

**HELENA TOWNSHIP**  
Antrim County, Michigan

**RECREATION AND NATURAL RESOURCE PLAN**

2013 – 2017

Adopted 09/12/2013

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## **Community Description**

This five-year recreational plan is for the jurisdiction of Helena Township. It was developed by the Parks and Recreation Committee in concert with and approved by the Helena Township Board. Our plan focuses on all matters relating to parks and recreation in our township currently and in the future.

Helena Township is located in the southwest part of Antrim County.

The Township is bounded by Kalkaska County on the south and Custer Township on the east. Torch Lake forms the western boundary while Clam Lake and the western portion of Grass River form a water boundary on the north.

Helena Township is one of the smallest townships in Antrim County. It is only 19.5 square miles as opposed to the usual 36.0 square miles for most townships.

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, there were 1,001 people living in Helena Township. Fifteen percent or 154 are under the age of 18 and 85 percent or 847 are over the age of 18. Of that last group 284 or 28 percent are age 50-64 and 302 or 30 percent are over the age of 65. The large population of older adults and its influence on our planning and goals and objectives will be discussed later in this document.

Commercial activity takes place in the Clam River area, the unincorporated village of Alden, and the southwest corner of the Township (Crystal Beach Road and South East Torch Lake Drive). The commercial activity that occurs in the Township is concentrated during the summer months.

## **Administrative Structure**

The Township Planning Commission was established by the Helena Township Board under the authority of Public Act 157 passed in 1905. The purpose of the Helena Township Planning Commission is to oversee the orderly development of the township. It systematically reviews and revises the master plan and zoning ordinances. In addition, the Planning Commission researches pertinent land use topics and advises the Township Board on these issues.

The Helena Township Planning Commission encourages public participation through its advisory committees, regular public meetings, and public hearings. One of those committees is the Parks and Recreation Committee. That committee drafted the Parks and Recreation Plan for Helena Township, which was reviewed and approved by the Township Board. The Parks and Recreation Committee will advise and work with the township to implement the goals, objectives, and action steps in the plan.

Helena Township employs one part-time zoning administrator, one assessor, one maintenance person, and one seasonal maintenance person. The supervisor, clerk, treasurer and two trustees are paid elected officials.

The primary source of funding Parks and Recreation projects is an annual operating budget that is reviewed and approved by the Township Board. The community is very active and supportive through financial donations as well as donations of labor and materials for many smaller projects. Major projects such as Coy Mountain have been initiated through MDNRTF grants as well as community donations and volunteer labor.

The Helena Township Parks and Recreation budget consists of two main accounts. One account contains \$26,600 for the operation and maintenance of the following parks: Coy Mountain Preserve, Tennis Court Park, Depot Park, Archie Valleau Landing, Alden Safe Harbor, and the Helena Township Ball Park. The second account contains \$96,141 and is for the operation and maintenance of the Helena Township Community Center. Both these budgets can be supplemented from the general fund if capital improvements or repairs are necessary.

Helena Township is fortunate to have several active volunteer groups who invest in the Township. These groups have invested money and energy into improving and maintaining the Township parks and recreational activities. We acknowledge the past efforts of all groups that have worked to ensure recreational venues and activities for Helena Township residents as well as visitors. The Parks and Recreation Committee look forward to partnering with volunteer groups in future endeavors.

Helena Township and Parks and Recreation Committee have also developed working relationships with a number of government agencies. Before any project is undertaken, the Parks and Recreation Committee would discuss plans with any government or private group that is likely to become involved.

- Alden District Library and Friends of the Library
- Alden Men's Club
- Alden Volunteers
- All Antrim County Staff as appropriate
  - Antrim County Sheriff's Office
  - Antrim County Conservation District
  - Antrim County Planners Office
  - Antrim County Soil Erosion Office
  - Antrim County Forester
  - Antrim County Health Department
- Bellaire Rotary Club
- Downtown Alden Business Owners Association
- Friends of Clam Lake
- The Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians
- Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy
- Grass River Natural Area
- Helena Township Board
- Helena Township Historical Society
- Juniper Garden Club
- Mancelona Public Schools
- MI Department of Environmental Quality
- MI Department of Natural Resources
- MSU- Cooperative Extension Service
- Northwest MI Council of Governments
- Three Lakes Association
- Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council
- Torch Lake Protection Alliance
- Bordering Townships: Clearwater, Custer, Forest Home, Milton and other townships as needed
- USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Village of Bellaire Parks and Recreation

## **Inventory of Existing Parks, Natural Areas and Recreation Facilities**

In this section we have constructed a grid for each park showing all of the required information as follows:

- Park Name
- Size in acres or length of linear parks
- Description of the general purpose or use for each park
- The park's primary service area
- The type and number of recreation and support facilities
- An accessibility evaluation at each park site
- No site development plan currently exists for any of the Helena Township Parks.
- Maps that show the location of all recreation and natural resource conservation areas owned or operated by Helena Township and those owned by others available to the Township

On the pages following the grid, we have included an informational paragraph about each park.

At the end of this section is a map showing the road end accesses in Helena Township and the parks that we currently operate.

Helena Township is a busy place with a variety of activities going on throughout the year. A copy of the 2012 Helena Township Annual Calendar showing these activities and when they take place can be found in the Appendix .

<b>HELENA TOWNSHIP RECREATIONAL INVENTORY (rev. 04/24/2013)</b>						
<b>Map #</b>	<b>Facility Name/Park Type</b>	<b>Location/Description</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Asset/Key Usage/Service Area</b>	<b>Recreation and Support Facilities</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Helena Twp. Tennis Court Park</b>  Park Type: Community Park (see note under park size)	In Alden, Bounded by the old railroad right-of-way on the West, Tyler Street on the South, And Alden Highway on the East. The Northern Boundary is shared with private property owners.	This park does not fit the size criteria for a Community Park as described in Appendix C of the guidelines. The park is approximately 2.3 acres.	Picnic area and gathering space for community events. Playground, tennis and basketball play areas. The service area is Antrim and surrounding counties. Many who use the facility are seasonal residents and tourists coming from all over the country and the world.	Two tennis courts with fencing and hitting wall; basketball court with two hoops; several items of playground equipment; bathroom facilities and drinking fountain; two pavilions with several picnic tables; several barbeque grills; parking for cars and bicycles; benches by the tennis courts. Helena twp. provides utilities and maintains the property and facilities.	Located in Alden the Tennis Court Park was originally deeded to the township on 6/12/1928. Additional former railroad property was deeded to the township on 7/13/1984. Site Development Plan: Add toddler play equipment; provide new basketball nets; line the basketball playing surface; resurface or replace the existing tennis courts; Renovate bulletin board.
	Accessibility Assessment	The parking lot at Tennis Court Park is paved and there is one handicap parking space available. The parking lot joins a paved sidewalk that leads to the bathrooms and provides easy access for someone using a wheelchair, cane, crutches, or walker. The doors to the bathroom open easily and provide an opening wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair. There are grab bars available by the toilet. The stool and sink are high enough to provide access for someone in a wheelchair. Access to the tennis courts and swings would require travel across uneven grassy ground and would be a challenge for someone using a wheelchair, cane, crutches, or a walker. Likewise, the area on which the playground equipment is located is covered with woodchips and would not be accessible to someone with a disability. The basketball court is located on a lower level and there is no paved path leading down to it. That area would not be accessible from the paved area above.				
	DNR Recreation Grant Inventory	No DNR recreation grant is associated with Tennis Court Park				

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<b>2</b>	<b>Archie Valteau Landing</b>  Park Type: Community Park (see note under "size")	This park is located adjacent to Alden Safe Harbor at the end of Helena Rd.	This park does not fit the size criteria for a Community Park as described in appendix C of the guidelines. It is less than ½ acre in size.	There is a small beach area near the mouth of Spencer Creek. This area is used by people from the area, State, and country.	There is a township bench overlooking this beach.	This park was donated to Helena Township by the estate of Archie Valteau The beach area needs more clean sand to enhance it.
	Accessibility Assessment	This park is located next to the Alden Safe Harbor and shares a parking lot with it. As with the Alden Safe Harbor there is no designated handicap parking space. However, the parking lot is paved and would allow a person using a wheelchair, cane, walker, or crutches to travel to the edge of Archie Valteau Park. However, there is a grassy area and then a concrete step down to the sandy beach area which would not be accessible.				
	DNR Recreation Grant Inventory	There is no DNR recreational grant associated with this property.				
<b>3</b>	<b>Alden Safe Harbor</b>  Park Type: Community Park (see note under "size")	This park is located at the end of Helena Rd.	This park does not fit the size criteria for a Community Park as described in appendix C of the guidelines. It is less than ½ acre in size.	Alden Safe Harbor is a public boat launch and the only safe harbor on Torch Lake. Parking for vehicles with boat trailers is available on the street.	There are 9 floating docks available for daytime docking. Portable toilets and 3 benches are located at the facility from May to October. Visitors often fish from the docks or the break wall.	The docks were replaced in 2011.
	Accessibility Assessment	There are no designated handicap parking spaces at this park. However, the driveway and parking spaces adjoining the dock area are paved. These paved areas lead up to the docks and there is one dock that has a metal ramp leading down to the wood dock surface that would be accessible to a handicapped person using a wheelchair, cane, walker, or crutches.				
	DNR Recreation Grant Inventory	There is no DNR recreational grant associated with this property.				



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<b>4</b>	<b>Helena Twp. Depot Park (Chessie's Pause)</b>  Park Type: Community Park (see note under size)	South East Torch Lake Drive, Alden, MI	This park does not fit the size criteria for a Community Park as described in appendix C of the guidelines. There is approximately 300 feet of frontage on Torch Lake. It is approximately 2.74 acres in size.	Key assets are Torch Lake access and the Historical Museum in the old Depot Building. This is the main community outdoor activity site. This park is used by residents from all of Antrim Co. as well as visitors from out of state.	There are two sand volley ball courts. Decking and steps for access to Torch Lake. The Park has been landscaped and is maintained by volunteers. There are viewing benches, picnic tables and grills. The parking lot at Depot Park provides parking for the park and boat trailer parking for those using the Alden Safe Harbor.	The Depot building is a State Historical Site. The Township provides maintenance and electricity, takes care of cleanup and trash collection and provides portable toilets for the summer season.
	Accessibility Assessment	The parking lot at Depot Park is not paved. There is no designated handicap parking space. The parking lot surface is rough and uneven and would be a challenge for someone in a wheelchair or using a walker, a cane, or crutches. There is a paved sidewalk at the front of the parking lot that provides access to the depot and would allow someone in a wheelchair to travel all around the building except for one small step on the East side. The restroom may not be accessible to someone with a disability. Access to the rest of the park would be difficult for a disabled person. Once you leave the sidewalk area, you can travel partway to the Torch Lake water front by using the paved road surface on Lake Street. However, you then must travel across a rough grassy area to get to the closest wooden lookout/lake access area, which has stairs leading to the water with a handrail. The ground is uneven and would not be accessible for a disabled person. Likewise for accessing any other area of the park.				
	DNR Recreation Grant Inventory	DNR grant project #: TF1023. Project Title: Chessie's Pause Acquisition of 2.74 acres with 300 feet of frontage on Torch Lake.				

<b>HELENA TOWNSHIP RECREATIONAL INVENTORY (rev. 04/24/2013)</b>						
<b>Map #</b>	<b>Facility Name/Park Type</b>	<b>Location/Description</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Asset/Key Usage/Service Area</b>	<b>Recreation and Support Facilities</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Helena Twp. Coy Mountain Preserve</b>  <b>Park Type: Natural Resource Area</b>	East of Terrace Drive and South of Valley Street. Access to the preserve is off Valley Road.	Approximately 17 acres in size	Hiking trails cross country skiing, nature preserve. The service area is Antrim County residents but during the summer tourist season, people from other areas of the state and country use the preserve.	Old growth forest, hiking trails, limited signage identifying tree species, signs showing trail routes, and benches.	Deed of property excludes any structures – strictly a nature preserve. Needs additional land for parking and expansion Site Development Plan: Possibly pave trail that leads from park entrance to closest benches. Invasive species need to be controlled as best able – garlic mustard & myrtle. Bridges over two boggy areas would be good for better drainage and hiker safety. Identification of more trees and flowers might make it more educational and fun
	<b>Accessibility Assessment</b>	Coy Mountain Preserve is a rugged hiking trail system with no paved parking lot, designated handicapped parking space, or paved trails. It would not be accessible to people with disabilities.				
	<b>DNR Recreation Grant Inventory</b>	DNR grant project #: TF03-203. Project Title: Coy Mountain Preserve Acquisition – Acquisition of 2.7 acres of climax hardwood forest in the center of existing 17 acre Coy Mountain Preserve for passive recreation and limited bow hunting.				

<b>HELENA TOWNSHIP RECREATIONAL INVENTORY (rev. 04/24/2013)</b>						
<b>Map #</b>	<b>Facility Name/Park Type</b>	<b>Location/Description</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Asset/Key Usage/Service Area</b>	<b>Recreation and Support Facilities</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Helena Twp. Community Center</b>  <b>Park Type: Special Use – Indoor Recreational Center</b>	The community center is located at 8751 Helena Rd., Alden, MI.	Approximately 4.7 acres.	Helena Township Admin. Offices Alden District Library Community Center utilized by many varied groups. Used by Antrim County residents and visitors.	Township Offices Storage Building Three meeting rooms Gym Kitchen Public toilet facilities Parking Recycle containers	This center is an integral part of the community. Many individuals and groups use the center as a meeting place
	<b>Accessibility Assessment</b>	There are 3 handicap parking spaces designated in the front of the building. An ADA compliant vestibule is located at the North (main) entrance of the Community Center and allows for automatic operation of the main doors upon entry and exit. All rooms are accessible by a person using a wheelchair, crutches or walker. However, the entry doors to the restrooms are challenging to enter and exit for someone in a wheelchair with limited arm strength and would benefit from automatic openers. The configuration of the kitchen also needs some adjustment (placement of steel tables) in order to be handicap accessible. The door in the back of the building could be exited but not entered by someone using a wheelchair.				
	<b>DNR Recreation Grant Inventory</b>	1990 DNR grant project #: BF90-023 Project Title: Indoor Recreational Facility – Renovation of community center facilities (gym, craft room, restrooms and kitchen)				

<b>HELENA TOWNSHIP RECREATIONAL INVENTORY (rev. 04/24/2013)</b>						
<b>Map #</b>	<b>Facility Name/Park Type</b>	<b>Location/Description</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Asset/Key Usage/Service Area</b>	<b>Recreation and Support Facilities</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Helena Twp. Ball Park</b>  Park Type: Community Park (see note under size)	This park is located on South East Torch Lake Drive	This park does not fit the size criteria for a Community Park as described in appendix C of the guidelines. It is approximately 6.2 acres in size.	The ball field is used by area little league teams. The special use area serves people from Helena Twp. and other parts of Antrim Co., as well as visitors from other parts of the state and country.	There is a ball field, dugout, permanent bleachers, concession building, Porta Potty, and Rubbermaid pump house. The special use area contains 3 picnic tables, 4 barbeque grills, and 2 trash barrels and a small wooden landing area with steps leading to Torch Lake.	This park with Torch Lake frontage is large enough to offer many recreational possibilities. We have discussed working with a professional planner to make the best use of this special park
	Accessibility Assessment	The parking lot at the park is not paved. There is no designated handicap parking space. The parking lot surface is rough and rocky and would be a challenge for someone pushing themselves in a wheelchair or using a walker, cane or crutches. The bleachers have a step down from the parking lot and no handrails or ramp to accommodate wheelchairs. They would not be accessible to someone with a disability. There are no paved paths to the waterfront. The entrance to the waterfront area is narrow and may not be wide enough for a wheelchair. The ground leading to the waterfront is rough and there are woodchips along the way. This would be a challenge for all but the fittest wheelchair bound person, and potentially dangerous for someone using crutches, a cane, or a walker.				
	DNR Recreation Grant Inventory	No DNR recreational grant is associated with the Helena Twp. Ball Park				

## **Inventory of Existing Parks, Natural Areas and Recreation Facilities**

Helena Township has many parks that provide opportunities for varied types of recreation. Upkeep and renovation at all sites is restricted due to the limited amount of Township money available for this purpose.

The unincorporated village of Alden is the center of activity with the exception of two private marina complexes in the northern part of the Township where Clam River enters Torch Lake.

In addition to the major Township-owned facilities described below, the Township has located within its boundaries the Grass River Natural Area owned by Antrim County, thirteen (13) public lake access sites and three (3) public launch sites.

