

**HAMLIN TOWNSHIP  
MASON COUNTY, MI  
RECREATION PLAN 2022 - 2027**



**HAMLIN TOWNSHIP**

**RECREATION PLAN**

**2022 - 2027**

**HAMLIN TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

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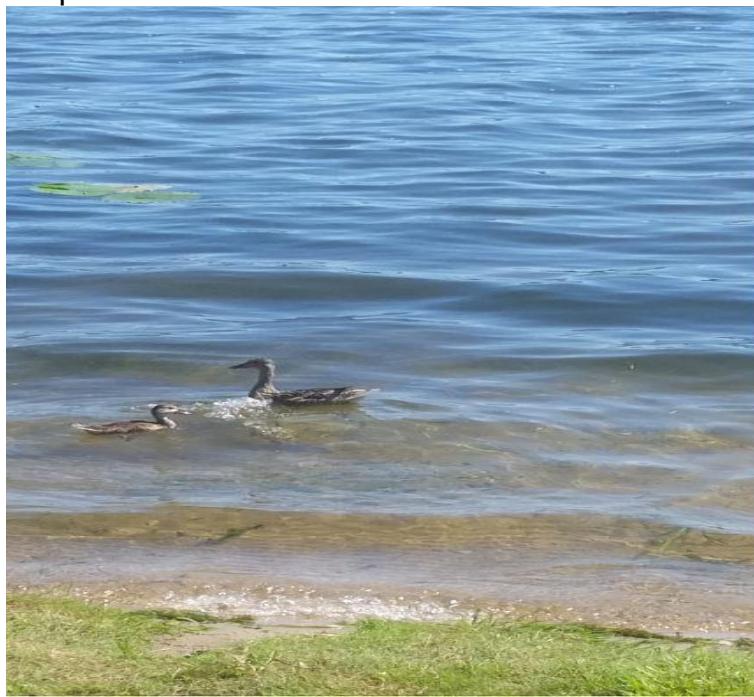
Johnaine Guryznski, Trustee

**PREPARED BY:**

Hamlin Township Board of Trustees  
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## **INTRODUCTION**

This document, the Hamlin Township Recreation Plan, is intended to guide present and future recreational resource development within the Township, including parkland, park facilities, recreation programs, and public open space.

This plan, in addition to serving as a guide for recreation facilities and program development, is prepared to satisfy the requirements set forth by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). Recreation plans are required by the MDNR for State and Federal Grant eligibility to encourage communities to take a long-term view of their parks and recreation facilities. Plans must not be older than five years and must be on file with the MDNR. It is important to understand what the needs of the residents are, recreational opportunities already in place, and what future projects are relevant for the community. Citizen input is very important in addressing recreation-related issues facing Hamlin Township Residents as a whole. The planning process is most effective when all sectors of the citizenry provide input into the future of their community. The opportunity for input was provided through a Public Open House, Hamlin Township Monthly Board of Trustees Meetings, Hamlin Township's Web Page and a survey. Notices of these meetings were promoted on the Township's Web Page (<http://www.hamlintownship.org>) and notice was posted at the Township Hall.

Every effort has been made to present information that is current and accurate. The Hamlin Township Board of Trustees shall not be held liable for any errors or omissions related to this plan. This Plan is a general planning document. Therefore, a thorough investigation with original research materials should be undertaken before proceeding with specific implementation decisions. It is also recommended that this Plan be re-visited in five years to review priorities, keep pace with changing conditions, and maintain grant funding eligibility.

Hamlin Township Board of Trustees intend to use this plan as a guide on all future township decisions and actions related to recreation and parks. This Plan also serves as a strategic document that articulates specific goals to various Township Projects and/or improvements. Specifically, this plan is developed in accordance with the guidelines for Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plans published by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR). It should be used by the decision-makers of Hamlin Township based on the desire of the general public and the availability of resources.

## **COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION**

Hamlin Township is located in Mason County on the shore of Lake Michigan in central lower Michigan. Hamlin Township is bordered by Grant Township to the North, Victory Township to the East, Pere Marquette Charter Township to the South and Lake Michigan to the West.

