



Guidelines for the Development of Community Parks and Recreation Plans

Michigan Department of Natural Resources Grants Management Section staff is available to provide additional guidance to as you prepare a five-year recreation plan.

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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Establishing Eligibility to Apply for Recreation Grants	1
Planning Deadline	2
Coordination of Planning	3
Regional Planning	3
Preparing the Plan and Plan Content	5
Community Description.....	5
Administrative Structure	5
Recreation Inventory	6
Natural Resource Inventory (Optional)	8
Description of the Planning Process	9
Description of the Public Input Process.....	9
Goals and Objectives	11
Action Program.....	11
Supporting Documentation	11
Local Adoption and DNR Approval of Five-year Recreation Plans.....	13
Plan Amendments	14
Amended Plan Content	14
Supporting Documentation	14
Submitting Documents in migrants	16
General Notes for MiGrants	16
Submitting a Five-Year Plan.....	16
Submitting a Multi-jurisdictional Plan	16
Submitting an Amendment	17
Appendix A: Sample Resolution for Adopting a Plan or Plan Amendment.....	18

Introduction

The intent of a community park and recreation plan is to create an inventory of existing facilities and resources, identify community recreation and open space needs, and set a plan of action for a five-year period. This plan is also referred to as a five-year recreation plan. This booklet describes the information that is required for a plan to be approved by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Grants Management staff. Information contained in the plan will be used in scoring applications.

The DNR provides financial assistance to communities through its grant programs. A current DNR-approved community park and recreation plan is required to be eligible for Land and Water Conservation Fund, Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund and waterways grants. For the Recreation Passport grant program, either an approved community park and recreation plan or approved capital improvement plan may be used for eligibility.

LWCF, MNRTF and RP grants can be used for the development of public outdoor recreation facilities, including support facilities. Recreation Passport grants can be used for indoor public recreation facilities. MNRTF is the only program that can be used for the acquisition of land for public recreation and for protection of land for environmental importance or scenic beauty. Waterways grants can be used for development of marinas and recreational boating facilities.

Questions regarding the community park and recreation plan requirements can be addressed with Grants Management at 517-284-7268. Questions specific to the Waterways Program requirements can be addressed with the Waterways Program at 517-284-6122. Ultimately, approval of a community park and recreation plan will come from DNR Grants Management.

More information on grant programs is available at Michigan.gov/DNRGrants.

Establishing Eligibility to Apply for Recreation Grants

Local units of government – defined according to Part 19 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act of 1994 PA 451 – are eligible to apply for recreation grants from the DNR. The statute defines local units of government as “... a county, city, township, village, school district, the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority, or any authority composed of counties, cities, townships, villages, or school districts, or any combination thereof, which authority is legally constituted to provide public recreation.”

Under the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund, recreation grants also are available to local units of government and other appropriate public agencies. However, only the state can apply directly to the National Park Service for these grant funds; therefore, all applications from local units of government must be sent to the DNR.

In addition to these eligibility requirements, all applicants for a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund or Land and Water Conservation Fund grant must submit a recreation plan to DNR Grants Management. Upon approval of the recreation plan and in accordance with the following terms, the following entities become eligible to apply for recreation grants from the DNR.

Local units of government. Local units of government include cities, villages, townships, counties, and, for the LWCF program only, federally recognized Native American tribes.

Recreation authorities. Typically, recreation authorities include a combination of local units of government but also may include school districts. The recreation authority must be formed under Michigan enabling legislation that allows the authority to act as a local unit of government legally authorized to provide public recreation.

Grants Management staff evaluates the following to determine whether the authority is an eligible applicant:

- Enabling legislation – A list of accepted enabling legislation is included in Figure 1 below. If the authority was formed under different legislation, contact Grants Management prior to completing a five-year plan.

Figure 1: Michigan Enabling Legislation for Providing Public Recreation and Parks

Act	Title	Government Units Covered	Governing Body Established by the Act	Allows for Joint Provision of Recreation?
1905 PA 157	Township Parks and Places of Recreation	Townships	Township Park Commission or Board of Commissioners ¹	Yes
1913 PA 90	Parks, Zoological Gardens and Airports	Counties	County Park Trustees	Yes
1917 PA 156	Recreation and Playgrounds	Cities, villages, townships, counties and school districts	Recreation Board	Yes
1929 PA 312	Metropolitan District Act	Cities, villages, townships and parts thereof	Charter Commission	Yes
1965 PA 261	County and Regional Parks	Counties	Parks and Recreation Commission	Yes ¹
1976 PA 451	The Revised School Code	School districts and intermediate school districts	School Board	Yes
1989 PA 292	Metropolitan Councils Act	Cities, counties, villages and townships ¹	Metropolitan Area Council	Yes
Part 721 of 1994 PA 451	Michigan Trailways	Federal government, counties, cities, villages and townships	Michigan Trailway Management Council ¹	Yes
1967 PA 7	Urban Cooperation Act	Cities, villages, townships and counties	Recreation Board	Yes
2000 PA 321	Recreational Authorities Act	Cities, counties, villages, townships and districts ¹	Board of Directors	Yes

- Articles of incorporation – The articles must include language to address the perpetual encumbrance required by the grant programs. There must be language regarding the transfer of property upon dissolution of the authority and description of how parks acquired or developed under the authority will be transferred to the local government where the property is located. Contact Grants Management for sample language.

Trailway commissions. Trailway commissions are limited to owning and managing a regional trail or trail system. Legally established trailway commissions may submit recreation plans and establish eligibility to apply for recreation grants. In addition, participating communities that submit separate recreation plans addressing their recreation needs exclusive of the trail are eligible to apply for recreation grants on their own.

