% 18.05%

SECTION SIX: OVERALL GROWTH

6.1 What do you want the City of Grayling to be known as? (203 responses)

Residential community 17.24% Tourist/Recreational 39.41% Commercial/retail center 13.80% Military town 12.32% Historical 13.80% Other: 3.45%

6.2 What do you think is the biggest draw to our Community?

6.3 How should the Bear Archery property be developed? (141 responses)

29.79%	Big box retail stores
28.36%	Specialty stores/small retail shops
9.22%	Single-family residential homes
21.99%	Residential condominium complex
10.64%	Other

9.57% Multiple-family housing, including apartments with 12 or more units per building

6.6 Other:

6.4 Do you believe the City needs to acquire land to accommodate future growth? (122 responses)

Yes 50%
No 50%

6.5 If so, what should acquired land be used for? (203 responses)

12.18%	Higher-value single-family homes on larger lots
10.43%	Condominiums, duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes

- 16.52% Industrial Business
- 36.52% General commercial business
- 14.78% Other _____

How strongly do agree/disagree with the following statements about overall growth in the City? Please circle your response.

Strongly Disagree	Policy	Responses	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
6.7	Protect private property rights over community interests.	127	25.98%	32.28%	33.07%	7.87%
.79%						
6.8	Any new construction would be good for the City.	129	24.03%	39.53%	27.91%	6.20%
2.33%						
6.9	The City should take a more aggressive approach to enforcing land use and zoning regulations.	128	16.40%	26.56%	43.75%	10.94%
2.34%						

SECTION 7: INFORMATION

7.1 What do you use a primary source of information for community events? **(158 responses)**

- 15.19% Grayling Regional Chamber of Commerce
- 50% Crawford County Avalanche
- 4.43% Grayling Visitors Bureau Website
- 7.59% The Weekly Choice
- 8.23% Radio
- 14.56% Other _____

7.2 Would you be interested in volunteering with events? **(134 responses)**

Yes 18.66% No 81.34%

7.3 If yes,

Name: _____

E-mail: _____

General Comments: Please indicate any other comments, concerns, or suggestions related to land use, development and improvement that you may have for the City Planning Commission or City Council.



HOME

Caring For Crawford Kids Activity Survey 2008

Totals of All Age Groups (1065 responses)

Where do you live?

385 Grayling Township	97 Don't Know/Other	27 Lovells Township
304 City of Grayling	88 Beaver Creek Township	5 South Branch Township
106 Frederic Township	44 Maple Forest Township	

If these activities were available, which of them would you participate in? (check all of interest)

4698 Public Swimming Pool	6 Gymnastics *	1 Sledding *
575 Sports Complex/Gym	5 Soccer *	1 Writing Music *
545 Open Gym	5 Rollerskating *	1 Self Defense *
469 Water Sports	5 Golf *	1 Science Club *
443 Dance	4 Paintball *	1 Roller Skate Rink *
440 Ice Skating	4 Downhill Skiing *	1 Roller Hockey *
424 Hunting or Fishing	3 Basketball *	1 Pool Tournaments *
385 Recreational Sports	3 Bowling *	1 Pilates *
372 Movie in the Park	3 Karate *	1 Pie Eating Contest *
357 Computers	3 Swim Lessons *	1 Overnight Camping *
345 Game Night	3 Bike Riding *	1 Laser Tag *
339 Arts and Crafts	3 Volleyball *	1 Karaoke Dance *
274 Skateboard Park	2 Snowboard Competition *	1 Karaoke *
230 Family Night	2 Football *	1 Jr. Mechanics *
224 Tennis	2 Choir *	1 Four Wheeling *
220 Equestrian (horse)	2 Building *	1 Fire Department *
217 Theatre Group	2 Sewing/Quilting *	1 Fight Club *
207 Yoga	2 Wrestling *	1 Downhill Ski Racing *
194 Cross Country Skiing	2 Summer Camp *	1 Dodge Ball *
152 Disk/Frisbee Golf	1 Weight Lifting *	1 Billiards/Pool *
95 Gardening	1 Tubing *	1 Badminton *
7 T-ball/Baseball/Softball *	1 Track *	1 Arcade *
7 Snowboarding *	1 Teen Club *	1 Acting *
7 Video Games *	1 Swimming *	1 Halo 3 Tournament *
6 Motocross/Snowtrack*	1 Study Hall *	

(* not printed on survey – written in response)

Does lack of transportation (or cost of transportation) keep you from participating in local activities?