Organized by the Michigan State Legislatures in 1861 by the approval of Act #78 on February 28, 1861, Hamlin Township was named after Hannibal Hamlin, Vice President from 1861 to 1864 under President Abraham Lincoln. The City of Ludington is the county seat.

Prominent features of Hamlin Township include the Ludington State Park. Ludington Stake Park is comprised of nearly 5,300 acres of scenic sand dunes, shoreline vista, ponds, marshlands and forests. It is situated between Hamlin Lake and Lake Michigan with several miles of shoreline and beaches on both bodies of water. The Ludington State Park draws about 1,000,000 visitors per year and has a waiting list for campers one year in advance.



Michigan Department of Natural Resources acquired 100 Acres of Sargent Sand properties in December of 2018. Ludington State Park grew by 100 Acres (60 of which had never been altered) in a \$17 million deal which was made possible by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund, the Michigan State Park Endowment Fund and the Land Exchange Facilitation Fund – all of which are sources managed by either the MI DNR or by an independent board associated with the Department. The Natural Conservancy and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation each contributed \$1 Million to the purchase. Also thanks to the Sargent Family who previously donated land the MI DRN including a portion of the property at the entrance to the park. . The purchase permanently protects a beautiful tract of critical sand dunes and its plants and animals.

Another prominent feature is Hamlin Lake. Hamlin Lake is more than 12 miles long and 5,000 acres large. It is the largest lake in Mason County. About half of the shoreline is forest wilderness and scenic sand dunes; the rest consists of bayous, beaches, breakwall and mini-parks, interspersed with appealing, well-kept resorts, private cottages and homes. Hamlin Lake narrows and winds along past the Ludington Stake Park beach to a picturesque dam. From there it continues on as the Sable River until it empties into Lake Michigan. This man made lake originated during the logging hey-day when lumbermen dammed the Big Sable River to make an enormous holding pond for trees felled upstream.





**Hamlin Township has five Township Parks:**

1. Long Skinny Park located on N. Lakeshore Drive between the South and Middle Bayous on lower Hamlin Lake. It currently features picnic areas, grills, fishing access, benches and provides magnificent views of Hamlin Lake.



2. Middle Bayou Park is a very small triangular shape piece of land. A person may have access to swimming, fishing and a bench for viewing of Hamlin Lake. Hamlin Lake is accessible by a ladder built into the seawall many years ago. A grassy area could be utilized for towels, etc. Limited parking.



3. North Bayou AND North Bayou Parking Area: is located on the lower lake near the North Bayou of Hamlin Lake. This park includes a rustic boat launch. A person can fish from shore, launch a rowboat, paddle boat, sail boat or kayak. Views of Hamlin Lake can also be obtained. Hamlin Township North Bayou Parking area is just a short walk to the lake and a large parking area that includes a port-a-potty and a bulletin board for Township news.





07/01/2021

**North Bayou Parking Area.** This parking lot approximately 300' X 300' was recently developed. Hamlin Township received a \$2,500.00 grant from the Great Lakes Energy Peoples Fund. The grant money was used towards the parking lot on Dunview Drive. (Members of Great Lakes Energy support the People Fund by voluntarily rounding up their bills to the next highest dollar. The rounded up amount is distributed to non-profit organizations and charitable activities that benefit people in communities served by the cooperative).



4. Wilson Hill/Hamlin Lake Township Park is located on Upper Hamlin Lake. This park consists of a gazebo, electricity, horseshoe pits, picnic tables, grills, boat ramp, dock, benches, playground equipment, sand box, port-a-potty and running water fit for drinking.



South Bayou Park, is located on the South Bayou of Hamlin Lake. This park consists of a boat ramp, docks, benches, picnic tables, grills, fishing, port-a-potty, sand box and playground equipment.



These Township owned parks are open year around. The South Bayou, Wilson Hill Park and the North Bayou are plowed in the winter months. There is currently no user charge to use the Township parks and/or boat launching facilities. However, the Township has donation boxes installed at the South Bayou, Wilson Hill and North Bayou.