School districts. School districts may be eligible for DNR recreation grants if they are the sole provider of parks and recreation for a community and they have a DNR-approved recreation plan. This means there is no recreation department and no parks owned or managed by the local unit of government. In this situation, any existing parks or recreation facilities would be owned and controlled by the school district. When the school district is the only recreation provider, the school district's plan would be the only plan for the community. For example, there is no village, city or township recreation plan. Nature centers owned and operated by a school district are the only exception to this rule, and eligibility must be reviewed by the DNR and may only be approved under limited circumstances.

Planning Deadline

Organizations may prepare and submit recreation plans at any time during the year. However, to be eligible to apply for a recreation grant or waterways grant, the applicant's recreation plan must be submitted in MiGrants by Feb. 1 of the year the community

intends to apply for grants. If the community is not applying for a grant, the recreation plan may be submitted any time of year. All plans expire Dec. 31 of the fifth year – or earlier if approved for less than five years by the highest governing body. A sample time frame is provided in Figure 2 below.

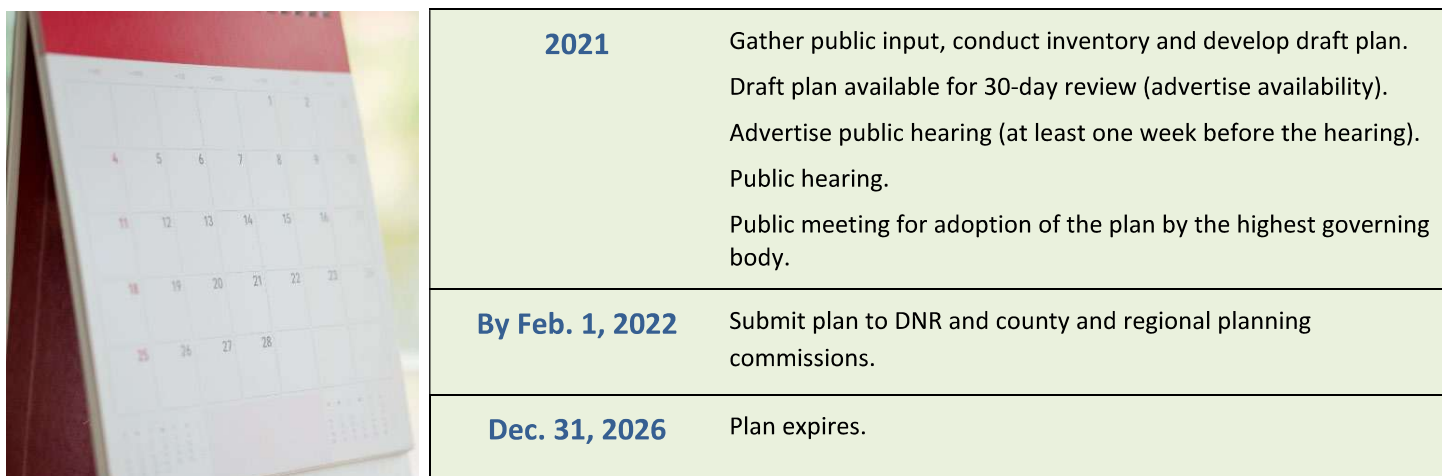


Figure 2

Coordination of Planning

Coordinated planning within a community, at a regional level, and among government agencies, private organizations, businesses and the public has many potential benefits. This includes better environmental protection, efficiency in providing park and recreation opportunities, increased funding sources, greater potential for tapping into new, creative ways of accomplishing recreation goals, enhanced public support for parks and increased potential for community buy-in for financing through millages and other taxing methods.

Regional Planning

Coordinated planning at a regional level benefits participating communities and the environment and can have practical benefits for the communities involved. For example, by planning on a regional rather than a community basis, parks and recreation staff can avoid duplicating expensive recreation facilities and give all communities involved a greater voice in planning facilities that best serve the entire region. Planning on a regional basis gives the planners a larger area in which to determine the best location for the facility based on factors such as the ability to access the site by car, public transportation and nonmotorized means, the potential effects (both positive and negative) of the facility on surrounding land uses and the environment.

Means to Accomplish Regional Planning

Regional planning is not a requirement when developing plans but is strongly recommended. There are several nonexclusive means by which regional planning may be accomplished:

1. Joint recreation plans. Collaborative planning can allow for better-coordinated and more efficient recreation systems by allowing units of government and school districts to plan together while maintaining separate control of their park lands. Joint recreation plans may include any combination of local units of government, recreation authorities, school districts or commissions.

Each unit of government included in the recreation plan is eligible, provided it meets qualifying criteria, can independently own or control park land and meets the requirements of these guidelines and the plan is adopted by the highest governing body. Once the multijurisdictional plan is approved by DNR Grants Management, individual recreation plans from any of the participating communities will not be accepted.

2. Incorporating the recreation plan into the municipal masterplan. The Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 2008,

codifies the laws for local units of government and outlines the requirement for developing a municipal master plan. The master plan must include sections on transportation (including nonmotorized), land use and recreation. A community can submit relevant sections of its master plan and – if it meets all the requirements of the recreation plan guidelines – it may be considered the community’s DNR-approved recreation plan.

The law also requires planning commissions to consult with commissions of contiguous communities when developing their master plan and to submit proposed plans to each contiguous community for review and comment prior to adoption. This may allow for coordination and avoid duplication of services with adjacent communities.