115 Yes	493 No	452 Sometimes
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Which locations are most convenient for you? (check all that apply)

621 School Buildings/Grounds	340 City Park/Nature Center	1 Lewiston *
598 Hanson Hills	176 City Hall	1 Fish Hatchery *
449 Township Park(s)	4 Frederic Elementary *	1 Walking Distance from School *
447 Library	1 Walking *	1 Forest *
437 Fairgrounds	1 Store *	1 Mt. Frederic *

Would you pay to participate in planned activities?

239 Yes	90 No	671 Depends
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What keeps you from participating in local activities/events? (check all that apply)

549 Busy Schedule	11 Not Enough Activities *	1 If parents will let me *
431 Lack of Personal Interest	5 Not Knowing Early Enough *	1 Getting in trouble *
396 Cost	4 Lack of Advertising *	1 Rude Coaches *
318 Lack of Transportation	3 Lack of Knowledge of Instructors *	1 Not knowing early enough*
234 Location	2 Time Schedule *	1 Away Games Too Far *
107 Too Much Competition	2 Age Restrictions *	1 Single Parent *
56 Not Enough Competition	2 Not Aware of Events *	1 Busy Parent *
11 Bad winter roads *	2 Conflicting Sports *	1 Poor Organization *

Does participation with different age youth than yourself affect your decision to participate in that activity? (such as middle school age students participating with high school age students?)

176 Yes	413 No	481 Sometimes
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Would your parent/guardians support your choice to attend additional activities?

571 Yes	60 No	430 Depends
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Would you be willing to help with planning, implementing and clean-up of activities?

367 Yes	189 No	508 Depends
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Is there an adult that you know that would help with activities?

1283 Yes	325 No	458 Depends
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(* not printed on survey – written in response)

Please send comments, suggestions, corrections and updates to info@crawfordPLAYs.com

Crawford County Recreation Survey (2008)

# of DOTS	RECREATION NEED
12	Crawford County Sportsplex development including baseball, softball and soccer fields. Upgrades to bring all outdoor sports together for the youth of Crawford County
9	Multi-use recreation facility/Recreation Center
7	Improved coordination of county-wide recreation marketing
5	Riverside trail from township park to library
4	Rayburn improvements - portajohns
4	Recreation programs designed for Senior Citizens
4	Improved transportation between sites for youth and seniors
3	ORV connector between Frederic Trail and Kalkaska Trail
3	City Park Improvements Phase II & III -additional fishing piers -playground equipment (ADA) -foot/snowmobile bridge parallel to railroad grade -connecting trail for park
3	Finish fish hatchery building as a museum
3	New, expanded Senior Center
2	More ORV Trails (HB4323) – town access
2	Cross state connector in N. Crawford County to meet
2	Rayburn Property Loop – N. Down River/M-32 East
2	Additional baseball and softball fields for ages 5-15
2	County wide trail maps -hiking/mountain biking -road biking -cross country skiing
2	Coordinated Promotion of calendar of recreational opportunities for all ages
1	Signage for existing recreation
1	Safe Routes to school (bike, walk, rollerblade)
1	Safe Routes to Schools
1	Better (improved) communication system between organizations
1	Backpacking/long hiking trails and back country camping
1	Public access to River
1	Paved trail from township park behind hospital/schools to library and downtown
0	Ausable River/bike trail from Grayling to Oscoda
0	Intergenerational program
0	Public swimming pool
0	Movie in the park location and equipment
0	Open gym
0	A place for skateboarders
0	Better marketing of outdoor/quiet sports and recreation
0	Organized Geo-caching
0	Nature Center improvements
0	Develop Children's Park – in central residential district

From Input Session in May of 2008.