- **Tennis Court Park** was originally gifted to Helena Township by Hartley Comfort. It now has two fenced tennis courts which were renovated around 1988. There is a small covered pavilion with electrical outlets. Running water is also available. Permanent restrooms are available May through October. There is an extensive play area and varied equipment. Swings are in an area separate from the general play equipment. There is a concrete basketball court in the lower level of the park. The Township provides electricity and ongoing maintenance of the Park.
- **Archie Valleau Landing** is adjacent to the north side of the Alden Safe Harbor and is a small wedge-shaped piece of shore land that was donated to the Township for recreational purposes. As with several other parks in Helena Township, Archie Valleau Landing lacks accessibility by persons with disabilities. In fact, a concrete ledge approximately four to five inches high separates the paved parking area from the beach front. There is no opening at any point in this barrier. The parking lot adjacent to this park is paved but has no handicap only parking spaces. We believe that all parks in our township must be accessible. In our public survey 49% of respondents thought all groups were being served adequately, but of the remaining 51% over 15% thought people with disabilities were underserved.

When we asked in our public survey about routine park maintenance, 54% said they would like to see better maintenance of existing park facilities. Archie Valleau Landing offers one of the few sandy beaches on Torch Lake, but it would benefit from routine raking of the beach. Also, the port-a-potties that serve both Archie Valleau Landing and the Alden Safe Harbor need an upgrade to make the area more attractive.

- **Alden Safe Harbor** provides the only public boat docks on Torch Lake. It is a designated safe harbor. In our public survey, Alden Safe Harbor was identified as the second most important resource in our township. Over 79%

of those who completed the survey listed Alden Safe Harbor as important to very important. And of that group, more than 30% said they used the harbor more than seven times each year with 50% using it one to six times.

Locating Alden Safe Harbor from a boat in the middle of Torch Lake can be difficult for those not familiar with the lake. This could be a safety issue in the event of dangerous weather. Our committee would like to establish a landmark to help boaters identify the entrance to the harbor.

When we asked in our public survey for suggestions to improve our parks, several people said they wanted improved signage about the features and attractions available in Helena Township. Since the Safe Harbor is an entry point for boaters visiting Alden, we believe improved signage and making the dock area more attractive would enhance the visitors' experience.

- **Depot Park** is a varied site, including a 1908 railroad depot with over three acres contiguous to Torch Lake. The depot was acquired in 1986, restored to its original appearance and is now the Alden Depot Museum, which has been designated as a state historical site. The Museum is open Friday through Sunday afternoons from Memorial to Labor Day. Renovation of the building provided public restrooms and barrier-free access, when the Museum is open. A caboose that can be explored by the public (during museum hours) and a train engine are located outside the Museum.

The Park has two sand volleyball courts, decking and steps for lake access. The Park has been landscaped and is maintained by volunteers, has viewing benches, picnic tables and grills.

The parking lot at Depot Park provides parking for the park, as well as boat trailer parking for people using the Alden Boat Launch.

The Township provides maintenance and electricity, takes care of cleanup and trash collection, and provides portable toilets for the season.

- **Coy Mountain Forest Preserve** began with land originally given by the Reuben Coy Family. The intent was to preserve and protect the landscape in all its natural beauty. The desire was to maintain the trees, shrubs, flowers, and wild life indigenous to this area for the use and benefit of the residents of Alden and the surrounding community. The original gift was supplemented with a donation by Harry Swan. In 2003 the Township, aided by a DNR recreations grant, acquired 2.7 acres of climax hardwood forest in the center of the existing 17 acres.

Trail development took place in several stages beginning in 1986 with members of the Youth Conservation Corps. The Alden Run Committee, local Boy Scouts, Traverse City Eagle Scout, Bob Pennington, and the Alden Volunteers all played a part in trail development and maintenance.

The trails are approximately 1.5 miles long with an elevation difference of 180 feet. A trailhead sign has been erected. Educational signs which identify unique trees are in place. Many large diameter red oak, sugar maple, beech, hemlock and basswood trees exist on the parcel. Coy Mountain is a place where people go to enjoy the natural beauty of a Northern Michigan forest.

- **Community Center** houses the Township offices and Alden District Library as well as a kitchen, meeting rooms, gymnasium, and public restrooms. The Community Center provides a location for a variety of indoor recreation and year-round social events including educational programs, movies, music, yoga, bingo, quilting, watercolor painting class, and mah jong.
- **The Helena Township Ball Park** is a recreational area and beach on Torch Lake approximately 6.2 acres in size. It is classified as a “Community Park” and is located on SE Torch Lake Drive and the southeast shore of Torch Lake. This park contains a ball field, dugout, permanent, concrete bleachers, concession building, port-a-potty, and Rubbermaid pump house.

There is a special use area of the park on the shoreline of Torch Lake. It contains steps leading down to the water bordered by a split rail fence at the top. This area contains three picnic tables, four barbeque grills, and two refuse barrels.

The baseball field is used by area little league teams. The shoreline area allows local residents and visitors to enjoy Torch Lake swimming and picnicking.

Currently many sections of this property are not being used because the focus is on the ball diamond and shoreline areas. This park could benefit from a professional land use planner.

Handicap accessibility at this park is very poor. The parking lot is not paved and there are no designated handicap parking spaces. There are no paved pathways within the park. Without a ramp or railings the bleacher section is not accessible. The port-a-potty is not handicap accessible.

There is no recreational grant associated with Helena Township Ball Park.

## **Inventory of Existing Parks, Natural Areas and Recreation Facilities**

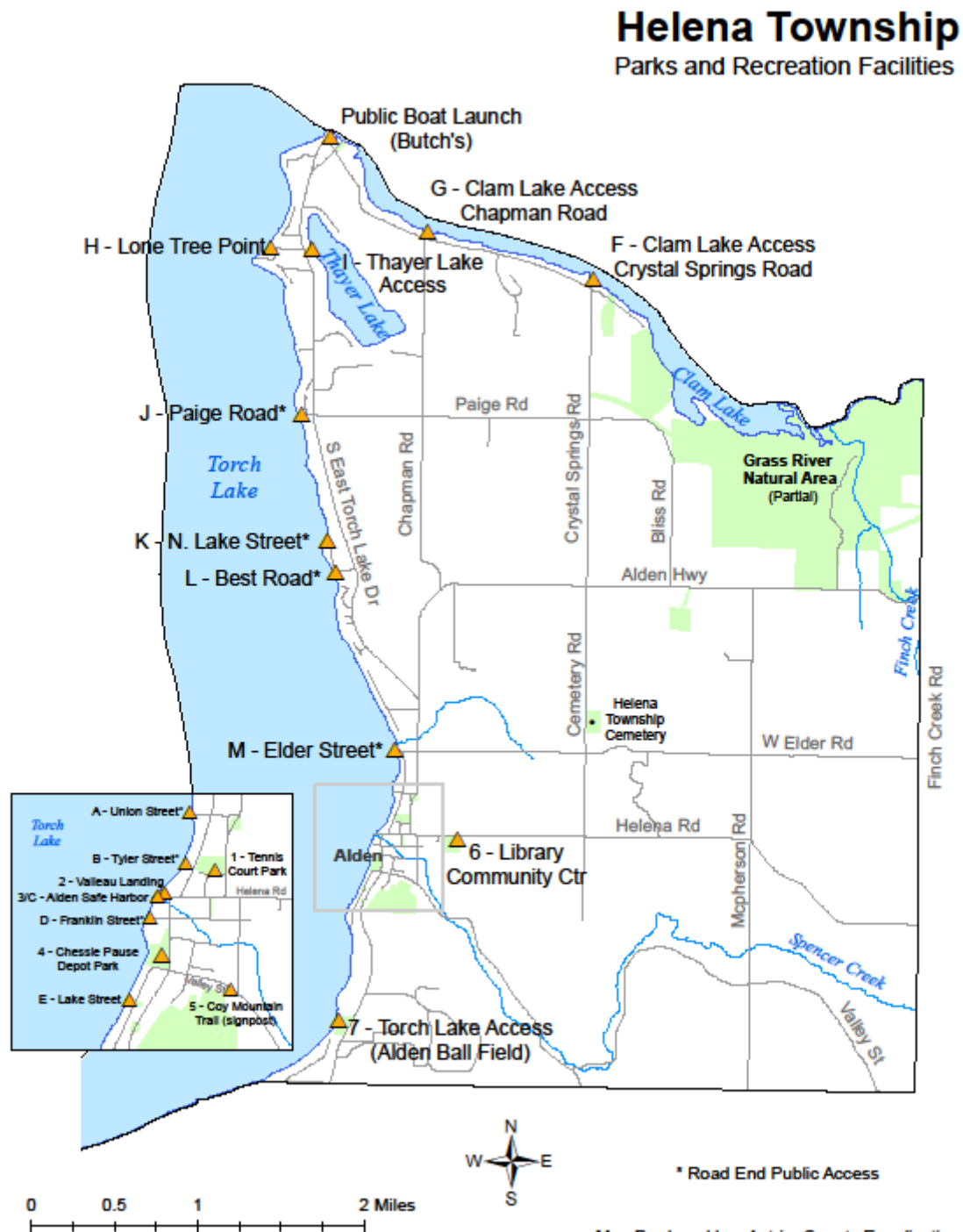
There are 13 road end lake accesses in Helena Township. Jurisdiction for these accesses was transferred from Antrim County to Helena Township in 2010 by Resolution No. 040810. These lake accesses are a valuable resource for our township. They allow both residents and visitors physical access to the three lakes in our township; Torch Lake, Clam Lake, and Thayer Lake. A short description of each access is given below:

1. (A) Union Street: located off N. Lake St.
2. (B) Tyler Street: located off N. Lake St.
3. (C) Helena Street: located at the west end of Helena Street, bordered by Archie Valteau Landing and the Alden Safe Harbor on Torch Lake.
4. (D) Franklin Street: located at the west end of Franklin Street and gives access to Torch Lake.
5. (E) Un-named access: located on South Lake Street with access to Torch Lake
6. (F) Crystal Springs Road: located at the 90 degree turn of Crystal Springs Rd. (near Green St.) giving access to Clam Lake.
7. (G) Chapman Road: located at the end on Chapman Rd. allows access to Clam Lake.
8. (H) Lone Tree Point: located west of S. East Torch Lake Dr. gives access to Torch Lake.
9. (I) Un-named road access: located on the northwest side of Thayer Lake.
10. (J) Paige Road: located at the west end of Paige Rd. and allows access to Torch Lake.
11. (K) N. Lake Street: located off S. East Torch Lake Dr. accessed by Best St, right onto Pere Marquette to the end and left onto Lake Street access. It gives access to Torch Lake.
12. (L) Best Street: located off S. East Torch Lake Dr. allows access on Torch Lake.
13. (M) Elder Road: located at the west end of Elder Rd. and allows access to Torch Lake.

\*Each letter corresponds to the location of that access on the following “Helena Township Parks and Recreation Facilities” map.



## Inventory of Existing Parks, Natural Areas and Recreation Facilities





0 0.05 0.1 0.2 Miles



\* Road End Public Access

Map Produced by: Antrim County Equalization  
Date: April 2013

### **Previous Grant-Assisted Parks**

As instructed, we are submitting the required documentation for all Helena Township Parks that received DNR grants in the past. These are:

- 1. Project Title: Chessie's Pause**  
**Project No.: TF1023**  
**Project Year: 1985**  
**Grant Amnt: \$180,000**
- 2. Project Title: Indoor Recreation Facilities**  
**Project No.: BF90-023**  
**Project Year: 1990**  
**Grant Amnt: \$37,500**
- 3. Project Title: Coy Mountain Preserve Acquisition**  
**Project No.: TF03-203**  
**Project Year: 2003**  
**Grant Amnt: \$93,000**

One form PR1945, "Post-Completion Self-Certification Report" is included for each project listed above. In addition, the PR1924 "Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plan Certification Checklist" has been completed, approved and signed by the Helena Township Supervisor and is also attached.



### Recreation Grant History

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**Applicant**

**Helena Township**

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**Project No.** TF1023**Project Year:** 1985**Project Title:** Chessie's Pause**Project Status:** Closed**Grant Amount:** \$180,000.00**Project Description:** Acquisition of 2.74 acres with 300 feet of frontage on Torch Lake.

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**Project No.** BF90-023**Project Year:** 1990**Project Title:** Indoor Recreation Facilities**Project Status:** Closed**Grant Amount:** \$37,500.00**Project Description:** Renovation of community center facilities (gym, craft room, restrooms, kitchen).

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**Project No.** TF03-203**Project Year:** 2003**Project Title:** Coy Mountain Preserve Acquisition**Project Status:** Closed**Grant Amount:** \$93,000.00**Project Description:** Acquisition of 2.7 acres of climax hardwood forest in the center of the existing 17 acre Coy Mountain Preserve for passive recreation and limited bow hunting.

Helena Township  
Parks and Recreation Plan



Michigan Department of Natural Resources – Grants Management

**MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND**  
**POST-COMPLETION SELF-CERTIFICATION REPORT**

*This information required under authority of Part 19, PA 451 of 1994, as amended.*

**GRANTEE:** Helena Township

**PROJECT TITLE:** Chessie's Pause

**PROJECT NUMBER:** TF1023

**PROJECT SCOPE:** Land Acquisition

**TO BE COMPLETED BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCY (GRANTEE)**

Name of Agency (Grantee)	Contact Person	Title
Helena Township of Antrim County, MI	Rick Teague	Twp. Supervisor
Address	Telephone	
PO Box 177, 8751 Helena Rd	231-331-4643	
City, State, ZIP	Email	
Alden, MI. 49612	helena@torchlake.com	

**SITE DEVELOPMENT**

Any change(s) in the facility type, site layout, or recreation activities provided? ☐ Yes ☒ No  
If yes, please describe change(s).

\_\_\_\_\_

Has project site been converted to other than recreation use? If yes, please describe what portion and describe use. ☐ Yes ☒ No

\_\_\_\_\_

Are any of the facilities obsolete? If yes, please explain. ☐ Yes ☒ No

\_\_\_\_\_

Are the site and all facilities accessible to persons with disabilities? If no, please explain. ☐ Yes ☒ No

Site has no paved parking nor designated handicap spaces. There is a paved sidewalk around the depot building. Lack of accessibility is addressed in our 5-year-plan.

**SITE QUALITY**

Is there a sign which identifies the property or facility as a public recreation area? ☒ Yes ☐ No  
If yes, please provide a picture of the sign. If no, please explain.

See pictures attached.

Are the facilities and the site being properly maintained? If no, please explain. ☒ Yes ☐ No

\_\_\_\_\_

Helena Township  
Parks and Recreation Plan

**POST-COMPLETION SELF-CERTIFICATION REPORT (CONT'D)**

**SITE QUALITY (CONT'D)**

Are there any features near the site which would detract from the use and enjoyment of the site or would pose a health or safety problem? If yes, please explain. ☐ Yes ☒ No

Is vandalism a problem at this site? If yes, explain the measures being taken to prevent or minimize vandalism. ☐ Yes ☒ No

Is maintenance scheduled on a regular basis? If yes, give schedule. If no, please explain. ☒ Yes ☐ No  
Helena Twp. Historical Society provides regular maintenance for the Depot Building.  
Township staff provide snow removal, mowing, trash removal services weekly.

What is the annual budget to maintain the facility? ☒ Yes ☐ No  
Annual budget of \$26,600 is allocated for operation and maintenance of all H.T. parks.

**GENERAL**

Is MNRTF plaque permanently displayed at the site? If yes, provide a photograph. ☐ Yes ☒ No

Is any segment of the general public restricted from using the site or facilities? (i.e. resident only, league only, boaters only, etc.) If yes, please explain. ☐ Yes ☒ No

Is a fee charged for use of the site or facilities? If yes, please provide fee structure. ☐ Yes ☒ No

What are the hours and seasons for availability of the site?