3. Joint planning commissions. With the passage of the Joint Municipal Planning Act (2003 Act 226), joint planning commissions may be formed by two or more communities – such as cities, villages or townships, but not counties – to carry out comprehensive planning, including planning for recreation, on a regional basis. The plan must meet the requirements outlined in this booklet and be adopted by the local units of government and the DNR to be eligible for funding.
4. Regional review. By contacting county and regional planning commissions during the development of the recreation plan, the community can ensure better-coordinated planning and ensure its plan does not conflict with regional or county plans. It is required that a copy of the final plan be sent to these organizations.

Preparing the Plan and Plan Content

The plan ideally forms the road map for the decisions made in the next five years regarding the provision of park and recreation lands and other open space for the community. As with all planning efforts, planners must try to determine not only current, but also future community needs. As discussed above, the coordination of recreation planning with broader community and regional planning allows organizations to better understand how the five-year recreation plan relates to other planning decisions. Coordination will improve an organization's ability to factor population growth, population demographics, planned transportation systems and land uses, among other variables, into their five-year recreation plans.

This section describes the information needed to prepare a five-year recreation plan and what the plan must contain to be approved by the DNR and to establish eligibility for applying for recreation grants during the five-year period of the recreation plan. These requirements establish minimum standards but are not intended to limit what the plan can contain. Unless noted otherwise, the following sections of the plan, outlined below, are **required**.

Community Description

Describe the jurisdiction of the five-year recreation plan. Was the plan prepared for a single township or village or does it encompass a larger region? Describe the physical and demographic characteristics of the community. This information need not be extensive, but it will provide a basic understanding of your community.

Also describe the extent of the plan's focus. For example, five-year recreation plans developed by trailway commissions would address the acquisition and development of the trail only, while plans developed by municipalities probably would include all aspects of recreation. Plans developed by a school district must describe the recreation opportunities it provides in relation to those provided by the parks and recreation department or other entity serving the same area.

Any characteristics that influence planning may be discussed later in the plan, as they relate to the goals and objectives the organization develops.

Administrative Structure

Planning for and providing park and recreation services and open space for a community require staff (or volunteers) and funds to purchase recreation land and open spaces and to develop, operate and maintain them. In this section, describe how the park and recreation functions are carried out in your community, and include descriptions of the following as they apply to the organization:

Roles of Commission(s) or Advisory Board(s)

- Describe the roles of the park and recreation commission, committee, board of directors or advisory board, if one exists.
- Include the enabling act under which it was established.
- For multijurisdictional plans, explain the working relationship among participating communities and school districts.

Department, Authority and/or Staff Description and Organizational Chart

- Describe the parks and recreation department, staff or authority, including an organizational chart.
- Define who has authority to commit funds for parks and recreation, accept grants and purchase land on behalf of the community.

Annual and Projected Budgets for Operations, Maintenance, Capital Improvements and Recreation Programming

- Provide the current-year and projected annual budgets for parks operation and maintenance, recreation programming and capital improvements.

Current Funding Sources

- Explain which funding sources are used for the park operation, maintenance, recreation programming and capital improvements.

Role of Volunteers and Organizations

- List the volunteer groups or programs involved in parks and recreation, what activities they do and the frequency of their activities.
- Describe any partnerships with private organizations to maintain or operate any parks or recreation programs.

Relationships with School Districts and Other Public Agencies Involved in Recreation

- Describe the relationship between the community and local school districts or other public agencies.
- Recreation authorities or trailway commissions also should include:
 - Description of the relationship between the authority or commission and the recreation departments of participating communities.
 - Articles of incorporation.

Recreation Inventory

A recreation inventory describes all parks, natural areas, other public spaces and recreation facilities within or near the organization's planning area – used by the residents of the planning area – with an emphasis on land and facilities the organization owns or operates.

For those lands and facilities that are owned privately, owned by a nonprofit organization or owned by another governmental unit, provide only the name, location and general information on the types of recreation and/or natural resource conservation provided. Businesses that provide recreation facilities to draw customers for their primary service, such as play areas in fast food restaurants, do not need to be included unless they are a major provider of recreation in the area.

Description of Methods Used to Conduct the Inventory

Describe the methods used to conduct the recreation inventory, including staff or consultants involved in creating or updating the inventory from previous years.

Inventory of all Community-Owned Parks and Recreation Facilities

The inventory, which can be as detailed as you would like, must at minimum contain information for the organization's parks and recreation facility system, including:

- Park name.
- Size in acres or length of linear parks.
- A description of the general purpose or use of each park.
- The park's primary service area (also consider a "walkability" map with a quarter-mile walking radius around each park).
- The type and number of recreation and support facilities, including size, quality, and age or condition of each facility.

Location Maps

Include one or more maps that show the location of all recreation and natural resource conservation areas the organization owns or operates, as well as facilities owned by others that are available to the community. Green infrastructure, trail plans or other relevant land-use plans that affect the community or region also may be included in the inventory. A site development plan can be submitted for each of the parks for which a plan has been developed, but is not required.

Accessibility Assessment

Include an accessibility assessment at each park and recreational facility site the organization owns or operates. If the organization has completed an American's with Disabilities Act transition plan, include a summary of the plan and relevant sections to meet the accessibility evaluation requirement. The New England ADA Center has developed checklists at [ADAChecklist.org](https://www.adachecklist.org), which may be helpful in completing an assessment but are not required. At a minimum, the evaluation should:

- Describe references used and who conducted the evaluation.

- Compare each facility to the [2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design](#) and, at a minimum, give a ranking from 1-5. Although it is not required for Title II and III communities, the Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas may also be a helpful reference.

