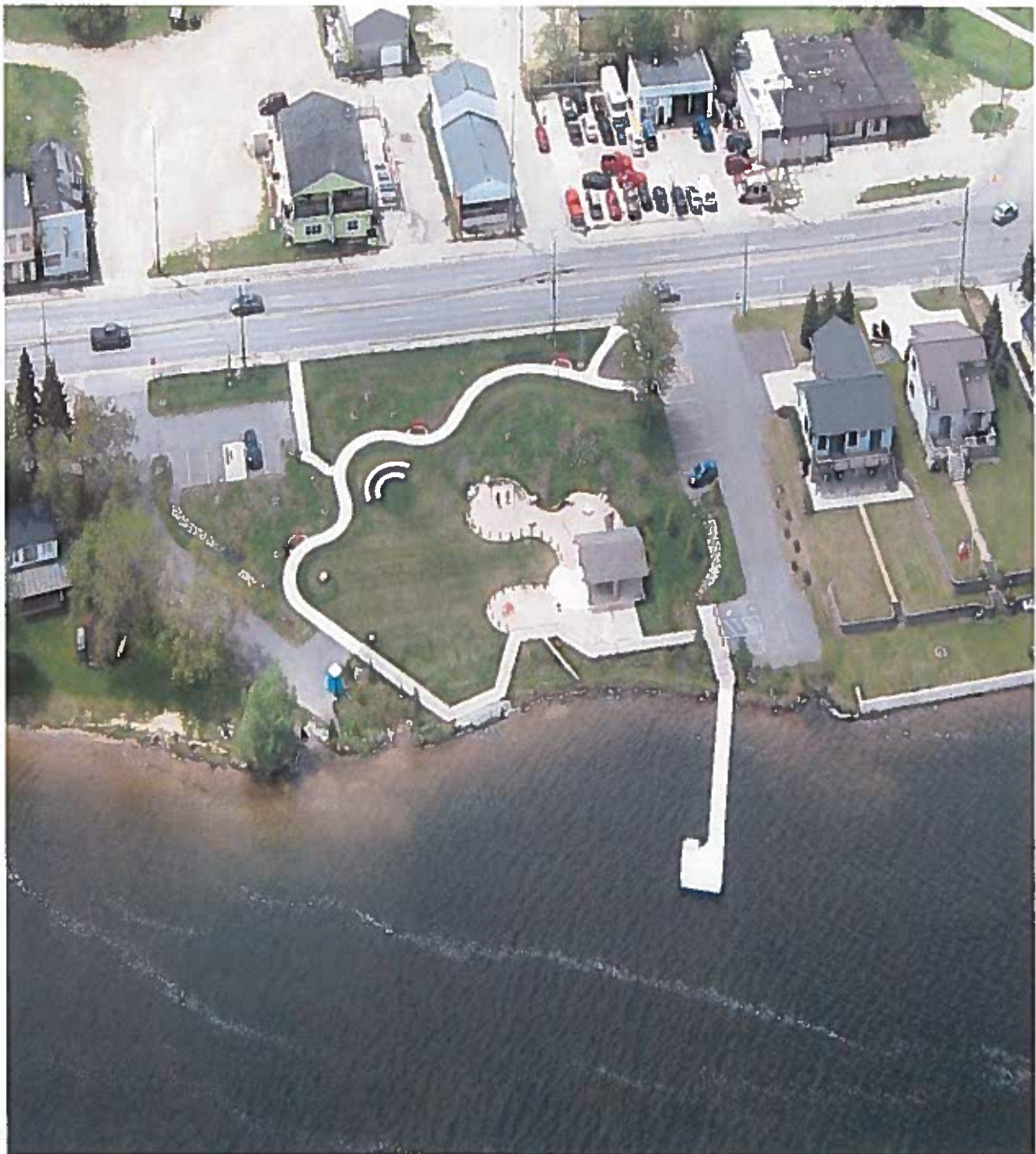


# ROSCOMMON TOWNSHIP PARK MASTER PLAN 2019 - 2023



## **Chapter 1: ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE**

There are several commissions and organizations that are concerned with the development and provision of parks and recreational facilities in Roscommon Township, including:

