

Chapter 8.0 Recreation

8.1 Introduction

Information provided in this chapter is intended to provide current and comprehensive data to guide City of Ishpeming decision makers regarding future park development and/or acquisition. Existing parks and other recreational facilities and events are discussed in the context of location, features and use. Requirements set forth under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 will also be presented.

The City of Ishpeming's current five year Recreation Plan was updated and adopted in 2008 to provide for the development of recreational activities, programs and facilities in the City and has been accepted by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. The City held two public hearings after a 30 day review period to obtain public input on the Recreation Plan.

There is a diverse array of both private and public recreational facilities within the Ishpeming area. Recreation related to tourism is crucial to area economics and is an expanding industry nationwide. Attractions and facilities located in close proximity to the City of Ishpeming present many opportunities for active and passive recreation. Ishpeming is rich in natural resources, drawing a growing number of visitors each year. Heritage based tourism and ecology based tourism are becoming increasingly popular. Having adequate recreational facilities to meet the needs of visitors and as well as residents, is vital to the community.

Under 1917 Public Act 156, the Ishpeming City Council has appointed a Parks and Recreation Commission. The Parks and Recreation Commission is a nine person advisory group which includes representatives from the Ishpeming City Council, Ishpeming High School Superintendent, and the Ishpeming School Board. The Commission meets on a regular basis to formulate, update, review and submit input on the five year plan. In addition, joint meetings with the City of Negaunee and Ishpeming Township are being held. The City of Ishpeming is also a member of the Iron Ore Heritage Trail Recreation Authority. Figure 8-1 below shows the City's Parks and Recreation organizational chart.

Figure 8-1
City of Ishpeming Parks & Recreation

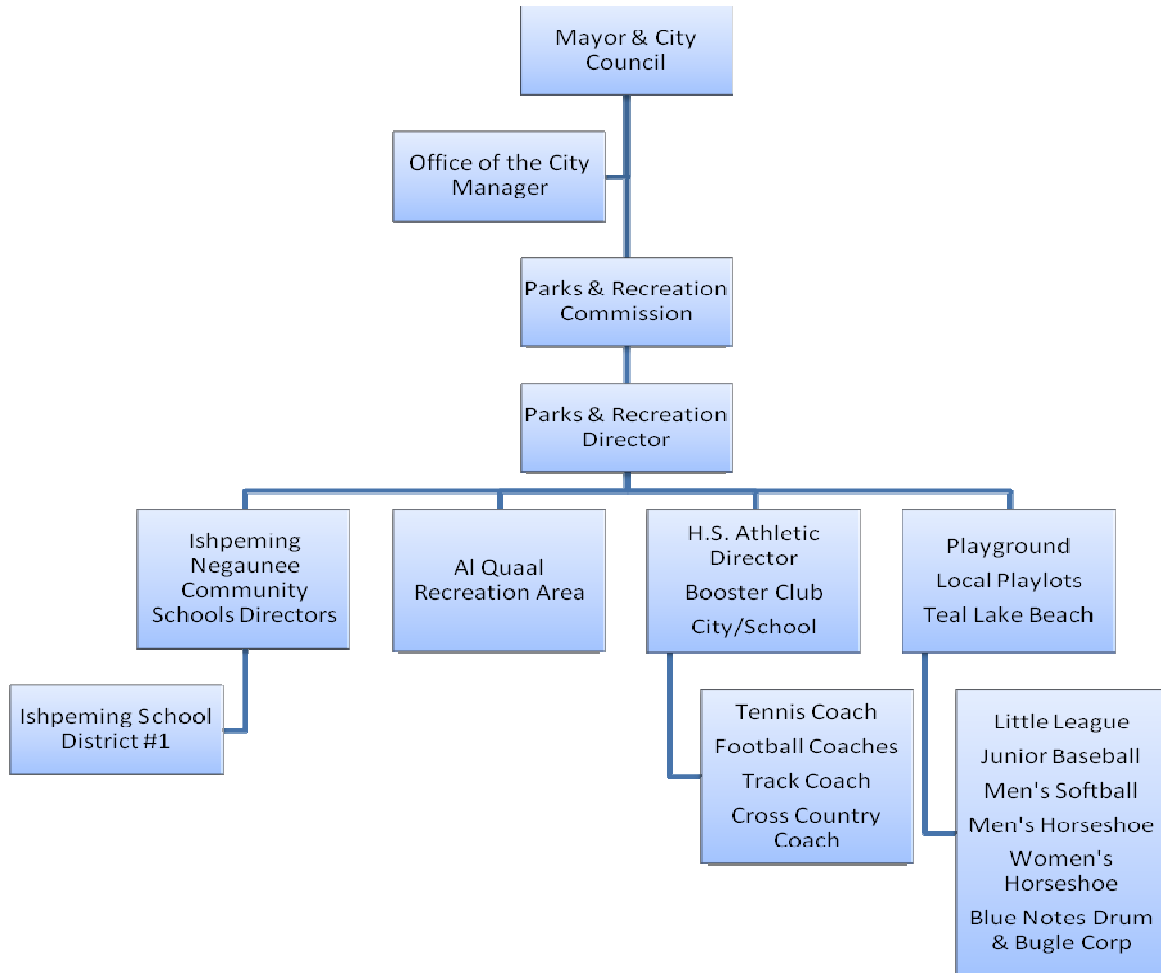
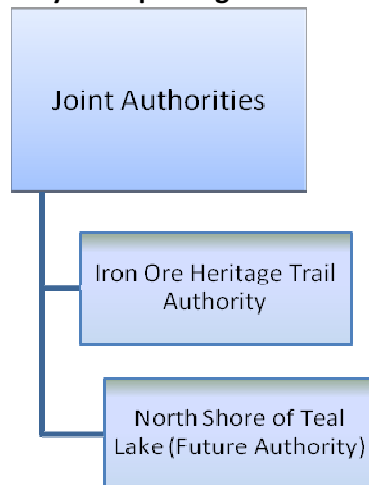