Other important recreational facilities in the township include private resorts. These facilities provide access to Hamlin Lake, boat and jet ski rentals, and lodging. Resorts provide the opportunity for vacationers coming to Hamlin Township to remain for extended periods of time ranging from 3 to 7 days. Many vacationers are repeat customers who return annually to the township. 8

## **POPULATION**

From 1960 to 1980, Hamlin Township experienced a larger raw increase in population than any other jurisdiction within Mason County. The township's



population rose from 1,468 persons in 1960 to 2,616 in 1980 and flattened in 1990 with a population of 2,597.

By the year 2000, the township population rose to 3,192 persons, an increase of about 23% in a decade. From 2000 to 2020, the township population rose again to 3,711, an increase of about 8.9% again had the largest Township population gain. Hamlin Township keeps growing and remains the largest residential Township in Mason. It should be noted that the seasonal population is not counted in the Census figures. Summer populations are well above the year-round population and since many of the summer residents are on or near the lakes, they have the potential to have a much higher impact than year-round residents.

#### An Aging Population

For Hamlin Township in 1990, persons 65 years and older equaled 15.8 percent of the population, an increase of 3.4 percent from 1980. By 2000 that figure increased to 17.3 percent, in part because people who had summer cottages are now retiring and staying in the area. Data released from the 2020 census showed that 31.5% are 65 years and older resided.

School age children (5-18) accounted for 21.7% of the population, which is an increase from 1990 when they accounted for 18.7 percent of the population. Median age of the population is 44.4 years of age which is higher than the state average of 35.3 years of age.



#### Smaller Households

Persons per household fell from 2.76 in 1980 to 2.50 in 1990 and to 2.38 in 2000 and 2.61 in 2020. Children under 18 years old account for 15.5% of the population while 8.1% accounts for ages 5 to 15 years of age and 2.8% for ages

ranging from 15 to 17 and 18 years and over account for 84.2%  
There were 2,488 occupied housing units in 2020 and 892 vacant housing units.

#### Seasonal Housing

According to the 2000 Census, there were 2,123 housing units in Hamlin Township, an increase of 18% from 1990. Homes occupied by owners accounted for 1,248 of the 2,123 total occupied housing units (92.69 percent owner occupancy rate). Renter occupied housing equaled 7.1 percent (95 units). The remaining 780 housing units in Hamlin Township are classified as vacant according to the Census Bureau. Vacant housing units account for 36.7 percent of all housing in Hamlin Township, which is down from the 1990 Census. The 2020 census showed that there were 2,488 occupied housing units in 2020 and 892 vacant housing units.



This category includes vacant units offered for sale or rent, and units rented or sold but not occupied. Also included in this category are homes held for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. Since the 1990 Census, owner-occupied housing has increased, rental units have decreased as have seasonal units. This may be due to the trend of people retiring to live in their once summer cottages.

However, since 2020, Hamlin Township has seen a large increase in occupied homes and cottages being remodeled into year around housing. Hamlin Township has also seen a increase in smaller homes and/or cottages being purchased for Short-Term Rentals as they are becoming increasing popular.

#### Local Economy

Income levels for Hamlin Township are higher than those for Mason County. In 1999 the median household income for Mason County was \$34,704, with the median family income at \$41,654. In Hamlin Township, household income was \$41,594, nearly \$7,000 higher than the Mason County level. Comparatively, the median family income in Hamlin Township was \$49,231 in 1989, over \$7,000 higher than that of the county. In 2007 the median income distribution for

Mason County was reported at \$34,704. The States median income distribution was \$47,182. The average manufacturer's per hour rate was \$13.50 per data from the Mason County Growth Alliance.



A similar relationship exists between the township and the county for per capita income levels. Mason County's per capita income was \$17,713 in 1999. Hamlin Township's per capita income was \$21,658 for the same year. According to the 2005 Hamlin Township Survey, 37% of the respondents reported earned income of over \$75,000 per year; 15% reported income levels between \$60,000 - \$74,999; 15% reported income levels between \$45,000 - \$59,999; 16.5% reported income levels between \$30,000 - \$44,999; and, 15% reported levels between \$15,000 - \$29,999.

