

Action Plan 2003-2008

This section includes the action plan for the
Clare County Parks and Recreation Department

The action plan was developed utilizing several information sources including the existing County park and recreation master plan, focus group input, countywide survey results and Enterprise Community benchmarks. The overall action plan addresses Quality of Life benchmark 5.1 (“Establish recreation department with comprehensive County recreation plan and maintain/improve resources”). Within the individual action plan items, resource development goal #2 addresses benchmark 9.1 (“Develop youth centers in each community”). In addition, Enterprise Community benchmark 5.2 (“Develop/Construct family-oriented recreational center”) is to be addressed through resource development goal #3. CCPRC is committed to linking its planning and development efforts to those of other relevant organizations and agencies within Clare County.

Resource Development

Currently, CCPRC is not in the position to recommend the purchase of land for recreational use, given the current economic condition of the County and the strong interest in outdoor recreation experiences by citizens. In particular, citizens have requested access to open space and water resources. To address this interest, the Commission will seek to work collaboratively and develop partnerships with various organizations to address this interest. The CCPRC will endeavor to do the same to address the desire for indoor recreation needs.

Goal #1: To develop an agenda for cooperative recreational resource development of state owned lands within Clare County

- CCPRC will work collaboratively with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) to enhance access to and improve the quality of facilities at:
 1. The former Temple State Forest Campground
 2. Pike Lake Campground and trails
 3. Jonesville
 4. Other lake/stream access sites
 5. Trail development on public land
- CCPRC will investigate with the MDNR to identify opportunities for enhancements and access to other state owned properties within Clare County for recreational use. Of particular interest are properties that enable access to lakes and rivers.

Goal #2: To enhance recreation facilities on a countywide basis

- Work collaboratively with townships, cities, and village within Clare County to refurbish and expand existing recreation facilities.

Goal #3: To beautify various areas in the County in partnership with Clare County Master Gardeners and other organizations and agencies.

- Partnership with Road Commission and Clare County Master Gardeners to develop and maintain a low maintenance garden at the Roadside Park.

- Other sites may be investigated as well for low maintenance gardens.

Goal #4: To create a facility to address indoor recreation needs of Clare County residents

- Explore the development of a county community recreation center in collaboration with Mid-Michigan Community College (Such a facility would be conceptualized to serve the indoor recreation needs of youth, families and senior citizens of Clare County).

Recreation Program Initiatives

Currently, the only organization providing any type of countywide programs that may be considered recreational is the 4-H Youth Development Program of MSU Extension-Clare County. Therefore, CCPRC will look to the 4-H Youth Development Program for assistance in addressing the recreational needs of County youth. The Commission will also look to any other educational and service agencies to work collaboratively in its efforts to address the recreational needs of Clare County youth. It is the Commission's intentions not to duplicate existing recreation programs, but where needed, develop strategies that will benefit County residents.

Goal #1: To provide access to organized recreation for residents in rural areas within the County

- In cooperation with interested townships, cities, and village, a "roving leader" program serving residents in rural areas of the County with scheduled recreational activities (an example is recreation programmers would visit township halls frequently providing organized recreational activities).

Services

At this stage in its service to the County, the Commission sees its role as one of an information center for recreational activities and leisure interests. The Commission recognizes that the County has many resources that are under-utilized and also that many organizations, public and private, are providing excellent recreation and leisure opportunities for County residents. What appears to be lacking is an awareness of the availability of such resources and opportunities.

Goal #1: To identify and disseminate existing recreational resources and programs to residents and visitors throughout the County

- The Commission will provide updated information regarding countywide leisure and recreation events on a regular basis. This will be accomplished by using a variety of media including a webpage, newspaper, radio, television, local cable channels, list serves and brochures.
- Maps of Clare County will be developed, in collaboration with other governmental and special interest groups, to identify educational and interesting marked tours (scenic, color, motorcycle, and historic) and trails (ORV, walking/hiking, horseback, biking, and cross-county skiing).

Goal #2: To provide County residents with information regarding the benefits of leisure and recreation

- The Commission will provide Clare County residents with information on the community/health/economic benefits of recreation/leisure participation.

Service Delivery System

For the Commission to successfully address the needs and interests of County residents, an organized system of service delivery must be created. Partnering with Michigan State University Extension to provide a supervisory and support structure will enable the County to responsibly accomplish CCPRC's goals.

Goal #1: To structure a model of operation that will enable the Commission to successfully address its goals

- *Parks and Recreation Director* – will be responsible for implementing the plans of the Commission.
- *Clerical Support* – will be responsible for assisting the Director in correspondence and information gathering and dissemination.
- *Volunteers/Interns* – will provide needed expertise in the provision of recreation programs, communication technology, and information gathering and dissemination.
- *Funding* – adequate and stable financial resources are necessary for the Commission to initiate its various plans. Sources of such financial support include County general fund, Enterprise Community support, grants for special projects, and where appropriate, user fees.

Goal #2: To develop a relationship with County residents which will enable the Commission to effectively respond to their needs, wants and desires

- *Public Education* – the Commission is a new County service that has potential of enhancing the quality of life of Clare County residents and visitors. To enhance this responsibility, the Commission will necessarily make an effort to educate users and potential users of the values and benefits of recreation and leisure.
- *Ongoing Research* – the Commission will regularly gather information for the enhancement of its programs and services through user evaluations, focus groups, and public input during public meetings
- *Advisory Committee* (composed of key County leaders) – will provide an ongoing source of insights and ideas to the Commission and Director.