

City of Ishpeming  
**Parks and Recreation Survey**  
**Tabulation of Results and Transcript of Public Comments)**

**Purpose:** This survey is your opportunity to influence Park and Recreation decision-making in the City of Ishpeming. The survey information will become part of the 2018-2022 Community Recreation Plan.

**Instructions:** Please complete the following survey in ink and return it to City Hall before *February 9, 2018*.

**Background Information:** The City of Ishpeming is updating our Community Recreation Plan. Copies of the current plan (2014-2018) and a copy of a draft plan for 2018-2022 are located at the following places: Carnegie Public Library, City Hall, the Senior Center in Ishpeming, and on line at [www.ishpemingcity.org](http://www.ishpemingcity.org)

**This survey is completely anonymous.** If you have questions about the survey or wish to contact the City regarding this survey, please feel free to do so, but we will not track the source of any input. If you need additional space for your comments, please use an additional sheet of paper and turn it in with this survey.

**1. Accessibility:**

Do the City's Park facilities have adequate accessibility for you and your family's needs?      Yes: 153    No: 12

If no, please tell us where or what access improvements are needed: These inputs are included in the list of comments at end of tabulations

Regarding you or your family's accessibility needs, please check all that apply:

Full Wheelchair Access	17
Disability Designated Parking	31
Wheelchair ramps	15
Other services are needed	

Please describe other services needed: These inputs are included in the list of comments at end of tabulations

**2. Recreational Facilities:**

The number shown below is the total tally, ranked in descending order for personal/family use:

Public rest rooms	123
Trails/ Wilderness Areas	118
Lakes/beaches	94
Al Quaal Lodge	86
Pavilions/Gazeboes	82
Playlots/Playgrounds	79
Tube slide	69
Teal Lake Lodge	63
Trailheads	60
Baseball Fields	54
Football field/Track	52
Cross Country Skiing	51
Boat launch	39
Tennis courts	34
Basketball courts	26
Horseshoe courts	16
Swimming Pool	16
Volleyball courts	10

Other: each of the following was noted once: snow shoe trail, rowing, and disc golf

City of Ishpeming  
Results of Parks and Recreation Survey (continued)

**3. New or Improved Facilities:**

Community leaders are talking about improving recreational facilities. Here is a list of possible improvements: a downtown multi-purpose park (with a skate-park, a lighted ice rink, and public restrooms); improved tennis courts; expanded trail system; a new toboggan run; tow-rope system for downhill skiing; new disc golf course; a new T-ball facility; soccer field(s); modern playgrounds. Because these projects are costly and the City has limited funds, these projects would probably **not** be funded with tax dollars. Instead, new projects would be mostly funded with grants and private donations. In your opinion, what new or improved recreational facilities are needed in Ishpeming?

Ice Rink:	50
Downtown Park:	43
Tennis Courts:	43
Skate Park:	37
Modern Playground:	26
New Toboggan Run:	25
Tow Rope for Ski:	19
Expand Trails:	16
Disc Golf:	13
Soccer field:	11
Dog Park:	9
No More Facilities:	6
More Benches:	2
Sled Hill:	1
New Beach area:	1
New Pavilion:	1
Trailheads:	1
Basketball Court	1
More Staff:	1
Band Shell:	1
Winter Trash cans:	1
Signage:	1
Free Tours:	1

**4. Maintenance/Care of Facilities:**

The City has many recreational facilities, but a very limited budget. The following questions are about the care and maintenance of City's facilities:

Does the City adequately maintain the existing facilities?	Yes	144	No	28
Should a larger percent of the City budget go toward recreational facilities?	Yes	50	No	109
Would you be willing to pay more taxes for better facilities?	Yes	52	No	113
Should the City close some facilities to better maintain the remaining facilities?	Yes	29	No	122

If yes, what facilities would you suggest the City close? Unused play lots, ski trails/grooming, non-motorized trail behind ALS shop (needs maintenance/blacktop), Pioneer Bluff Park (on Second St.), Park near Cedar and Division (never care...), kids playground (outdated), Disc Golf, update or close old/outdated playgrounds, eliminate or repurpose ballfields (at Playgrounds), unused playlots: These inputs are included in the list of comments at end of tabulation.

5. <b>Smoking: Should the City allow smoking in our Parks?</b>	Yes    52    No    118										
6. <b>Overall Assessment of City of Ishpeming Parks and Recreations:</b> (Scale of 1 to 5; with 1 being excellent and 5 being poor)	<table border="0"> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 10px;"><b>1</b></td> <td style="padding-right: 10px;"><b>2</b></td> <td style="padding-right: 10px;"><b>3</b></td> <td style="padding-right: 10px;"><b>4</b></td> <td><b>5</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 10px;">24</td> <td style="padding-right: 10px;">43</td> <td style="padding-right: 10px;">55</td> <td style="padding-right: 10px;">26</td> <td>9</td> </tr> </table>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	24	43	55	26	9
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>							
24	43	55	26	9							

**List of Recreation survey Comments Received:**

“We are elderly with a limited income. About the only park we use is the Al Quaal—the trails and roadway for walking, and the swings/slides for our grandchildren. We see the tennis and basketball courts there do receive quite a bit of use in the summer.”