City of Grayling Survey Results (2 surveys)

Activity	Facilities Used	Improvements	Needs
Camping	Bike trail	Teenager activities	Bicycle Turnpike Trailhead
Hunting	Hanson Hills	Awareness of current activities	Community pool
Fishing	City Park	Single track mountain bike trail near Hartwick Pines	Expand bike trails

Recreation Plan Public Hearing Session

In accordance with requirements set forth by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, the City Council held a public hearing on May 22, 2024. A legal notice was published in the Crawford County Avalanche newspaper. During the public hearing, there were 0 (zero) comments on the proposed City of Grayling Recreation Plan 2024-2028 from the public.

CHAPTER FIVE: GOALS & OBJECTIVES/ACTION PLAN

Goals and objectives were developed from a public input session as well as by input from the survey results from the 2013 City of Grayling Master Plan update.



Goals and Objectives

Goal 1. Implement Phase II improvements to the Au Sable River City Park.

Objectives:

1. Add additional signage around the entire park.
2. Add additional security cameras in the park.
3. Improve the aesthetics of the park through additional landscaping and irrigation including the Memorial Gardens.
4. Building a new enclosed pavilion.
5. Building shuffleboard courts.
6. Designate and develop area for sand sports such as volleyball and horseshoes.
7. Build additional fishing docks on East side of the park.
8. Nature Center improvements
 - a) Improve and replace security system outside of the Nature Center.
9. Improve barrier free accessibility in City parks, where appropriate.
10. Improve and install new playground equipment at City Park.

Goal 2. Make improvements to City Skate Park to enhance quality and user experience.

Objectives:

1. Establish a Bike path trailhead to begin at the Skate Park.
2. Build a warming shed with restrooms.
3. Improve barrier free accessibility in City parks, where appropriate.

Goal 3. Skateboard Park to address youth interest in skateboarding and provide a safe place that is away from the central business district.

Objectives:

1. Work with service clubs, i.e., Rotary and Grayling Youth Boosters to help raise funds to expand the park.
2. Purchase and install new equipment to improve the skatepark.
3. Improve barrier free accessibility in City parks, where appropriate.
4. Pursue funding for equipment.

Goal 4. Water Trails/River Trails Classification.

Objectives:

1. Work with Michigan Department of Natural Resources to establish a Water Trails/River Trails classification for the main stream of the AuSable River.
2. Partner with other local agencies, Emergency Management or the State of Michigan on installing mile markers along the river for better access to people in need of emergency services while on the river.
3. Improve barrier free accessibility in City parks, where appropriate.

Goal 5. Implement Phase III improvements to the AuSable River City Park

Objectives:

1. Build a bridge adjacent to the railroad bridge over the AuSable River for biking, and hiking improvements.
2. Complete the asphalt path around the park from the new bridge described above to the existing bridge.
3. Improve barrier free accessibility in City parks, where appropriate.
4. Create access from city central business district to the Au Sable River City Park.
 - a) Continue to work with MDOT and the City to determine the best path to access the City Park from across I-75 BL.
5. Nature Center Improvements.
 - a) Landscape around the building
 - b) Purchase and place additional information kiosks that can be used to post information including but not limited to: Park rules, maps and current events.
 - c) Build a stage complete with public address system outside the nature center under a band shell.

Goal 6. Purchase Portable Stage System

Objectives:

1. Partner with other civic groups to purchase a portable stage system.

Goal 7. Develop a park on the East Branch of the Au Sable River

Objectives:

1. Acquire rights to use property located behind the Fish Hatchery on the East Branch of the Au Sable River. (Property is currently owned by Crawford County).
2. Develop a natural park for hiking, biking, cross country ski trails, and possibly camping.
3. Develop a public access site for launching small watercraft.
4. Develop a Picnic area and fishing pier.
5. Build a parking lot and seasonal restrooms.