According the 2020 census, Hamlin Township's median household income was \$60,573 compared to \$51,725 which is Mason County's median household income. 28.6% of people residing in Hamlin Township have acquired a Bachelor's degree compared to 23.1% for Mason County.

Within the township, two major transportation corridors exist. M-116 extends north along the Lake Michigan shoreline from the City of Ludington and terminates at the Ludington State Park. Jebavy Drive runs north-south through the eastern part of the township. Jebavy Drive connects with the US-10/US-31 corridor. The Township, to the north, joins Angling road, extending to the east before eventually connecting with the two-lane US-31 north of Scottville. Three collectors (Jagger, Decker, and Dewey Roads) run east-west and join M-116 and Lakeshore Drive to Jebavy Drive.



No aerial  
available  
for this  
area

## **ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE**

Hamlin Township does not have a Park Board. The Township contracts with a local lawn mowing company who is responsible for maintenance at Township owned Parks. Volunteers also provide crucial support to many programs and activities in the Township. The Township Board of Trustees are authorized to make such decisions pertaining to parks maintenance and/or projects. Funding for parks operations comes from the Township's General Fund Budget, grants and donations. There are no user fees.

Hamlin Lake Preservation Society also assists with the preservation of Hamlin Lake and recreational opportunities. HLPS completes yearly water testing, fish stocking, monitors aquatic plant growth, and organizes yearly fireworks. HLPS educational objective is to present articles on current concerns, history, and activities pertaining to Hamlin Lake. HLPS publishes a newsletter three times-a-year: Fall, Spring, Winter and the organization holds an annual dinner.

### ***General Fund Budget – Parks***

<b><i>2017/2018</i></b>	<b><i>2018/2019</i></b>	<b><i>2020/2021</i></b>
\$39,587.15	\$21,407.50	\$11,989.44



## **RECREATION AND RESOURCE INVENTORIES**

Hamlin Township Board of Trustees completed a Recreation and Resource Inventory by conducting an on-site visit to all Township owned Parks. The Township Board of Trustees also reviewed maps of the Township and identified the location and amenities of each recreational facility located in Hamlin Township. During the open house, attendees were presented with the Recreational Facilities Map, a computerized slide show of the Township Parks and were asked to comment and provide additional information regarding the



facilities and resources in the Township.

Hamlin Township is blessed with abundant natural resources, including untouched forest land, precious wildlife habitat, and a pristine lake. The following is an inventory of the Township owned recreational facilities.



*Hamlin Township Parks and Recreational Inventory*

**Wilson Hill on Upper Hamlin Lake**

Playground Equipment

Pavilion

Horseshoes

Restrooms (Port-a-Potty)

Grills

Benches

Fishing

Hamlin Lake Boat Ramp

Dock

Electricity

Running Water

Picnic Tables

Overflow Parking Lot

Bulletin Board

**South Bayou – Middle Bayou of Hamlin Lake**

Playground Equipment

Restrooms (Port-a-Potty)

Grills

Benches

Fishing

Boat Ramp

Two Docks

Picnic Tables

Bulletin Board

**North Bayou**

Restroom (Port-a-Potty)

Fishing

Limited Boating Access

Parking

Bulletin Board

**Long Skinny Park**

Benches

Grills

Picnic Tables

Fishing

**Middle Bayou**

Bench

Fishing

Limited Parking

## **DESCRIPTION OF PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS**

Public input and participation from the Hamlin Township residents is always welcome. With a variety of recreational outlets, the residents and elected officials take pride in the recreational offerings available in the Township. As with any Township asset, including park lands, there is always the potential for improvements and expansion due to an ever changing Township and its needs. The Township's interest in maintaining and improving its parks is obvious by the dedicated Township Board.

The Hamlin Township Board of Trustees provided several opportunities for input and participation during the development of this plan.