- The Roscommon County Board of Commissioners
- The Roscommon Township Parks Committee
- The Houghton Lake School District
- The Roscommon County Planning Commission
- The Michigan State University Extension office
- Central Michigan University
- The Roscommon County Road Commission
- Houghton Lake, Lake Association
- Houghton Lake Improvement Board
- Houghton Lake Rotary Club

While this is a rather extensive list, the County is homogeneous to the level that these various groups work effectively together.

The main responsibility for Township parks and recreation facilities has been with the Roscommon Township Board. However, with the increased demand for service and the complexity in Township government today, recreational services and the supervision of facilities need the attention of a focused advisory committee. Therefore, the Board established a Roscommon Township Parks and Recreation Committee made up of a cross section of interested citizens. This advisory committee's responsibilities include; development of Roscommon Township's Parks and Recreation Master Plan, making recommendations to the Board regards implementing the Plan's action program, serving as the catalyst for implementation of Board approved action, and an annual review of the Master Plan.

The responsibility of financing, operating, maintaining and programming the Township park system rests entirely on the shoulders of the Roscommon Township Board. The Township currently has in place the administrative capacity to operate the recreation program. A fully staffed office is open five days per week. They utilize standard bookkeeping techniques and are familiar with federal regulations.

Because the demand for recreation facility improvement, expansion and development far exceeds resources of the Township, it is imperative that the Township secure assistance from other funding sources for this purpose.

## **Chapter 2:**

### **COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION**

Roscommon Township is located in Roscommon County on the southwest quarter of Houghton Lake, Michigan's largest inland lake, and contains approximately 72 square miles of Michigan State Forest. The Houghton Lake area is a four-season vacation destination with a growing retirement community, and is located between I-75 and U.S. 127. Tourism and Service industries are primary contributors to the economic base of Townships touching Houghton Lake's shores.

#### **SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

- U.S. Bureau of Census
  - 1990 & 2000 census
  - 2004 & 2005 population estimates
  - 2010 Census Data
- Michigan Department of Natural Resources

#### **FINDINGS: Topography**

- Elevations within Roscommon Township range from 500 feet to 1300 feet above Lakes Michigan and Huron. The soil is primarily sand with isolated pockets of clay deposits.

#### **FINDINGS: Water Resources**

- Houghton Lake is 20,044 acres and has approximately 37 miles of shoreline and a maximum depth of 25 feet.
- Within Roscommon Township are 4 miles of Houghton Lake shoreline. The shores touching Houghton Lake are heavily populated.

#### **FINDINGS: Climate Conditions**

- The chief climatic features of Roscommon Township are a mean annual temperature of 43.8 degrees, total mean precipitation of 28.16 inches, and total mean snowfall of approximately 54 inches. The climate is conducive to winter and summer recreational activities.
- Winters are long as temperatures below freezing prevail from November to March with occasional below freezing temperatures expected in September, October, April, and May. The summers are characterized by high percentages of sunshine and moderate temperatures. The average summer temperature is 73 degrees Fahrenheit with temperatures reaching into the 90's at times.