Figure 8-2
City of Ishpeming Joint Recreational Authorities



8.2 City of Ishpeming Recreation Volunteer Organizations

The City provides and maintains recreational facilities for users but does not provide programming. Those recreational uses that require organizing and scheduling are guided by community volunteers. City officials maintain an oversight role to insure equitable usage among various groups and that timely and necessary maintenance is completed.

The City has had a long and successful relationship with both community and school organizations. Community organizations involved with recreation include the Downtown Development Association (DDA), Ishpeming Business Association, Kiwanis, Ishpeming Ski Club, various organizations that support youth baseball and local Churches. The School partners include the Ishpeming/Negaunee Community Schools Directors, the High School Athletic Director, the Booster Club and various coaches.

Along with the support from various community groups, the City has received both corporate and individual donations which have been extremely helpful with ongoing activities and projects. There is a tremendous amount of support from the community in our parks and recreation program.

8.3 City of Ishpeming Recreation Inventory

Public recreational facilities found within the City’s corporate limits are described below.

1. City Playground	Size: 60 acres	Accessibility Assessment Rating: 4
---------------------------	-----------------------	---

Located along West Empire Street in the north central portion of the City. About 16 acres of the total acreage is undeveloped. The remaining area provides various types of recreational activities. Facilities at the park include:

City Playground

- Two Lighted Ball Diamonds
- Two Unlighted Tennis Courts
- Four Lighted Basketball Courts
- Warming Shelter & Restrooms
- Stadium (2,600 seating)
- Paved Track
- Lighted Football Area
- Storage Building & Restrooms
- Pavilion/Concession Area
- Parking and New Entrance
- Renovated Hardball Field
- Volleyball Courts
- Blacktop Roads
- Six Unlighted Ball Diamonds
- Five Lighted Tennis Courts
- Restroom/Locker Room
- Natural Ice Rink
- Twelve Sets of Bleachers
- Three Paved Field Event Areas
- Concession Area
- Four Horseshoe Courts
- Three Little League Baseball Fields
- New Fencing (Ball fields/perimeter)
- New Softball Field
- Practice Golf Cage/Net