Site is available to the public Spring, Summer and Fall 8:00am to 10:00pm

**CERTIFICATION**

*I do hereby certify that I am duly elected, appointed and/or authorized by the Grantee named above and that the information and answers provided herein are true and accurate to the best of my personal knowledge, information and belief.*

RICK TEAGUE  
Please print

[Signature]  
Grantee Authorized Signature

04/19/13  
Date

SPUR DELL  
Please print

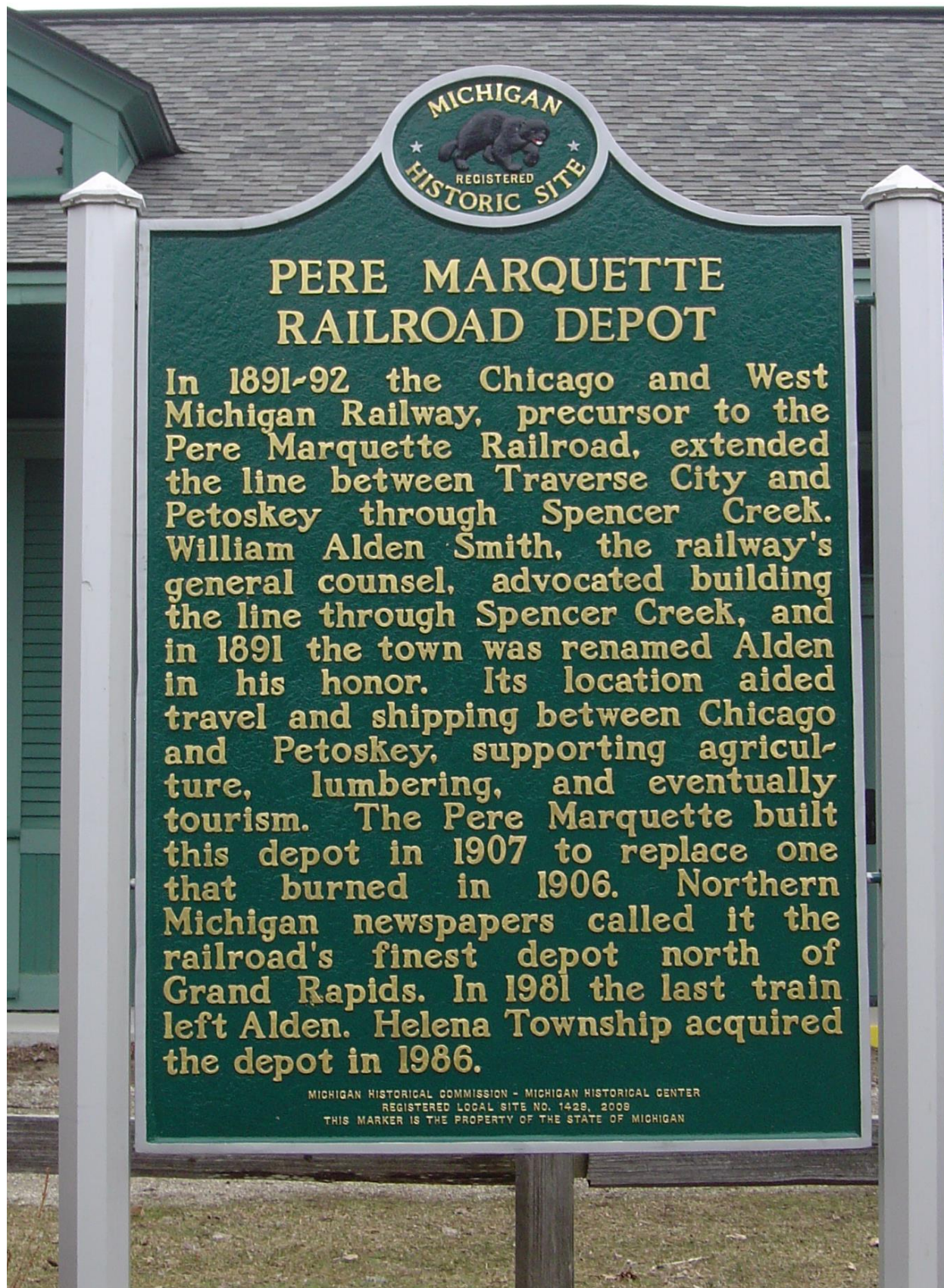
[Signature]  
Witness Signature

04/19/13  
Date

Send completed report to:

**GRANTS MANAGEMENT  
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
P O BOX 30425  
LANSING MI 48909-7925**







Helena Township  
Parks and Recreation Plan







Helena Township  
Parks and Recreation Plan



Michigan Department of Natural Resources – Grants Management

**MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND**  
**POST-COMPLETION SELF-CERTIFICATION REPORT**

*This information required under authority of Part 19, PA 451 of 1994, as amended.*

**GRANTEE:** Helena Township

**PROJECT TITLE:** Indoor recreation facilities

**PROJECT NUMBER:** BF90-023

**PROJECT SCOPE:** Renovation of facilities

**TO BE COMPLETED BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCY (GRANTEE)**

Name of Agency (Grantee)	Contact Person	Title
Helena Township of Antrim County, MI	Rick Teague	Twp. Supervisor
Address	Telephone	
PO Box 177, 8751 Helena Rd.	231-331-4643	
City, State, ZIP	Email	
Alden, MI. 49612	helena@torchlake.com	

**SITE DEVELOPMENT**

Any change(s) in the facility type, site layout, or recreation activities provided? ☐ Yes ☒ No  
If yes, please describe change(s).

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Has project site been converted to other than recreation use? If yes, please describe what portion and describe use. ☐ Yes ☒ No

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Are any of the facilities obsolete? If yes, please explain. ☐ Yes ☒ No

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Are the site and all facilities accessible to persons with disabilities? If no, please explain. ☒ Yes ☐ No

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**SITE QUALITY**

Is there a sign which identifies the property or facility as a public recreation area? ☒ Yes ☐ No  
If yes, please provide a picture of the sign. If no, please explain.

See photographs.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Are the facilities and the site being properly maintained? If no, please explain. ☒ Yes ☐ No

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Helena Township  
Parks and Recreation Plan

**POST-COMPLETION SELF-CERTIFICATION REPORT (CONT'D)**

**SITE QUALITY (CONT'D)**

Are there any features near the site which would detract from the use and enjoyment of the site or would pose a health or safety problem? If yes, please explain. ☐ Yes ☒ No

Is vandalism a problem at this site? If yes, explain the measures being taken to prevent or minimize vandalism. ☐ Yes ☒ No

Is maintenance scheduled on a regular basis? If yes, give schedule. If no, please explain. ☒ Yes ☐ No  
Cleaning and trash removal are provided on a daily basis.

What is the annual budget to maintain the facility? ☒ Yes ☐ No  
An annual budget of \$93,722 is allocated for operation and maintenance of this building.

**GENERAL**

Is MNRTF plaque permanently displayed at the site? If yes, provide a photograph. ☐ Yes ☒ No

Is any segment of the general public restricted from using the site or facilities? (i.e. resident only, league only, boaters only, etc.) If yes, please explain. ☐ Yes ☒ No

Is a fee charged for use of the site or facilities? If yes, please provide fee structure. ☒ Yes ☐ No  
Gymn and voter room: \$12/hr. Gymn daily: \$100. Weddings: resident \$200, non-resident \$300.

What are the hours and seasons for availability of the site?  
Open year around Monday - Friday 8:00-5:00, Sat. 8:00-12:00. Other hours by arrangement.

**CERTIFICATION**

*I do hereby certify that I am duly elected, appointed and/or authorized by the Grantee named above and that the information and answers provided herein are true and accurate to the best of my personal knowledge, information and belief.*

RIK TEAGUE  
Please print

[Signature]  
Grantee Authorized Signature

04/19/13  
Date

STEVE DELL  
Please print

[Signature]  
Witness Signature

04/19/13  
Date

end completed report to: **GRANTS MANAGEMENT  
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
P O BOX 30425  
LANSING MI 48909-7925**

Helena Township  
Parks and Recreation Plan



Helena Township  
Parks and Recreation Plan



Michigan Department of Natural Resources – Grants Management

**MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND**  
**POST-COMPLETION SELF-CERTIFICATION REPORT**

*This information required under authority of Part 19, PA 451 of 1994, as amended.*

**GRANTEE:** Helena Township

**PROJECT TITLE:** Coy Mtn. Preserve Acquisition

**PROJECT NUMBER:** TF03-203

**PROJECT SCOPE:** Acquisition of 2.7 acres

**TO BE COMPLETED BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCY (GRANTEE)**

Name of Agency (Grantee)	Contact Person	Title
Helena Twp. of Antrim County, MI	Rick Teague	Twp. Supervisor
Address	Telephone	
PO Box 177, 8751 Helena Rd.	231-331-4643	
City, State, ZIP	Email	
Alden, MI. 49612	helena@torchlake.com	

**SITE DEVELOPMENT**

Any change(s) in the facility type, site layout, or recreation activities provided? ☐Yes ☒No  
If yes, please describe change(s).

Has project site been converted to other than recreation use? If yes, please describe what portion and describe use. ☐Yes ☒No

Are any of the facilities obsolete? If yes, please explain. ☐Yes ☒No

Are the site and all facilities accessible to persons with disabilities? If no, please explain. ☐Yes ☒No

Site has no paved parking, handicap spaces, or paved pathways.

The lack of accessibility is addressed in our 5-year-plan.

**SITE QUALITY**

Is there a sign which identifies the property or facility as a public recreation area? ☒Yes ☐No  
If yes, please provide a picture of the sign. If no, please explain.

See photograph.

Are the facilities and the site being properly maintained? If no, please explain. ☒Yes ☐No



Helena Township  
Parks and Recreation Plan

**POST-COMPLETION SELF-CERTIFICATION REPORT (CONT'D)**

**SITE QUALITY (CONT'D)**

Are there any features near the site which would detract from the use and enjoyment of the site or would pose a health or safety problem? If yes, please explain. ☐ Yes ☒ No

Is vandalism a problem at this site? If yes, explain the measures being taken to prevent or minimize vandalism. ☐ Yes ☒ No

Is maintenance scheduled on a regular basis? If yes, give schedule. If no, please explain. ☒ Yes ☐ No  
This is a natural area. Maintenance is completed as required to clear trails and  
remove hazards.

What is the annual budget to maintain the facility? ☒ Yes ☐ No  
An annual budget of \$26,600 is allocated for operation and maintenance of all twp. parks.

**GENERAL**

Is MNRTF plaque permanently displayed at the site? If yes, provide a photograph. ☒ Yes ☐ No

Is any segment of the general public restricted from using the site or facilities? (i.e. resident only, league only, boaters only, etc.) If yes, please explain. ☐ Yes ☒ No

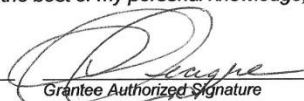
Is a fee charged for use of the site or facilities? If yes, please provide fee structure. ☐ Yes ☒ No

What are the hours and seasons for availability of the site?  
Site is available dusk to dawn Spring/Summer/Fall. Available in Winter but not maintained

**CERTIFICATION**

*I do hereby certify that I am duly elected, appointed and/or authorized by the Grantee named above and that the information and answers provided herein are true and accurate to the best of my personal knowledge, information and belief.*

RECK TEAGUE  
Please print

  
Grantee Authorized Signature

04/19/13  
Date

STEVE DELL  
Please print

  
Witness Signature

04/19/13  
Date

Send completed report to: **GRANTS MANAGEMENT  
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
P O BOX 30425  
LANSING MI 48909-7925**





## RESOURCE INVENTORY

Helena Township residents strongly agree that acquiring land for future parks and/or open space is an action that will improve the park system. The Township will continue to evaluate land acquisition opportunities and will work with willing landowners and other public and private partners to acquire land that meets parks and recreation needs.

Based on the results of our public survey and input from other business and stakeholder groups, we have determined that the most desirable lands for acquisition would be the following:

1. Waterfront property on Torch Lake, Clam River, Thayer Lake and Spencer Creek.
2. Property contiguous with our existing parks which allow for expansion of those parks.
3. Scenic viewshed property.

### **Waterfront property on Torch Lake, Clam River, Thayer Lake and Spencer Creek**

We have identified several pieces of property in the vicinity of the Alden Safe Harbor that may be available for acquisition in the near future. Currently, these parcels are owned by the Alden State Bank. One parcel is contiguous to the Alden Safe Harbor and has frontage on Torch Lake. The others are connected to that parcel. Together, they would make a wonderful picnic area for the public and boaters to use. The description for these parcels is as follows:

05-08-150-001-00  
05-08-150-015-00  
05-08-150-002-00

In addition, there is one parcel located directly across the street (Coy St.) from those listed above that offers frontage on Spencer Creek. It is also owned by the Alden State Bank. The description for this parcel is as follows:

05-08-150-013-00

### **Property contiguous with our existing parks which allow for expansion of those parks**

Our committee has identified four pieces of property that border the Coy Mountain Preserve and, if acquired, would allow for a substantial expansion of that park. These parcels contain no buildings and are partially wooded. They are all privately owned but may be on the market in the near future.



The description of these parcels is as follows:

05-08-110-039-00

05-08-110-028-00

05-08-110-079-00

05-08-027-018-00

**Scenic viewshed property**

Our committee also identified a 63 acre parcel located approximately one-half mile east of Alden that offers a wonderful view of Alden and Torch Lake. It contains an old barn but no other buildings and is partially wooded. It is large enough for the development of trails and/or picnic areas. This parcel is currently owned privately but may be available for purchase in the near future. The description for this parcel is:

05-08-027-019-00

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING AND PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS**

### **Planning Methods:**

A systems approach to planning was utilized in the construction of our five year plan. The first step for our Parks and Recreation Committee was to review the Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans provided by the DNR. We also reviewed the previous five year plan which was completed in 2004 to cover the period 2004-2008. We then conducted a physical inventory of the existing parks and recreation facilities by touring each park and documenting their content, features, and positive and negative attributes. We also interviewed people who use these facilities, including library workers, township officials and members of the general public.

In October of 2011 we conducted a survey of Helena Township's full-time and part-time residents to obtain demographic information, and determine their likes and dislikes about existing parks. We also asked about their wishes for future development of existing or additional parks, and their priorities related to this process. The public survey is described in detail below.

In April of 2012, a meeting was held with volunteer groups in Helena Township to review the findings of our public survey, advise them that we are developing a new five year plan and to obtain their input. Attending that meeting were representatives from the Juniper Garden Club, Alden Volunteers, Downtown Alden Business Association, Alden Historical Society, and Friends of the Library. Several of these groups have been instrumental in the development, maintenance, and beautification of our parks.

Our five year plan focuses on the features in our parks, natural areas, and facilities which we identified as needing improvement based on our observations, discussions with other stakeholders, and the information obtained through the public input process.

### **Public Input Process:**

In addition to the onsite survey of each park and facility by the Parks and Recreation Committee, and the meeting with Helena Townships volunteer groups; we also conducted a comprehensive survey of Helena Township's property owners, residents, and visitors. Our goal was to obtain their insights and priorities as we work to develop a new five year plan. The survey was conducted as follows.

## **Description of the Public Planning and Input Process**

In October of 2011 we mailed informational postcards to every property owner/tax payer in Helena Township. This totaled 1,030 postcards, of which 18 were undeliverable for a total of 1,012 delivered. The postcards notified taxpayers that the Helena Township Parks and Recreation Committee was conducting a survey during the period October 1 - 31. Residents were given three ways to complete the survey. They could pick up a copy of the survey at the Helena Township Community Center, go online at [www.helenatownship.com](http://www.helenatownship.com) and complete an electronic survey, or they could download a copy at the same website and mail or drop it off at the community center.

In addition, advertisements about the survey were placed in the two main newspapers that serve our township, and 30 flyers were posted around this and surrounding communities. Members of the Parks and Recreation Committee also made personal contacts to encourage residents to complete the survey.

A total of 221 people responded to the survey (a 22% response rate) as follows:

- 191 responded to the survey using the online tool
- 30 responded to the survey via hard copy

In addition to the survey, a public forum was held in November of 2011 to review the survey results and obtain any additional input from those in attendance.

Based on the number of people who responded to the survey and attended the public forum and our stakeholders meeting, our committee believes we have gathered input from the entire community, including residents of all ages, and members of community organizations.

A copy of the survey, forum agenda, and a summary of the survey findings can be found in the Appendix.

### **Public Input About the Plan:**

Our Draft Five Year Plan was completed on June 4, 2013. On June 13, 2013 we placed a notice about the availability of our draft plan and a request for comments on the Helena Township bulletin board in the Community Center and in the two main newspapers that serve our township.

This notice informed readers they could view our draft plan two ways:

1. Review a hard copy of the plan at the Alden District Library.
2. Go online to the Helena Township Parks and Recreation website, [www.helenatownship.com](http://www.helenatownship.com) then click on "Draft - Parks and Recreation Plan" .

Our committee gave residents three ways to comment on the draft plan:

1. Mail comments to the Helena Township Parks and Recreation Committee
2. Email comments to the committee at [helena@torchlake.com](mailto:helena@torchlake.com)
3. Bring their comments to a public meeting held July 16, 2013

Residents were given a one-month window, June 13 – July 16, to review the plan and submit comments.

### **Summary of the Comments Received:**

Four Helena Township residents gave us written input about the Five-Year Plan and two residents offered verbal comments at our July 16 public meeting. Many of the comments were complimentary about the work the committee had done and supported the goals and objectives outlined in the plan. Several, however, targeted other issues that were not addressed directly in the plan. The specific issue and the action our committee is taking to address it are listed in the following paragraphs.