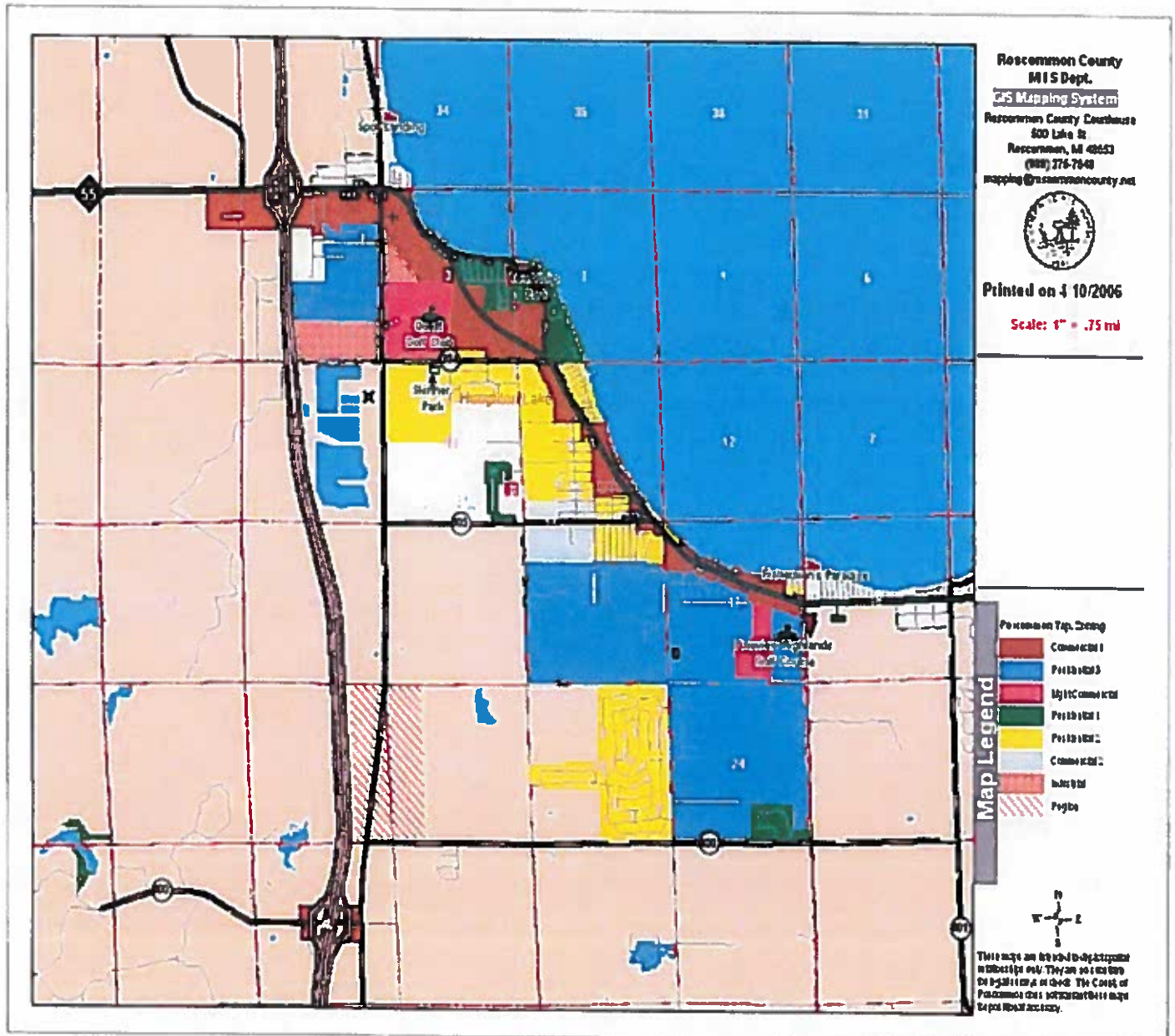
#### **FINDINGS: Vegetation & Wildlife**

- Diverse types of fish and wildlife that flourish in its waters and forest enrich Roscommon Township's environment. Fish species include trout, perch, pike and pan fish. Examples of wildlife inhabiting the Township's forested areas include muskrat, beaver, white tail deer, black bear, woodcock, ruffed grouse, fox, skunk, raccoon, bald eagle, osprey, owl and songbirds.

# 2019 - 2023 MASTER PLAN

## FINDINGS: Land Use

- The most predominate land use in Roscommon Township is forest reserves. Approximately 74% of the Township is Michigan State Forest land or Wildlife Research area. Uses of the remaining land include residential, commercial and industrial uses.
- Most development is along M-55, where residential and commercial land uses are concentrated. A generalized land use map appears below.