6. Improve barrier free accessibility in City parks, where appropriate.

Goal 8. Expand and enhance non-motorized recreation facilities within the City and support development regional facilities that connect Grayling to other communities and points of interest.



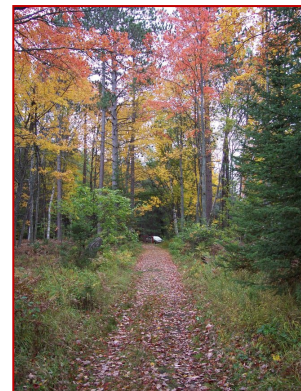
Objectives:

1. Bike Path Signage
2. Connect the City of Grayling to the Rayburn Property located along the Main Branch of the AuSable River (*On-Road Facilities & Side Paths*)
3. Link Grayling Bicycle Turnpike to North Higgins Lake State Park (*On-Road Facilities & Side Paths*)
4. Develop river walkway from Downtown Grayling to Fish Hatchery (*Off-Road Paths*)
5. Establish non-motorized routes along AuSable River from Grayling to Mio, Glennie, Oscoda and Lake Huron. Identify bike routes along the AuSable River Corridor; map and inventory segments to evaluate needed non-motorized facility improvements (*On-Road Facilities*)
6. Bike loop: M-72 west to M-93 to Military Road to North Higgins Lake State Park On-road facilities (*On-Road Facilities*)
7. Bike loop: Grayling M-72 west to Manistee River Road to 612 and east to Frederic (*On-Road Facilities*)
8. Extend Grayling Bicycle Turnpike to Waters (*On-Road Facilities & Side Paths*)
9. Extend shoulders on M-72 from Grayling east to Wakley Lake and Mason Tract (*On-Road Facilities*)
10. Connect Grayling with Old Dam Road (*On-Road Facilities*)
11. Support the Northeast Michigan Regional Non-motorized Transportation Plan
12. Construct pedestrian crossing at bridge in downtown Grayling

Goal 9: Create a City Greenways System that connects features within the City and connects to regional features

Objectives:

1. Develop a detailed site-specific greenways plan that identifies critical and resource sensitive areas, parcels to be protected, precise location of pathways and funding options.
2. Establish policies in the City's planning and zoning documents to develop greenways and protect open space.
3. Work with land conservancies and private landowners to protect natural areas along the AuSable River.



4. Develop a river walkway from the Downtown to the Fish Hatchery.
5. Create the East Branch Park as a nature recreation facility, develop hiking trails within the park and connect the park to other community facilities with a pathway.
6. Support efforts to extend trails from Grayling to other communities and State Parks.
7. Connect the City of Grayling to the Rayburn Property located along the Main Branch of the AuSable River.
8. Work with adjacent communities to develop interconnected greenways that reach beyond the city boundaries.
9. Create a portage on the Main Branch of the AuSable over N. James Street

Goal 10: Advance elder-friendly community concepts in public environments that support independence and livability by being sensitive to the physical needs and limitations of older adults.

Objectives:

1. Streets, sidewalks and paths are well maintained all year.
2. Sidewalks and pathways are suitable for persons requiring motorized scooters and wheelchairs; are wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs, motorized scooters and pedestrians.
3. Pathways are multi-purpose, (i.e., suitable for walking, running and biking).
4. Pathways are barrier-free and can be used by persons with disabilities.
5. Pathways have sufficient width with acceptable surfaces and slopes and allowing for safe passing.
6. Pathways have clearly marked signs and trail markings.
7. Pathways connect to neighborhoods, parks, other bike lanes, streets, retail centers and other common destinations.
8. Pathways and public spaces have appropriately situated resting areas with benches.
9. Signals are timed to allow anyone to cross comfortably and safely and where appropriate have pedestrian devices such as buttons that stop traffic and walk/don't walk signals are available to allow safe crossing.
10. Intersections have safety features such as bright, reflective lane markings, directional signals and overhead indicators that are present for turning lanes and left turn lanes.
11. Crosswalks and curb ramps are well signed and striped appropriately; are well lit at night; are low, textured for traction, and have the appropriate slope and width for persons with disabilities.
12. Indoor facilities provide environments for year-round recreational activities.