**Issue: Currently there is not a method available to enforce order at our township parks. Recently I called the police to respond to loud noise after closing time for the park and they said they will not enforce local ordinances that govern our parks. The township should not improve our parks in an effort to bring in more people until steps are taken to enforce ordinances and rules we have now.**

- This issue is currently being addressed by the Helena Township Board.  
For this reason the committee will not include it in the plan.

**Issue: It is essential that swim areas [in our parks] be designated throughout the township where markers and buoys assure swimmers of a safe area and where boats are never allowed.**

- This issue is currently being addressed by the Helena Township Board.  
For this reason the committee will not include it in the plan.

**Issue: I am a regular user of Coy Mountain and it is truly a wonderful resource for our community. I...have noticed this summer the undergrowth beneath the large trees along Valley Street where the half-circle drive provides ingress and egress by car to the trailhead is making it impossible to see oncoming cars from the west when pulling out at the east end of the lot.**

- This issue is currently being addressed by the Helena Township Board.  
For this reason the committee will not include it in the plan.

**Issue: I reviewed the inventory information related to the Alden Baseball Park [Helena Township Ball Park] in the plan. In approximately 2001 there was some discussion about changing the land use at this park. I recall from the discussions deed restrictions are in place from the original land donations**

**by the Aemisegger and Chapelle families. I think further research is required on the part of the committee to confirm what deed restrictions exist to include the information in the inventory.**

- The committee has obtained copies of all deeds related to the parks in Helena Township. It will review these deeds at a future committee meeting in order to determine what restrictions (if any) exist.

**Issue: The Ball Park [Helena Township Ball Park] ...is an area of concern. The ball park is great for baseball, picnics, and swimming. We enjoy hearing and watching the adults and children in the water and the occasional ballgame. However, it has recently become a second “Sand Bar”. Someone usually anchors their boat there most of the summer. Sometimes there is also another one anchored. We don’t know what the rules are, but it doesn’t seem like a good idea.**

- This issue is currently being addressed by the Helena Township Board. For this reason the committee will not include it in the plan.

**Issue: The survey conducted in 2011 indicated that Helena Township residents were most interested in walking/jogging paths (57%) and bike paths and trails (55%). Except for the identification of additional property in the Coy Mt. Trail area and a scenic overlook area, this draft does not appear to address the major wishes identified by the respondents in the township.**

- The committee believes that these issues are already addressed in the plan. The acquisition of additional property contiguous to Coy Mountain Preserve and view-shed property will lead to additional walking/jogging paths and perhaps bike paths if the terrain is not too hilly. In addition, accessible pathways within both Depot Park and Helena Township Ball Park will increase the number of walking paths available for residents.

**Issue: I am guarded about more paving that can lead to increase storm water runoff in the various parks especially at Valleau Landing [Archie Valleau Landing] and the Ballpark [Helena Township Ball Park]. A paved path to the water’s edge is a direct path for storm water and all it carries with it to the lake. In San Diego on the beaches large plastic-like squares with large holes are pieced together to allow wheelchair access across the soft sand to the hardback sand near the water’s edge. I also would prefer not to see paving at the Coy Mt. Trailhead [Coy Mountain Preserve]. Please research alternative surfaces from paving that are more pervious to rainwater especially on slopes and near the lake. Adding sand and raking the beach are two items I fear may alter the natural environment...**

- The committee believes this an excellent point regarding the unintended side effects of building pathways at any of our parks. As stated under action/program steps whenever we discuss constructing pathways, we would consult with disability specialists and environment experts before beginning any of these projects.

**Issue: If the Township intends to set a goal and /or prioritize land acquisition that reflects the values represented by the survey responses, you [Parks and Recreation Committee] might want to consider adding some language in the recreation plan that states that goal.**

- The committee agrees with this suggestion and has revised the plan under the section titled **RESOURCE INVENTORY** to reflect this.

## **GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTION STEPS:**

**On the following pages in a grid format, we have stated our goals, objectives, and action steps for each park. A paragraph that provides support for the goals and objectives we used is included before each park's grid.**

**The goals we arrived at for the Helena Township Parks and Recreation 5-year-plan are based on information obtained from our extensive survey of the residents, the public meeting held to discuss the survey results, our meeting with stakeholder groups, our contacts with people who use the parks and facilities, and observations and data collected by committee members. They are:**

- Promote a healthier and safer community for all age groups**
- Develop age appropriate recreational opportunities within Helena Township**
- Improved communication for residents and visitors about Helena Township parks and recreation facilities and activities**
- Improved access at all Helena Township Parks**
- Protection/preservation of natural areas and the environment**
- Unify the visual statement made by signage, landscaping, equipment, paint colors, and style of any modifications or other new buildings at the parks**

## **TENNIS COURT PARK**

### **Accessibility and Safety:**

Helena Township includes a large percentage of the population who are middle age to seniors. Census figures for 2010 state that 59% of our population is over age 50. Sixty percent of the people who responded to our public survey were age 55 or over. We believe that all the parks in our township must be accessible and safe for people in these age groups, regardless of their mobility challenges.

When we surveyed our parks for accessibility by the handicapped or disabled, only three were accessible, including Tennis Court Park. The Tennis Court Park has one handicap parking space and accessible bathrooms, but no access to the play ground equipment and surrounding area, the swings, the tennis courts, the pavilion, or the basketball court. In fact, the only paved pathway leads from the parking lot to the restrooms. The basketball court in this park is located on a lower level of the park which is approximately 12 to 15 feet below the main level. Currently, the only way to access the court is to walk down the steep and eroded hillside, or walk out to the two-track road which goes down to that level. Also, the hillside between the two levels contains a large quantity of poison ivy which is a hazard to those using the park. Our committee believes that improving accessibility and safety in Tennis Court Park must be a major priority.

### **Healthier community with recreational opportunities for all age groups:**

Fifteen percent of our residents are under the age of 18 and 25% are between 18 and 49 years old according to 2010 census data. In our public survey, 14% of those responding were 19 years old or younger, and 25% were between 20 and 54. Over 70% of survey respondents said that Tennis Court Park is an important to very important resource. In addition, over 61% said they supported upgrading existing parks and 54% said they would like to see better maintenance of existing parks. When we asked which groups were underserved by our current recreation resources and programs, 49% said all groups are served adequately. However, of the remaining 51% over 19% answered seniors, 17% stated high school youths, and 15% believed people with disabilities were underserved. Both those responding to our public survey and those who attended our public meeting to discuss the survey results indicated a desire to have play equipment for infants and toddlers available at Tennis Court Park. We believe that it is important to provide safe recreational opportunities for all age groups by improving the basketball courts, reconditioning the tennis courts, and providing playground opportunities for families with toddlers.

### **Uniformity of themes and styles in parks:**

One of the goals for the Parks and Recreation Department of Helena Township as stated in their master plan is to unify the visual statement made by signage, landscaping, paint colors, and style of modifications or new buildings at our parks. Currently there is no coordinated effort to do this so our committee believes we must begin this process by including it in the 5-year-plan.



## GOALS:

(Rev. 05/10/13)

**GOAL: Promote a healthier and safer community for all age groups.**

**GOAL: Develop age appropriate recreational opportunities within Helena Township.**

**GOAL: Improved communication for residents and visitors about Helena Township parks and recreation facilities and activities.**

**GOAL: Improved access at all Helena Township parks.**

**GOAL: Protection/preservation of natural areas and the environment.**

**GOAL: Unify the visual statement made by signage, landscaping, equipment, paint colors, and style of any modifications or other new buildings at the parks.**

**Note: Priority scale indicates urgency of need with 1 being most urgent.**

## Tennis Court Park

**A. RELATED GOAL:** Improved access at all Helena Township parks.

Promote a healthier and safer community for all age groups.

Develop age appropriate recreational opportunities within Helena Township.

### OBJECTIVE:

1. Provide accessible roads and paths to all recreational facilities.
2. Improve the safety of the park.

Priorit y	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
1	Provide paved pathways to the following facilities: Tennis Court Swings Toddler play equipment Basketball courts Pavilion	Consult with disabilities specialist Determine a plan Estimate costs Construct the pathways	Parks and Rec. Budget Grant Volunteers
2	Signs that ask people to clean up after their pets and provide disposal bags and refuse containers for that purpose.	Purchase signs and disposal bags and be sure refuse containers are provided.	Parks and Recreation Budget

## TENNIS COURT PARK (CONT'D)

**B. RELATED GOAL:** Promote a healthier and safer community for all age groups.  
Develop age appropriate recreational opportunities within Helena Township.  
**OBJECTIVE:** Allowing more opportunities for physical activity and relaxation.

Priorit y	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
1	Provide play equipment appropriate for toddler age children.	Research appropriate equipment. Purchase equipment. Install equipment.	Parks and Recreation Budget Grants Volunteers
3	Improve basketball court.	Paint Lines on court surface. Replace nets on each hoop. Other? – check out.	Parks and Recreation Budget Grants Volunteers

**C. RELATED GOAL:** Promote a healthier and safer community for all age groups.  
Develop age appropriate recreational opportunities within Helena Township.  
Protection/preservation of natural areas and the environment.  
**OBJECTIVES:**  

1. Allowing more opportunities for physical activity and relaxation.
2. Ensuring that all Helena Township parks and recreation facilities are safe for the activity provided.
3. Control invasive plant species.

Priorit y	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
3	Replace existing cracking and uneven Tennis Court Surface.	Consult with contractor who specializes in tennis court construction. Support formation of a Community Tennis Association.	Parks and Recreation Budget Grants Volunteers
2	Evaluate park for invasive species and if found initiate plan to eradicate.	Consult with professional to determine most appropriate method of eradication. Research to see if grant money is available and if so apply for funds. Implement eradication plan.	Helena Township Budget Grants

## TENNIS COURT PARK (CONT'D)

**D. RELATED GOAL:** Promote a healthier and safer community for all age groups.  
Develop age appropriate recreational opportunities within Helena Township.

**OBJECTIVE:** Offer additional recreational opportunities if appropriate.

Priorit y	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
4	Evaluate unused concrete slab on east side of tennis courts to determine if usable for a park activity or if it needs to be removed to free up park space.	Evaluate condition of slab relative to cracks. Get input from P&R Committee and Twp. board. Contract out reconditioning or removal project.	Helena Township Budget

**E. RELATED GOAL:** Unify the visual statement made by signage, landscaping, equipment, paint colors, and style of any modifications or new buildings at the parks.

**OBJECTIVE:** Coordinate the visual statement of this park with those of the other parks.

Priorit y	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
3	Determine what the visual statement for Helena Township parks is. Construct a plan for bringing this park into conformity with that statement.	Ask Helena Township Board for direction in deciding on a visual statement for our parks. Determine cost of bringing our park into conformity.	Helena Township Budget Volunteers Donations Grants

## TENNIS COURT PARK (CONT'D)

**F. RELATED GOAL:** Promote a healthier and safer community for all age groups.

Improved access at all Helena Township parks.

Protection/preservation of natural areas and the environment.

**OBJECTIVE:**

1. Improve the quality of the experience for visitors to the park.
2. Improve the safety of traveling between the upper and lower levels of the park.

Priorit y	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
2	Inventory the plants on the hillside between the upper and lower levels of the park to identify invasive species, poison ivy and other undesirable plants. Develop a landscape plan to improve the visual experience by eliminating unwanted plants and adding others. In the same process evaluate the need for an ADA compliant pathway on the hillside to enable safe passage of visitors between the upper and lower levels.	Obtain township permission to improve the hillside between upper and lower levels. Request help of garden club and other experts to inventory existing plants, and develop landscape plan. Research ADA compliant pathway between upper and lower level and compile cost estimate if appropriate.	Helena Township Budget Juniper Garden Club Government agencies Volunteers

**G. RELATED GOAL:** Promote a healthier and safer community for all age groups.

Develop age appropriate recreational opportunities within Helena Township.

**OBJECTIVE:** Maximize use of available park space.

Priorit y	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
4	Evaluate uses for open space located on the lower level next to the basketball court.	Consult with township to determine if any plans for the space exist. If no plans exist determine most appropriate use and develop a plan to accomplish desired result. Compile cost estimate to complete.	Helena Township Budget Volunteers

## **Archie Valteau Landing**

**As with several other parks in Helena Township, Archie Valteau Landing lacks accessibility by persons with disabilities. In fact, a concrete barrier approximately 4 to 5 inches high separates the grassy area from the beach front. There is no opening at any point in this barrier. The parking lot adjacent to this park is paved but has no handicap only parking spaces. We believe that all parks in our township must be accessible. In our public survey, 49% of respondents thought all groups were being served adequately, but of the remaining 51%, over 15% thought people with disabilities were underserved.**

**When we asked in our public survey about routine park maintenance, 54% said they would like to see better maintenance of existing park facilities. Archie Valteau Landing offers one of the few sandy beaches on Torch Lake, but it could benefit from routine raking of the beach. Also, the Port-a-Potties that serve both Archie Valteau Landing and the Alden Safe Harbor need an upgrade to make the area more attractive.**

## GOALS:

**GOAL: Promote a healthier and safer community for all age groups.**

**GOAL: Develop age appropriate recreational opportunities within Helena Township.**

**GOAL: Improved communication for residents and visitors about Helena Township parks and recreation facilities and activities.**

**GOAL: Improved access at all Helena Township parks.**

**GOAL: Protection/preservation of natural areas and the environment.**

**GOAL: Unify the visual statement made by signage, landscaping, equipment, paint colors, and style of any modifications or other new buildings at the parks.**

**Note: Priority scale indicates urgency of need with 1 being most urgent.**

## Archie Valleau Landing

**A. RELATED GOAL(S):** Promote a healthier and safer community for all age groups.  
Develop age appropriate recreational opportunities within Helena Township.  
Protection/preservation of natural areas and the environment.

**OBJECTIVE(S):**

1. Enhance the recreational experience and use of Torch Lake for area residents and guests.
2. Improve beach quality and accessibility.
3. Provide better maintenance.
4. Upgrade area facilities.
5. Control invasive plant species.

Priorit y	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
1	Provide ADA approved accessibility to waterfront.	Construct paved path to waterfront. Evaluate need for handicap parking spaces.	Parks and Recreation Budget Alden Volunteers Downtown Alden Business Association
1	Regular care and raking of the beach area	Township maintenance. Introduce more sand. Trim trees and bushes.	Parks and Recreation Budget Alden Volunteers Downtown Alden Business Association

### ARCHIE VALLEAU LANDING (CONT'D)

Priorit y	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
2	Upgrade area structures and equipment	Upgrade structure “port-a-potties”. Add new tables and benches.	Parks and Recreation Budget Alden Volunteers Downtown Alden Business Association
2	Better define parking/no parking area	Mark pavement parking spaces. Provide signage for parking/no-parking. Evaluate need for handicap parking spaces.	Parks and Recreation Budget
2	Evaluate park for invasive species and if found initiate plan to eradicate.	Consult with professional to determine most appropriate method of eradication. Research to see if grant money is available and if so apply for funds. Implement eradication plan.	Helena Township Budget Grants

**B. RELATED GOAL:** Unify the visual statement made by signage, landscaping, equipment, paint colors, and style of any modifications or new buildings at the parks.