“Please remember this is the UP. It is not the City’s responsibility to discourage smoking in open air spaces. Serve all the people. There is plenty of fresh air for non-smokers.”

“The downtown park is the best idea of the list.”

“We don’t need a skate park or disc golf course. Fix the sidewalks and plow them so we could walk on them in the winter.”

“Parks are kept up beautifully. We need more utilization to keep people local and skate-park in summer use might help curb some of the boredom that kids seem to have locally.”

“Skate Park and outdoor ice rink would be welcome additions. All our children must travel outside the City to currently do both of these activities. Not feasible for either the adults or kids.”

“Look into volunteers (to help maintain the parks)”

“Teal Lake Lodge—inadequate access, no kitchen facilities, out of the way...”

“Close Play lots. Never see kids there.”

“I would love to see a “dog park” in Ishpeming and would be willing to pay a fee for using it.”

“There are a few smaller parks in disuse that teens flock to & damage.”

“Too many dogs pooping at Lake Bancroft & Al Quaal—disgusting.”

“I would like to see the tow rope restored for downhill skiing. Al Quaal is where I learned to ski when I was young. I went on to race in high school & college.”

“Fix up Jasper Knob (Gemstone), Black River Park, and things people forgot.”

“Reduce activities for kids. They are supported already by fed, state, house & income & property taxes.”

“Pave roads at least 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> streets.”

“How wonderful it would be if our city would establish a dog park! Many dogs will thank you! It is so nice that mutt mitts have been put up along the Oak Street side of Lake Bancroft, thank you for that.”

“Public Rest Rooms at Al Quaal, Teal Lake and Playgrounds.”

“Anything that continues to keep the kids busy and off drugs: skate-park, ice rink, etc...”

“We badly need new tennis courts.”

“Teal Lake Access—it is not really a boat launch. Would be nice if it was an actual boat launch.”

### List of Recreation Survey Comments Received (continued):

"If building by Lake Bancroft, make a small kitchen area. It is really needed in this town. You would make money from rentals. Teal Lake would really benefit with kitchen."

"Needs signs to tell you where to next. Or, you could find on your phone."

"Something with low maintenance, possible a better beach area."

"Allow non-motorized trail around Lake Angeline."

"The fee for league use of the horseshoe area is prohibitively expensive."

"No new facilities are needed."

"Improve Cedar Beach."

"Allow rustic camping at Al Quaal and Cedar Lake."

"No interpretive trails signage/info."

"A downtown multi-purpose park could bring people downtown which could improve business opportunities and, thus, improve the tax base."

"Public parks should never be closed to the public, day or night."

"I remember the old toboggan run & tow-rope system from when I was young. What fun!"

"More handicap parking at events such as 4<sup>th</sup> of July, and other events at Al Quaal, etc."

"Need more benches on trails and Al Quaal areas. Porta potties would be great here & there along the trails, or public restrooms."

"Basketball courts; lost full court on Division St. across from old hospital, lost court on Pearl St. with new H.S. cafeteria."

"Need a downtown multi-purpose park."

"Playgrounds outdated Al Quaal outdated equipment."

"Need public restrooms open all the time by the football field/track/playground."

"Public restrooms at Al Quaal need to be open at all times."

"Expand the trail system."

"Need non-motorized walking paths and dog park."

"Could improve lighting with replacement of burned out street lights."

"Is all this stuff why you raised my property taxes? I do not use any of this and didn't vote on it either!!!"

"How about fixing the roads?"

"Please more stuff for these kids (ages 0-16) to do; to have fun with the whole family."

"Al Quaal could be updated. Maybe a mini carnival park with a pool or maybe a little concession stand."

"Improve our tennis courts. They are pathetic! They were pathetic 25 years ago! Needs TLC desperately."

"We need a park near Cleveland Avenue, the central school no longer has a playground. Solar powered lighting for evenings. Safety!"

"The park near Cedar and Division St. has a baseball diamond that is never cared for. It needs bases and updated equipment. Lots of space but the city doesn't care!"

"Our community kids need something to do!"

## List of Recreation Survey Comments Received (continued):

Facilities are “hard for handicapped, wheel chair dependent people” to use.

“Need unisex bathrooms.”

“Might not be recreational but sidewalks are terrible for wheel chair which makes it impossible for anyone in a wheel chair to get anywhere.”