DNR Accessibility Grading System for Parks and Recreation Facilities	
Accessibility Grade	Definition
1	None of the facilities meet accessibility guidelines
2	Some facilities meet accessibility guidelines
3	Most facilities meet accessibility guidelines
4	The entire park meets accessibility guidelines
5	The entire park was developed using the principles of universal design

- Describe how the organization intends to address ADA compliance. A brief description is acceptable and may be covered in the goals and action plan.

Status Report for all Grant-Assisted Parks and Recreation Facilities

Briefly describe the status of grant-assisted sites and facilities. The community grant history can be accessed in MiGrants. Include whether the site is still open to the public, if the grant-funded facilities are still present and if any conversions of use exist at the site.

Most DNR recreation grant programs encumber the project boundary for recreation use in perpetuity, or for 20 to 40 years for Recreation Passport grants. Parks that are sold or where the use is transferred from recreation to another use are considered a conversion. If a conversion is identified, contact DNR Grants Management for instructions on conversion mitigation requirements. Address how the community will mitigate conversions in the action plan. The conversion also should be noted in the post-completion self-certification report, which is described in the supporting documentation section of this booklet.

Inventory of Existing Harbor/Marina Facilities (if Applicable)

This section is required only for communities with harbors and marinas and is required to be eligible for Michigan DNR Waterways Grants.

Recreational harbors are designed to be used by boaters for protection, overnight stays or day-use visits. These facilities may be included in the recreation inventory and location map or you may create a separate inventory and map of these facilities.

The harbor inventory can be as detailed as is useful to you, but must contain the following information at minimum.

Name and location of facility: Include the location information of your facility, how the facility fits in relation to your community, the body of water it accesses, nearby amenities, etc.

Size of facility: Include numbers of seasonal and transient slips for harbor facilities, discuss whether the facility meets the demands of boaters, whether the facility is too large or too small, and if boaters are turned away or if there are waiting lists.

ADA accessibility: Explain whether the facility meets current ADA guidelines. Please include details on all aspects that meet and do not meet ADA requirements.

Site development plan: If you have current development plans, please explain or include.

Marketing, events and partnerships: Explain any ways you currently market your facility and any future marketing plans. Include any event currently hosted at this facility or future event plans. Please describe any current partnerships or if you have any future partnering plans.

Dredging Information: In this section, detail any current dredging needs, a typical dredge cycle, approximate volume of dredged materials and dredged materials disposal location.

Maintenance and replacement: This section should include the three categories:

- Annual maintenance schedule. Please provide some detail on your typical annual maintenance and repairs, including projected costs.
- Minor or small-scale infrastructure replacement schedule. This would be for minor infrastructure and replacement of smaller items. Please include a projected year and a projected cost.
- Large-scale maintenance and replacement schedules. This section would include larger maintenance and replacement schedules for things like buildings, docks, water systems and more. Include a projected year and projected cost.

See an example in figure 4.

Figure 4: Maintenance and Replacement

Example: Annual Maintenance Schedule

<u>Repairs and maintenance</u>	\$35,000
Buildings	
Startup costs	
Painting	
Irrigation maintenance	
Sewer maintenance	
Minor electrical repairs	
Sidewalks	
Vehicles and equipment	
Winterization	
Lumber	
<u>Annual Supplies</u>	\$15,000.00
tools	
hardware	
office supplies	
cleaning and paper products	
<u>Annual services</u>	\$60,000.00
trash service	
utilities	
weed control	

Example: Minor and small-scale infrastructure replacement schedule

<u>Equipment replacement</u>	<u>year</u>	<u>projected cost</u>
New push mower	2018	\$250.00
New dock carts	2020	\$1,000.00
<u>Minor infrastructure repairs</u>	<u>year</u>	<u>projected cost</u>
Bathroom fixtures	2018	\$ 1,000.00
Lighting upgrades in parking lot	2019	\$ 2,500.00
Shower door replacement	2020	\$ 6,000.00
Parking lot restriping	2021	\$ 5,000.00

Example: Large-scale maintenance and replacement schedules

<u>Project</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>estimated cost</u>
Re roof harbormaster building	2018	\$ 50,000.00
Replace water lines on docks	2020	\$100,000.00
Re deck T dock	2021	\$ 60,000.00
Maintenance Dredge	2024	\$ 50,000.00

Natural Resource Inventory (Optional)

Resource inventories provide a method to identify open-space land that may be desirable for future protection and/or public access through acquisition or other means due to the natural features present, as well as an accounting of land that is already protected.

It is important to develop a resource inventory, because it will assist in identifying the most desirable lands for acquisition in terms

of their ecological significance, location, proximity to other natural areas and other factors. Typically, a resource inventory would be conducted by creating a map of each type of resource or feature considered important for conservation purposes, such as wetlands, soils, surface water and forests, as well as maps of political boundaries, roads and parcel maps. These individual maps (or data layers) are usually incorporated into a geographic information system. They then can be combined with each other to determine the relative conservation value of different lands and the relationship of these lands to each other.

When conducting a resource inventory, map natural features such as wetlands, flood plains, groundwater recharge areas, woodlands, farmlands, wildlife habitat, rare species and scenic viewsheds. Land already protected, such as public parks and recreation areas, state or national forests, designated natural rivers and designated natural areas, also should be incorporated into the inventory.

Description of the Planning Process

In this section, planning methods are discussed. These methods are intended to assist with the assessment of the organization's park, recreation and open-space needs. Organizations are encouraged to choose planning methods that work best for their community.

Planning Methods

Comparison to park metrics: Comparison of existing recreation opportunities to park metrics can be used to determine deficiencies in the recreation system; however, it is important to apply knowledge of the community when determining its recreation needs. Relevant information may include age and income distribution, neighborhood structure and recreation interests of the community, and recreation opportunities in nearby communities. The National Recreation and Park Association park metrics can be viewed here: <https://www.nrpa.org/publications-research/ParkMetrics/>.