Playground Inventory

- Four Swing Sets
- Four Teeter Totters
- Slide
- Climber
- Six Fields
- 16 Benches
- Four Picnic Tables
- Two Flagpoles
- Four Lighted Paved Basketball Courts
- Merry-go-Round
- Seven Tennis Courts
- Seven Backstops
- 13 Bleachers
- Ten Dugouts
- Two Bike Racks
- Two Electric Scoreboards
- Three Football Goal Posts

Tot Lot Inventory

- Saddle Mate Swing
- Snyder-the-Spider
- Spring Mate w/Handrail
- Mini-Dale
- Dome Climber
- Two Picnic Tables
- Swinging Gate
- Buck-a-Bout
- Four Saddle Mates
- Eagle Whirl
- Sandbox

DNR Grant History: 1972, Project No. 26-00339
 1976, Project No. 26-00762
 1980, Project No. 26-01104 T1
 1989, Project No. BF89-521
 1989, Project No. BF89-66

2. Al-Quaal**Size: 460 acres****Accessibility Assessment Rating: 2**

This regional recreation site is located in the northern portion of the City, along Poplar Street. This is the largest recreation area within the City's Corporate limits. The land that currently makes up the recreation area was leased by the City in 1939 and purchased in 1999.

The site is utilized year round, with tennis, basketball, baseball, horseshoes, volleyball, mountain biking, hiking, swimming picnicking, boating and fishing, occurring in the summer months and skiing, tobogganing, ice fishing, and snowmobiling occurring in winter months. Facilities at this site include:

- Ball Diamond
- Restroom Building
- Ski Ticket & Patrol Shelter
- Two Basketball Courts
- Picnic Area
- 12 Picnic Grills
- One Maypole
- Gym Set
- Pavilion
- Ski Warming Shelter
- Two Ski Tow Buildings
- Two Tennis Courts
- 40 Picnic Tables
- Seven Swing Sets
- Two Merry-go-Rounds
- Two Slides

- Backstop
- 16 Horseshoe Courts
- Four Cross-Country Trails (One Lighted)
- Snowboarding
- Lighted Sledding Area
- Toboggan House & Slide (1,500' Toboggan Run with Water Lines & Lighting)
- Outdoor Skating/Hockey Area
- Fitness Trail
- Mountain Bike Trail
- Rustic Cabin
- Additional Volleyball Courts
- Golf Facilities (Nets & Range Area)
- Large Wooden Playlot
- Boat Launch
- Teal Lake-New Log Cabin
- Skateboard
- Flagpole
- Three Downhill Ski Slopes
- Tubing
- Snowshoeing
- Mountain Bike Trail System (included Section of CC Ski Trails)
- Clubhouse (Restrooms, Concession Area, and Kitchen Facilities)
- Expand Tube/Sled Area
- New North Ski Tow/Improve Ski Run
- New Paved Roads
- New Second Toboggan Slide
- Improved Swimming Beach Area
- Lighted Areas (Horseshoes, volleyball, cross-country skiing)

DNR Grant History: 1979, Project No. 26-01052
 1990, Project No. TF90-242
 1991, Project No. TF91-080
 1994, Project No. TF94-054
 1995, Project No. TF95-316
 1997, Project No. TF97-228

3. Lake Bancroft Park Size: 3 acres Accessibility Assessment Rating: 4

This three acre parcel is a community park located between Cliff Street and the west shore of Lake Bancroft. This property was originally developed by a local Jaycee group. The setting of the park makes it one of the most attractive areas in the City. Facilities at the recreational site include:

