

OSCEOLA TOWNSHIP RECREATION PLAN

2023 - 2027



ADOPTION:
February 22, 2023

PREPARED BY



Western U.P.
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT REGION

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INTRODUCTION

Osceola Township, Michigan is located north of Houghton, runs along a portion of the southern branch of Torch Lake but is otherwise landlocked continuing north to the western edges of the City of Calumet. This area has a deep history of copper mining and many of the ruins from historic use can be seen in parks throughout the area.

The 2023-2027 Osceola Township Recreation Plan (Plan) has been developed to guide recreation improvements in the Township over the next five years. The Plan provides an overview of the community, presents an inventory of existing recreational facilities, and provides a framework for continued improvement and development of recreation facilities in Osceola Township. The goal of the Plan is to establish a program of improvements that meets the needs but is also affordable and achievable for the Township. A five-year plan also qualifies Osceola Township to apply for Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) and other grants.

This Plan, prepared by Western Upper Peninsula Planning and Development Region (WUPPDR), was developed under the guidance of a Recreation Plan Committee on behalf of the Osceola Township Board. Public comments and suggestions were taken under consideration during the development of the Plan. The Plan will continue to be updated, as needed, to address changing needs of the community and its residents. The Osceola Township Board adopted the Plan on March 8, 2023.

COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

LOCATION

Osceola Township is located in northern Houghton County, which is found in the western Upper Peninsula of Michigan (Figure 1). The southern tip of the Township is on the Portage Lake and its most northern boundary is close to the Keweenaw County line. It is bounded on the west by Franklin Township, north by Calumet Township, and west by Schoolcraft and Torch Lake Townships. The Township contains the four unincorporated communities of Dollar Bay, Tamarack City, Tamarack Hill Location and Osceola.

POPULATION, HOUSING AND SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

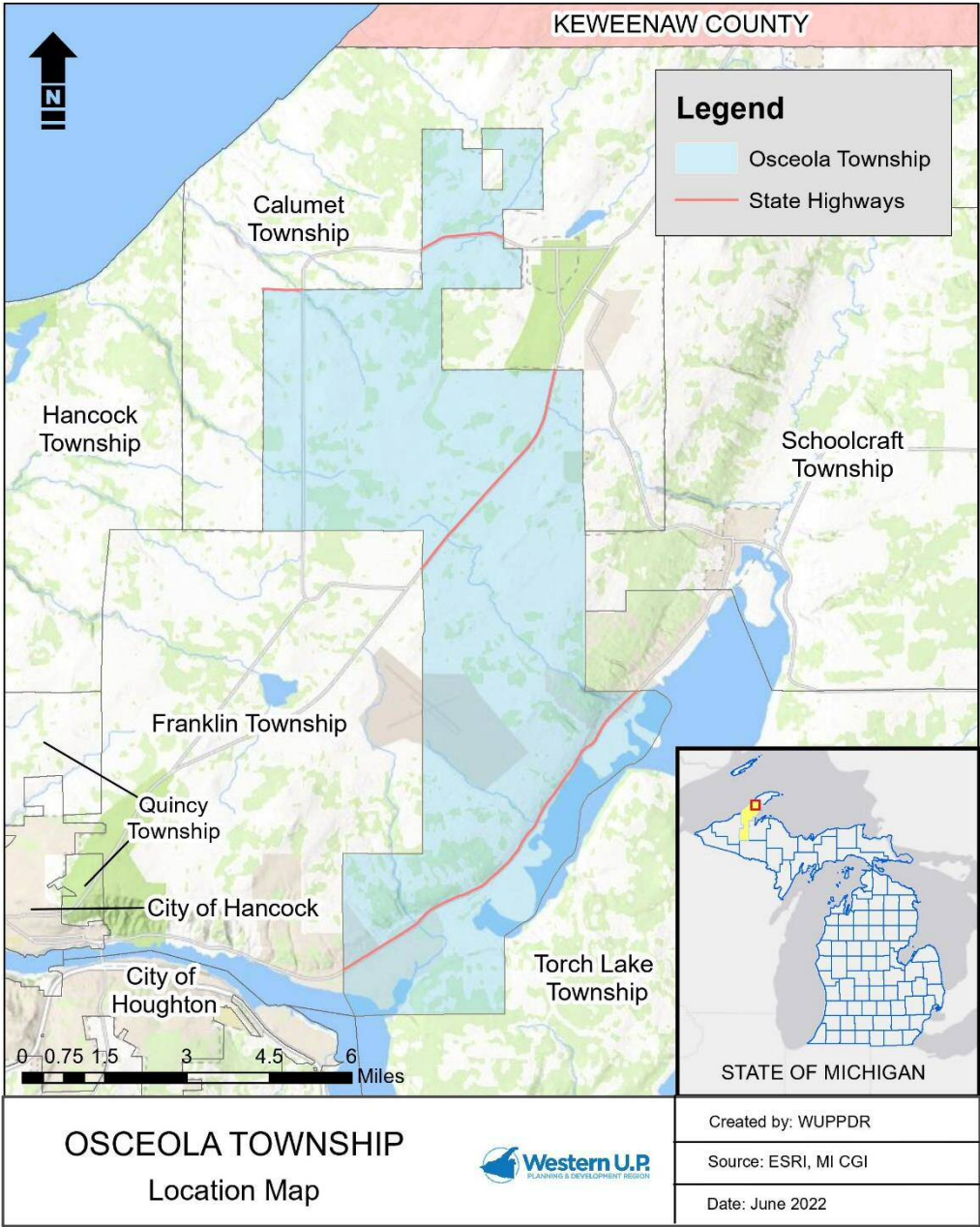
Prior to the 19th century and for many years thereafter, the area’s economy flourished. With the decline of copper mining and lumbering the area experienced a steady out-migration of residents in response to the decline of those industries. Over the years of economic decline many people migrated out of the local area and the western Upper Peninsula. The mining industry eventually closed operations in Houghton County in 1968. The closing of the mines placed the area in a state of economic depression that is still apparent today and resulted in significant population declines. While recent trends indicate the area is stabilizing, the general trend appears to be a slight reduction in total population (Table 1).