System planning: This planning method will use the organization's metrics, priorities, needs, level of service and community-wide issues to guide cyclical planning efforts. As planning efforts are implemented, the system can be re-evaluated to measure success and guide future planning goals. More information on parks and recreation system planning can be found here: <https://www.nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2020/november/a-new-approach-to-parks-and-recreation-system-planning/>.

Equity-based planning: This planning method focuses on community engagement, equity and inclusion. Planning for equity will ensure all people have access to programs, facilities and public spaces in the community. Benefits of equity-based planning may include improving community health, economic impact, access and resiliency. More information on equity-based planning can be accessed here: <https://www.nrpa.org/publications-research/best-practice-resources/creating-equity-based-system-master-plans/>.

Additional planning methods and resources not listed in this booklet are available for organizations to use. Contact the DNR Grants Management Section to add a resource to this list.

Description of the Public Input Process

In this section, describe the methods used to incorporate public input into the recreation planning process. Residents' opinion on recreation and open-space priorities is a key consideration in plan development.

Early Public Input

As you develop your plan, you must solicit early public input from your community before preparing your draft plan. The means of soliciting that input should take place within a year of plan adoption by the governing body.

It is important to involve the public *early* in the process before the draft plan is written. It is highly recommended that additional effort be put forth to solicit comments from residents living near future projects and from others who may be negatively affected by the projects. Special efforts may be required to involve segments of the population whose concerns are often overlooked. If your community has substantial minority, low-income, disabled or elderly populations, identify and address their needs and concerns.

Early public input increases ownership of the plan by community members, promotes democracy and equality with equal

opportunity to share in decisions, empowers residents to be more active and to participate more fully, enhances creativity, increases stability and commitment to management, and encourages support for local grassroots initiatives.

During early public input, a typical public meeting format is discouraged. Methods such as surveys, questionnaires, workshops, stakeholder meetings, focus groups, or visioning sessions are encouraged because they facilitate more public participation from all segments of the population. Describe the early public input method(s) you used. Explain whether the responses received represented the whole community, groups that do not typically attend public meetings, the potential users for special-use areas (for example, skate parks) and those who may be greatly affected by the recreation and open-space opportunities considered. This is an ideal time to include input from other recreation providers, private and public partners and regional organizations.

30-Day Public Review Period

Once the draft plan has been completed, residents must be provided with a well-publicized opportunity of adequate length, at least 30 days, to review and comment on the plan before it is officially adopted. Select convenient locations for reviewing the draft plan, such as your public library, town hall and municipal website. Document and describe the methods you used to notify people of the opportunity to review and comment on the draft plan before it was officially adopted. The notification can be accomplished by a variety of means, including methods typically used to make announcements by the governing body, such as a published notice or posting at the government office or on the municipal website, etc. The announcement must include the date of posting and must be certified by the publisher. Physical postings must be date-certified by the clerk. The notice should provide instructions to the public on how to submit comments to the plan via email or other methods. In addition, provide a summary of any comments received and how they were used to modify the plan.

Public Hearing and Resolution of Adoption

The final means of soliciting public input is an advertised public hearing, held after the 30-day public review period. The public must be given the opportunity to provide comments prior to passing a resolution to adopt the plan, according to the Open Meetings Act, PA 267 of 1976. This public hearing can be held as part of a regularly scheduled meeting, such as a planning or parks and recreation commission or a meeting of the governing body, or it can be held as a special single-topic public hearing. The public hearing must occur prior to passing a resolution for adoption by the highest governing body. If both the public hearing and resolution for adoption occur at one meeting of the highest governing body, they must be conducted as separate agenda items and the public hearing must be held prior to the resolution for adoption. Plans will not be accepted if the public hearing occurs after the plan has been adopted by the local governing body or bodies.

Advance notice for the public hearing is required in the manner typically used by the community for public hearings, such as published notice, certified posting at government offices, posting on the municipal website, etc. The announcement must include information on the time, date and location of the public hearing. The public hearing notice must be available for viewing to residents in all local units of government included in the plan. Proof of the notice location and posting date must be provided, such as an affidavit from the publisher, or full copies of the published page with the notice, including masthead. Physical postings must be date-certified by the clerk and include photo documentation. Notices for the public hearing should be publicized in the same manner as the community notices other public hearings, as for the planning commission. Care should be taken to provide a nonelectronic method, as not everyone has access to the internet. Notice for the 30-day review period and the public hearing can be combined if the title of the notice includes both items.

The final resolution to adopt the plan must come from the highest governing body. The adoption of the plan must be in the form of a resolution of adoption. The template for the resolution for adopting the recreation plan can be found in Appendix A.

Public hearing minutes must reflect that a call for comment was made to the public and whether there was public comment or not. When submitting the plan to the DNR, include a copy of the published notices for the 30-day review period and the public hearing and the approved, certified minutes of the meetings at which the public hearing was conducted and the plan was adopted by the governing body. If the plan was adopted at a separate meeting from the public hearing, provide the minutes of both meetings.

For joint recreation plans, the public hearings can be condensed to cover multiple communities at one meeting if the meetings are located so that all residents can easily attend. Otherwise, each community should host its own public hearing. Any proposed

consolidation of public hearings for joint recreation plans should be approved by the DNR prior to scheduling them. The public hearing must be advertised for all the communities contained within the plan in a method that can be viewed by members of all those communities. The plan must be adopted by resolution at a public meeting of each of the individual local governing bodies covered in the plan.