## 2019 - 2023 MASTER PLAN

### FINDINGS: Growth

- Between 1990 and 2004 total population of Roscommon County increased from 19,776 to 26,103 or 32%.
- Between 1990 and 2004 total population of Roscommon Township increased from 3,223 to 4,326 or 34%.
- Based on 2010 Census date, Roscommon Township has a population of 4411.

### FINDINGS: Age

- 24% of the township population is over the age of 60.
- From 1994 to 2003 the slowest growing segment of the population was for persons under 18 (7.5%) and from 18 to 44 (16.9%). This was below the growth rate for these age groups in Michigan.
- The median age of county residents is 12 years older than the average age in the state of Michigan.

### FINDINGS: Income & Employment

- 8.4% of township families are below the poverty level.
- However, this increases to 15.5% for families with children 5 and under and to 19.5% for families with children younger than 18.
- 68.8% of households have income from social security or retirement.

### FINDINGS: Summary

Demographic Characteristics of Township & County Residents from Census data 2000

Characteristic	TWP	County	US
Median age	41	47	35
Children under 5	5.5%	4.3%	6.8%
Adults over 65	17.9%	23.8%	12.4%
Persons with disabilities	28.3%	25.2%	12.4%
Median household income	\$28,805	\$30,029	\$41,994
Households below the poverty level	8.4%	8.6%	9.2%

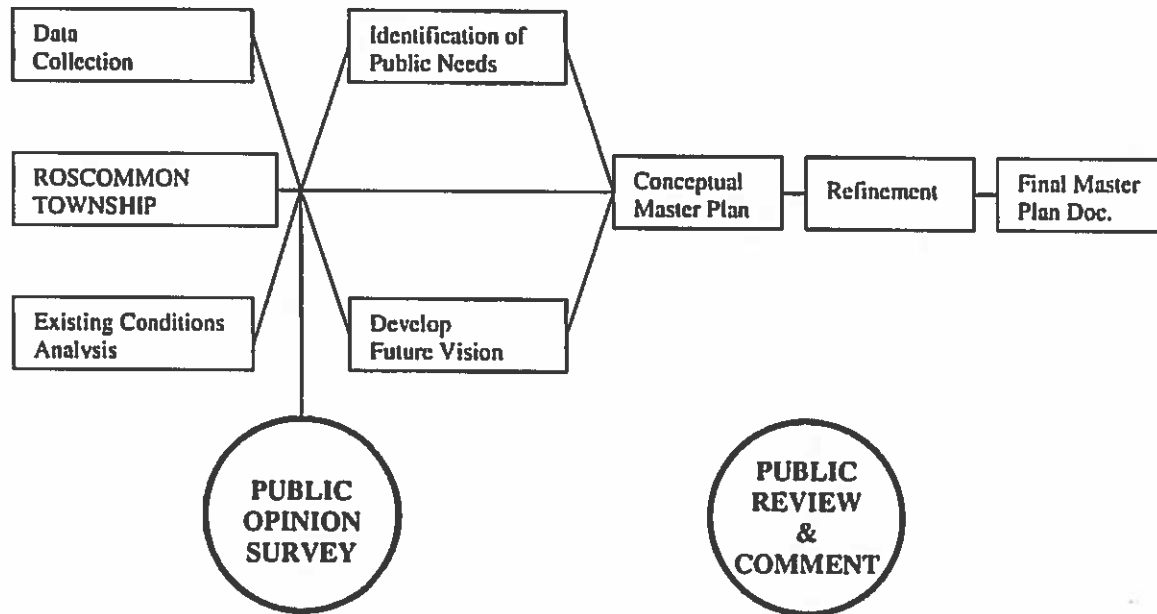
### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Because Roscommon Township is experiencing great growth among retirement age adults, plans for recreation programs and facilities should focus on providing older adults the opportunity to live active, healthy lifestyles.
- Cost for use of recreation programs and facilities should be minimal.
- Because of the high rate of persons with disabilities, special attention should be paid to making facilities and programs accessible to all residents, handicapped as well as the physically able.

