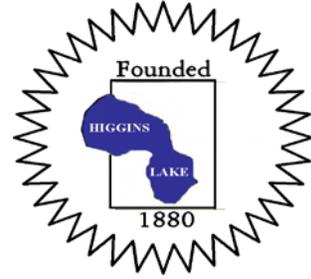


# GERRISH TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN



2011-2015

**(Draft Proposed Amendment 2015)**



### Township Owned Properties

Gerrish Township currently owns five locations that are dedicated exclusively to parks, recreation and open spaces.

Name and Location	Classification and Compliance	Site Size	Description
Gerrish Township Park 109 Carlos Avenue	Neighborhood *2	>1 acre	Lakefront park with approximately 400 ft of public beach that offers public swim access, gazebo, picnic areas, grills, restrooms with bath house, children’s play equipment, volleyball net, universally accessible boardwalk, tetherball and paved parking
East Walking Trail 3075 E. Higgins Lake Drive	Park Trail *1	>1 acre	Located behind the Police station, the walking trail offers two ½ mile loops of natural pathways through wooded area
Community Park Marina 103 Mill Road	Community Park *2	>5 acres	Lakefront park area that currently operates a 133 slip marina facility. Offers marina gas sales, fishing, grills, boating and ATV safety classes and lake access. Winter activities include ice fishing and ice skating.
Gerrish Municipal Park 2997 E. Higgins Lake Drive	Community Park *2	>25 acres	Pavilion, picnic tables, grills, restroom facilities inside Township Hall, tennis courts, children’s play equipment, playfields, basketball court, tetherball and paved parking. (Adjacent 20 acres of land to west was recently obtained from the State of Michigan for parks and recreation purposes.)
West Side Park Area Birch Road	Community Park *1	20 acres	Land was obtained from State of Michigan for parks and recreation purposes. Preliminary clearing of approximately 5 acres for development of multi use park area.

\* Facilities/park areas are rated on a scale of 1 – 5 based on ADA accessibility guidelines. A top rating of ‘5’ indicates the entire park was developed or renovated using the principals of universal design while a “1” indicates minimal ADA accessibility.



Community Park Marina



Gerrish Township Park

**SECTION VI**  
**GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

The Recreational Plan Committee determined the following factors for analysis and development of goals and objectives: NPRA recreational standards, requests and needs of citizens, Board of Trustee goals and input, future land use and budgetary constraints. Careful review of the above factors led to the development of four major goals to be accomplished within our five year recreation plan.

*Goal 1:*                    *Land Acquisition*  
**Ensure the rural, natural surroundings of Gerrish Township and maintain green spaces, open spaces and lakefront preservation.**

**Objective 1:**            Maintain an active interest in the preservation of State owned lands in Section 16 for green space preservation and potential natural parkway setting.

**Objective 2:**            Obtain State owned property that abuts Township property in NW corner of Section 22 for extension of Gerrish Township Municipal Park and inclusion into Trailways program. **(This objective has been met as the Township has recently acquired the additional 20 acres west/adjacent to the existing park which will allow expanded recreational opportunities at this larger Municipal Park facility.)**

**Objective 3:**            Increase parks and recreation budgeting to include long term investment savings for purchase of lakefront parcels, specifically Section 20, for lakefront preservation and swim access.

**Objective 4:**            Maintain Sections 23, 26, 35 and 36 in the Southeast corner of Gerrish Township as conservation areas intended for green space to preserve biodiversity and lowlands.

**Objective 5:**            Preservation of State owned lands in Sections 1 and 2 to encourage preservation of woodlands and the overall rural/resort characteristic of our Township.

*Goal 2:*                    *Improvements to Maintenance, Usage and Accessibility*  
**Improve current parks and recreation areas and facilities through increased maintenance standards, upgraded equipment and services and improvements to ADA accessibility.**

**Objective 1:**            Completion of strategic plan for West Side Park Area on Birch Road. Future uses to include family campsites with family oriented activities such as volleyball, walking trails, ball fields and mini golf.

**Objective 2:**            Creation of salaried Marina Manager position, independent of elected Board members to allow for controlled oversight of continued development of the Community Park Marina.