At the June 14, 2018, Hamlin Township Board of Trustees Meeting, it was announced that the Township Board and public should review the current Recreation Plan and provide input on updating the Plan.

At the July 12, 2018, Hamlin Township Board of Trustees Meeting, the Township Supervisor drafted a Recreation Survey and asked for input.

At the August 16, 2018, Hamlin Township Board of Trustees Meeting, the Township Supervisor asked for additional suggestions on the survey.

At the September 13, 2018 Hamlin Township Board of Trustees Meeting, the cost for the survey were reviewed sending the survey to all improved properties in the Township. There being 2,097 improved properties.

At the October 11, 2018 Township Board Meeting, it was announced that the Recreation Survey was mailed to all improved properties located in the Township and the Survey was posted on the Township's website.

On April 5, 2019, a letter was mailed to the Mason County Board of Commissioners, an email to Senator Curt Vanderwall which announced that the Township was in the process of updating our 5-year Recreation Plan and to invite them to the Open House which was scheduled for April 25, 2019.

At the April 11, 2019, Hamlin Township Board of Trustees Meeting, it was announced that the survey responses were coming in and also announced the Open House.

The newspaper, at Hamlin Township Board of Trustees Meeting and on the Township's web site, the open house was announced. A direct mailing to each of the ten County Board of Commissioners, the 101<sup>st</sup> District State Representative, the State Senator, the 34<sup>th</sup> District, Senator, the 2<sup>nd</sup> District Congressman and to the two U.S. Senators. The few attendees to the community input open house provided valuable input about recreation in Hamlin Township. An inventory map was available for review along with a computerized slide show displaying the Township's current recreational facilities. All the suggestions were written on charts that were posted around the room. The comments are summarized below.

**SOUTH BAYOU PARK:**

- \*Litter receptacle year around.
- \*Fill pot holes in parking lot.

**LONG SKINNY PARK:**

- \*Repair seawall.

**WILSON HILL PARK:**

- New bumpers and walking surface.
- New bulletin/display boards.

**NORTH BAYOU:**

**MIDDLE BAYOU:**

However, after the draft was developed, COVID-19 hit Mason County and meetings, offices were closed down for months.

After the relief of COVID-19 and on December 16, 2021, the Hamlin Township Board of Trustees approved moving forward and completing the update the Recreation Plan.

At the April 14, 2022, Hamlin Township Board of Trustees it was announced that the draft plan was available for review and/or comments. The Plan was also posted on the Township's web page at <http://hamlintownship.org> and an announcement was posted at the Township Hall.

Survey results from February 2019 including comments.

**1. Overall, how would you rate the Township Parks:**

Excellent:	7
Good	23
Average	9
Low	2

**How long have you lived in Hamlin Township?**

< A Year	2
1 – 5 Years	3
5 -10 Years	9
15+	9
20+	23

**What Improvements do you feel are needed to the existing park facilities?**

South Bayou Park  
Long Skinny Park  
Wilson Hill Park  
North Bayou/Duneview Drive  
Middle Bayou Area:

**Which is the most important to you?**

Acquire more park space  
Enhance Existing Parks  
Keep parks as is

**Overall how would you rate the parks in Hamlin Township**

South Bayou Park: 11 Excellent; 29 Good; 7 Fair; 0 Poor  
Long Skinny Park: 3 Excellent; 5 Good; 1 Fair; 1 Poor  
Wilson Hill Park 17 Excellent; 29 Good; 0 Fair; 4 Poor  
North Bayou/Duneview Drive 0 Excellent 10 Good 4 Fair 0 Poor  
Middle Bayou park: 8 Excellent; 19 Good; 11 Fair; 3 Poor

**In the last 12 months, how often have you or your family used on of the Parks?**

Daily 2  
Weekly 18  
Monthly 13  
Once in 6 months 5  
Once a Year 11  
**Never 6**