Table 1: Osceola Township Population

Population	
2010 Census	1,888
2011-2015 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year Estimate	1,794
2016-2020 American Community Survey (ASC) 5-year Estimate	1,477

Source: US Census Bureau (2020)

Figure 1: Osceola Township Location Map



POPULATION AGE DISTRIBUTION

Analyzing population age distribution characteristics aids in determining the types of recreation and community facilities needed. Figure 2 summarizes the general age distribution of Township residents at the time of the 2020 Census. As the graph indicates, the Township shows the large amount of children present in the community indicating the need for a focus on family oriented recreation.

Figure 2: Township Age Distribution by Gender 2020 Census Data

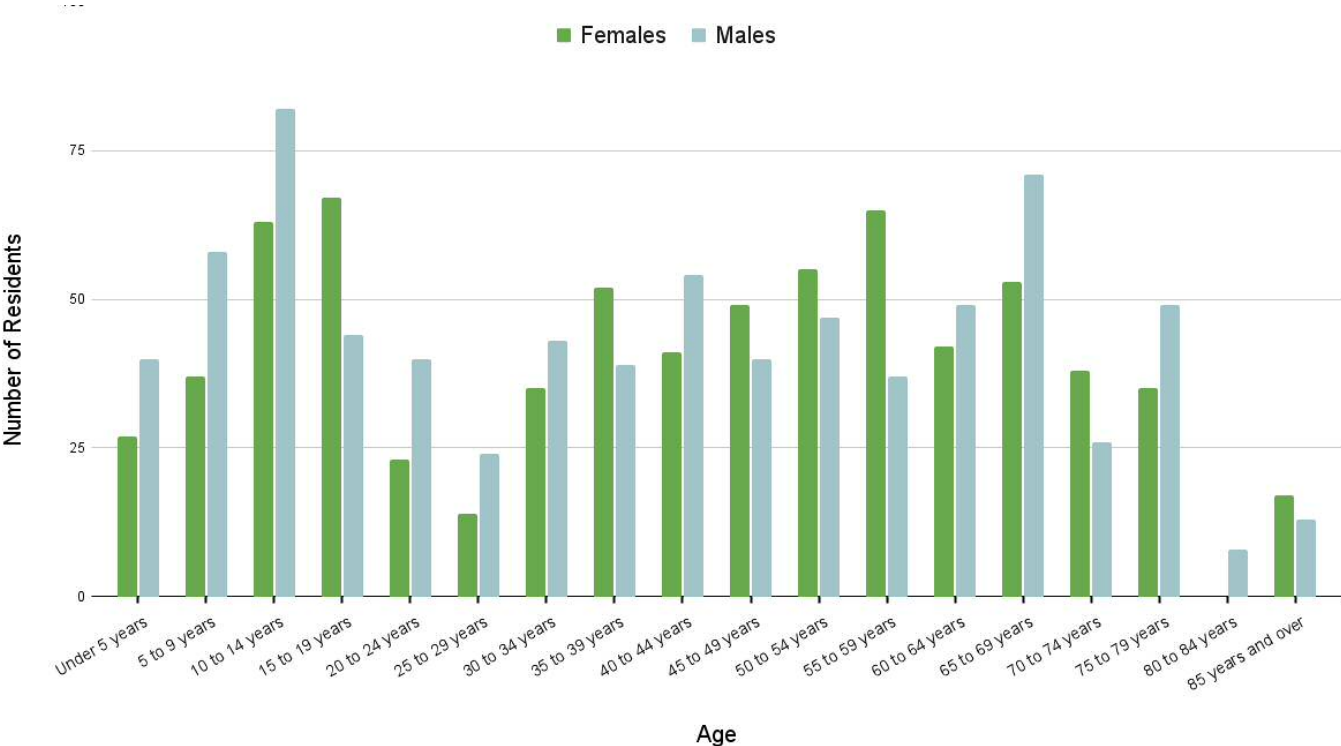


Table 2: Population Distribution

Population Distribution		
2020 Census	Persons	Percent of Total
Male	764	51.7%
Female	713	48.3%
Under 5 Years Old	67	4.5%
5 to 19 Years Old	351	23.7%
20 to 64 Years Old	749	50.8%
65 Years and Over	310	20.9%
Households		
Total Households	572	100.0%
Households with individuals under 18 years	165	28.8%
Households with individuals 60 years and over	268	46.9%

Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2016-2020

The residents in the 65 plus age group represent those who were established in the area or are natives of the area who returned to retire in the Township. In recreation planning and programming, special consideration should be given to this age group. While the percentage of the prime working group is less than the norm, the school age group is equitable to the State level so accordingly these groups merit continuation of recreational facility planning and maintenance to meet their demands. The high influx of tourists to the area each summer and winter also creates an additional demand on local recreational facilities. The Township is also giving special consideration to residents with special needs and disabilities. Additional socioeconomic characteristics, identified in the following tables, include income, housing costs and poverty levels.

Table 3: Income

Income	
Median Household	\$52,647
Median Family	\$63,472
Per Capita	\$29,014

Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey (2016-2020)

Table 4: Persons with Income below Poverty Status

Persons with Income below Poverty Status		
2015 ACS	Totals	Percent of Total
All Ages	92	6.2%
Under 18 Years of Age	21	5.5%
Over 18 Years of Age	84	5.7%
Families	22	5.5%

Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey (2016-2020)

LAND USE AND ZONING

The land use in Osceola Township includes everything from urban areas (residential, commercial, etc.) to forests. The primary residential areas are focused in unincorporated communities of Dollar Bay, Tamarack Hill Location, Tamarack City and Osceola. The rest of the Township is interspersed with a mix of agricultural lands with large, forested regions. Osceola Township presently is not zoned.