### Chapter 3: PUBLIC INPUT

The Roscommon Township Parks and Recreation Committee conducted a mailed survey of residents asking for input related to their recreational needs and the recreational needs of visitors. The survey asked residents to rate a number of recreational options as “Important”, “Neutral”, or “Unimportant”. Residents were also asked to make written comment on how Township property should be developed. The survey was done during the data collection phase of the Plan development process.

In the Fall of 2016, two hundred sixty five were completed and returned to the Roscommon Township Parks and Recreation Committee. Once developed, a draft Plan was available for public review at the Roscommon Township Hall. A public hearing was held for the purpose of soliciting citizen comment and opinions relative to the draft Plan. Public input, as well as input from the Roscommon Township Board was taken into account during preparation of a final draft Plan.



## 2019 – 2023 MASTER PLAN

### 2019 – 2023 MASTER PLAN

*-Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines, National Recreation and Park Association*

*-Mailed survey of residents (See Appendix A) Minutes of public meeting during which a public hearing was held for the purpose of soliciting citizen comments and opinions relative to the draft Plan (See Appendix A)*

#### **FINDINGS: Summary 265 surveys rating recreational options**

<b>Options</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Unimportant</b>	<b>TOT.= col 1+2</b>
<b>Children's Playground</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>191</b>
<b>Dog Park</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>168</b>
<b>Splash Park</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>166</b>
<b>Sand Volleyball Court</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>162</b>
<b>Basketball Court</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>161</b>
<b>Horseshoe Pit</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>148</b>
<b>Tennis Court</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>145</b>
<b>9 hole disc golf Course</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>141</b>
<b>Skateboard Area</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>121</b>
<b>Pickleball Court</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>113</b>

#### **Findings: Summary of key themes of written comments**

- 1. Provide more Children's playground equipment**
- 2. Provide dog park**
- 3. Provide Splash Park --We feel too expensive with many maintenance problems**
- 4. Provide sand volleyball court**
- 5. Improve basketball court at Skinner Park**
- 6. Horseshoe Pit**
- 7. Expand disc golf course to 18 holes**

## Chapter 4:

# CURRENT RECREATION RESOURCES

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- Roscommon County Recreation Development Plan 2006
- *Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines*, National Recreation and Park Association
- Michigan Department of Natural Resources

### FINDINGS:

- Developed Township recreation areas
  - Lakeview Park
    - 1.26 – acres, fully ADA accessible
    - Dock and fishing platform, pavilion, playground, kayak/canoe launch, grill, picnic tables, and natural shoreline. Four interpretive panels highlight the park's history, identity of flora, species of fish, and the rationale behind the native planting at the shore. The park also boasts benches, an outdoor classroom, and a panoramic view of Houghton Lake.
    - Could be defined as a roadside park, as the area serves the entire community, tourists, and motorists traveling along Highway M-55.
  - Skinner Park
    - 36.38-acre Community Park with an accessibility ranking of 2 (some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines)
    - Playground, kiddie park, softball, soccer, pavilions, picnic tables, grills, nine fitness stations on walking trail, and 18 hole disc golf course. Services entire township.
  - Heights Park
    - Small, 17,820 square feet, Neighborhood Park with an accessibility ranking of 1 (none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines)
    - 200 feet of lake front beach, playground, grills, new pavilion and tables.
    - Services surrounding neighborhood
  - Fire Hall Property
    - Future resource property.
- Neighboring Denton Township also provides a variety of recreation areas and facilities that are within easy access of residents, and have developed new Lakeside Park, Tresle Park
- Houghton Lake Middle School, High School & Collins elementary are easily accessible.
- Roscommon Township is located in a recreation resource rich area of Michigan with ample opportunities for a wide variety of outdoor and nature-based recreation within easy reach.