Priority	Site	Proj. #	Property Improvements	Est. Cost	Funding Source (s)	Year
High	City Skate Park	16	Establish a Bike path trailhead to begin at the Skate Park	\$500,000.00	DNR, LOCAL & PRIVATE	2021
Medium	City Skate Park	18	Purchase and install additional skateboard equipment	\$50,000.00	DNR, LOCAL & PRIVATE	2022
Low	AuSable River City Park Phase III	26	Expand the Wi-Fi at the Nature Center to cover park.	\$1,100.00	DNR, LOCAL & PRIVATE	2015
Low	AuSable River City Park Phase III	28	Purchase Portable Stage and/or bandshell	\$110,000.00	DNR, LOCAL & PRIVATE	2015
Medium	AuSable River City Park Phase III	36	Greenway rehabilitation the river's edge within the City Park	\$250,000.00	DNR, LOCAL & PRIVATE	2015
Medium	Charles Moore Memorial Park	30	Additional Landscaping at Charles Moore Park	\$10,000.00	DNR, LOCAL & PRIVATE	2015
High	City AuSable River City Park Phase III	37	Collaborate to connect a non-motorized pathway between Otsego Lake State Park & North Higgins Lake State Park	\$500,000.00	DNR, MEDC, MDOT, LOCAL & PRIVATE	2016
Medium	AuSable River City Park Phase III	7	Walkway to cross I75 Business Loop to City Park	\$10,000.00	DNR, LOCAL & PRIVATE	2016
High	AuSable River City Park Phase II	4	Landscaping in City Park including Memorial Gardens	\$50,000.00	DNR, LOCAL & PRIVATE	2017
High	AuSable River City Park Phase II	12	Build additional Fishing Pier & Picnic area at City Park	\$250,000.00	DNR, LOCAL & PRIVATE	2017
Medium	Elm Street AuSable River City Park Phase III	19	Develop Property for Children's Park	\$500,000.00	DNR, LOCAL & PRIVATE	2017
Low	AuSable River City Park Phase III	24	Purchase property downtown for a pathway and demolish any current buildings on it	\$300,000.00	DNR, LOCAL & PRIVATE	2017
Low	AuSable River City Park Phase III	25	Landscape around the Nature Center Building	\$5,000.00	DNR, LOCAL & PRIVATE	2017
High	AuSable River City Park Phase II	9	Designate Fitness Trail to City Park	\$500,000.00	DNR, LOCAL & PRIVATE	2018
Low	East Branch of AuSable River	33	Develop public canoe/kayak launch at the park and/or in the City Limits.	\$500,000.00	DNR, LOCAL & PRIVATE	2018

Low	Downtown City Au Sable River City Park Phase	34	Develop downtown Pocket Park w/Restrooms	\$500,000.00	DNR, LOCAL & PRIVATE	2018
Medium	III	21	Build bridge adjacent to the railroad bridge over the Au Sable River	\$300,000.00	DNR, LOCAL & PRIVATE	2019
Low	III	22	Complete the asphalt path around City Park from new bridge to existing bridge	\$300,000.00	DNR, LOCAL & PRIVATE	2019
Low	East Branch of Au Sable River	31	Acquire property behind Fish Hatchery	\$500,000.00	DNR, LOCAL & PRIVATE	2019
Medium	City	1	Add additional Historical & Factual Signage around City	\$250,000.00	DNR, LOCAL & PRIVATE	2022
Low	East Branch of Au Sable River	32	Develop property into Natural Park for hiking, biking, cross country skiing, etc.	\$500,000.00	DNR, LOCAL & PRIVATE	2019
Low	East Branch of Au Sable River	35	Build a parking lot and seasonal restrooms at the Natural Park behind Fish Hatchery	\$500,000.00	DNR, LOCAL & PRIVATE	2019
Low	City	20	Community Center	\$10,000,000.00	DNR, LOCAL & PRIVATE	2024