ECONOMY

Osceola Township residents are primarily dependent on employment opportunities available in the surrounding communities of Houghton, Hancock, Calumet and Laurium. Michigan Technological University is the largest employer with 1,539 jobs and an enrollment of about 7,009 students as of 2021. Other major employers in the region include Finlandia University, UP Health System Portage, Aspirus Keweenaw, local public K-12 schools, governmental entities, and other private businesses. Employment opportunities within the Township include Horner Flooring and several small service type businesses.

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

Osceola Township has three major thoroughfares bisecting the north and south ends of the Township. State Highway M-26 runs through the two unincorporated communities of Dollar Bay and Tamarack City. U.S. 41 intersects the Township from southwest to northeast. M-203 crosses the northern portion of the township and connects with U.S. 41. A well-maintained county road system compliments the Federal and State highway system.



Houghton County Memorial Airport Image
by Houghton County

Air service is provided by United operated by United Airlines at the Houghton County Airport between Hancock and Calumet off U.S. 41. There are two daily flights to Chicago and intercity bus service via Indian Trails is available in the City of Hancock departing to Marquette, Green Bay, Milwaukee, and Chicago.

TOPOGRAPHY

Osceola Township’s topography varies in elevation of approximately 600 feet along the banks of Portage Lake to nearly 1,200 feet of elevation away from the water. Osceola Township is mostly flat to gently rolling terrain. Slopes within the Township can reach as much as 10-20%. Slopes, soil types, drainage and high water tables inhibit some of the land in the county from being developed.



GEOLOGY AND SOILS

The bedrock of the western portion of the Upper Peninsula and Osceola Township was formed during the Precambrian Era and is crystalline in nature. The Keweenaw Peninsula bedrock is made up of Copper Harbor Conglomerate, Portage Lake Lava Series and Jacobsville Sandstone with the inactive Keweenaw fault running through the area. The most conspicuous geological features are the rugged hills comprised of exposed bedrock, which can be seen throughout the region. The Keweenaw Peninsula is much like other parts of Michigan, with an uneven blanket of unconsolidated material covering the bedrock surface. This material, glacial drift, is a mixture of sand, gravel, clay, and boulders. Glaciers that migrated south during the Pleistocene Epoch transported this material. The two principal kinds of drift are stratified and unstratified.

CLIMATIC CONDITIONS

Lake Superior has a dominating effect on the climate of Osceola Township. Temperatures are moderated, and annual snowfalls ranging from 210 to 300 inches are created by the lake effect. Excessive snowfall is possible, and in 1978, 355 inches of snow fell at Houghton County’s weather station. Data from the Houghton County Airport weather station indicates that the average annual precipitation is 36.03 inches, while an average of 222 inches of snow falls annually. The coldest month is January when temperatures average 13.7 °F. The hottest month is July, with an average temperature of 77 °F.



Image by Keweenaw Convention & Visitors Bureau

WATER RESOURCES

The lakes, rivers, and streams in and around Osceola Township are the most prominent natural features, particularly Portage Lake and Torch Lake. With many miles of shoreline along both lakes, the Township possesses unique opportunities for recreational development.