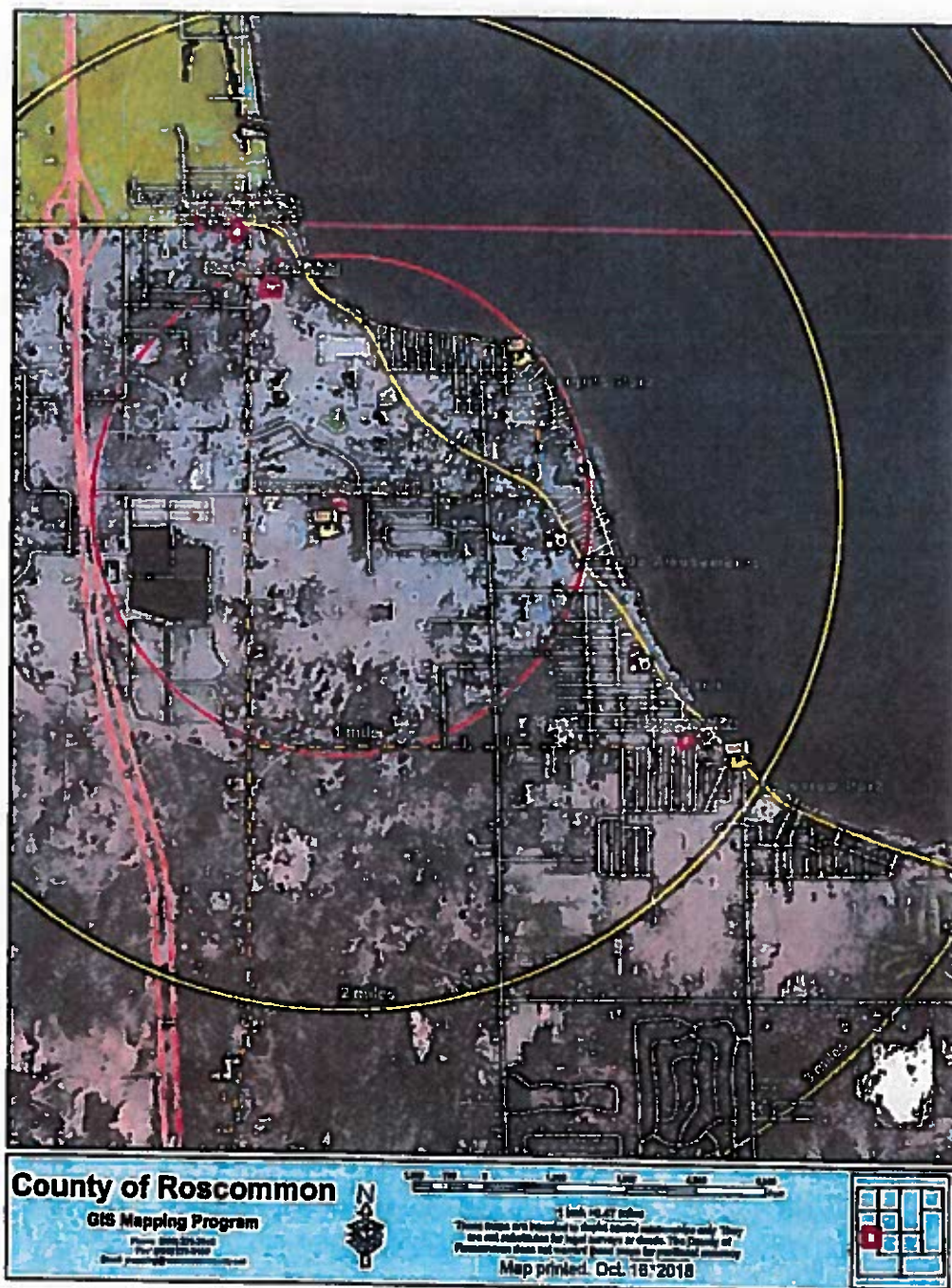
## 2019 - 2023 MASTER PLAN

Recreation facilities available within Roscommon Township and its immediate area meet most standards.