- 16 Picnic Tables
- Five Dusk-to-Dawn Lights
- Flagpole and Marker
- Paved Walking Path
- Paved Parking Area
- New Brick Path Memorial
- Decorative Water Fountains
- Maintain & Refurbish Park Equipment
- Bog Walk & Bike Path Around Lake
- Complete Lake Restoration and Cleanup
- Eight Picnic Grills
- Shelter
- State Historical Marker
- Rustic Sign
- New Gazebo
- Restrooms/Storage Area
- Park Signage and Identification
- Jogging/Walking Area
- Playground Equipment
- Board Walk

DNR Grant History: 1976, Project No. 26-00787

- Three Swings Sets
- Slide
- Picnic Table

- Three Swings
- One Molded Animal

9. Palms Area Playlot **Size: 1 acre** **Accessibility Assessment Rating: 3**

This neighborhood park is a one acre parcel of land located in the southern portion of the City, along Juniper Street. Facilities at this park include:

- Three Swing Sets
- Merry-go-Round
- Slide
- Basketball Standard

10. Mather “A” Ballfield **Size: 1 acre** **Accessibility Assessment Rating: 2**

A one acre community recreation site located at the inactive Mather “A” mine site in the northwestern portion of the City. The site was acquired in 1984 by the City as an additional auxiliary ball field to compliment expansion of recreation leagues. It was built by the Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company (CCI) originally to service their employee softball league. Because of scheduling and maintenance problems, CCI requested the City take over this area. The ball field is now used on a daily basis during the summer months because of the current demand for ball field facilities. Facilities at this site include:

- Backstop
- Two Benches
- Port-a-John
- Topsoil Infield
- Parking Area—Barrier Poles/Handicap Parking
- Five Bases
- Two Bleachers
- Lights
- Maintenance Program
- Restrooms

11. Holmes Playlot **Size: 1 acre** **Accessibility Assessment Rating: 4**

This recently established one acre neighborhood park is located in the western portion of the City between D Street and E Street, off of Washington Street. The playlot has a new play center. Facilities at this site include:

- Tree House Jungle Gym
- Picnic Tables
- Four Swing Sets
- Basketball Standard

12. Second Street Playlot **Size: 1 acre** **Accessibility Assessment Rating: 3**

This neighborhood park occupies a 1 acre parcel of land located in the central portion of the City, on South Second St., west of East Superior.

- Swing Set
- Merry-Go-Round

- Picnic Table
- Playstation
- Fence
- Maintain and Refurbish Equipment

8.4 Public and Private School Recreational Facilities

Recreational opportunities offered by area public and private schools are discussed below.

Ishpeming High School/Central School Size: 5 acres Accessibility Assessment Rating: 3

These two schools occupy the same structure which is located on a five acre parcel of land in the central portion of the City, along Division Street. Facilities provided at this site include:

- Pool
- 2 Gymnasiums
- Playground Equipment
- Weightlifting Room
- Volleyball
- New Rubberized Track
- Tennis Court Resurfacing
- Whirlpool
- Two Paved Basketball Standards
- 4 Locker Rooms
- Wrestling Equipment
- Tot Lot Area
- New Practice Football Field

Birchview Elementary School Size: 2 acres Accessibility Assessment Rating: 3

This school is located on a two acre parcel of land in the northern portion of the City along Popular Street. Facilities provided at this site include:

- Gymnasium
- Two Swing Sets
- Merry-go-Round
- 2 Locker Rooms
- Two Basketball Standards
- Complete Play Center
- Cafeteria
- Slide
- Two Tennis Courts
- Climbing Tower
- Locker Room
- Tot Lot Area

C.L. Phelps Intermediate School Size: 1 acre Accessibility Assessment Rating: 4

Phelps School occupies a one acre parcel of land in the central portion of the City, along North 3rd Street. Recreation facilities at the site include:

- Gymnasium
- Cafeteria
- Complete Play Center
- Six Paved Basketball Courts
- Maintain & Refurbish Equipment/Facilities
- Weightlifting Room
- Locker Room
- Picnic Table
- Gazebo/Pavilion Type Facility

8.5 Publicly Owned Recreational Facilities

Publicly owned recreational opportunities are discussed below.