“I’ve watched on multiple occasions the grounds keeper kick people out of the basketball court and football field and hang up a homemade no trespass sign.”

Need “stuff children can do.”

Build “band shell at old Edward Jones location.”

In the parks, allow “smoking in designated areas.”

“We should work to improve and maintain the facilities we have.”

“Care for what is there!”

Need “more bathrooms.”

“With the recent water increases- no more tax increase.”

Need “Trail improvements-mowing occasionally in summer—for walking, running, bicycle.”

“Recreation is important but so are streets, police.”

“Please fix our roads first.”

“Update facilities at the football field.”

“More staff for ongoing regular jobs.”

“Much bigger problems! Make no improvements unless you are going to increase law enforcement, so people feel safe in this drug infested town! Get serious, try the water quality & iron ore dirt!”

A tax increase “so long as it resulted in an actual increase in recreation funds and not a General Fund offset.”

“A warming room at the ice rink downtown for ‘littes’ (kids?)!”

“Tennis courts need work....”

“Maintain & upgrade all existing facilities with grants.”

“Tell school –leave “all” gates open—violating”

“Maintain and improve existing--expand manpower.”

“Improve tennis courts, trail systems, modern playground.”

“Pavilion at Al Quaal should have some sort of wind protection added.”

“Maintain and improve existing facilities.”

Add a “Southern connection to IOHT.”

“Improve all streets first.”

“Feel facilities are not used a lot currently. Modern playground might draw more to Al Quaal. Not in favor of a downtown park. Feel that the draw is the Al Quaal area & could be improved & made a destination.”

“More information where how long a walk or destination. Mow more. Brush out back. No dogs on courts...need bags for dog clean up. Need recreation for older people, like maybe a fruit market or bake sale, like Marquette does on Saturday or Negaunee does on

## List of Recreation Survey Comments Received (continued):

Wednesday in the park. P.S. maybe get the neighborhood watch helping services on mowing or painting, etc. All you could do is ask at a meeting. Some people may be willing to help in their own area. Shoveling fire hydrants.”

“Tennis Courts the number 1 priority. I rated the City Recreation low mainly because of the tennis courts and no public access to use the track.”

“Improve more important things than recreational. Leave Lake Bancroft alone. It is very nice the way it is—touch up the Gazebo paint.”

Regarding City Park Staff: “They are all doing a good job.”

“Quit using funds for Lake Bancroft—waste of money over the last 8 years. The lake has not met the quality standards for public use. Wasted investment still unusable. Lake Bancroft has been a money pit with no valuable resolution.”

“Would like to see a list of city facilities to close.”

“Initiate as many activities in the downtown area; not across town. Having to cross 41 to a large out-of-the-way area is not safe for children and too far for downtown dwellers. Possibly more info needed here (to consider closing facilities).”

“No wildlife killing; Police Dept. Change walking and ATV trails as both the same trails with speed limits. Let the walking trail pay their share. No outlet to go north for ATV. Handicap? & walk together.”

Regarding the question, Should a larger percentage of budget go for recreational facilities, the respondent comments: “maybe if you quit giving 80-85% of their salary (it’s unsustainable) in pensions to early retiring workers there would be more \$ in your budget. In this small town nobody should make that much in retirement. Huge water bills and taxes that go up yearly (while our social security or paychecks don’t) are pushing responsible homeowners out of city.”

“I am 82 yrs old. I have been an Ishpeming resident all of my life. I used to be proud of our city, loved our city & promoted our city. In my opinion the city of Ishpeming is the worst managed city in the U.P.. Especially for a city our size. We applaud Mr. Skauge and Mr. Lehmann in their efforts to push the important issues instead of creating ridiculous issues such as the smoking ban, chew ban, e-cigarette ban. This will only drive more people out of our city instead of promoting new comers. Our taxes are one of the highest in the U.P. (Has been researched). And what do we receive for them? Horrible roads. Outrageous water bills. I live alone and my water consumption/use is not even close to the minimum. Yet I am required to pay the minimum which is \$79.95, includes 1 bag of garbage pickup per week and our wonderful (Ha, HA) maintenance of our great (Ha, Ha) sewer system. I have talked to many residents who feel the same way I do. Unfortunately, most of you care only what you can spend money on to ban. Always looking for more money (for what may I ask). I have picked up on my walks more fast-food garbage/liquor bottles, etc. than I care to think about. A lot more of that than anything to do with tobacco. Are you going to ban those items also? Why should people move to Ishpeming? Oh yes, I forgot, to have more rules, regulations and to have to pay for them. I am too old to move now, but if I was younger, I would have packed up a long time ago. A very sad and disgusted citizen.”

