2008 Village of Augusta Recreation Plan

Overview

Purpose: The Rec Plan will focus our planning and allow us access to State of Michigan grant money.

Rec Plan Categories

Community Description/Administrative Structure: This section details the administrative makeup and jurisdiction of the entity submitting the plan. The jurisdiction also determines the extent of the plan. For example, the Village of Augusta can only use grants to encourage use of the regional trails passing through and not work on the trails themselves because they are under the jurisdiction of a trail authority.

Recreation Inventory: The Recreation Inventory shows the current recreation in the village. It’s completeness is important. The inventory is shown on its own poster.

Planning: Planning is the process by which what constitutes a need is determined. Precedence and regional concerns should both be considered during the planning process. The planning in the rec. plan can have long term consequences and it is important to be able to justify decisions made to future audiences.

Public Input: Public input is important to ensure community support of the rec plan and to ensure that everyone’s concerns are accounted for in the final product. These posters are part of the required public input for the rec. plan.

Goals and Objectives: The goals and objectives are the drivers for the planning process. They show what is needed as well as a general understanding of the importance of needs.

Action Program: The action program shows the results of planning. It outlines the order of which projects will be done as well a timetable for their completion and a general source of funding.

Approval Process

Before the plan is accepted by the DNR several things must take place.

- Solicitation of Public Input: Citizens must be provided at least one month to comment on the plan.
- Village Government Acceptance: After the public input is complete the village must officially adopt the rec. plan.
- DNR Acceptance: Once the first two steps are complete the DNR will either accept the plan or send it back for revisions.

Grants

There are two main sources of grants available to us after completing the Rec Plan. The Village of Augusta could potentially qualify for grants from either of these locations.

- Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund: The MNRTF provides grants to local units of government for the acquisition of new land and the development of currently owned land for recreation. It is supported through revenues from state owned mineral resources. The MNRTF has existed since 1976. A single project is generally between $15,000 and $500,000. The total annual amount granted over the last few years has been a little more than 30 million statewide.

- Land and Water Conservation Fund: The LWCF provides federal grants to local units of government and states for the purpose of developing outdoor recreation. Projects must be between $30,000 and $75,000. Applications are evaluated by the Michigan DNR and then ultimately approved by the National Park Service.

Who are we?

We are Calvin College Senior Engineering Students from Grand Rapids. We became connected with the Village of Augusta in September when we approached Glen Avis about doing our senior design project on improvements in the Village of Augusta. He introduced us to the idea of a recreation plan and we decided to include it in our project.
Purpose: The recreation inventory is required to assess the current recreation available.

Overview: The table below shows our current recreation inventory. The recreation inventory was developed by speaking with village officials to develop a list of recreation facilities in the community. Additionally, the Community Strategic Plan and previous Community Recreation Plan were used to build the list. The specific recreation facilities available at the school and park facilities were verified by Calvin Engineering Students.

### Recreation Inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park Name</th>
<th>Park Type</th>
<th>Size in Acres or Length</th>
<th>Likely Service Area</th>
<th>Description of Park Location</th>
<th>Description of Use / Purpose</th>
<th>Accessibility (1-5, 5 Most Accessible)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Village Park</td>
<td>Neighborhood Park</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Entire Village</td>
<td>The park is located near the center of town. It provides a place for families to gather and enjoy outdoor activities.</td>
<td>Recreation, walking, frisbee.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Cemetery</td>
<td>Cemetery</td>
<td>6.54</td>
<td>Entire Village</td>
<td>The cemetery is located on the north side of town. It contains the remains of many of the village’s early settlers.</td>
<td>Recreation, walking, memorial.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDC Private Preschool</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Entire Village</td>
<td>The school is located on the west side of town. It provides educational opportunities for the community.</td>
<td>Learning, physical education.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate School</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Entire Village</td>
<td>The school is located on the north side of town. It provides educational opportunities for older children.</td>
<td>Learning, sports.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Entire Village</td>
<td>The school is located on the east side of town. It provides educational opportunities for younger children.</td>
<td>Learning, sports.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Custer State Recreation Area</td>
<td>State Recreation Area</td>
<td>Entire Village</td>
<td>The recreation area is located near the center of town. It provides a place for families to enjoy outdoor activities.</td>
<td>Recreation, camping, fishing.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property on Water Tower Site</td>
<td>Land</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Entire Village</td>
<td>The property is located near the center of town. It provides a place for families to enjoy outdoor activities.</td>
<td>Recreation, walking, picnics.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalamazoo River Floodplain Area East of Town</td>
<td>Land</td>
<td>57.47</td>
<td>Entire Village</td>
<td>The village owns a large amount of floodplain area east of town. Some of this land is also protected wetland.</td>
<td>Recreation, walking, fishing.</td>
<td>NA, Undeveloped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Pines&quot; area east of town</td>
<td>Land</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>Entire Village</td>
<td>The village owns a parcel of land east of town. It provides a place for families to enjoy outdoor activities.</td>
<td>Recreation, walking, picnics.</td>
<td>NA, Undeveloped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property west of the existing cemetery</td>
<td>Land</td>
<td>19.87</td>
<td>Entire Village</td>
<td>The property is located near the center of town. It provides a place for families to enjoy outdoor activities.</td>
<td>Recreation, walking, picnics.</td>
<td>NA, Undeveloped</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Inventory Categories

**Park Name and Type:** The park type reflects how it services the community. The types are laid out in Appendix C of the Rec Plan guideline. This section also includes the size of the park and the likely service area.

