

4.0 PLANNING

Recreation Planning

Recreation has come to be defined in a very wide manner. As stated by Richard Krause in *Recreational Program Planning Today*:

“Recreation is generally viewed as the act of participating in voluntarily chosen pleasurable activities in one’s free time”

Recreation has come to mean the traditional passive parks or the more active playgrounds, ball fields or courts, but all of the pleasurable activities are provided privately, such as bowling alleys or video arcade halls, but most are provided publicly by one level of government or another.

Recreation even has a broader perspective in that tourism itself is a recreational endeavor thus adding a significant economic dimension to an otherwise local citizen-oriented public service. At times, Escanaba has had difficulty understanding the importance of this concept. As one of the fastest growing segments of the economy, the visitor/tourism industry cannot be ignored in the Recreation Plan. Nor can the importance that new industry in search of locations for plant sites place upon an area’s recreational opportunities.

The *City of Escanaba Recreation Plan 2006* has three specific purposes:

- ① To comprehensively identify and organize the development of recreation/park facilities for the existing and future population of Escanaba and its visitors;
- ② To be the means by which public and private recreational service providers can coordinate recreational facilities and activities that are provided; and
- ③ To maintain the certification necessary for financial aid from grant sources to implement major segments of the plan.



The Escanaba Recreation Advisory Board began the process to update and revise this Plan in late-2005. The previous plan, developed in 1999, was an accurate blueprint and served the City well. The Recreation Board and the staff of the Recreation Department have developed the 2007 Plan which reflects priority changes and reinforcements as a guide for developing a total program of park and recreation services over the next five-year period.

Components of this plan, the most notable as the recreation/park deficiencies, justification, basis for action program, the five-year capital improvement program and the goals and policies, were developed by the Recreation Advisory Board based upon the following criteria:

- Deficiencies and/or needs identified by the three most recent public hearings asking for citizen opinion on recreation and park priorities and issues; public hearings were conducted October 14th, 2003, November 12th, 2003, and February 13th, 2007.
- Deficiencies and needs noted by the Recreation Advisory Board over the past five-year period as reflected within published minutes;
- Unsolicited public comment and concerns, received by the members of the Recreation Advisory Board, the City Council and the City Administration; and
- Needs/deficiencies noted and solution options recommended by the staff of the Recreation Department.

The seven-member Recreation Advisory Board has identified major issues and subsequent policies and goals included within the plan as responsive to the needs of the citizens of Escanaba. Preservation/maintenance of facilities, access issues, inter-governmental cooperation, operations-funding and greater community involvement soliciting non-traditional sources of funding have been identified in the plan.

The City of Escanaba Recreation Plan 2007 is intended to build upon an existing public park/recreation system and provide a foundation for community action that improves the quality and quantity of leisure opportunities in the City of Escanaba for its citizens and visitors. This plan is a further attempt to blend alternatives for using physical space, talent, energy and resources to accommodate our leisure and recreational needs.

The Recreation Plan was reviewed and forwarded to the Planning Commission by the Escanaba Recreation Advisory Board February 13, 2007. The Planning Commission, after the mandatory 30-day review period, adopted the plan on March 8, 2007 and sent the plan to the City Council for approval. At the March 15, 2007 meeting, the City Council adopted by resolution to incorporate the Five-year recreation plan into the City's Master Plan. Documentation of these events is found in the accompanying appendices that follow this plan.

The plan outlines the facilities and programs that may be developed in City of Escanaba during the next five years as listed in section 8.0 RECREATION DEVELOPMENT SCHEDULE. The Recreation Advisory Board will continually examine the recreational needs of the community and amend the plan as needed.

This plan will hopefully provide a foundation for City action to improve the quality and quantity of recreational opportunities in Escanaba.