Project #	Justification
1	Improved signage will enhance users' ability to enjoy everything the City has to offer.
4	Improving aesthetics of the park will improve the quality of experience at the park and will attract additional users. Irrigation will allow for proper maintenance of the landscaped improvements.
7	A designated walkway crossing the I-75 Business Loop would provide pedestrians a safe and convenient way to come and go between businesses and the City Park.
9	A fitness trail will allow residents of all age's access to more active and recreational activities.
12	A Fishing platform will allow residents of all ages and abilities to fish and enjoy viewing, and a picnic area would draw residents and visitors to the Au Sable River and be consistent with implementing a greenways system within the community.
14	Art in the park will improve the quality of experience at the park and will attract additional users.
16	Constructing a trailhead will support users of the Grayling Bicycle Turnpike by providing a convenient staging area in-town. This will draw people from out of the community to park and use the facility.
18	Our skate park is one of the best in the area and adding additional equipment will only enhance the wonderful park we already have.
19	The Children's Park will provide access to recreational opportunities for residents, in particular young families, along with creating green space in the area.
20	A Community Center could serve as an affordable place for residents to exercise, enjoy nature and spend time with their family and friends.
21	The bridge would be built to accommodate both pedestrian and snowmobile/orv traffic. A bridge at this location would expand access to trails for residents and would connect the community to regional trail systems.
22	A paved pathway will improve use of the park for walkers and bicyclers. Trail expansion will increase walkability within the community.
24	Adding links to the pedestrian network will increase walkability and therefore encourage residents to embrace a healthier life style.
25	Landscaping will improve the quality of experience at the park and will attract additional users.
26	An expanded Wi-Fi will allow for educational & recreational opportunities for the residents and park users.
28	Construction of a band shell or a portable stage will allow outdoor performances and draw residents and visitors to the downtown.
30	Additional landscaping will improve the quality of experience at the park and will attract additional users.
31 and 32	This will allow for the development of a park behind the fish hatchery. It would be consistent with implementing a greenways system within the

	community.
33	Water access for canoes and kayaks will enable people to use the Au Sable River in town and be consistent with implementing a greenways system within the community.
34	Downtown pocket park w/restrooms would give people a place to rest & relax downtown as well as have use of public restrooms.
35	
36	Maintaining and improving the City Park's greenways will be beneficial both ascetically environmentally.
37	Collaborating and expanding and enhancing the non-motorized pathway to connect Grayling to other communities and points of interest will be very beneficial to tourism.

Priority	Site	Proj. #	Property Improvements	Year Completed
High	Au Sable River City Park Phase II	2	Purchase new playground equipment for City Park	2013
High	Au Sable River City Park Phase II	3	Install security camera in Park and Nature Center restrooms	2012
High	Au Sable River City Park Phase II	5	Adding benches, tables, trash receptacles and drinking fountains to City Park	2013
High	Middle School Recreation Field	6	Adding new roof to pavilion to City Park	2013
High	Charles Moore Memorial Park	8	Dog gone pick-up stations in City Park	2013
Medium	Au Sable River City Park Phase III	10	Repair electrical system and add lighting to City Park	2009
Medium	City All Purpose Skate Park	11	Install bike parking	2014
Medium	Children's Park	13	Purchase and install security cameras both inside and outside of Nature Center building	2013
	Grayling Middle School Field	15	Purchase Portable Ice Rink	2013
	City Concrete Skate Park	17	Build a warming shed	2010
	City of Grayling Elm Street	19	Purchase property for Children's Park and/or pocket park	2013
	City of Grayling	23	Repave and stripe City Park parking lot	2010
	Au Sable River City Park Phase 11	27	Purchase and place an information kiosk outside of Nature Center building	2012
	City of Grayling	29	Gazebo for Charles Moore Memorial Park	2013
	City of Grayling	30	Landscape Charles Moore Memorial Park	2013
High	Au Sable River City Park Phase II	14	Have a mural painted or purchase art for the wall behind the window in front of the Nature Center	2015
Medium	Au Sable River City Park Phase III	36	Greenway rehabilitation the rivers edge within the City Park	2016
Medium	Charles Moore Memorial Park	30	Additional Landscaping at Charles Moore Park	2015