**SURVEY COMMENTS RECEIVED:**

**SOUTH BAYOU PARK:**

- \*A cement boat launch ramp – Dredge entry .
- \*Extend cement boat ramp.
- \*Good
- \*I appreciate year around porta-john.
- \*Boat launch nice – but cant pontoon can't get out of the lake. Bridge openings for pontoons.
- \*Pave the parking area. Paint lines for parking diagonally.
- \*Very nice.
- \*Add some flowers.
- \*Dock could be enlarged.
- \*Parking.
- \*Fill pot holes.'
- \*More swings, etc for children.
- \*Fix the bridge – Lakeshore Drive.
- \*Better parking enforcement – Fix holes in lot – Fix picnic tables and swing set.  
Fix low area better – Re-pave parking area.
- \*Grill – longer hours – night fishing.
- \*Trash receptacle – Longer park hours for night fisherman.
- \*Pave parking, improve boat launch and docks.
- \*Picnic tables.
- \*Replace South Bayou Bridge.
- \*Replace the bridge.
- \*Move money box closer to ramps. Mae it stand out.
- \*Cement and covered picnic area.
- \*Dredge under bridge to make access to lake easier.
- \*Need deeper wider access to main lake.
- \*Update swings playground.
- \*Clean sand out of channel area.
- \*Picnic tables needed.

**LONG SKINNY PARK:**

- \*A new break wall.
- \*Need seawall work.
- \*Permanent repair to the seawall.
- \*Repair seawall.
- \*Wall.
- \*Seawall.
- \*Fix the seawall.
- \*Fill in the holes along the seawall. (I fell in one).
- \*Put boulders in front of old seawall.
- \*Seawall and safety.
- \*New seawall, dangerous and eyesore. Keep litter picked up. Have some planters to add color.

- \*Seawall needs improvement.
- \*Wall repair.
- \*Love Long Skinny Park.
- \*Seawall repair.
- \*Seawall.
- \*New breakwall.
- \*Repair/Replace seawall.
- \*Rebuild seawall, it looks terrible.
- \*More benches.
- \*Need a pier for fishing.
- \*Remove private property in middle.
- \*Fix erosion issue.
- \*Trash cans – Grill.
- \*Install dockage and canoe/kayak portage.
- \*A walking area off road.
- \*Fill in eroded area.
- \*Picnic tables. Fill in sunken areas by seawall/repair seawall.
- \*Install Martin houses.
- \*Parking.
- \*Adding steps to allow swimming access to Hamlin Lake.
- \*Near my cottage, so visit regularly all summer.
- \*Better entrance/exit. Put in second boat launch.
- \*Improve the grassy area up to the break wall.
- \*Refuse containers,
- \*Fill in areas sinking around breakwall.
- \*Very nice.
- \*Good.

#### ***WILSON HILL PARK:***

- \*Needs dock work.
- \*Boar ramp location bad.
- \*Expand parking.
- \*Add a second launch ramp (Widen street to it).
- \*Wish there was a dock out into the lake for a little fishing.
- \*Better boat launch.
- \*More parking.
- \*Improve children's play area. Fill low wet spots between pavilion and the lake.
- \*Upgrade playground equipment.
- \*More swings.
- \*More playground equipment.
- \*More swings and things for children.
- \*More playground equipment.
- \*More playground equipment.
- \*Re-install second dock.
- \*Add a 2<sup>nd</sup> launch.
- \*Better launch ramp – Charge non residents.
- \*Maybe a light or two at night.

- \*Pave parking lots, more bumpers on dock allow dogs.
- \*Other than boat ramps, small parking, there is nothing.
- \*Add a swimming area.
- \*Install better bumper pads that stay in place on the dock.
- \*Boat access totally redone.
- \*At least one more boat launch. Use Wilson Hill most of winter ice fishing.
- \*More parking for boaters.
- \*Make money box stand out.
- \*Move parking winter for ice fishing.
- \*Better bumpers on dock. Expand parking .
- \*Hard to launch boats.
- \*Nothing. Fine area.
- \*A better boat ramp if possible.
- \*Improve docking.