“Ideas for Parks and Recreation: Update play grounds with modern equipment. Build a play area at Al Quaal, like Marquette lower harbor (volunteers to do this). Improve the beach (Ishpeming side of Teal Lake), excavate the area and bring in sand, set up a proper boat launch. Improve (new) picnic facilities. A skate park and ice rink would be a great idea. Build a roof over the band stage at Al Quaal. Set up a kitchen at Al Quaal Lodge, many people have thought this. Get the public to adopt parks in their area, this would help with clean up. Also: video surveillance should be set up at all our parks to help control crime, vandals, etc. And strictly enforce pet restrictions, specifically dogs. Make high fines for not cleaning up after your dog. Al Quaal is disgusting in the spring from people walking dogs.”

“The city pays for too many things that area township residents enjoy for free or little cost that doesn’t cover the city’s cost.”

“If we can’t maintain a park or a part of the park properly, example little kids playground by the football field, it should be removed.”

“Best Park is Birchview & no restroom available. Could a nice playground be put at Al Quaal since bathrooms already there?”

“New good sidewalks. Modern Playground with restrooms open all summer (May – Sept 31st)”

“No outdated playgrounds. Road/snow removal most important.”

“Practical size ice rink, well located drinking fountains/refill stations.”

“A new toboggan run and a downtown multi-purpose park”

“Need improve tennis courts and some soccer fields.”

**List of Recreation Survey Comments Received (continued):**

“Skate park so they aren’t on the roads, new tennis courts, ice rink would be fun, down-hill skiing that’s cheaper than Marquette.”

“ (We need) a modern playground and expanded trails.”

## Discussion and Analysis of the Results of the Park and Recreation Survey

General Comments: About 190 responses were received from approximately 2,300 survey instruments mailed to residential addresses in the City. That is a response rate of over 8.2 percent. Based on published professional survey literature, a response rate of 3 to 4 percent is generally considered by to be sufficient to approximate a group's responses to survey instruments. Therefore, we may have high confidence that these survey results fairly represent the community's responses to the questions in the survey.

Section 1: Regarding accessibility, a dozen responses indicated that accessibility was a problem. These are probably persons or families with specific issues. 153 responses indicated no accessibility issues. Thirty one responses indicated more disability designated parking spaces are needed. Some of these noted that the additional ADA parking is needed in the Al Quaal Recreation Area.

Section 2: Regarding use of recreational facilities, it is no surprise that public restrooms was indicated as the most used. This high use is consistent across most communities. The second ranked item—Trails/Wilderness Areas—is not surprising. Our trails and wilderness areas are one of our community's greatest attractions/features. The same could be said of lakes and beaches. Although, it is interesting to note that a few people marked this area with a question mark (?), indicating they were puzzled. It may be that some of our newer residents are unaware of the City's two beaches (Teal Lake and Cedar Lake). These locations are not particularly visible and not marked. This may be an area for further investigation. The numbers for the lodges, pavilions, and tube slide are not particularly surprising. However, I was surprised by the large number of responses indicating use of the playlots/playgrounds: 79. That is almost half of the surveys received. If extrapolated to the entire community, this number suggests that over half of our citizens (or the children in their family) use these facilities. Some people have suggested that we should close some of these facilities; however, with this high level of use, closing these facilities should be very carefully considered, as it may not serve our community well to do so. The rest of the use data tracks fairly well with generally accepted sport popularity data.

Section 3: Regarding new or improved facilities, the largest number of responses were for four ideas: an Ice rink, a downtown park, tennis court improvements, and a skate park. The next largest number of responses clustered around: a modern playground, a new toboggan run, a skiing tow rope system, expanded trails, disc golf, and soccer. Nine responses requested a dog park. Six responses indicated that the City should not consider any new facilities. Often this response was accompanied by a comment about maintenance of existing facilities or the condition of street.

Section 4: Regarding care and maintenance of recreational facilities, the responses were very favorable concerning adequate maintenance of existing facilities with 144 "Yes" and only 28 "No." By two-to-one, responses did not favor either giving recreation a larger portion of the budget or increasing taxes to pay for recreational facilities. Four-to-one were against closing any facilities.

Section 5: Regarding smoking in the parks, better than two-to-one indicated the City should not allow smoking. Please note that there were a few strongly worded comments in the opposite direction.

Section 6: The overall assessment of City Parks and Recreation was favorable. On a scale of one to five, with one being excellent and five being poor, 122 ranked the City 3 or higher, while only 35 ranked the City 4 or 5. Please note that 33 of the 190 surveys did not provide a score. That is about 18 percent of the submitted responses. Of the 157 responses marking an overall assessment, the average of the scores was 2.7.

The results for this survey are generally favorable for the City and support the draft 2018-2022 Community Recreation Plan as presented.

Mark Slown