Low	East Branch of the Au Sable River	33	Develop public canoe/kayak launch at the park and/or in the City Limits.	2019
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Basis for Action

The Total population is 1849; the demographics of the City of Grayling indicate that a majority (55.8%) of the City exists as family households. There are 461 children under the age of 20 (25%); while 32.5% of Grayling residents are over the age of 55. There are 419 disabled residents in the City of Grayling. Due to the large number of residents



who are able to pursue active recreation as well as the high number of households with children and disabled persons, the City of Grayling must plan recreational facilities that appeal to a wide variety of people. In addition, with the median income of Grayling being \$24,000 in 2013 with 16.8% of Crawford County population and 32.7% of City of Grayling Population being below the poverty level, recreation must be fairly affordable.

The City intends to capitalize on its natural assets to fulfill the needs of outdoor recreation in the community. With the surrounding fishing, camping, snowmobiling and skiing opportunities, the City of Grayling will lean towards the development of the city’s outdoor recreational facilities. Therefore, the City of Grayling intends to develop its outdoor recreation to suit the needs of differing age groups, income levels, and physical abilities of City residents and visitors. Added pedestrian facilities will improve the walkability in the community, which would benefit all age groups and in particular the elder population and youth. The connection of residential areas to businesses and institutional facilities with pathways will support a more physically active community, thus improving community health and safety. Development of recreation facilities with a focus on meeting ADA guidelines will address the needs of residents with disabilities and the aging population. Parks and playgrounds provide safe outdoor gathering places for families. In addition, community facilities that offer no-cost recreation opportunities for residents will enhance quality of life for all residents. Access to art, whether visual or performing, further adds to the quality of life in a community.

Au Sable River City Park

In 2005, The City of Grayling received a Michigan Department of Natural Resource Land Trust grant to make improvements to the Au Sable River City Park. However, the improvements needed were much greater than the funds available to complete the project.



In 2007, the City in conjunction with the Department of Natural Resource made some major improvements to the park. These improvements include: The major renovation of a building that sits on the property creating a “Nature Center” and public restrooms. A new ADA compliant bridge was constructed over the Au Sable River, a fishing pier and a kayak launch was also constructed. We added a walking path that brings both sides of the park together and allows easy access around the park for walkers and bikers alike. Attention was given to the parking lots that surround the park, making them more user-friendly.

The Au Sable River City Park is a valuable community facility, as well as an important tourist destination. The annual Au Sable Marathon, a 120-mile canoe race begins very near this location and ends in Oscoda.

This event draws more than 10,000 people to the City of Grayling. Many of the activities that take place prior to the



marathon occur in the park. Other community events that are held in the park are the Annual Au Sable River Fine Arts and Crafts show, the Rotary

Barbeque, Chamber of Commerce Kids Day, and various concerts that are held throughout the summer.

This highly utilized park would offer much more to the community with additional signage, playground equipment, security cameras, landscaping, benches, tables, drinking fountain and trash receptacles. A new pavilion will bring additional user opportunities to complement the future shuffleboards, volleyball and band shell. Bike parking, electrical repairs including additional lighting will enhance resident experiences at the park. Fishing docks on the east-side of the Park will allow fishing opportunities for all groups including residents with disabilities. Proper irrigation will assist in maintaining the aesthetic enhancements developed in the park.