Ishpeming Senior Citizen Center Size: Accessibility Assessment Rating: 4

The senior center is a community recreation facility located along South Pine Street in the central portion of the City. The facility offers the following recreational opportunities to seniors: bingo, crafts, cards, movies, exercise, hiking club, shuffleboard, chorus, trips, oil painting class, dances, and day excursions.

Senior Citizen Park Size: 5 acres Accessibility Assessment Rating: 4

This 5 acre mini-park is located within the senior citizen housing complex area, along Bluff Street in the central portion of the City. The site has the following facilities:

- Two Picnic Tables
- Flower Garden
- Flagpole
- Patio Area

National Ski Hall of Fame Size: 1 acre Accessibility Assessment Rating: 4

The Hall of Fame structure is located on about a one acre parcel of land, along U.S. 41/M-28, in the northern portion of the City. The one and a half million dollar structure was constructed in 1992. It is a museum with historical displays and artifacts of skiing from all countries.

National Guard Armory Size: Accessibility Assessment Rating: 4

The armory facility is located along U.S. 41/M-28 in the northern portion of the City. It provides the following recreational facilities:

- Gymnasium
- Pistol & Rifle Range

8.6 Private Recreational Facilities

The following recreational facilities are privately owned facilities in the City of Ishpeming or in close vicinity of the City that are for use by the general public:

Private Recreational Facilities City of Ishpeming		
Facility	Location	Description
Country Lane & Billiards	1011 North Road	16 Bowling Lanes, 12 Billiards Tables, and a Dart Board
St. Johns Church	South Pine Street	Gymnasium
Kountry Kids Child	1025 Country Lane	

Private Recreational Facilities City of Ishpeming		
Facility	Location	Description
Story Hour	Local Church groups	
Delta Trail Riders		
Ishpeming Wawonowin Country Club	CR478, Six Miles West of City	Club and Golf Course
Ishpeming Trail Riders		Horse Shows
Ishpeming Beagle Club	Four Miles West of City	
Under the Rainbow Day Care Center	Greenwood Street	Day Care Center
Strength and Fitness	115 South Main Street	Health and Fitness Club
Ishpeming Ski Club & City of Ishpeming	Suicide Bowl Road	Ski Jumping Club

8.7 Nearby Recreational Facilities

The following is an inventory of nearby public recreational sites that are most likely utilized by residents of the City of Ishpeming:

[City of Negaunee](#)

- **Negaunee Ice Arena:** A full-sized, city owned, area with restrooms, lobby, 4 locker rooms, summer volleyball court, and hard surface parking area. This site is a 3.5 acre parcel.
- **Lacombe Field:** Owned by the city, this is a 3.3 acre parcel with an illuminated softball field, restrooms, storage facility, and open field used for football practice and soccer.
- **Lions Field:** City owned baseball field with six illuminated horseshoe courts, playground equipment, restrooms, concessions, and a storage building. This site is a 2.1 acre parcel.
- **Iron Town Field:** City owned baseball field with concessions, restrooms, and storage building. This is a 5 acre site.
- **Jackson Park:** Five acre, city owned, park with picnic area, 12 picnic tables, playground equipment, 2 tennis courts, and 6 horseshoe courts.

- **Miner's Park:** Five acre, city owned, park with picnic area, 2 illuminated basketball courts, playground equipment, 2 horseshoe courts, green open area, historical markers, and volleyball courts.