**OBJECTIVE:** Coordinate the visual statement of this park with those of the other parks.

Priorit y	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
3	Determine what the visual statement for Helena Township parks is. Construct a plan for bringing this park into conformity with that statement.	Ask Helena Township Board for direction in deciding on a visual statement for our parks. Determine cost of bringing our park into conformity.	Helena Township Budget Volunteers Donations Grants

## **Alden Safe Harbor**

**Alden Safe Harbor provides the only public boat docks on Torch Lake. In our public survey, Alden Safe Harbor was identified as the second most important resource in our township. Over 79% of those who completed the survey listed Alden Safe Harbor as important to very important. And of that group, more than 30% said they used the harbor more than 7 times each year with 50% using it one to six times.**

**Locating Alden Safe Harbor from a boat in the middle of Torch Lake can be difficult for those not familiar with the lake. This could be a safety issue in the event of dangerous weather. Our committee would like to erect a structure to help boaters identify the entrance to the harbor.**

**When we asked in our public survey for suggestions to improve our parks, several people said they wanted improved signage about the features and attractions available in Helena Township. Since the Safe Harbor is an entry point for boaters visiting Alden, we believe improved signage and making the dock area more attractive would enhance the visitor's experience.**



## GOALS:

**GOAL: Promote a healthier and safer community for all age groups.**

**GOAL: Develop age appropriate recreational opportunities within Helena Township.**

**GOAL: Improved communication for residents and visitors about Helena Township parks and recreation facilities and activities.**

**GOAL: Improved access at all Helena Township parks.**

**GOAL: Protection/preservation of natural areas and the environment.**

**GOAL: Unify the visual statement made by signage, landscaping, equipment, paint colors, and style of any modifications or other new buildings at the parks.**

**Note: Priority scale indicates urgency of need with 1 being most urgent.**

## ALDEN SAFE HARBOR

**A. RELATED GOAL(S):** Improved access at all Helena Township parks.

**OBJECTIVE(S):**

1. To provide a convenient, accessible, and pleasant area for the community and boaters to enjoy Torch Lake.
2. To better identify the location of the harbor entrance.
3. To provide informational services of area facilities and attractions

Priorit y	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
1	Construction of structure and flag pole to better mark harbor location.	Construct attractive feature as landmark to help boaters locate harbor entrance.	Alden Volunteers Downtown Alden Business Authority
1	Signage to help identify the location of the bathroom facilities and Alden area attractions.	Adding informational signs and maps of downtown facilities and attractions.	Parks and Recreation budget Alden Volunteers Downtown Alden Business Authority

ALDEN SAFE HARBOR (CONT'D)			
Priority	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
1	Provide signs that ask people to clean up after their pets, disposal bags, and refuse containers for that purpose.	Purchase signs and disposal bags. Be sure refuse containers are provided.	Parks and Recreation budget
2	Additional plantings and surface improvements	Plant flowers and shrubs. Improve grass. Trim trees and remove brush. Maintain area with more regular care and cleanup. Research use and placement of facilities. Purchase additional benches and tables.	Parks and Recreation budget Alden Volunteers
<p><b>B. RELATED GOAL:</b> Unify the visual statement made by signage, landscaping, equipment, paint colors, and style of any modifications or new buildings at the parks. Protection/preservation of natural areas and the environment.</p> <p><b>OBJECTIVE: 1.</b> Control invasive plant species. <b>2.</b> Coordinate the visual statement of this park with those of the other parks.</p>			
Priorit y	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
2	Evaluate park for invasive species and if found initiate plan to eradicate.	Consult with professional to determine most appropriate method of eradication. Research to see if grant money is available and if so apply for funds. Implement eradication plan.	Helena Township Budget Grants
3	Determine what the visual statement for Helena Township parks is. Construct a plan for bringing this park into conformity with that statement.	Ask Helena Township Board for direction in deciding on a visual statement for our parks. Determine cost of bringing our park into conformity.	Helena Township Budget Volunteers Donations Grants

## **Helena Township Depot Park (Chessie's Pause)**

### **Accessibility and Safety:**

**Depot Park was referenced by 88% of survey respondents as important or very important to this community. Nearly one third (28%) used the park more than 7 times in a year, and nearly two thirds (62%) indicated that they visited 1 – 6 times annually. Only 9% said that they never visited the park. As the most used facility in Helena Township, concerns about safety and accessibility must be taken very seriously. At present, there are few measures taken to ensure access for the disabled.**

**Since our local population is predominantly aged 50+, the park must be revised to include those with mobility issues. Pathways to the observation decks at the southwest corner of the park and the brick platform in front of the depot building must be upgraded to allow those in wheelchairs or motorized scooters to access these areas without danger of getting stuck or turning over. There should be a hardscaped handicapper access to the brick platform from the south end, as well as a renovated path next to the Herb Garden so that those who cannot walk can still enjoy these facilities. The Alden Depot Museum, located inside the building, has some mitigation for accessibility, but that facility should be evaluated for better access. Finally, the parking lot should have some spaces designated for handicapped parking.**

### **Healthier Community:**

**There are concerns that the facility could be better used if some planning were done to provide more opportunities for recreation. While the park is used for private gatherings, some thoughtful planning might open up some concepts that would increase the parks utility as a recreational source.**

### **Improved Communication:**

**There are several problems that emerge as a result of overlapping organizations that use the facility. The Helena Township Historical Society administers the museum and holds some standing events each year. Private individuals also use the park for events, and several local nonprofits also hold various events there. Increased publicity and awareness campaigns could improve the cluttered schedule.**

### **Uniformity of Themes and Styles:**

**Over the years, various styles of seating and picnic tables and grills have been added to the park, and because of multiple uses, the seating often gets moved around for rental tents and other issues.**

**It may be wise to reconsider the kinds of seating that are used there, although the budget might not be able to cover replacement. Signage indicating hours of use and other commonsense rules would be helpful.**

## GOALS:

**GOAL: Promote a healthier and safer community for all age groups.**

**GOAL: Develop age appropriate recreational opportunities within Helena Township.**

**GOAL: Improved communication for residents and visitors about Helena Township parks and recreation facilities and activities.**

**GOAL: Improved access at all Helena Township parks.**

**GOAL: Protection/preservation of natural areas and the environment.**

**GOAL: Unify the visual statement made by signage, landscaping, equipment, paint colors, and style of any modifications or other new buildings at the parks.**

**Note: Priority scale indicates urgency of need with 1 being most urgent.**

## HELENA TOWNSHIP DEPOT PARK (CHESSIE'S PAUSE)

**A. RELATED GOAL(S):** Promote a healthier and safer community for all age groups.  
Improved access at all Helena Township parks.  
Protections/preservation of natural areas and the environment.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** Upgrade park facilities to make them safer and more accessible.

Priority	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
1	Park stairs and deck near the beach have some damaged supports that could injure people. Replace pathways around the herb garden to make them safer and accessible for disabled.	After careful inspection, repair or replace wooden structures to ensure safe use by residents. Get bids for a short walkway between the drive and the deck to make the deck accessible for disabled.	Parks and Recreation Budget

## HELENA TOWNSHIP DEPOT PARK (CHESSIE'S PAUSE) (CONT'D)

**B. RELATED GOAL(S):** Improved access at all Helena Township Parks.  
Protection/preservation of natural areas and the environment.  
Promote a healthier and safer community for all age groups.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** 1. Improve accessibility for people with disabilities.  
2. Improve the landscaping throughout the park.  
3. Upgrade park facilities.

Priority	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
1	Improve accessibility in park by creating pathways that allow wheelchair access to the park and the Depot's brick platform.	Using consultants, design a system that will create better access to the park. Build the paths when funding can be obtained through grants. Also build a wheelchair ramp at the south end of the Depot platform so that disabled can enter the park at the Caboose area.	Parks and Recreation budget Grants Donations
2	Consult with a professional to create a better balance of shrubs and trees on the bank.	Remove overgrown trees as needed. Survey the shrubbery and plan to eliminate invasive species such as Autumn Olive. Trim branches of established trees to improve the view of the lake from the park.	Parks and Recreation budget Grants Donations
2	Inspect the wooden picnic tables in the park. Add some lower maintenance tables.	Purchase new tables and establish picnic areas within park. Make sure that most new tables are useable by disabled. Repair and/or replace existing park furniture, including benches and tables.	Parks and Recreation budget Grants Donations

## HELENA TOWNSHIP DEPOT PARK (CHESSIE'S PAUSE) (CONT'D)

**C. RELATED GOAL:** Unify the visual statement made by signage, landscaping, equipment, paint colors, and style of any modifications or new buildings at the parks.

Protection/preservation of natural areas and the environment.

**OBJECTIVE:** 1. Control invasive plant species.

2. Coordinate the visual statement of this park with those of the other parks.

Priority	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
2	Evaluate park for invasive species and if found initiate plan to eradicate.	Consult with professional to determine most appropriate method of eradication. Research to see if grant money is available and if so apply for funds. Implement eradication plan.	Helena Township Budget Grants
3	Determine what the visual statement for Helena Township parks is. Construct a plan for bringing this park into conformity with that statement.	Ask Helena Township Board for direction in deciding on a visual statement for our parks. Determine cost of bringing our park into conformity.	Helena Township Budget Volunteers Donations Grants

## **COY MOUNTAIN PRESERVE**

**In our public survey, over 67% of respondents said that Coy Mountain Preserve is important to very important to their family. Over 9% said they have used the facility more than 7 times during the past year, and over 53% said they have used it 1 to 6 times. Clearly Coy Mountain Preserve is a valuable asset in our community.**

**One of the features lacking at Coy Mountain is accessibility for disabled persons. The parking area is uneven, unpaved and has no handicap parking spaces. The trails are dirt, narrow and uneven. Parts of the park are extremely hilly and could not be used by wheelchairs. However, other trails offer modest elevation changes and could easily be adapted to be handicap accessible. One of the questions in our public survey asked, “If you support the development of a trail system, what type of trail(s) should have the highest priority in Helena Township?” 48.7% supported “paved trails for walking, biking, etc.”**

**Ensuring the safety of those using Coy Mountain Preserve is a most urgent priority for our committee. One item that needs attention is the welcome sign at the entrance to the park. It has not been updated since the most recent trail was added and does not accurately indicate all trails available for hiking. This is both an information issue and a safety issue.**

**Several respondents to our survey stated they would like to see improved upkeep and maintenance to enhance the safety of those using this park. We need to shorten the interval of routine maintenance for the park to be sure that hazards such as fallen trees are removed immediately.**

**Several privately owned vacant parcels of land border Coy Mountain Preserve. Expanding the park by purchasing these properties would add to the overall experience of those using the park. In our public survey over 49% of respondents stated they agreed/strongly agreed with the action of the township “acquiring land for future parks and/or open spaces.” Also, over 61% said they support redeveloping/upgrading existing parks to support a broader range of activities and over 57% said they agree/strongly agree with the township developing new trails.**

**Our committee believes Coy Mountain Preserve is a wonderful resource for our township and the village of Alden. It offers a trail hiking experience within walking distance of the downtown and lake front areas.**

## GOALS:

**GOAL: Promote a healthier and safer community for all age groups.**

**GOAL: Develop age appropriate recreational opportunities within Helena Township.**

**GOAL: Improved communication for residents and visitors about Helena Township parks and recreation facilities and activities.**

**GOAL: Improved access at all Helena Township parks.**

**GOAL: Protection/preservation of natural areas and the environment.**

**GOAL: Unify the visual statement made by signage, landscaping, equipment, paint colors, and style of any modifications or other new buildings at the parks.**

**Note: Priority scale indicates urgency of need with 1 being most urgent.**

## COY MOUNTAIN PRESERVE

**A. RELATED GOAL:** Improved access at all Helena Township parks.

Promote a healthier and safer community for all age groups.

Develop age appropriate recreational opportunities within Helena Township.

### OBJECTIVES:

1. Provide a pathway that allows all visitors access to the park and the beauty of the forest.
2. Allow more opportunities for physical activity and relaxation.

Priorit y	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
3	Provide a paved pathway from the trailhead into the park that is accessible to all.	Consult with a disabilities specialist and groups that advocate for the disabled. Determine a trail. Estimate costs. Construct the trail.	Parks and Recreation Budget Grants Volunteers



## COY MOUNTAIN PRESERVE (CONT'D)

**B. RELATED GOAL:** Improved access at all Helena Township Parks.

Improved communication for residents and visitors about Helena Township parks and recreation facilities and activities.

Protection/preservation of natural areas and the environment.

Promote a healthier and safer community for all age groups.

Develop age appropriate recreational opportunities within Helena Township.

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. Improve the quality of the experience for park visitors by improving information about available trails.
2. Allow more opportunities for physical activity and relaxation.
3. Improve the safety of the park.
4. Control invasive plant species.

Priority	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
1	Revise or purchase a new sign at the trailhead that shows all of the current trails available to park visitors.	Consult with original sign planner if possible to discuss changes. Hire the work done.	Parks and Recreation Budget Grants Volunteers
1	Provide benches for the recently developed trail.	Get information about who provided the other park benches in order to match their design and material. Seek funding for the project.	Parks and Recreation Budget Grants Donations Volunteers
2	Provide signs that ask people to clean up after their pets and provide disposal bags and refuse containers for that purpose.	Purchase signs and disposal bags and be sure refuse containers are provided.	Parks and Recreation Budget
2	Evaluate park for invasive species and if found initiate plan to eradicate.	Consult with professional to determine most appropriate method of eradication. Research to see if grant money is available and if so apply for funds. Implement eradication plan.	Helena Township Budget Grants
1	Provide adequate space for parking at trailhead.	Purchase additional property. Explore providing parking on current Coy Mountain property.	Parks and Recreation Budget Grants Volunteers Donations

COY MOUNTAIN PRESERVE (CONT'D)			
Priority	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
1	Have a process in place to identify safety hazards in Coy Mtn. Preserve.	Identify any regulatory restrictions that may limit removing safety hazards from the park. Work with the Helena Township Board to establish a process/procedure to identify and remove safety hazards.	Parks and recreation budget. Grants Volunteers Donations
1	Creation of a system to maintain the park in a safe and user friendly condition.	Identify maintenance needs in the park. Consult with local agency resources on invasive species. Work with the Helena Township Board to develop a plan to maintain Coy Mountain Preserve.	Parks and recreation budget. Grants Volunteers Donations
3	Preserve existing property and expand Coy Mountain Preserve acreage to make a larger natural area available to the public.	Identify private property that is contiguous to Coy Mountain Preserve that is available for purchase. Consult with Helena Township board about future acquisition. Pursue funding for property acquisition.	Parks and recreation budget. Grants Volunteers Donations
3	Increase the number of signs that identify various species of flora and fauna found in the Coy Mountain Preserve.	Consult with local agency resources on the identification and labeling of flora and fauna. Develop a plan to increase and improve signage. Consult with and solicit approval of the Helena Township Board for this project.	Parks and recreation budget Grants Volunteers Donations

## COY MOUNTAIN PRESERVE (CONT'D)

**C. RELATED GOAL:** Unify the visual statement made by signage, landscaping, equipment, paint colors, and style of any modifications or new buildings at the parks.

**OBJECTIVE:** Coordinate the visual statement of this park with those of the other parks.

Priority	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
3	Determine what the visual statement for Helena Township parks is. Construct a plan for bringing this park into conformity with that statement.	Ask Helena Township Board for direction in deciding on a visual statement for our parks. Determine cost of bringing our park into conformity.	Helena Township Budget Volunteers Donations Grants

## **HELENA TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY CENTER**

**The Helena Township Community Center was rated as “very important” by over 78% of our survey responders and was considered to be in “average to excellent” condition. Over 60% of the township residents responding to our survey are 55 years of age or older, and almost half of the survey responders use the Community Center more than seven times a year. Although it wasn’t brought out in the survey we have to note that the gymnasium is also used almost daily by senior citizens for walking, by young children for running and playing, and by teens and young adults for playing basketball. When considering the survey information, and also observing the daily use of the Community Center, our committee feels it is important to bring this aging building up to modern standards as regards handicap accessibility and providing a safe, comfortable place for our residents and visitors.**

**The Antrim County recycling bins are a welcome addition to the community. However, the area around the bins is unpaved, uneven and rutted. We feel that paving this area and making the driveway around the exterior of the building safer is important.**

## GOALS:

**GOAL: Promote a healthier and safer community for all age groups.**

**GOAL: Develop age appropriate recreational opportunities within Helena Township.**

**GOAL: Improved communication for residents and visitors about Helena Township parks and recreation facilities and activities.**

**GOAL: Improved access at all Helena Township parks.**

**GOAL: Protection/preservation of natural areas and the environment.**

**GOAL: Unify the visual statement made by signage, landscaping, equipment, paint colors, and style of any modifications or other new buildings at the parks.**

**Note: Priority scale indicates urgency of need with 1 being most urgent.**

## HELENA TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY CENTER

**A. RELATED GOAL(S):** Promote a healthier and safer community for all age groups

### OBJECTIVE(S):

1. Update and maintain the interior of this former elementary school built in 1958 to provide a safe and comfortable location for many community activities.
2. Improve the safety of those using the Community Center.

Priority	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
1	Air conditioning for entire building.	Get bids from HVAC contractors. Select contractor. Research and acquire funds.	Helena Township Budget Grants Donations Volunteers
1	First aid station with defibrillator.	Contact Antrim County Emergency Coordinator to get advice on equipment to purchase. Research sources. Research and acquire funds.	Helena Township Budget Grants Donations Volunteers

## HELENA TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY CENTER (CONT'D)

	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
2	Restroom doors are difficult to open. Restroom would not be accessible for a person with a disability. Provide doors that are easier to open.	Consult with a disabilities specialist. Research sources to purchase proper hardware. Research and acquire funds.	Helena Township Budget Grants Donations Volunteers
<b>B. RELATED GOAL(S):</b> Improved access at all Helena Township parks. Promote a healthier and safer community for all age groups. <b>OBJECTIVE(S):</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Upgrade the area where the recycling dumpsters are located to improve the safety of those recycling.</li> <li>2. Improve the safety of the main parking area.</li> </ol>			
Priorit y	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
2	The area where the recycling dumpsters are located is potholed, uneven, muddy, and a potential hazard. Leveling and paving this area would greatly improve the safety of those using it.	Get bids from paving companies. Select a contractor. Research and acquire funds.	Helena Township Budget Grants Donations Volunteers
2	There is a blind spot at the Southeast corner of the main parking lot where the roadway along the east side of the building enters that lot. A “Yield” or “Stop” sign is needed at that intersection.	Purchase a sign and post. Have township maintenance staff install it.	Helena Township Budget Parks and Recreation Budget

## HELENA TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY CENTER (CONT'D)

**C. RELATED GOAL:** Unify the visual statement made by signage, landscaping, equipment, paint colors, and style of any modifications or new buildings at the parks.