Goals and Objectives

In this section, describe the goals and objectives you developed during the preparation of your plan. Also describe the information you used to formulate the goals and objectives, including the role public input played in their formulation.

Goals should be based on the demographic characteristics of the population served and the physical and environmental characteristics of the area, such as the size of the population, age, gender and the distribution of low-income, disabled, elderly and minority residents. Recreation opportunities provided should be determined based on a consideration of the demographic subgroups that make up the population of the community, which recreation opportunities each of these subgroups wants, where the subgroups live, how they will get to the parks or other locations that provide recreation opportunities, how much they can afford to pay and many other factors.

Protection of open space will be dependent on the physical characteristics of the area. Physical characteristics include topography, water resources, soils, vegetation, fish and wildlife resources, presence and location of rare species, as well as human-created characteristics such as land-use patterns, transportation systems and zoning.

Goals should be broad enough and have one or more objectives associated with them. Objectives will be more specific actions to help accomplish the goal.

For example:

Goal: To provide recreation facilities to meet the needs of the community.

Objective: Construct additional soccer fields at Memorial Park.

There currently are 50 school-age kids participating in soccer, and the existing fields are scheduled to capacity. In the next five years, 100 children in the community will be of school age. During the community visioning session and recreation survey, the community expressed interest in programming for adult soccer leagues.

Action Program

The action program is the section of the plan where you identify how you intend to meet or work toward meeting your goals and objectives over the next five years. Describe specific projects identified during the planning process and how they will meet goals and objectives. You also may include organizational, staffing, programming, public information, operation and maintenance actions, as well as land acquisition and facility development, if applicable. A capital improvement schedule for park development projects is not required, but may be useful for planning purposes and may include the type of improvement, the estimated cost, funding sources and a schedule of construction.

Supporting Documentation

A number of supporting documents will be required to be submitted in MiGrants separate from the 5-year Recreation Plan and are described below.

Post-Completion Self-Certification Reports

Every five years, updated [post-completion self-certification reports](#) — including photographs of the park entrance sign and program acknowledgement plaque — are required for all previous grants, regardless of the year of funding, for the following grant programs:

- Land and Water Conservation Fund

- Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund
- Recreation Passport Grant Program
- Clean Michigan Initiative Fund
- Recreation Bond Fund

Submitted recreation plans will not be approved by the DNR until these forms are completed and returned, including photos of required program recognition plaques.

Maintenance and other issues identified during the inventory, including those at grant-assisted sites, should be addressed within the community plan if they cannot readily be corrected.

Early Input Before the Draft Plan is Written

Provide results of community surveys or questionnaires and/or notes from informal workshops, focus groups, stakeholder meetings or other informal public input opportunities. Read through the [early input section](#) of this booklet for more information. Provide a copy of the survey, meeting agenda, etc., and a summary of the amount of response and the information and opinions received.

Notice of the Draft Plan for 30 Days of Public Comment

The notice for the 30-day review period should include the date of posting and instructions on how the public can view the draft plan and submit comments and should be certified by the publisher. If the notice is published in a newspaper, a full-page print of the posting or an affidavit of publication may be submitted. If the notice is published online or on a social media site, a screen print or screenshot – which includes the post dates – can be submitted, or the person who posted the notice can submit a signed statement with the date of posting. If a printed copy of the notice is posted at a physical location, such as a township hall or library, submit clerk certification with the location and dates of posting and a photo of the posted notice.

Notice of the Public Hearing

The notice for the public hearing should include the date of posting and the date and location of the public hearing, should be certified by the publisher and should state that the recreation plan will be discussed at the meeting. Provide a copy of the notice for all public hearings, if more than one took place. If the notice is published in a newspaper, a full-page print of the posting or an affidavit of publication may be submitted. If the notice is published online or on a social media site, a screen print or screenshot that includes the post dates can be submitted, or the IT director can certify posting dates. If a printed copy of the notice is posted at a physical location, such as a township hall or library, the person who posted the notice should submit a clerk-certified copy of the notice with the location and dates of posting and a photo of the posted notice.

Minutes from the Public Hearing

Approved, clerk-certified meeting minutes should be submitted. Unapproved meeting minutes can be submitted to meet the submission deadline, but the approved, signed copy is required prior to DNR approval of the recreation plan. Include minutes from all public hearings, if more than one took place. Public comments should be recorded on the minutes.

Minutes from the Meeting to Pass a Resolution of Adoption

Approved, clerk-certified meeting minutes should be submitted. Unapproved meeting minutes can be submitted to meet the submission deadline, but the approved, signed copy is required prior to DNR approval of the recreation plan. If the public hearing took place at the same meeting at which a resolution was passed, the public hearing portion of the meeting must have occurred prior to the resolution to adopt the plan and minutes must be provided for both the public hearing and the meeting where the resolution was passed.

Transmittal Letters to the County and Regional Planning Agencies

A copy of the completed plan should be sent to the [regional planning agency](#). A copy also should be sent to the county planning commission. If there is no county planning commission, forward to the parks department of the county commission. Submit a copy of the letter or email transmitting the plan to both agencies.

Local Adoption and DNR Approval of Five Year Recreation Plans

To be eligible for DNR recreation grant consideration, an organization's five-year recreation plan must be adopted by a resolution of the governing body that has the final authority on recreation expenditures, such as a city council, recreation authority's board of directors or township board. (See Appendix A for a resolution template with required language.) If the planning process included the adoption of the plan by a planning commission or parks and recreation commission, that is additional and optional, as those boards must seek approval for expenditures by a higher governing body. These resolutions may be included in the supporting documentation.