City of Marquette

- **Presque Isle Park:** 312-acre park with 2 picnic areas, cross-country ski trail, playground, 2 tennis courts, band shell, fishing, shuffleboard, horseshoe pits, gazebo, break wall with lighthouse, outdoor swimming pool, and water slide.
- **Presque Isle Marina:** 40-acre site with boat launching and docking facilities on Lake Superior.
- **Marquette Mountain:** Downhill skiing, lodge, and picnic area.
- **Lakeview Arena:** Recreation and Convention facility used for hockey, skating, concerts, shows, exhibits, etc.
- **Superior Dome:** World's largest wooden dome containing football field, also used for trade shows, concerts, etc.
- **Mount Marquette Lookout:** Lookout view of the City of Marquette and Lake Superior, snowmobile trail, and hiking trail.

Marquette Township

- **Sugar Loaf Mountain Area:** 80-acre site with nature trail and scenic overlook.
- **NMU Forest (Long year Forest):** 180-acres with nature trail and physical fitness trail.
- **Forestville Dead River Public Access Site:** Five acres with boat launch on Dead River.
- **Little Garlic River Public Access Site:** Fishing access site.

Ishpeming Township

- **Ishpeming Township:** Seven acres with softball diamond, Little League diamond, tennis courts, pavilion, Tot Lot, restrooms, concessions, playground, horseshoe court, shuffleboard, volleyball court, basketball court, picnic table, and grills.

Negaunee Township

- **Negaunee Township Park:** 71-acres with basketball court, pavilion, warming building, concessions, playground area, Little League field, Babe Ruth Baseball Field, softball field, tennis court, cross-country ski trail, picnic tables, snowmobile trail access.
- **Michigan Mining Museum:** 30-acres with exhibits of early iron ore mining artifacts, audio-visual programs, and outdoor interpretive paths.
- **McClure Storage Basin Access Site:** Hard-surface launch ramp, toilets, and parking area. Site is 1.03 acres.
- **Hoist Basin Access Site:** Hard-surface launch ramp, toilets, and parking area. Site is 1.82 acres.

Richmond Township

- **Richmond Township Park:** Horseshoe court, basketball court, tennis courts, baseball field, playground, picnic area, pavilion and restrooms.

Tilden Township

- **Tilden Township Recreation Complex:** Six acre site with tennis courts, baseball field, horseshoe courts, basketball court, playground area, pit toilets, parking, picnic area and pavilion.

Sands Township

- **Blueberry Ridge Pathway:** Trail system (cross-country skiing, mountain biking, and hiking).
- **Marquette County Fairgrounds:** 60 acre site with exhibition building, American Legion building, 4 H Building, 2 cattle show rings, horse barn, poultry and small animal building, large livestock building, office building, barrier-free restroom/utility building, 2 storage structures, power outlets, 2 wells, large lighted parking area, outside speaker system, ½ mile oval race track, mud drag strip, paved go-cart track, large carnival area, outside horse stall, 2 outdoor pavilions, and portable bleachers.

8.8 City of Ishpeming Capital Improvement Schedule

The City of Ishpeming Parks and Recreation Committee, through the capital improvements schedule, developed a number of necessary and valuable recreation projects to enhance the quality of life for all demographic groups. The Committee has

also recognized the need for maintenance improvements to existing facilities that are not specifically reflected in the City’s capital plan. These maintenance improvements are performed by City staff with the volunteer assistance from the community and the local school district.

The capital improvements schedule highlights the City’s top priorities as follows:

- The City of Ishpeming is a member of the Iron Ore Heritage Recreation Authority and is in support of the Iron Ore Heritage Trail.
- Lake Angeline is currently “land-locked” with no public access points. The City intends to pursue opportunities for purchasing land adjacent to the lake for public access.
- The study of development plan options of the “Cliffs Land Purchase” was prepared for the City of Ishpeming and the Downtown Development Authority. Included in this study is a recreational development conceptual plan which the city would like to further investigate implementing.
- There is a section of land on the north side of Teal Lake in which the City, partnering with neighboring communities, plans to acquire and develop for recreational use by the public.
- In taking a proactive approach to recreational development, the City intends to acquire land, with special interest in waterfront properties, as it becomes available for purchase.