Phase II will follow ADA guidelines allowing greater use among the residents. Paving the path from the new bridge and the parking lot will allow more residents to utilize the park, especially residents with special needs. Community activities occurring at a band shell within the park will add to the utilization and awareness of the facility. Creating easy access is vital to the use of the park.

Skate Park

With 662 residents between the ages of 5-34 (35.8%), the skate park has been well used recreational opportunity within the City of Grayling. In 2004 the city created a new skate park next to the City offices/City Police department. The skate park is within walking distance to the Primary, Elementary and Middle schools. The park is well lit and is used from December (weather permitting) to the end of March. The availability of the park is solely dependent on the weather. Once the weather is below freezing the DPW floods the surface with water and continues to maintain the ice throughout the winter months.

Improvements to the rink will provide for better ice formation and ice skating. The reconstruction would also improve warm weather use of roller skating, rollerblading and skateboarding. The warming building and restrooms will enhance year-round use of the park. Constructing a trailhead will support users of the Grayling Bicycle Turnpike by providing convenient staging area in-town. Planned improvements will benefit young families and middle-aged users.

Children's Park

To help reduce the rate of obesity, the city will build a children's park adjacent to the middle school. The school owns the center of the entire city block that has identified as an area to build the Children's Park. The City of Grayling plans to purchase the designated property and then merge with the existing school property. The school would be involved in determining the two age specific play areas for the children. This joint venture with the schools and the Kiwanis is an excellent joint venture with local volunteers and community working together to benefit the youth of the city. The park

would benefit young families by providing a safe place for active outdoor recreation. Senior citizens would benefit by having another in-town park within walking distance from their homes along with providing multi-generational interaction.

Nature Center

The Nature Center is a community meeting center within the Au Sable River Park with public restroom facilities and will house a historic story of Grayling's environmental features. The building will be more appealing when the landscaping and the mural are completed. Phone and Internet accessibility within the building will enhance its educational abilities for visitors. Security cameras will limit vandalism and protect investment in the building and grounds. Construction of a band shell will allow for outdoor performances and draw residents and visitors to the downtown. The nature center will benefit all age groups in the community. Place-based education programs would permit high school students to participate in the development of gardens, nature displays and historic displays. Senior citizens would have the opportunity to work with students on displays, resulting in building cross-generational relationships. The center has the ability to become a focal point and source of community pride.

Charles Moore Memorial Park

The Charles Moore Memorial Park is a small triangle piece of land located across the street from Mercy Hospital. The park was dedicated to Charles Moore in 1973 and is a historic park in Grayling. Sidewalks and roads surround the park. On this small quaint piece of property there sits a bench with a memorial plaque that is no longer readable. Hospital staff and walkers use this park. The park is in need of a facelift as ground cover primarily consists of moss and benches need painting or upgrading. A new gazebo and landscaping will restore the overall aesthetics and usability of the park. The park will most benefit older age groups as well as hospital employees by providing a place to relax, while reflecting on the significance of the history of Grayling.

Proposed Park on the East Branch of the Au Sable River

Developing a park behind the Hatchery is an excellent extension of the current use of the property. The Hatchery receives 5,000 – 7,000 visitors each year. As the hatchery continues to be improved upon, these numbers will only increase. The Senior Center could be housed on the Hatchery property and the proposed park will provide a pleasant setting for senior citizens to enjoy their beautiful surroundings. Collaborating

with the County on this project is another example of the City of Grayling working with other organizations and volunteers. The activities planned for the park – hiking and cross-country ski trails, picnic area, canoe/kayak launch and a fishing pier will also be accessible from a bridge by the hospital. The improvements will be ADA accessible there for all ages and abilities will enjoy the recreational opportunities in this proposed park. The proposed park would be consistent with implementing a greenways system within the community. The park would benefit all age groups by providing a natural area within the City that offers a close-by escape from the hustle and bustle of urban life, where residents can enjoy beauty and sounds of nature.