Plan Amendments

Prior to the expiration date of a plan, a community may want to amend portions of the plan. An approved plan may be amended at any time during the five-year period of eligibility to reflect significant changes in community conditions, action plan or goals and objectives. An amendment does not extend the five-year life of the plan. Please discuss the need for an amendment with your DNR grant coordinator prior to initiating the process. If a potential project meets the plan's stated goals and objectives, it is not required that it be specifically identified in the action plan.

Amendment deadline: Communities may prepare five-year recreation plan amendments at any time during the year; however, for amendments to be considered during a grant application preliminary evaluation period, they must be submitted in MiGrants by Feb. 1 of the year the application will be submitted.

Amended Plan Content

The amended plan will be uploaded in MiGrants and should include the following information:

- Description of the planning process.
- Description of the public input process.
- Amended goals, objectives or action plan.
- Description of any other amended plan elements.

Supporting Documentation

Notice of Draft Plan for 14 Days of Public Comment

Once the amendment has been drafted, residents must be provided with a well-publicized opportunity of adequate length – at least two weeks – to review and provide input on it before it is officially adopted. Convenient places to allow the public to view the draft amendment are at your city or township hall, public library and on your municipal website. The amendment should be accompanied by the original plan for the two-week review period.

Notice of the Public Hearing

After the two-week review period, a public hearing must take place to take comment on the proposed changes to the plan. The public hearing notice must be published in advance of the hearing, according to the Open Meetings Act, PA 267 of 1976. The public hearing notice must be available for viewing to residents in all local units of government included in the plan.

Minutes from the Public Hearing and Resolution

Approved, certified meeting minutes should be submitted for both the public hearing and the meeting where the resolution was passed to adopt the amended plan. Unapproved meeting minutes can be submitted to meet the submission deadline, but the approved, certified copy is required prior to DNR approval of the recreation plan. Include minutes from all public hearings, if more than one took place. Public comments should be recorded in the minutes. Minutes must reflect that the public hearing took place, with a call to the public, whether or not anyone actually chose to speak. The public hearing and resolution for adoption can occur at one meeting of the highest governing body if they are conducted as separate agenda items and the public hearing occurs prior to the resolution for adoption.

Certified Resolution

Plan amendments must be adopted by the same governing body that adopted the original plan. (See Appendix A for a sample resolution.) Any amendments to a multijurisdictional recreation plan must be adopted by all communities affected by the change to the plan. A letter with a copy of the amendment must be sent to all communities covered by the plan.

Transmittal Letters to the County and Regional Planning Agencies

A copy of the amended plan should be sent to the county and regional planning agencies identified on the table below. Upload a copy of the letter or email transmitting the plan to both agencies. If there is no county planning commission, transmit the plan to the parks and recreation department or county commission instead.

Submitting Documents in MiGrants

All five-year Recreation Plans and plan amendments must be submitted to DNR Grants Management through an online application system, MiGrants, found at MiGrants.Intelligrants.com.

To submit an electronic version of a five-year recreation plan or amendment, a community must register its organization in the MiGrants system and receive approval as a new applicant from DNR Grants Management. If a community is already a registered organization, log in with the proper username and password. Once logged in, a community representative can use the “My Training Tools” link on the top of the home page as a guide for how to upload documents.

Upon receipt of the adopted plan and documentation, DNR Grants Management will review the plan for completion to ensure that all required documentation is included in the submittal. You will receive notification if the recreation plan submittal package is approved or requires additional documentation. Grant eligibility expires Dec. 31 of the last year covered by the plan, but in no case can the plan cover more than five years.

General Notes for MiGrants

Register in MiGrants – Five-year recreation plans are **only** accepted in MiGrants. A representative of the local unit of government must register as the authorized official in MiGrants. This role will allow this person to submit the five-year recreation Plan and add people to the organization and to documents in MiGrants. When the community is ready to submit grant applications, the authorized official is the only person who can initiate and submit grant applications. Because of this, the authorized official should be someone with the authority to complete these tasks and who is likely to respond on the project.

MiGrants notifications – The authorized official and anyone else who is added to the five-year recreation plan document in MiGrants will receive system-generated emails when there is a status change and also may receive emails from the DNR grant coordinators. Do not reply to any email notifications from MiGrants. System messages will come from the email address NoReply-MiGrants@Michigan.gov. If you receive an email that the five-year recreation plan was not approved, this may mean additional information is required. If you receive such an email, go to the five-year recreation plan document in MiGrants to review comments in the DNR-only box.

Submitting a Five-Year Plan

1. Authorized official logs into MiGrants at MiGrants.Intelligrants.com. In the “My Opportunities” box, choose “5-year Recreation Plan” to initiate a new recreation plan. Confirm that you want to start a new five-year recreation plan. The new five-year recreation plan document has been created. From now on, any organization members can start with step 2 to open and submit the five-year recreation plan.
2. Click on “Searches” then “5-year Recreation Plan” and click “search.”
3. Click on the document name to open the recreation plan.
4. On the left navigation menu, go to “Forms” and click “Plan Info & Certification.” Complete the required fields, certify the page and click “save.”
5. On the left navigation menu, go to “Forms” and click “Plan & Supporting Documentation.” Upload all required attachments, fill out the text boxes and click “save.” You will only be allowed to upload one file in each upload area. Combine documents into one file, if needed. The maximum file upload size is 25 MB.
6. Once all required documents have been uploaded and saved, the authorized official can change the status to submit the recreation plan for DNR review. On the left navigation menu, go to “Status Options” and click “5-Year Recreation Plan Submitted.”
7. The DNR has now received the submission and will review it. If clarifications are needed, your DNR grant coordinator will change the status of the five-year plan to “5-Year Plan Not Approved.” This will allow you to upload missing documents or clarify information. The documents must be saved and submitted following the same steps above.