**DUNEVIEW DRIVE:**

- \*Needs a launching dock and cement ramp.
- \*Needs improvements on park lot.
- \*Requires more parking.
- \*Need a dock, very slippery when getting into a boat.
- \*Improve parking.
- \*Information on its location would be nice.
- \*Fix the slope of the ramp to match the natural slope of the lake bottom – every year the waves wash out a large hole at the end of the concrete logs. Someone is going to get hurt.
- \*Dock for boat launch.
- \*Redo (poorly installed) boat launch.
- \*Ok as is.
- \*Dock needs to be repaired.
- \*Not really much of a park – try to acquire land.
- \*Need a dock. Hard to put a boat in.
- \*Pier to tie boat to when you launch.
- \*Pier to tie boat to when you launch.
- \*Remove no guns allowed so duck hunters can use it.
- \*Wasn't aware of a park here.
- \*Township residents should launch free.
- \*Needs landscaping as it is in a neighborhood. I would not want a parking lot in my back Yard. Please help those people. No more parks on Hamlin Lake.
- \*Improve road, install boat ramp, pave parking.
- \*Needs a dock to make it fully accessible for boat launching.
- \*Public park at end of Sumach Avenue.
- \*Clean up.
- \*Improve boat launch.
- \*Picnic tables on either side of boat launch.
- \*Add a dock for fishing and boat launching.
- \*Dock system.

- \*Boat launch at North Park.
- \*Fishing pier.
- \*Deeper longer launch area and dock. No area on main lake to launch a deep draft boat to shallow except State Park.
- \*Good.

#### ***MIDDLE BAYOU AREA:***

- \*What do we own there?
- \*Too small.
- \*Good
- \*Is there a park there? If not, a small one would be nice.
- \*Plant some flowers.
- \*Better water access.
- \*Only room for the bench.
- \*Wasn't aware there was a park here.
- \*Picnic table – nobody knows it is a park – put sign.
- \*Acquire old Wren's Roost property for a park if available.
- \*Picnic tables and more benches.
- \*Clean it up, work to make it more inviting.
- \*Nothing much there.
- \*Put in boat launch. Similar to South Bayou.
- \*Parking.
- \*Easier access to water.
- \*Signs
- \*Weed Removal.
- \*Okay.
- \*Picnic Table is needed. Limited Parking.

#### ***MISC. COMMENTS***

\*All parks are clean, grass cut, no litter. Good Job. Please thank the people who make us look good. Dogs are eing run on south Bayou. Put out a can & pick up bags to keep clean like Cartier park. Thanks

- \*Pet friendly water access.
- \*Walking paths/trails.
- \*A nice big park is needed (with benches along with walking paths for human and dogs and porta poties.
- \*They are good as is. Keep them natural.

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

Developing goals and objectives is an important part of the recreation planning process. The overall goals of the Township Board of Trustees is to provide recreation opportunities for the community it serves.

Goals are the broadest level. Objectives carry out the purpose of the goal.

### **GOAL:**

\*Increase public recreational opportunities within Hamlin Township for residents of all ages.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- \*Encourage expansion of recreational uses in the Township. Develop Township-owned property in Section 2 for recreational uses.  
(Approximately nine acres; Hilly, Woods. Fronts off Barnhart Road. Could be developed for additional parking to Wilson Hill Park, Hiking/Walking or Bike Trails.)
- \*Promote opportunities for tourism.
- \*Encourage development of a 2<sup>nd</sup> boat launch and/or staging area at Wilson Hill Park.
- \*Encourage development of fishing piers at Long Skinny Park, South Bayou Park and North Bayou.
- \*Encourage new sea wall at the Long Skinny Park.
- \*Encourage new walk-way with handicap and fishing pier at the South Bayou Park.
- \*Plan for new equipment at Parks such as picnic tables, swings and grills.
- \*New wood seawall at South Bayou Park along with new docks.