**Maps:** Maps showing the location of the community and all parks within the community are required. The maps for this report were generated using GIS data from Kalamazoo County. A site plan of specific areas is also recommended.

**Accessibility:** An assessment of the accessibility of each recreational facility is required. The accessibility includes both facilities themselves and the access routes to them. The accessibility includes compliance with regulations as in the case with ramps and other access, but it also includes the overall accessibility of the park. For example an open field may meet requirements but still provide few opportunities to people with disabilities.

**Grant Inventory:** The Michigan DNR requires that communities disclose any grants that they have received in the past from the Michigan DNR. According to Michigan DNR Records the Village of Augusta has not received any grants in the past.
Purpose: The action program chosen will direct our recreational development for the next five years

M-96 Traffic Calming and Downtown Area
- Providing safe crossing of M-96 is a top priority. Currently speeding through the village is a major safety concern. The Village of Augusta has spoken to the Michigan Department of Transportation about ways to slow drivers down through the village. Since the M-96 corridor is central to the village and highly visible to travelers, it would be beneficial to create a distinct downtown aesthetic. This downtown area would connect M-96 with the village park and business district through similar architecture, signs, and decorative lights.

Trout Stream
- Augusta Creek upstream of the dam is a registered trout stream, though only the portion north of the village supports trout reproduction. Within the village the trout habitat is compromised by pollution from storm drains, and a lack of dissolved oxygen caused by the calm water surface. This plan proposes to re-route the storm drains and create a system of deeper pools and turbulent riffles to encourage trout to populate the area through the village. Any changes would not impact the risk of flooding and improve the overall aesthetics of the canal.

Improve Access to Regional Trails
- Four major trails pass near or through Augusta: The North Country Trail, the Battle Creek Linear Trail, the Kalamazoo River Valley Trail and the Kalamazoo River Water Trail. The village would like to improve access between the trails to the village so that it can better service trail users. The village will continue to discuss routing the path if the proposed Kalamazoo River Trail through the village.

Improve Access Across the Canal
- Currently the M-96 bridge over the canal is scheduled for replacement in 2010. The historic bridge located at Van Buren street has limited weight capability making it unfit for large vehicles. This plan suggests that the historic Van Buren bridge be moved to the location of the old Clinton Street Bridge and converted to a pedestrian bridge. A new bridge would be constructed across the canal at Van Buren. This would allow better pedestrian access across the canal. Village officials would continue to talk to MDOT about improving pedestrian safety on the new M-96 bridge being designed currently.

Village Owned Land
- The village has several sections of land that are currently undeveloped: The Pines’ on the west side of the village, the water tower property and the “Twenty-Acre Wood” west of the cemetery. The water tower property could be developed into a small park. The Twenty Acre Wood could be developed with a natural hiking trail. These improvements are not currently necessary, but could be implemented if future need should arise. There have been no suggestions to develop the pines area.

Boat Launch/Floodplain Trail
- A large village owned parcel along the Kalamazoo River has great recreational potential. This plan proposes a riverside trail be constructed in this area. The trail would likely connect near the eastern end of Jefferson Avenue to the M-96 near the Kalamazoo River Bridge. Furthermore, a non motorized boat launch shall be constructed here to further improve access to and from the Kalamazoo River and encourage boaters to stop in Augusta.

Other Projects
- There are a few improvements proposed by the village that do not fit well into these categories. Cemetery water lines will be replaced, as the current galvanized lines are at risk of leaking. Replacing TG Ave within the village limits is recommended to improve pedestrian and bicycle travel. A trail extending past the end of West Jefferson Street would provide direct access from the residential neighborhood to the middle school, encouraging students to walk to school.

Overview: The action program indicates what we want to do, how much we think it will cost, and when we want to do it. The boxes on the left show the general direction of the action program. Funding information and a general timetable for completion will be included with the recreation plan when it is submitted.

The projects listed here come from several sources
- Village of Augusta Working Papers – Towards A Walkable Village. This is the bulk of the projects. They come from public input and needs seen by the village.
- Needs and opportunities that presented themselves during the process of writing the rec plan.
- The existing Community Strategic Plan (1990) and the previous Rec Plan (1991)

What Needs to Happen Before the Rec Plan Can be Submitted to the State
- One month of public review, as part of the required public input process.
- The details of the action program will be finalized by village officials.
- Any further amendments to the document will be made.
- The Recreation Plan must be adopted by a vote of the village council.

How to Get Involved
The village is seeking comments on the draft Rec Plan. The full plan is available at the library and online.