Submitting a Multi-jurisdictional Plan

For multijurisdictional plans, the following applies:

- All communities included in the plan must submit a five-year recreation plan in MiGrants at MiGrants.Intelligrants.com.
- All communities must each upload the following for their own community:
 - Public hearing notifications and public hearing meeting minutes.
 - If there is a separate meeting for the public hearing and adoption, also upload the meeting minutes where the plan was adopted by the highest governing body of that community.
 - Resolution where the plan was adopted by the highest governing body of that community.
 - Post-completion self-inspection reports.

Submitting an Amendment

If the organization has an approved five-year recreation plan on file with the DNR, contact your DNR grant coordinator prior to submitting an amendment to the plan.

1. Authorized official logs in to MiGrants at MiGrants.Intelligrants.com. Click on “Searches,” then “5-year Recreation Plan” and then click “Search.” Click on the document name to open the recreation plan. On the left navigation menu, go to “Status Options” and click “Amendment in Process.” From now on, any organization members can start with step 2 to open and submit the five-year recreation plan amendment.
2. Click on “Searches,” then “5-year Recreation Plan” and then click “Search.”
3. Click on the document name to open the recreation plan.
4. On the left navigation menu, go to “Forms” and click “Plan Amendment.”
5. Complete all required items on the page, then save the page.
6. Once all required documents have been uploaded and saved, the authorized official can change the status to submit the recreation plan for DNR review. On the left-navigation menu, go to “Status Options” and click “5-Year Recreation Plan Submitted.”
7. The DNR has now received the submission and will review it. If clarifications are needed, your DNR grant coordinator will change the status of the five-year recreation plan to “5-Year Plan Not Approved.” This will allow you to upload missing documents or clarify information. The documents must be saved and submitted following the same steps above.

Appendix A: Sample Resolution for Adopting a Plan or Plan Amendment

(NAME OF PLAN / AMENDMENT)

For *(name of governing body of local unit of government OR name of recreation authority/commission), (county name)*

WHEREAS, the *(local unit of government OR recreation authority/commission)* has undertaken a planning process to determine the recreation and natural resource conservation needs and desires of its residents during a five-year period covering the years 20__ through 20__, and

WHEREAS, the *(local unit of government)* has entered into this planning process in collaboration with *(names of other local units of government)*, and

WHEREAS, the combined area of the aforementioned local units of government constitutes the planning area, and

WHEREAS, the *(governing body of local unit of government)* is of the understanding that the governing bodies of the aforementioned local units of government intend to pass a similar resolution of adoption of the *(name of recreation and natural resource conservation plan)*, and

OR

WHEREAS, the *(recreation authority/commission)* is made up of representatives from *(names of local units of government)*, and

WHEREAS, the *(local unit of government OR recreation authority/commission)* began the process of developing a *(community recreation and natural resource conservation plan / plan amendment)* in accordance with the most recent guidelines developed by the Department of Natural Resources and made available to local communities, and

WHEREAS, residents of the *(local unit of government OR planning area)* were provided with a well-advertised opportunity during the development of the draft plan to express opinions, ask questions and discuss all aspects of the recreation and natural resource conservation plan, and

WHEREAS, the public was given a well-advertised opportunity and reasonable accommodations to review the *(final draft plan / plan amendment)* for a period of at least (30 days for plan / two weeks for amendments), and

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held on *(date)* at *(place)* to provide an opportunity for all residents of the planning area to express opinions, ask questions and discuss all aspects of the *(name of recreation and natural resource conservation plan)*, and

WHEREAS, the *(local unit of government OR recreation authority/commission)* has developed the plan as a guideline for improving recreation and enhancing natural resource conservation for the *(local unit of government OR recreation authority/commission)*, and

WHEREAS, after the public hearing, the *(governing body of local unit of government OR governing body of recreation authority/commission)* voted to adopt said *(name of recreation and natural resource conservation plan)*.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the *(governing body of local unit of government OR governing body of recreation authority/commission)* hereby adopts the *(name of recreation and natural resource conservation plan)*.

Yeas: Nays: Absent:

I, (name), (title), do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and original copy of a resolution adopted by the (name of governing body) at a Regular/Special Meeting thereof held on the (___ day of _____, 20__.)

<<Seal here, if a seal is available>>

(signature)

*Joint Plan Only

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES MISSION STATEMENT

"The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the State's natural resources for current and future generations."

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION STATEMENT

The Natural Resources Commission (NRC), as the governing body for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, provides a strategic framework for the DNR to effectively manage your resources. The NRC holds monthly, public meetings throughout Michigan, working closely with its constituencies in establishing and improving natural resources management policy.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources provides equal opportunities for employment and access to Michigan's natural resources. Both state and Federal laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, disability, age, sex, height, weight, or marital status under the U.S. Civil Rights Acts of 1964 as amended, 1976 MI PA 453, 1976 MI PA 220, Title V of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, and the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended.

If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility, or if you desire additional information, please write: Human Resources, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, PO Box 30028, Lansing MI 48909-7528 or Michigan Department of Civil Rights, Cadillac Place, Suite 3-600, 3054 W. Grand Blvd, Detroit, MI 48202, or Division of Federal Assistance, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Mail Stop MBSP-4020, Arlington, VA 22203.

For information or assistance on this publication, contact Grants Management, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, PO Box 30425, Lansing, MI 48909-7925.

This publication is available in alternative formats upon request.