Recreation Development Schedule City of Ishpeming		
Project	Year	Cost (Funding Source)
1. Improvements to North Ski Tow Area at Al Quaal	2009	\$25,000 (City)
2. Develop second Tube Slide at Al Quaal	2009	\$70,000 (City/Grant)
3. Move Toboggan Slide	2009	\$20,000 (City)
4. Move Teal Lake Lodge to top of Hill	2009	\$30,000 (City/Negaunee, Ishpeming Water Authority)
5. Install Ice Rink at Al Quaal	2010	\$20,000 (City/Grant)

Recreation Development Schedule City of Ishpeming		
Project	Year	Cost (Funding Source)
6. Mountain Bike Trail Development at Al Quaal	2010	\$10,000 (City/Argall/Grant)
7. Establish a new large Play lot at Al Quaal	2010	\$40,000 (City/Grant)
8. Public Access to Lake Angeline	2010	\$750,000 (City/Grant)
9. Pedestrian Crossing on US-41 at Lakeshore	2010	\$500,000 (City/Grant)
10. Construction of a paved Roller Ski Loop at Al Quaal	2011	\$150,000 (Cities/CCI/NMU/Grant)
11. Purchase Park land and water front Property	2011	\$500,000 (City/Grant)
12. Develop Hematite Heights	2011	\$200,000 (City/Grant)
13. Develop North Shore of Teal Lake	2011	\$150,000 (City/Grant)
14. Pedestrian Trails connecting Country Village to Downtown, Bell Hospital and the Al Quaal Trails.	2011	\$200,000 (City/Grant)
15. Cleanup Lake Bancroft	2012	\$200,000 (City/CNR/Grant)
16. Establish a new Snowmobile Trail at North Teal Lake Property (Al Quaal)	2012	\$15,000 (Cities/Grant)
17. Install new equipment at seven City Owned Play lot sites	2012	\$30,000 (City/Grant)
18. Establish Rustic R.V. Sites at Al Quaal	2013	\$80,000 (City/Grant)
19. Develop a Golf Facility with Range/ Nets at City Playground	2013	\$25,000 (City/Grant)
20. Indoor Ice Arena – Multi-Purpose Facility	2013	\$750,000 (City/Grant)

8.9 Issues and Opportunities

- Natural features throughout the City of Ishpeming provide a variety of year-round active and passive recreational opportunities for residents and visitors.

- The City has an updated 5-year recreation plan approved by the MDNR, which allows the City to apply for MDNR Trust Fund grants. The City has identified several priorities for recreational development. Grant funding could be pursued to begin the proposed improvements.
- The City has placed trail development and maintenance on their list of recreation priorities. Green infrastructure crosses community boundaries and development of a trail system can be accomplished effectively through joint planning. Development and maintenance of trails improve the “walkability” of a community.
- Lake Angeline is currently “land-locked” with no public access points. The City has secured public access to the lake.
- The City has a conceptual recreational development plan for the “Cliffs Land Purchase” and will continue reviewing the plan for possible implementation of recreational opportunities.
- Opportunities are available to purchase and potentially develop land on the north side of Teal Lake for recreational uses in partnership with neighboring communities.
- The City wishes to continue its proactive approach to recreational development and intends to continue to purchase land as it becomes available.
- All current and future recreation sites should be developed to achieve maximum benefits for all users, including compliance with the ADA. This could include the upgrade of play areas, removal of uneven surfaces and sidewalk obstructions, and procurement of additional wheel-chair accessible picnic tables. Creation of new recreation areas to address the interests of the younger and senior generations and those with special needs is necessary.
- The Ishpeming Parks and Recreation Committee should provide updated recreation plans to the Planning Commission for incorporation into the City Master Plan.