### **GOAL:**

\*Increase communication between Hamlin Township and other recreational providers, including surrounding communities and businesses.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- \*Continually communicate and work cooperatively with the Hamlin Lake Preservation Society, Mason County Parks and Recreational Commission.
- \*Maintain an open relationship with the federal government regarding federally-owned and operated land within the Township.
- \*Establish and maintain an open relationship between Hamlin Township and private recreational providers with the Township in order to increase public recreational opportunities for residents.
- \*Promote coordination of recreation programs between Ludington Area Schools and the Township.

- \*Create and maintain a working relationship with county, state and federal officials to investigate possibilities for recreational facility development within Hamlin Township.
- \*Continually communicate and work cooperatively with the State of Michigan and Ludington State Park officials. (Ludington State Park is entirely located in Hamlin Township.)

**GOAL:**

\*When possible, purchase additional property for open space and recreational opportunities in order to retain the Township's natural resources and rural character.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- \*Create hiking, biking, walking trails within the township where possible.
- \*Identify recreational opportunities for residents to take advantage of the community's natural resources on a year-round basis.
- \*Maintain the water quality in Hamlin Township.

**GOAL:**

\*Continue to improve accessibility at all parks by incorporating new amenities and updating existing amenities as appropriate.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- \*Improvements to existing facilities should be designed to exceed minimum requirements of the Michigan barrier-free code.  
(Existing facilities in Hamlin Township provide some level of handicap parking accessibility).
- \*Encourage additional handicap parking and fishing piers.
- \*Repair the seawall at the Long Skinny Park (approximately 500' feet along the Hamlin Lake shoreline).

**GOAL:**

\*Create a community awareness of the Township parks.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- \*Work with local media to provide coverage of improvements, events, and activities in the parks.
- \*Work with the schools, governmental units and non-profit organizations to share information regarding Township Parks.
- \*Take advantage of the Township's web site to communicate to residents about Hamlin Township Parks.
- \*Create a newsletter informing the residents about the Township Parks.

## **ACTION PROGRAM:**

Over the next five years, the Hamlin Township Board of Trustees will use the Recreation Plan to accomplish the goals set forth through the planning process. The planning process, it became apparent the Township is strongly dedicated to providing recreational opportunities to its community residents and capitalizing on the township's abundant natural resources while maintaining the community's rural character. Township officials also recognize that this will not be an easy task, but are committed to the goals established through the creation of the Hamlin Township Recreation Plan.

Based on the projected plan of funding and grant opportunities, the Township will seek to develop and utilize all current land within the Township and provide recreational opportunities.

### **Phase I – (2022 – 2023)**

- Utilize the Township's undeveloped nine acres adjacent to Wilson Hill Park and create additional parking and improve existing parking lot.
- Replace deteriorating seawall along shore of Hamlin Lake at the Long Skinny Park. Approximately 500' feet. The existing seawall was installed in the 1940's under President Roosevelt's
- Develop marked natural trails: such as hiking, walking and biking trails with benches on the Township's undeveloped nine acres.

### **Phase 2 – (2023 - 2024)**

- Construct boardwalk approximately (6' X 135') along the shore of Hamlin Lake at the South Bayou Park with a handicap fishing pier;
- Replace wood seawall at the South Bayou Park.

### **Phase 3 – (2024 - 2025)**

- Develop additional boat launch and/or staging area at Wilson Hill Park.

### **Phase 4 – (2025 - 2026)**

- Improve launch at North Bayou. Construct fishing pier. (MI DNR Permit required).

### **Phase 5 – (2026 - 2027)**

- Pave South Bayou Parking Lot.
- Re-do existing docks at the South Bayou Park.

All facilities will be universally accessible. Funding for all phases will be obtained through cooperative Federal and State Grants, Township Resources and volunteers.

If properly used, the Hamlin Township Recreation Plan will assist the Hamlin Township Board of Trustees in properly managing future recreation development. The plan is a guide for decisions and should be consulted regularly. Public input is an essential facet of this process and should be utilized when recreational decisions need to be made.

The Plan should be updated as the local situation warrants, or every five years as required by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to allow the Township to remain eligible for grant consideration.

**APPENDIX A – PUBLIC INPUT DOCUMENTATION**