Protection/preservation of natural areas and the environment.

**OBJECTIVE:** 1. Control invasive plant species.

2. Coordinate the visual statement of this park with those of the other parks.

Priority	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
2	Evaluate park for invasive species and if found initiate plan to eradicate.	Consult with professional to determine most appropriate method of eradication. Research to see if grant money is available and if so apply for funds. Implement eradication plan.	Helena Township Budget Grants
3	Determine visual statement for Helena Township parks. Construct a plan to bring this park into conformity with that statement.	Ask Helena Township Board for direction in deciding on a visual statement for our parks. Determine cost of bringing our park into conformity.	Helena Township Budget Volunteers Donations Grants

**D. RELATED GOAL(S):** Improve communication for residents and visitors about Helena Township parks and recreation facilities and activities.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** Ensure that current and accurate information is displayed on Helena Township bulletin boards and website.

Priority	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
1	Dedicate a space in the entryway to post and display information on Helena Township parks and recreation areas. Establish a procedure to ensure that information posted is updated and accurate.	Request the township to dedicate a space for posting parks and recreation information. Determine who is responsible for updating parks and recreation bulletin boards and work with them to establish a maintenance routine.	Helena Township Budget Volunteers
1	Promote the use of the Helena Township Parks and Recreation website.	Display the Helena Township web address in prominent areas such as bulletin boards and printed materials.	



## **Helena Township Ball Park**

**In our public survey, 49% of respondents thought all groups were being served adequately. However, of the remaining 51%, over 15% thought people with disabilities were underserved. The Helena Township Ball Park parking lot is not paved and there are no handicap parking spaces. In addition, there are no paved pathways within the park. Our committee believes that all parks in our township must be accessible for those with disabilities. One of our goals for this park is a paved parking area with designated handicap spaces, and a paved path to the water front and an accessible observation platform.**

**Input from our public survey revealed that families with children wanted a park with permanent restrooms, a covered pavilion, a sandy beach area, and a designated swimming area with buoys. With so much frontage on Torch Lake and 6.2 acres, Helena Township Ball Park would be a perfect location for this. The 2010 Census revealed that 40% of people living in Helena Township are under the age of 50. In our public survey over 39% of those responding were under the age of 55. Since such a large percentage of our population may include families with children, we believe this goal must be a priority for our committee.**

## GOALS:

**GOAL: Promote a healthier and safer community for all age groups.**

**GOAL: Develop age appropriate recreational opportunities within Helena Township.**

**GOAL: Improved communication for residents and visitors about Helena Township parks and recreation facilities and activities.**

**GOAL: Improved access at all Helena Township parks.**

**GOAL: Protection/preservation of natural areas and the environment.**

**GOAL: Unify the visual statement made by signage, landscaping, equipment, paint colors, and style of any modifications or other new buildings at the parks.**

**Note: Priority scale indicates urgency of need with 1 being most urgent.**

## HELENA TOWNSHIP BALL PARK

**A. RELATED GOAL(S):** Improved access at all Helena Township Parks.

**OBJECTIVE(S): 1.** Provide accessible roads and paths to all recreational facilities.

**2.** Improve the safety of the park.

Priority	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
1	ADA compliant accessibility	Create path (walkway) to beach area. Invite representatives from Antrim County Soil/Conservation to help plan beach development. Determine plan. Estimate costs. Construct a pathway.	Parks and Recreation budget. Grants Alden Volunteers
2	A recreational plan for the ball park.	Hire a consultant/land use engineer and designer. Review and develop long-range recreational uses.	Parks and Recreation budget. Grants

## HELENA TOWNSHIP BALL PARK (CONT')

**B. RELATED GOAL(S):** Promote a healthier and safer community for all age groups.  
Develop age appropriate recreational opportunities within Helena Township.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** Upgrade or add facilities to make the park safer and more usable by the public.

Priority	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
1	Install fence for defining the ball park outfield.	Determine the location of the fence and bids for the cost to install	Parks and Recreation budget. Grants
2	Provide bathroom facility including ADA compliant permanent structure.	Design bathroom facility. Obtain bids. Build bathroom facility.	Grants Public donations
2	Evaluate the existing structures, including the old concession stand, dugout, and bleachers.	Take action as needed. Obtain permits where required.	Parks and Recreation budget Grants Public donations

**C. RELATED GOAL(S):** Promote a healthier and safer community for all age groups.  
Develop age appropriate recreational opportunities within Helena Township.  
Protection/preservation of natural areas and the environment.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** 1. Develop beach front area for water enjoyment.  
2. Control invasive plant species.

Priority	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
1	Provide a sandy beach and access for swimming and wading.	Meet with Soil and Erosion agent. Define area and bring in sand.	Parks and Recreation budget Grants
2	Evaluate park for invasive species and if found initiate plan to eradicate.	Consult with professional to determine most appropriate method of eradication. Research to see if grant money is available and if so apply for funds. Implement eradication plan.	Helena Township Budget Grants

## HELENA TOWNSHIP BALL PARK (CONT'D)

Priority	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
2	Define swimming area with buoys.	Obtain permits from the DNR.	Parks and Recreation budget
1	Construct a pavilion	Define placement. Obtain permits to construct.	Grants
<p><b>D. RELATED GOAL:</b> Unify the visual statement made by signage, landscaping, equipment, paint colors, and style of any modifications or new buildings at the parks.</p> <p><b>OBJECTIVE:</b> Coordinate the visual statement of this park with those of the other parks.</p>			
Priority	Improvements Needed	Action Program/Steps	Funding Sources
3	Determine what the visual statement for Helena Township parks is. Construct a plan for bringing this park into conformity with that statement.	Ask Helena Township Board for direction in deciding on a visual statement for our parks. Determine cost of bringing our park into conformity.	Helena Township Budget Volunteers Donations Grants

# Appendix

HELENA TOWNSHIP ANNUAL CALENDAR JANUARY – DECEMBER 2012 (Rev.1/28/13)							
<p>The following columns show events and activities that were scheduled during the calendar year January thru December 2012. Some events are repeated weekly and/or on more than one day of the week each month. Activities occurring weekly are highlighted in Yellow. Location of activities is indicated as follows: <b>Community Center</b> = CC, <b>Depot Park</b> = DP, <b>Downtown Alden</b> = DA, <b>Tennis Court</b> = TC</p>							
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SAT. Cont'd
Grass River Activities DP	Crocheting-CC	Mah Jong-CC	Basket Weaving-CC	Book Sale-CC	Yoga-CC	Cartooning: "You can't do it wrong"-CC	Alden Sidewalk Sale-DA
The Art of Creating Bronze Figures-CC	Yoga-CC	Grange Bingo-CC	Yoga-CC	Hospice Program-CC	Book Sale-CC	Fly Tying Basics-CC	Heritage Days-DA
Fireman's Spaghetti Dinner-CC	Estate Planning-CC	Digital Photography-CC	Watercolor Painting Class-CC	Basic Computer Skills-CC	File of Life-CC	Build a Bluebird House-CC	Potato/Chili Bar
Graduation Celebration-CC	Writing for Fun-CC	Taste of Torch-DP	Great Start-CC	Historical Society Picnic-DP	Historical Society Mtg.-DP	Wedding-DP	A/V Pumpkin Patch Celebration-DA
Strawberry Festival-DP	Book Sale-CC		Your First 100 Years-CC	Alden Stroll-DA	Depot Work Session-DP	Antiques and Cottage Sale-DP	Harvest Dinner-CC
TAAG Quilt Show-DP	The Amazing Immune System-CC		Writing Workshop-CC	Off the Wall Movie Jan-Apr.-CC	Rehearsal-DP	Concert in the Park-DP	Arts and Crafts Show-CC
Train Show and Swap Meet-DP	The Art of Pottery Making-CC		Vintage Car Show-TC		Hops and Berries Wine Tasting-DP	Alden Run-DA	
Train Show-DP	Cooking Breakfast-CC		Bonfire & Costumes-TC			Alden Men's Club Rummage Sale-DA	Alden Community Illumination-DA & DP
Children's Christmas Party-CC	Scarf Tying-CC					Bake Sale-DA	
	Museum Opens Memorial Wkend-DP					TAAG Quilt Show-DP	
	Parade and Flag Service-DA & DP					Twin Bay British Car Club Show-DP	
	Book Sale-CC						
	Museum Closes Labor Day-DP						

## Helena Township Parks & Recreation Community Survey

### Welcome...

Helena Township is committed to improving the quality of life for our residents and providing a safe and enjoyable environment for all, now and into the future.

The recently re-established and re-energized Helena Township Parks & Recreation Committee has developed this survey to provide a format for gaining your insights and priorities as this committee works to develop a new five-year Parks & Recreation plan. The five-year plan is important because it is the minimum requirement for the township to submit grant applications with the State of Michigan's Department of Natural Resources allowing the community to potentially receive funding in support of the key initiatives outlined in the five-year plan. More importantly, by gaining your input and completing this plan, we can address the current and future needs of our residents and visitors.

We welcome all ideas and suggestions to ensure these public assets are optimized for all to enjoy.

Please help us ensure we capture your most sincere opinions by answering all the questions to the best of your ability. Your responses are anonymous, unless you would like to provide your contact information at the end of the survey, so you can feel comfortable providing your most candid feedback. Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey! Let's begin the survey now...

### 1. Please check the living situation that best describes you?

- ☐ My primary residence is located in Helena Township for greater than six (6) months per year
- ☐ I own property in Helena Township, but it is not my primary residence
- ☐ I don't reside or own property in Helena Township, but I utilize the park resources

### 2. If Helena Township is NOT your primary residence, please choose below how often you use this property/residence?

- ☐ I reside at this property/residence approximately 1 – 8 weeks per year
- ☐ I reside at this property/residence approximately 9 – 16 weeks per year
- ☐ I reside at this property/residence approximately 17 – 25 weeks per year



Helena Township Parks & Recreation Community Survey

**3. Please tell us the number of persons living in your household, including yourself, who are:**

Number of Household members for each age group

Under age 10	<input type="text"/>
Age 10-19	<input type="text"/>
Age 20-24	<input type="text"/>
Age 25-34	<input type="text"/>
Age 35-44	<input type="text"/>
Age 45-54	<input type="text"/>
Age 55-64	<input type="text"/>
Age 65+	<input type="text"/>

**4. Please select the ways you learn about Helena Township parks and recreation programs, activities, and resources. (Please select all that apply)**

- ☐ Program Guide
- ☐ Newspaper
- ☐ Flyer/Brochure
- ☐ Friends/Neighbors
- ☐ Helena Township Website
- ☐ Helena Township Representatives
- ☐ Local Businesses (e.g. "local watering hole")
- ☐ None of the above (I am generally not aware of any parks and recreation programs and/or activities)

Other (please specify) and/or Comment (optional)

## Helena Township Parks & Recreation Community Survey

### 5. Please select for EACH Row (Helena Township Public Resource) that best indicates how important each of the following resource is to you/your family.

	Not Familiar	Not important	No Opinion (Neutral)	Important	Very important
Coy Mountain Preserve & Walking Trail	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Depot Park	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tennis Court Park	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ball Diamond Park	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helena Twp. Community Center	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Harbor & Harbor Park	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public Road End Lake Accesses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify) and/or Comment (optional)

### 6. Please select for EACH ROW (Helena Township Public Resource) that best indicates how often in the past 12 months you have used each of the following resources?

	Not Familiar	Never	1 – 3 Times	4 – 6 Times	7 - 10 Times	> 10 Times
Coy Mountain Preserve & Walking Trail	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Depot Park	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tennis Court Park	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ball Diamond Park	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helena Twp. Community Center	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Harbor & Harbor Park	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public Road End Lake Accesses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify) and/or Comment (optional)

## Helena Township Parks & Recreation Community Survey

**7. When you think about your experience at any of Helena Township's park resources, what suggestions would you make to improve the community center, parks, trails, and/or lake accesses that you utilized. (Please skip this question and proceed to question 8 if you have not utilized any of Helena Township parks/recreation resources)**

**8. Please select for EACH ROW (Helena Township Public Resource) that best indicates your opinion of the condition and maintenance for each of the following resources?**

	Not Familiar	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent
Coy Mountain Preserve & Walking Trail	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Depot Park	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tennis Court Park	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ball Diamond Park	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helena Twp. Community Center	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Harbor & Harbor Park	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public Road End Lake Accesses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify) and/or Comment (optional)						

## Helena Township Parks & Recreation Community Survey

### 9. If you seldom or never use the community center, parks, trails, and/or lake accesses in Helena Township, what are your reasons? (Please select all that apply)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not interested                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Do not have transportation                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No Time                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Do not know where they are                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feel unsafe                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Do not know what is available                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of facilities                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Too crowded                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poorly maintained                      | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not value our parks                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Too far away; not conveniently located | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable (I utilize some/all resources) |

Other (please specify) and/or Comment (optional)

### 10. Indicate your level of agreement with each of the following hypothetical actions to improve our park system.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion (Neutral)	Agree	Strongly Agree
Acquiring land for future parks and/or open spaces	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Re-developing/upgrading existing parks to support a broader range of activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Better maintenance of existing parks and facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide recreation programs and activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop new trails	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
No additional parks or changes to current resources are needed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify) and/or Comment (optional)

### 11. Do you support the development of a recreational trail system in Helena Township?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

## Helena Township Parks & Recreation Community Survey

### 12. If you support the development of a trail system, what type of trail(s) should have the highest priority in Helena Township? (Please select your top TWO (2) choices)

- ☐ Trails that link community destinations
- ☐ Barrier free trails (accommodates all, including those with disabilities)
- ☐ Barrier free pathways that connect existing parks
- ☐ Nature trails for viewing plants and wildlife
- ☐ Trails with exercise stations along the way
- ☐ Trails that link with other existing trails
- ☐ Paved trails for walking, biking, etc...
- ☐ Trails that extend long distances (5+ miles)

Other (please specify) and/or Comment

### 13. Which groups do you believe are under-served by our current recreation resources and/or programs? (Please select all that apply)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Preschoolers        | <input type="checkbox"/> Seniors                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elementary youth    | <input type="checkbox"/> Families                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Middle school youth | <input type="checkbox"/> People from diverse cultures     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High school youth   | <input type="checkbox"/> People with disabilities         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adults              | <input type="checkbox"/> All groups are served adequately |

Other (Please specify) and/or Comment (optional)

## Helena Township Parks & Recreation Community Survey

### 14. When you visit our community center, parks, trails, and/or lake accesses, what activities do you participate in? (Please select all that apply)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming/Water Activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Sunbathing                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biking                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Arts & Crafts              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mahjong                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Picnic                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Quilting/Knitting          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basketball                | <input type="checkbox"/> Using Playground Equipment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Book Club/Reading         | <input type="checkbox"/> Kayaking/Boating           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Soccer                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Hunting/Fishing/Trapping   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Baseball/Softball         | <input type="checkbox"/> Kite flying                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yoga                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Playing catch              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volleyball                | <input type="checkbox"/> Bingo                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walking/Running/Hiking    | <input type="checkbox"/> Relaxing                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Badminton                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable             |

Other activities (please specify) and/or Comment (optional)

### 15. When you consider the above activity(s) and the community center, parks, trails, and/or lake accesses where you participated, how would you rate the overall quality of your experience? (Please select only one)

- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Fair
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ No Opinion
- ☐ Not Applicable (I do not utilize these resources)

Comment (optional)

## Helena Township Parks & Recreation Community Survey

**16. What are the recreation facilities/resources you would MOST like to see added in Helena Township to meet the needs of the members of your household? (Please select all that apply)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor concert stage                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Skateboard/Roller Blade Park                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Baseball/Softball fields     | <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Volleyball Court(s)                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bike Paths/Trails                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Picnic/Group Facilities (Pavilions)     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BMX/Dirt Bike/Off-road Park             | <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Benches                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dog Park                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Walking/Jogging Paths                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Equestrian Facilities                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Basketball Courts                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Football Field(s)                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Wet playground                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Golf Course/Driving Range               | <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Playgrounds/Tot-lots                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming Pool for Recreation or Lessons | <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Swimming areas                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Soccer Field(s)                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Additional bathrooms/drinking fountains            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Tennis Court(s)              | <input type="checkbox"/> No additional facilities/resources should be added |

Other (please specify) and/or Comment (optional)



## Helena Township Parks & Recreation Community Survey

**17. What are the programs, classes, or activities your household would MOST like to see in Helena Township to meet the needs of the members of your household? (Please select all that apply)**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adult care   | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor concerts  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aerobics, spinning, or fitness instruction/classes | <input type="checkbox"/> Parenting classes   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts or crafts instruction or classes              | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal development/business classes                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Before or after school child care                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Reading, language, spelling, or writing classes             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Camps for school-age children                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Science or nature classes                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooking instruction or classes                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming lessons  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dance instruction or classes                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Scuba Diving/snorkeling lessons                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drama instruction or classes                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Trips or excursions to different places or events           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drop-in playground program                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer opportunities                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Early childhood development classes                | <input type="checkbox"/> Yoga, meditation, or stress relief classes                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Educational workshops or classes                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Shuffleboard  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gymnastics instruction or classes                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Horseshoes  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health/nutrition related workshops or classes      | <input type="checkbox"/> Frisbee golf  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Holiday/seasonal celebrations or fairs             | <input type="checkbox"/> Badminton leagues or lessons                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Martial arts instruction or classes                | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis leagues or lessons                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meal program for seniors                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth programs such as soccer, basketball, football, etc... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Music instruction or classes                       | <input type="checkbox"/> None  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hunting/fishing/trapping instruction/classes       |  |

Other (please specify) and/or Comment (optional)

## Helena Township Parks & Recreation Community Survey

### 18. What are the most important priorities Helena Township Parks and Recreation should consider when providing services to our residents? (Please select the THREE (3) most important)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improved physical and mental health/wellness             | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide cultural education/opportunities                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fun for participants and observers                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide positive alternatives to unfavorable behavior                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enhance the economic climate for existing/new businesses | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide opportunities to enjoy nature/outdoors                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Positive change in personal attitude                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide opportunities for lifelong learning (all ages)                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Promote youth development                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Help seniors and disabled people remain active                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increase in tourism                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Connect people together, building stronger families and neighborhoods |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Protection of natural areas and the environment          | <input type="checkbox"/> Enhance community image and sense of pride                            |

Other (please specify) and/or Comment (optional)

### 19. Please provide any additional information, opinions, or comments related to Helena Township's Parks and Recreation resources (parks, trails, lake accesses and related facilities and activities) and/or the direction and priorities of the parks and recreation committee.