Standards appear to be unmet for the following:

- Tennis courts (1/2000 population or ½ mile drive)
- Recreation courts (tennis, basketball, volleyball 1/10,000 or 2 mile drive)

### FINDINGS: Area Recreation Facilities Location Map



## **Chapter 5:**

### **STANDARDS ANALYSIS**

Standards represent “rules of thumb” that reflect the types and numbers of recreation amenities that a “typical” community might have. Standards must only be interpreted with the unique characteristics of a community in mind.

#### **SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

- DNR Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plans
- National Recreation and Park Association national park land standards

#### **FINDINGS**

- Recreation facilities available within Roscommon Township and its immediate area meet most standards.
- Standards appear to be unmet for the following:
  - Tennis courts (1/2000 population or ½ mile drive)
  - Recreation courts (tennis, basketball, volleyball 1/10,000 or 2 mile drive)

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Develop our three existing parks to better meet community needs based on the five year plan that follows.

## Chapter 6:

### GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & ACTION PROGRAM

The essential purpose of recreational planning in Roscommon Township is to promote and encourage the use and development of a system of recreational facilities that meet the needs of the Township's residents, provide low cost recreational opportunities for visitors and tourists and be compatible with Township's natural setting. Out of this general statement, several general goals to guide planning have been developed which are made more specific by objectives and plans to carry out objectives.

The order in which the goals, objectives, and plans are presented does not indicate their relative importance. A majority of the objectives reflect the concerns identified in the Community Description, Public Input, and Standards Analysis sections of the Plan. While the objectives and action steps do not represent a complete list, nor limit the Township's flexibility in implementation, they do define a specific direction.

**Goal 1: Provide year-round park and recreation facilities that insure recreational opportunities to *all* residents and visitors.**

Roscommon Township endeavors to provide recreation opportunities for all ages. Because of the high percentage of senior citizens within the Township, facilities and programs should be developed that address their recreational needs. The Township is especially concerned with the recreational needs of the residents and also the many short-term needs of tourists in the community.

#### Objectives (Goal 1)

- a. Develop recreational facilities that provide access to people with disabilities in conformance with the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the other applicable State and Federal regulations.
- b. Provide facilities and improvements, which encourage increased local participation as well as promote commercial tourism.
- c. Improve and broaden the variety of facilities and recreational opportunities within the Township.
- d. Develop or improve park and recreational facilities so as to meet the needs of, and encourage use by the Township's older residents.
- e. Provide for winter-sensitive design in all facilities and promote year-round use.
- f. Improve public knowledge of township recreational opportunities.

#### Action Steps (Goal 1)

- a. **Houghton Lake Heights Park:**
  - Provide directional signs, additional picnic tables, and benches.
  - Improve accessibility to the park.
  - What not accomplished from this list in 2018- New pavilion, picnic tables, additional lakeview benches, new fencing and signage as needed. New barbecue grills, new playground equipment and new swimming buoys as needed.

## 2019 - 2023 MASTER PLAN

### **b. Skinner Park:**

- Upgrade the recreational equipment.
- Build dog park, improve basketball court, add sand volleyball court and horse shoe pit.
- Create a multipurpose hard surfaced area; Pickleball, badminton, shuffleboard, skateboard.

### **c. Township Fire Hall Property:**

- Consider for future development.

### **d. Lakeview Park:**

- Up grade public awareness- i.e..
- Revise website to include phase II, advertise with other townships, Chamber of Commerce and the Tourism Bureau.

**Goal 2: Roscommon Township shall preserve and expand lake views, recreational shoreline and water based opportunities to meet the needs of all residents and provide a regional attraction.**

### **Objectives (Goal 2)**

- To the extent possible, preserve the lakefront as public open and recreation space.
- In order to attract residents and visitors alike to the lakefront, and capitalize upon the environmentally unique area, the Township shall continue to develop open space and passive park areas in appropriate shoreline areas.
- Evaluate existing shoreline sites for upgrading and/or expansion of waterfront and water-related opportunities within the Township.
- To the extent possible, preserve or enhance views to the lake.