- Objective 3:** Development of a Parks and Recreation Department that is inclusive of all Parks and Recreation areas to include budget separate from General Fund and Parks and to be overseen by a Parks and Recreation Manager.
- Objective 4:** Further progress on Gerrish Township Park Advisory Committee recommendations as accepted by Township Board to include relocating existing parking and relocation and improvements to playground equipment.
- Objective 5:** Increase ADA accessibility and compliance at existing parks and recreational facilities, specifically Gerrish Township Park restroom facilities and playground areas at Gerrish Township Municipal Center.
- Objective 6:** Increase general fund contributions to Parks and Recreation budget by a minimum of fifty percent.
- Objective 7:** Development of yearly, monthly, weekly and daily repair, cleaning and maintenance checklists for Parks and Recreation areas.
- Objective 8:** Improve accessibility and safety of Gerrish Township Walking Trail through consistent maintenance and improved security and signage.

**Objective 9:** Now that the Township has acquired the additional 20 acres west/ adjacent to the existing Municipal Park, expand recreational opportunities at this larger Municipal Park facility. These recreational opportunities may include, but not be limited to, a barrier-free play structure, a new barrier-free restroom building (separated from the existing Township offices) to be used specifically for the Park, a dog park, pickleball courts and adding walking trails in the new 20 acres of the Municipal Park.

**Goal 3:** *Building Recreational Partnerships*  
**Forge alliances and develop partnerships with local and state agencies, services and groups that share common goals and interests in improving and maintaining recreational opportunities within Gerrish Township.**

- Objective 1:** Development of Adopt a Park program where individuals and/or organizations can contribute to the regular maintenance, upkeep and possible development of the Township parks and recreation areas.
- Objective 2:** Formal commitment and contribution to the Higgins Lake Trailway project to include portions of scenic trailway through Township properties as feasible.
- Objective 3:** Creation of Parks and Recreation Board to advise and oversee the Gerrish Township Parks and Recreation Department.
- Objective 4:** Develop good, cooperative relationships with area businesses and school districts to promote cooperative development and planning of parks and recreation areas, therefore improving the overall economy and health of our community.
- Objective 5:** Approach the State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources to develop a plan of action for green space and open space preservation.

## 2015 ACTION PLANS

Action	Justification	Responsible Party
Creation of Parks and Recreation Department to oversee all park and recreation areas; inclusive of budgets, personnel and managerial activities Creation of Parks and recreation Public Relations Liaison position with specified directives and directions	Streamline and combine practices, policies, oversight, budgeting and employees Promote and brand Gerrish Township Parks and recreation	Township Board and Parks and Recreation Board Township Board/Park and Rec. Board
Partner with neighboring Townships to create a professionally designed 'Higgins Lake' parks and recreation promotional brochure	Promotion of parks and recreational opportunities to increase usage and tourism	Township Board/Park and Rec Board
Creation of volleyball, horseshoe and basketball areas at Community Park Marina	Increase recreational opportunities of existing facilities'	Marina Manger.
Reorganize layout of Gerrish Township Park to include centralized picnic area, updated play area expanded boardwalk and improved waste management,	Improve current conditions and accessibility of existing facilities	Park and Rec. Board
Expand recreational opportunities at the now larger Gerrish Township Municipal Park facility. These recreational opportunities may include, but not be limited to, a barrier-free play structure, a new barrier-free restroom building (separated from the existing Township offices) to be used specifically for the Park, a dog park, pickleball courts and adding walking trails in the new 20 acres of the park.	Goal 1-Objective 2 listed above stated to obtain State owned property that abuts Township property in NW corner of Section 22 for extension of Gerrish Township Municipal Park and inclusion into Trailways program. This objective has been met. Now additional action is being taken to develop this property and expand recreation opportunities at this facility.	Township Board and Parks and Recreation Board.

### POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

There is a direct correlation between the amount of funds directed toward parks and recreation and the utilization of such activities by the public. Even a small increase in funding for playground equipment, programming or walking paths can provide significant boosts to the overall usage of our facilities. Gerrish Township is fully aware that the costs to improving and maintain its parks and recreation programs and facilities are well worth the benefit and intends to utilize several different sources for potential funding. Anticipated funding sources will be in the form of cash from the Township general fund, in-kind labor, private donations and both State and Federal grants.