## Helena Township Parks & Recreation Community Survey

### 20. (Optional) I would like to be contacted about:

- ☐ This survey/responses
- ☐ Future surveys
- ☐ Focus groups/Public forums
- ☐ Parks and recreation committee participation
- ☐ No thank you...I prefer to remain anonymous

Other (please specify) and/or Comment (optional)

### 21. (Optional) If you would like to be contacted regarding this survey, your survey responses or future surveys, focus groups or parks and recreation committee participation, please complete the following:

**Name:**

**Address:**

**Address 2:**

**City/Town:**

**State:**

**ZIP:**

**Email Address:**

**Phone Number:**

CONGRATULATIONS...YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE SURVEY!!!

On behalf of the Helena Township board and the Parks and Recreation committee members, we sincerely THANK YOU for your participation in the Helena Township Parks & Recreation Survey!

Please join us for a COMMUNITY PUBLIC FORUM to discuss this survey and gain further insights and comments relating to Helena Township's Parks and Recreation activities. The forum is intended to be scheduled in November, so be on the lookout in the local paper, postings around the township and our website for the date and location details. We look forward to seeing you soon!

HELENA TOWNSHIP  
PARKS AND RECREATION  
COMMUNITY FORUM  
NOVEMBER 10, 2011

AGENDA

- COMMITTEE INTRODUCTIONS/OPENING COMMENTS
- OVERVIEW OF HELENA TOWNSHIP'S PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE  
2011/2012 OBJECTIVES
- REVIEW OF THE PARKS & RECREATION COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS
- OPEN SESSION TO GAIN COMMUNITY SUPPORT

**SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS FOR HELENA TOWNSHIP**  
**COMMUNITY SURVEY OF 2011**

(Q1) Respondents Living Situation: 56.6% live in Helena Twp. more than 6 months/year  
40.7% live elsewhere but own property in HT

(Q2) If HT is not primary residence how often do you use your HT property?  
35.6% 1-8 wks/year  
37.8% 9-16 wks/year  
25.6% 17-25 wks/year

(Q3) Age groups of people responding:  
60.2% 55+  
25.2 20-54  
14.1% 1-19

(Q4) How do you learn about HT P&R programs, activities, resources?  
58.5% word of mouth  
51.4% newspaper  
22.9% local watering hole

(Q 5,6,8 see table next page)

(Q7) Suggestions for improving parks, etc:  
Various subjective responses

Helena Township  
Parks and Recreation Plan - Summary of Survey Results

	<b>Coy Mtn.</b>	<b>Depot Park</b>	<b>Tennis Court Park</b>	<b>Ball Diamond Park</b>	<b>HT Community Center</b>	<b>Harbor Park</b>	<b>Public Road End Accesses</b>
(Q5) Indicate how important each resource is to your family	67.1% Important-Very Important	87.5% Important-Very Important	70.5% Important-Very Important	49.5% Important-Very Important	78.8% Important-Very Important	79.9% Important-Very Important	64% Important-Very Important
(Q6) How often have you used the P&R Facilities in HT	9.2% More than 7 times	28.1% More than 7 times	18.1% More than 7 times	3.9% More than 7 times	48.1% More than 7 times	30.2% More than 7 times	30.1% More than 7 times
	53.9% One to Six times	61.6% One to Six times	44.9% One to Six times	29.2% One to Six times	31% One to Six times	50.7% One to Six times	31.5% One to Six times
	35.4% Never	9.2% Never	36.6% Never	64.6% Never	18.1% Never	16.3% Never	35.9% Never
(Q8) What is your opinion of the condition of each HT resource	64% Average to excellent	96.6% Average to excellent	78.3% Average to excellent	57.2% Average to excellent	83.2% Average to excellent	85% Average to excellent	63.3% Average to excellent

(Q9) If you seldom or never use the Community Center, Parks, Trails or lake accesses in HT what are your reasons:

64.5% do currently use these resources

15.9% no personal time available

13 % don't know what is available

<b>(Q10) Indicate your level of agreement with each of the following hypothetical actions to improve the park system:</b>		
Acquiring land for future parks and/or open spaces	Agree/strongly agree 49.3%	Disagree/strongly disagree 25.6%
Re-developing/upgrading existing parks to support a broader range of activities	Agree/strongly agree 61.8%	Disagree/strongly disagree 13.8%
Better maintenance of existing parks and facilities	Agree/strongly agree 54.2%	Disagree/strongly disagree 13.3%
Provide recreation programs and activities	Agree/strongly agree 48.3%	Disagree/strongly disagree 10.9%
Develop new trails	Agree/strongly agree 57.8%	Disagree/strongly disagree 14.2%
No additional parks or changes to current resources are needed	Agree/strongly agree 18.3%	Disagree/strongly disagree 46.9%

**(Q11) Do you support the development of a recreational trail system in HT:**

**78.8% Yes**

**21.2% No**

**(Q12) If you support the development of a trail system, what type of trail(s) should have the highest priority in HT:**

**48.7% Paved trails for walking, biking, etc.**

**36.5% Trails that link with other existing trails**

**34.6% Nature trails for viewing plants and wildlife**

**34% Trails that link community destinations**

**(Q13) Which groups do you believe are underserved by our current recreation resources and/or programs:**

**49.7% All groups are served adequately**

**19.2% Seniors**

**17.4% High School youth**

**15.6% People with disabilities**

**(Q14) When you visit our community center, parks, trails and lake accesses what activities do you participate in:**

**68.5% Walking, running, hiking**

**58.4% Relaxing**

**57.9% Swimming/water activities**

**46.2% Picnic**

**39.6% Biking**

**35% Using Playground**

**(Q15) When you consider the activities listed in Q14, how would you rate the overall quality of your experience:**

**25.5% Excellent**

**63.5% Good**

**(Q16) What are the recreation facilities/resources you would most like to see added in HT to meet the needs of your household?**

**57% Walking/jogging paths**

**55.4% Bike paths/trails**

**37.3% Additional bathrooms/drinking fountains**

**26.4% Additional benches**

**24.4% Outdoor concert stage**

**22.3% Additional beaches**

**19.7% Additional picnic areas/pavilions**

**(Q17) What are the programs, classes or activities your household would most like to see in HT to meet the needs of the members of your household:**

**42.9% Outdoor Concerts**

**24.1% Holiday/seasonal celebrations or fairs**

**21.5% Arts and crafts instruction or classes**

**20.9% Educational workshops or classes**

**20.9% Trips or excursions to different places**

**19.4% Aerobics, spinning or fitness classes**

**17.8% Yoga, meditation or stress relief classes**

**(Q18) What are the 3 most important priorities HT P&R should consider when providing services to our residents:**

- 66% Protection of natural areas and the environment**
- 52.8% Provide opportunities to enjoy the outdoors**
- 27.4% Fun for participants and observers**
- 24.9% Improved physical and mental health/wellness**
- 21.8% Enhance the economic climate for existing /new businesses**

**(Q19) Please provide any additional information, opinions or comments related to HT P&R resources and/or the direction and priorities of the P&R Committee.**

**See comments in qualitative responses.**

**(Q20) I would like to be contacted about:**

- 19.6% this survey responses**
- 16.6% Future surveys**
- 8.0% Focus groups/public forums**
- 5.5% P&R committee participation**



## PUBLIC NOTICES

Public notice deadline is Monday at 5 p.m. • Email to [manager@antrimreview.net](mailto:manager@antrimreview.net) • 231-533-5651 ext. 201

### Helena Township Parks & Recreation Five Year Plan Draft Document Available for Review

June 13 – July 16, 2013

Your review is requested before the Plan is submitted to Township Board. In October 2011 Helena Township's full-time and part-time residents completed a survey to obtain demographic information, and determine their insights and priorities. The Parks & Recreation Committee used the survey results, as well as other research and information to develop a new five year plan. The five year plan is a requirement for the township to submit grant applications with the State of Michigan's Department of Natural Resources allowing the community to potentially receive funding in support of the key initiatives outlined in the five year plan. Helena Township residents may review the plan and make comments as follows:

You can review the Plan in two ways:

Go online to [www.helenatownship.com](http://www.helenatownship.com) and then click on "Draft – Parks & Recreation Plan"

Review a paper copy at the Alden District Library or Helena Township Office. You can comment on the Plan in three ways:

Mail your comments to:

Helena Township Parks & Recreation Committee  
P.O. Box 177

Alden, MI 49612

Email your comments to the Parks & Recreation Committee at [helena@torchlake.com](mailto:helena@torchlake.com)

Bring your comments to the Parks & Recreation Public Meeting scheduled on Tuesday, July 16 from 3-4 p.m. at the Helena Township Community Center, 8751 Helena Road, Alden, Michigan

After reviewing the comments and making any needed modifications, the Plan will be presented to the Helena Township Board for adoption at their Board meeting on Thursday, August 8 at 7:00 p.m.



HELENA TOWNSHIP

**HELENA TOWNSHIP  
PARKS & RECREATION FIVE YEAR PLAN  
DRAFT DOCUMENT AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW  
June 13 – July 16, 2013**

Your review is requested before the Plan is submitted to Township Board

In October 2011 Helena Township's full-time and part-time residents completed a survey to obtain demographic information, and determine their insights and priorities. The Parks & Recreation Committee used the survey results, as well as other research and information to develop a new five year plan. The five year plan is a requirement for the township to submit grant applications with the State of Michigan's Department of Natural Resources allowing the community to potentially receive funding in support of the key initiatives outlined in the five year plan. Helena Township residents may review the plan and make comments as follows:

**You can review the Plan in two ways:**

- Go online to [www.helenatownship.com](http://www.helenatownship.com) and then click on "Draft – Parks & Recreation Plan"
- Review a paper copy at the Alden District Library or Helena Township Office

**You can comment on the Plan in three ways:**

- Mail your comments to:

**Helena Township Parks & Recreation Committee  
P.O. Box 177  
Alden, MI 49612**

- Email your comments to the Parks & Recreation Committee at [helena@torchlake.com](mailto:helena@torchlake.com)
- Bring your comments to the Parks & Recreation Public Meeting scheduled on Tuesday, July 16 from 3-4 p.m. at the Helena Township Community Center, 8751 Helena Road, Alden, Michigan

After reviewing the comments and making any needed modifications, the Plan will be presented to the Helena Township Board for adoption at their Board meeting on Thursday, August 8 at 7:00 p.m.

VILLAGE OF ELK RAPIDS

**22 | Elk Rapids News  
June 13, 2013**

Minutes Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting - Alden Community Center

Meeting date: July 16, 2013

approved 8-20-2013

In attendance: Mike Crawford, Steve Dell, Jan Loveland, Carolyn Nowfel, Dave Peterson & Ruth Smith.

Absent: Casey McDowell

**Community Input:**

Non Committee members in attendance: Nancy Brimhall, Carolyn Buxenstein, Paul De Lange, Jack Findlay, Gerry Hollis, Barb Lockrey, & Dave Reck.

The committee published 3-4PM on July 16<sup>th</sup> as the time slot for public input on the Five Year plan. Since we did not need this full one hour slot for input we moved on to handle other business. The public input session was to be opened again if someone else came for this purpose. No one else came to input concerning the Five year plan.

**Input concerning the Five Year Parks and Recreation plan.**

1. Nancy Brimhall representing Sunset Estates (property owners N. of Ball Park).
  - Possible Donation to township to improve access
  - HT parks should serve current residents first before focusing on visitors and non-residents
  - Would support Depot Park as site for accessible swimming rather than Ball Park
  - DNR will not allow sand to be brought in to form a beach at Ball Park
  - Currently there is no method available to enforce order at our township parks.  
Recently called Police to respond to noise at ball park after park is closed and they said they will not enforce local ordinance that govern our parks. The township should not improve our parks in an effort to bring in more people until steps are taken to enforce ordinances and rules we have now.
2. Barb Lockery
  - Likes the doggy bag idea for all parks.
  - Poison Ivy at tennis court park needs addressing
  - Valleau Landing needs to be raked. Concrete barrier at that park is an accessibility issue.
3. Dave Reck
  - Gave written comments in email and attended the meeting to show support.

**Input received outside of the public meeting. This input is on file and will be included in Five Yr. Plan:**

**Communication from:**

1. Shirley Coleman
2. Trish Narwold
3. Dave Reck.
4. Bob Robbins

**Veterans Memorial:**

Jack Findlay again presented the concept of a Veteran's Memorial at Depot Park and answered questions concerning the project.

1. A site plan including elevations and setbacks was presented.

Helena Township  
Parks and Recreation Plan – Email to County Planning Commission

September 16, 2013

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Attached is the Helena Township Parks and Recreation Five Year Plan adopted by the Helena Township Board on 9-12,2013. If you wish to have a paper copy please let us know.

Helena Township Parks and Recreation Committee

**8751 Helena Road**

**P.O. Box 177**

**Alden, MI 49612**

**Phone: (231) 331-4643**

**Fax: (231) 331-6713**

**E-mail address: [helena@torchlake.com](mailto:helena@torchlake.com)**

Helena Township  
Parks and Recreation Plan



Michigan Department of Natural Resources-Grants Management

**COMMUNITY PARK, RECREATION, OPEN SPACE, AND  
GREENWAY PLAN CERTIFICATION CHECKLIST**

By Authority of Parts 19, 703 and 716 of Act 451, P.A. 1994, as amended, submission of this information is required for eligibility to apply for grants

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Complete, obtain certification signatures and submit this checklist with a locally adopted recreation plan.

All recreation plans are required to meet the content and local approval standards listed in this checklist and as outlined in the *Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plans* provided by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR). To be eligible for grant consideration, plans must be submitted to the DNR prior to the grant application deadline with a completed checklist that has been signed by an authorized official(s) of the local unit of government(s) submitting the plan.