### **Action Steps (Goal 2)**

- Maintain the lakefront property on M55 between Tower Hill Road and Federal Avenue as a natural lakefront.
- Improve upon amenities at the Houghton Lake Heights Park swimming area.
- Monitor Lakeview Park for necessary facilities improvements.

**Goal 3: Roscommon Township shall develop a strategy for securing resources needed to improve and expand its recreational facilities at a rate that will not exceed funds available for maintenance of the system.**

### **Objectives (Goal 3)**

- Pursue public and private trust fund grants.
- Pursue public and private foundation grants.
- Pursue public and private donations.

### **Action Steps (Goal 3)**

- Continue planning in compliance with Michigan Department of Natural Resources and federal Land and Water Conservation Fund guidelines.
- Continue planning in compliance with Barrier Free Accessibility Requirements for Parks.
- Expand site development plans for all parks and recreational facilities owned by the Township.

## 2019 – 2023 MASTER PLAN

- d. Search out public and private grant opportunities.
- e. Apply for Michigan Department of Natural Resource grant.
- f. Apply for Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund grant.
- g. Apply for Roscommon County Foundation grant.
- h. Apply for United Way grant.

**Goal 4: Roscommon Township shall establish community partnerships that promote efficient operation, public use, and community stewardship of area park and recreation systems.**

### **Objectives (Goal 4)**

- a. Pursue, for mutual benefit, partnerships with, but not limited to, the following.
  - Denton, Markey and Lake Townships
  - MI Department of Transportation
  - Roscommon County Road Commission
  - Huron Pines Resource Conservation & Development
  - Soil Conservation District
  - Houghton Lake Lake Association
  - Houghton Lake Improvement Board
  - Houghton Lake Schools
  - Commission on Aging
  - Area Service Groups
  - Area Youth Groups

### **Action Steps (Goal 4)**

- a. Work with neighboring townships to assure area citizens and visitors have quality recreational facilities.
- b. Work with neighboring townships to find ways to reduce expenses by sharing operation/maintenance services.
- c. Work with the MI Department of Transportation and the Roscommon County Road Commission to maintain and improve public access points
- d. Cooperate with Houghton Lake Improvement Board and Houghton Lake Lake Association efforts to educate the public on best practices for protecting and improving the environmental health of Houghton Lake.

## 2019 – 2023 MASTER PLAN

### Five Year Action Plan

#### Yearly Maintenance

- Increase public awareness of all Roscommon Township Parks & Recreation facilities.
- Continuous research of grant funding opportunities.
- Prepare and submit applications for relevant grants.
- Consider new projects as they arise and if feasible, add to the Master Plan.
- Assist township in coordinated Park Maintenance & Inventory Program.
- Recruit additional Parks Committee members.
- Plan fundraisers.
- Yearly review, adjustment and update to the Master Plan.

#### Year One - 2019

##### a. Houghton Lake Heights Park:

Improve swimming area

Install directional signs to park

New pavilion, new picnic tables, additional lake view benches, new fencing and signage as needed, new barbecue grills, new playground equipment and new swimming area buoys.

Continue with improvements that are in compliance with Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund guidelines, as well as Barrier Free Accessibility Requirements and child safety standards for play equipment. Discuss ideas with adjacent property owners and neighborhood in general.

Monitor useage for needed facilities improvement.

##### b. Skinner Park Walking Trail

- Begin planning process for under planting and amenities for established trail.
- Implement under planting.
- Construct dog park north of ballfield #2

#### Year Two - 2020

- a. Start investigation of space requirements for multi-purpose hard surface court(s)
- b. Renovate basketball court

#### Year Three - 2021.

##### a. Skinner Park:

Construct sand volleyball court and horse shoe pit.

Continue investigation of space requirement for multipurpose hard surface court(s)

#### Year Four -2022

##### a. Skinner Park:

Construct multi-purpose hard surface court(s) ie – shuffleboard, skateboard

#### Year Five -2023

##### a. Skinner Park:

Construct pickleball court