PLAN INFORMATION		
Name of Plan: <u>RECREATION AND NATURAL RESOURCE PLAN</u>		
List the community names (including school districts) covered by the plan	County	Month and year plan adopted by the community's governing body
<u>HELENA TOWNSHIP</u>	<u>ANTRIM</u>	

PLAN CONTENT
<p><b>INSTRUCTIONS:</b> Please check <u>each</u> box to certify that the listed information is included in the <u>final</u> plan.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>1. COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>2. ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE</b></p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Roles of Commission(s) or Advisory Board(s)  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Department, Authority and/or Staff Description and Organizational Chart  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Annual and Projected Budgets for Operations, Maintenance, Capital Improvements and Recreation  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Programming  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Current Funding Sources  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Role of Volunteers  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Relationship(s) with School Districts, Other Public Agencies or Private Organizations  <b>Regional Authorities or Trailway Commissions Only</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> Description of the Relationship between the Authority or Commission and the Recreation Departments of Participating Communities  <input type="checkbox"/> Articles of Incorporation         </p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>3. RECREATION INVENTORY</b></p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Description of Methods Used to Conduct the Inventory  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Inventory of all Community Owned Parks and Recreation Facilities  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Location Maps (site development plans recommended but not required)  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accessibility Assessment  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Status Report for all Grant-Assisted Parks and Recreation Facilities         </p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>4. RESOURCE INVENTORY (OPTIONAL)</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>5. DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING PROCESS</b></p>



Helena Township  
Parks and Recreation Plan

☐ 6. DESCRIPTION OF THE PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

☒ Description of the Method(s) Used to Solicit Public Input Before or During Preparation of the Plan, Including a Copy of the Survey or Meeting Agenda and a Summary of the Responses Received

☒ Copy of the Notice of the Availability of the Draft Plan for Public Review and Comment

Date of the Notice 06/13/13

Type of Notice LOCAL NEWSPAPER

Plan Location ON-LENE PUBLIC LIBRARY AND TWP OFFICE

Duration of Draft Plan Public Review Period (Must be at Least 30 Days) 06/13/13 Thru 07/16/13

☒ Copy of the Notice for the Public Meeting Held after the One Month Public Review Period and Before the Plan's Adoption by the Governing Body(ies)

Date of Notice 06/13/13

Name of Newspaper ANTHEM REVIEW AND ELK RAPIDS PRESS

Date of Meeting 07/16/13

☒ Copy of the Minutes from the Public Meeting

☒ 7. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

☒ 8. ACTION PROGRAM

☒ 9. POST-COMPLETION SELF-INSPECTION REPORT

**PLAN ADOPTION DOCUMENTATION**

Plans **must** be adopted by the highest level governing body (i.e., city council, county commission, township board). If planning is the responsibility of a Planning Commission, Park and Recreation Commission, Recreation Advisory Board or other local Board or Commission, the plan should **also** include a resolution from the Board or Commission recommending adoption of the plan by the governing body.

The local unit of government must submit the final plan to both the County and Regional Planning Agency for their information. Documentation that this was done must be submitted with the plan to the DNR.

Items 1, 3 and 4 below are **required** and must be included in the plan.

**APPROVAL DOCUMENTATION:** For multi-jurisdictional plans, **each** local unit of government must pass a resolution adopting the plan. Prepare and attach a separate page for each unit of government included in the plan.

☒ 1. Official resolution of adoption by the governing body dated: 09/12/13

☒ 2. Official resolution of the HELENA TWP PARKS & REC Comm Commission or Board, recommending adoption of the plan by the governing body, dated: 08/20/13

☒ 3. Copy of letter transmitting adopted plan to County Planning Agency dated: 09/19/13

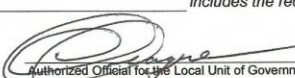
☐ 4. Copy of letter transmitting adopted plan to Regional Planning Agency dated: N/A

**OVERALL CERTIFICATION**

**NOTE:** For multi-jurisdictional plans, Overall Certification must include the signature of each local unit of government. Prepare and attach a separate signature page for each unit of government included in the plan.

I hereby certify that the recreation plan for HELENA TOWNSHIP includes the required content, as indicated above and as set forth by the DNR.

(Local Unit of Government)

 09/12/13  
Authorized Official for the Local Unit of Government Date

This completed checklist must be signed and submitted with a locally adopted recreation plan to:

GRANTS MANAGEMENT  
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL  
RESOURCES  
PO BOX 30425  
LANSING, MI 48909-7925

**DNR USE ONLY - APPROVAL**

The recreation plan is approved by the DNR and the community (ies) covered by the plan, as listed on page 1 of this checklist is/are eligible to apply for recreation grants through

By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Grants Management \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Helena Township  
Parks and Recreation Plan

Helena Township  
P.O. Box 177  
Alden, MI 49612  
231-331-4643 fax 331-  
6713

Helena Township  
P.O. Box 177  
Alden, MI 49612  
231-331-4643 fax 331-6713

Helena Township

**To: Peter Garwood**  
**Antrim Co. Planning Commission**  
**coordinator@antrimcounty.org**

**September 18, 2013**

**Attached is the Helena Township Parks and Recreation Five Year Plan adopted by the Helena Township Board on 9-12-2013. If you wish to have a paper copy please let us know.**

**Helena Township Parks and Recreation Committee**  
**8751 Helena Road**  
**P.O. Box 177**  
**Alden, MI 49612**  
**Phone: (231) 331-4643**  
**Fax: (231) 331-6713**  
**E-mail address: [helena@torchlake.com](mailto:helena@torchlake.com)**

***“Where Neighbors Care!”***

# Helena Township

09/18/2013

Dear Ms. Brimhall,

Thank you for your recent comments on the draft of the Helena Township Parks and Recreation Plan. We appreciate your willingness to share your perspective on the challenges that face our community. The committee has prepared a final version of our plan, which will include **detailed** descriptions of the concerns that you raised.

Many of the issues that we face can be addressed in the future with careful planning. We very much appreciate your taking part in that process. Your concern for the well-being of our community will help us move toward the goal of making local parks more functional for all of our neighbors.

Sincerely,  
Helena Township Parks & Recreation Board

*“Where Neighbors Care!”*



Minutes Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting - Alden Community Center

Meeting date: August 20, 2013

In attendance: Steve Dell, Jan Loveland, Carolyn Nowfel, Dave Peterson & Ruth Smith.

Absent: Mike Crawford & Casey McDowell

**Community Input:**

No community input.

Minutes from 07/16/2013 -approved as presented & will be published on the HT website.

**Information from monthly Helena Twp. Mtg.:**

The policing ordinance that the HT Board approved concerning no overnight mooring at Alden Safe Harbor will go into effect Sept. 8<sup>th</sup>. A revision of the memorandum of understanding concerning the Veteran's Memorial is being requested as the Township will not be participating in sharing the initial costs of the memorial.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Review of Public Input about the 5-year plan and discussion of any needed changes to the plan.

**Summary of Comments Received:**

**The below information was written up by Steve Dell and will be included in the 5-year plan. It summarizes the decisions made during this August meeting.**

Four Helena Township residents gave us written input about our 5-year-plan and 2 residents offered verbal comments at our July 16 public meeting. Many of the comments were complimentary about the work the committee had done and supported the goals and objectives outlined in the plan. Several however targeted other issues that were not addressed directly in the plan. The specific issue and the action our committee is taking to address it are listed in the following paragraphs.

**Issue: Currently there is not a method available to enforce order at our township parks. Recently I called the police to respond to loud noise after closing time for the park and they said they will not enforce local ordinances that govern our parks. The township should not improve our parks in an effort to bring in more people until steps are taken to enforce ordinances and rules we have now.**

- This issue is currently being addressed by the Helena Township Board. For this reason the committee will not include it in the plan.

**Issue: It is essential that swim areas [in our parks] be designated throughout the township where markers and buoys assure swimmers of a safe area and where boats are never allowed.**

- This issue is currently being addressed by the Helena Township Board. For this reason the committee will not include it in the plan.

**Issue: I am a regular user of Coy Mountain and it is truly a wonderful resource for our community. I...have noticed this summer the undergrowth beneath the large trees along Valley Street where the half-circle drive provides ingress and egress by car to the trailhead is making it impossible to see oncoming cars from the West when pulling out at the East end of the lot.**

- This issue is currently being addressed by the Helena Township Board. For this reason the committee will not include it in the plan.

**Issue: I reviewed the inventory information related to the Alden Baseball Park [Helena Township Ball Park] in the plan. In approximately 2001 there was some discussion about changing the land use at this park. I recall from the discussions deed restrictions are in place from the original land donations by the Aemisegger and Chapelle families. I think further research is required on the part of the committee to confirm what deed restrictions exist to include the information in the inventory.**

- The committee has obtained copies of all deeds related to the parks in Helena Township. It will review these deeds at a future committee meeting in order to determine what restrictions (if any) exist.

**Issue: The Ball Park [Helena Township Ball Park] ...is an area of concern. The ball park is great for baseball, picnics, and swimming. We enjoy hearing and watching the adults and children in the water and the occasional ballgame. However, it has recently become a second “Sand Bar”. Someone usually anchors their boat there most of the summer. Sometimes there is also another one anchored. We don’t know what the rules are, but it doesn’t seem like a good idea.**

- This issue is currently being addressed by the Helena Township Board. For this reason the committee will not include it in the plan.

**Issue: The survey conducted in 2011 indicated that Helena Township residents were most interested in walking/jogging paths (57%) and bike paths and trails (55%). Except for the identification of additional property in the Coy Mt. Trail area and a scenic overlook area, this draft does not appear to address the major wishes identified by the respondents in the township.**

- The committee believes that these issues are already addressed in the plan. The acquisition of additional property contiguous to Coy Mountain Preserve and view shed property will lead to additional walking/jogging paths and perhaps bike paths if the terrain is not too hilly. In addition, accessible pathways within both Depot Park and Helena Township Ball Park will increase the number of walking paths available for residents.

**Issue: I am guarded about more paving that can lead to increase storm water runoff in the various parks especially at Valleau Landing [Archie Valleau Landing] and the Ballpark [Helena Township Ball Park]. A paved path to the water’s edge is a direct path for storm water and all it carries with it to the lake. In San Diego on the beaches large plastic like squares with large holes are pieced together to allow wheelchair access across the soft sand to the hardback sand near the water’s edge. I also would prefer not to see paving at the Coy Mt. Trailhead [Coy Mountain Preserve]. Please research alternative surfaces from paving that are more pervious to rainwater especially on slopes and near the lake. Adding sand and raking the beach are two items I fear may alter the natural environment...**

- The committee believes this an excellent point regarding the unintended side effects of building pathways at any of our parks. As stated under action/program steps whenever we discuss constructing pathways, we would consult with disability specialists and environment experts before beginning any of these projects.

**Issue: If the Township intends to set a goal and /or prioritize land acquisition that reflects the values represented by the survey responses, you [Parks and Recreation Committee] might want to consider adding some language in the recreation plan that states that goal.**

- The committee agrees with this suggestion and will revise the plan under the section titled **RESOURCE INVENTORY** to reflect this.

**OLD BUSINESS CONTINUED:**

**Review name of our plan. Make changes if required so Plan name and name in resolution to the board match.**

The name decided upon for the Five Year Plan was **Helena Township Recreation & Natural Resource Plan. This will be on the plan and the resolution to be approved by the Helena Township Board.**

**Review plan for completeness:**

The plan was reviewed & all present voted to approve the plan as amended at this meeting. The final copy is to be presented to the Helena Township Board for a decision on Thursday, Sept. 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Review memo regarding acquiring jurisdiction over Valley St. access which was sent to board.**

Dave said that the memo was received but he is not aware if there was any action taken concerning the memo.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- 1. Potential new committee member Tim Fox.** Tim expressed an interest in serving on the Pks and Rec. Comm.. Tim responded to an email sent by Ruth stating he was not able to meet during the day most of the year. He did not respond to the follow up email saying that the committee could discuss a possible meeting time that was compatible to everyone if he joined.
- 2. List Tina Fields as being a member of the HT Parks and Recreation Committee in recognition of her contributions.** The Committees appreciation for Tina's help with typing and formatting the 5-year plan was unanimous. It was decided that we would be sure to say a public thank you on the HT Website. (Ruth)  
A thank you note will also be sent. (Ruth)
- 3. Casey McDowell is still listed as committee member. The HT website still shows Casey as the Committee chair. Action required?** It was decided that after the Five Year Plan is (hopefully) approved a copy will be sent to Casey with a thank you email. The email would also state that the Committees plan is to recommend to the HT Board that Casey be removed from the Committee as he is no longer available for meetings. (Ruth)
- 4. Schedule meeting with Rick Teague and other board members to review 5-year-plan.** Steve and Carolyn worked out a timeline on the 5-year plan being completed so that Steve could arrange a meeting time with Rick T. to go over the mandatory check sheet that goes in with the 5 year plan. (Carolyn & Steve)
- 5. Meeting dates not listed on web site. Also, skip meeting in December?** The Committee agreed that we will not meet in December. The meeting dates are no longer listed on the HT website. We would like these to be added back on to the website and for the Committee member listing to be kept up to date. (Ruth)
- 6. Prioritize list of "future agenda items" for consideration by the committee.** Once again we did not get to this.
- 7. Other agenda items – none.**

**Action Items needed:**

**Carolyn:**

Continue typing new 5-year-plan. Carolyn will work to complete the plan including the appendix.

**Dave:** Contact Christie Bayus our DNR Plan advisor to discuss the Plan name the Committee selected.

**Mike:** Volunteered to obtain some abstracts we might find useful.

**Ruth:**

**1. The approved July minutes are to be sent to Joyce Looman for publishing online. The August minutes need to be prepared for review by the Committee and will be sent to Rick after feedback from committee members.**

**Action Items needed continued:**

**Ruth**

**2.** Send thank you to Tina Fields for her help with the 5-year plan. **3.** Send 5-year plan to Casey when it has (hopefully) been approved. Thank Casey and let him know we are recommending to the HT Board that he now be removed from the Committee. **4.** Work with Joyce Looman to update the HT website as mentioned under New Business.

**Steve:**

Will summarize the public input for the 5-year plan. Review the Five Yr. Plan with Rick Teague and help with the completion of the check sheet that needs to go in with the Plan.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:**

**These items will continue to be carried forward until they are discussed by the Committee**

1. Deed restrictions for Helena Twp. Parks are to be reviewed. (Steve)
2. Riparian rights / possible review by township attorney (Dave)
3. Handicap parking in Helena Township (Discussion).
4. Research rules and laws governing road ending lake access sites (Steve, Ruth)
5. Discuss possible memo to the Township about developing a plan concerning reservation of usage for all Township Parks
6. Discuss possible memo to the Township concerning placing signs at all Parks to clarify Township ownership and whom to contact if there are questions concerning or problems with the Park
7. Further discuss Alden Safe Harbor and its park status / ownership – memo to Board?
8. Work to update the Parks and Recreation pages of the Helena Township web site.
9. The Helena Township Master plan (Jan. 2010) mentions that a member of the planning commission will appoint one of its members to the Pk. & Rec. Committee. Also check responsibilities of the Parks & Rec. Committee outlined in the current HT Master Plan. There is a new plan due in 2015.
10. Mike mentioned the AAU Sports / Recreation Complex – Morey Complex- and suggested that they may be looking to locate a similar complex in the North.
11. Look into the possibility of Flo McCormick (MI Assoc. of Counties) helping with writing any Pks. And Rec. grants. (Mike Crawford)
12. Consider Keith Charters as a resource for Pk. & Rec. projects.

**The next regular monthly meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, at 3 PM**

Respectfully submitted by Ruth Smith 08-31-2013

## Helena Township Parks and Recreation Plan

### Resolution for Adopting the Helena Township Recreation and Natural Resource Plan

For Helena Township  
Antrim County

WHEREAS, the Helena Township Board has undertaken a planning process to determine the recreation and natural resource needs and desires of its residents during a five year period covering the years 2013 through 2017, and

WHEREAS, Helena Township constitutes the planning area, and

WHEREAS, the Helena Township Board began the process of developing a community recreation and natural resource plan in accordance with the most recent guidelines developed by the Department of Natural Resources and made available to local communities, and

WHEREAS, residents of Helena Township 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 plan, and

WHEREAS, the public was given a well-advertised opportunity and reasonable accommodations to review the final draft plan for the period of June 13, 2013 through July 16, 2013, and

WHEREAS, a final public comment session was held on July 16, 2013 at Helena Township Offices to provide an opportunity for all residents of the planning area to express opinions, ask questions, and discuss all aspects of the recreation and natural resource plan, and

WHEREAS, Helena Township has developed the plan as a guideline for improving recreation and enhancing natural resources for the residents of and visitors to Helena Township, and

WHEREAS, after the public meeting, the Helena Township Board voted to adopt said Recreation and Natural Resource Plan.

Helena Township  
Parks and Recreation Plan

Resolution for Adopting the Helena Township Recreation and Natural Resource Plan

For Helena Township  
Antrim County

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Helena Township Board hereby adopts the Recreation and Natural Resource Plan.

	Yeas:	Nays:	Absent:
Rick Teague, Supervisor	X	NONE	NONE
Catherine Rice, Treasurer	X		
David Peterson, Clerk	X		
Butch Bartz, Trustee	X		
Bonnie Robbins, Trustee	X		



I, David Peterson, Helena Township Clerk, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and original copy of a resolution adopted by the Helena Township Board at a Regular Meeting thereof held on the 12th day September 2013.

*David Peterson*

David Peterson, Helena Township Clerk

*Rick Teague*

Rick Teague, Helena Township Supervisor