VEGETATION AND WILDLIFE

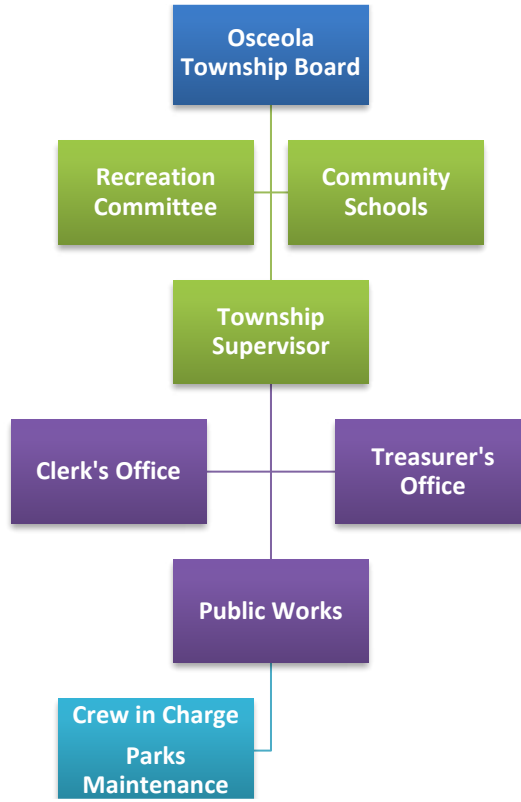
Northern hardwoods characterize the predominant forest cover (of approximately 338,155 acres) in Houghton County. These forest lands are located primarily in the central and inland areas of the County. Osceola Township, partially located inland in the County, has a total of 16,565 acres of which 37% or 6,024 acres are forested. The wildlife within the county includes raccoons, skunks, rabbits, porcupines, squirrels, chipmunks, mice, voles and a variety of bird species. Outside the developed areas, whitetail deer, black bear, fox, otter, and beaver are also present.

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

In Osceola Township, park and recreational facilities are managed by the Township Board, with the exception of the school-related properties and snowmobile trails. Current board members are Mark Halkola—Supervisor, Christa Gardner—Clerk, Dominique DiVito —Treasurer, Don Wareham—Trustee, and Aaron Janke—Trustee. Osceola Township supports and maintains recreation facilities through annual budget appropriations. Maintenance for the township is carried out by Township employees. The Annual Recreation budget provides approximately \$26,500 for operations and maintenance of existing facilities. Additional funding is appropriated as needed to match recreation development grants. Figure 4 reflects the current administrative structure for recreation related decisions and activities.

While the Township, County, DNR, and surrounding communities are the primary recreation providers in Osceola Township, they are only one aspect of the community of partners that supports recreational programming in the region. In the Township there are numerous entities that protect public access, provide recreation and education programs, volunteers, funding, and are social outlets for various interests. These partners include: Community garden volunteers; Lake Linden-Hubbell School Baseball Team, led by coach Leon Sutherland; Portage Lake Little League; Keweenaw Little League; Andy Moyle; Aaron Janke for the Ballfield; Onigaming Yacht Club; Tamarack City Volunteer Fire Department, and Community members for the Tamarack City Park. Tamarack City Volunteer Fire Department and Dollar Bay Volunteer Fire Department for annual set up and take down of Veteran’s Banners hung in the respective communities.

Figure 3: Osceola Township Administrative Structure



RECREATION INVENTORY

Osceola Township maintains access to a number of recreation facilities for both local residents and tourists. The following recreation inventory describes the types and location (See Figure 4) of recreation facilities currently available in the Township and nearby. In addition, accessibility assessments and rankings are provided for each site based on the parameters outlined in the “DNR Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans” as follows:

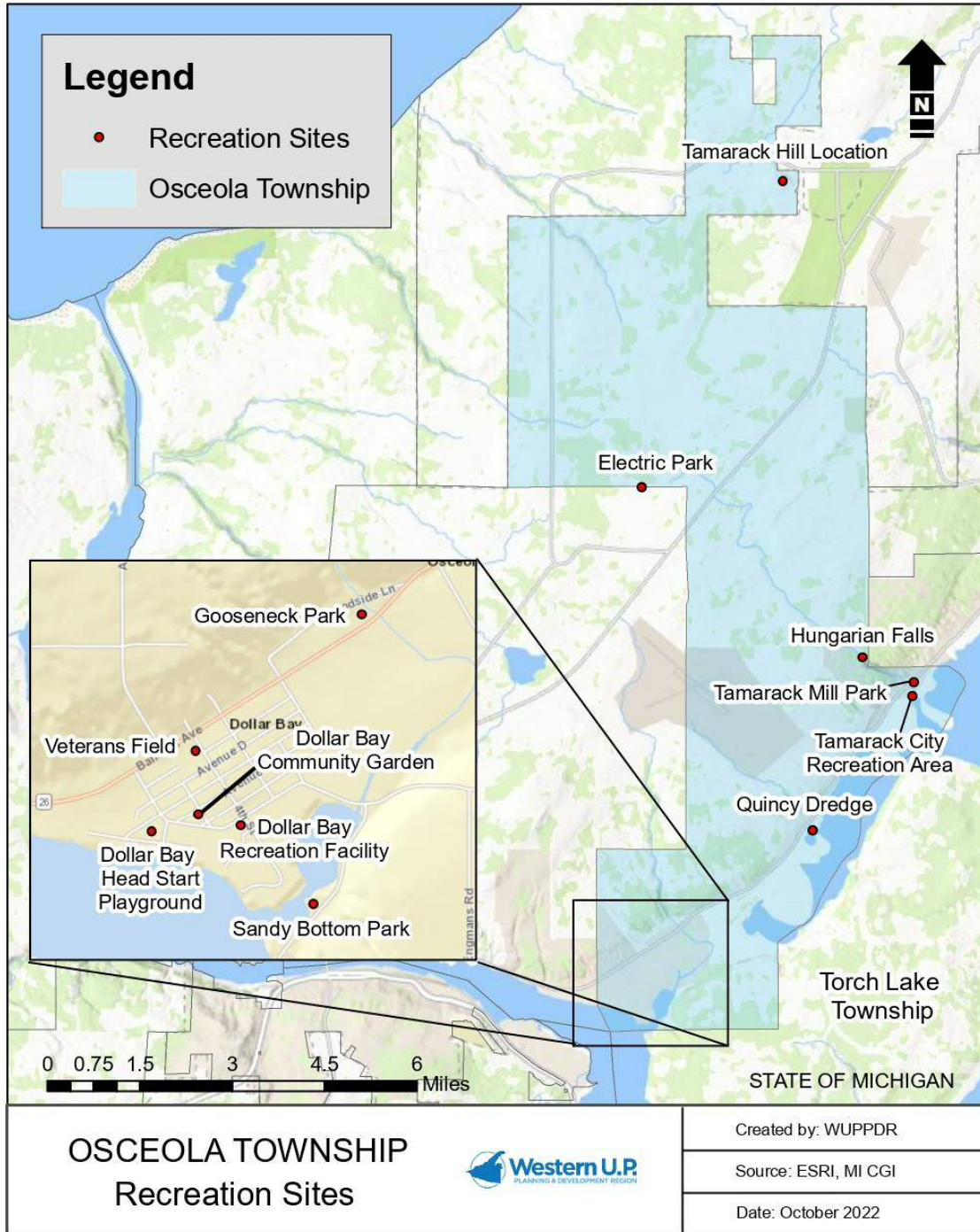
- 1=none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- 2=some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- 3=most of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- 4=the entire park meets accessibility guidelines
- 5-the entire park was developed/renovated using the principals of universal design

Based on this inventory the need for improvements and additional recreational facilities can be fully evaluated. Accessibility assessments were completed by the Recreation Committee. Any accessibility deficiencies found in the assessment will be addressed in future site project upgrades as funding becomes available. The map in Figure 3 identifies the locations of Osceola Township’s recreation sites.

Seven Principles of Universal Design

1. **Equitable Use:** The design is useful and marketable to any group of users.
2. **Flexibility in Use:** The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.
3. **Simple and Intuitive Use:** Use of the design is easy to understand.
4. **Perceptible Information:** The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user.
5. **Tolerance for Error:** The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintentional actions.
6. **Low Physical Effort:** The design can be used efficiently and comfortably.
7. **Size and Space for Approach and Use:** Appropriate size and space is provided for approach and use

Figure 3: Osceola Township Recreation Sites Map



Recreational Sites Within Osceola Township

Dollar Bay Head Start Playground

Owned by Dollar Bay-Tamarack City Area Schools, the playground is used by children in the Head Start Program, and is adjacent to Dollar Bay Elementary on North Maple Street. The area is shaded with trees and has a fenced in play area for safety. The playground is also used by school and neighborhood children.



Accessibility assessment=2/5

Dollar Bay Recreation Facility

The Dollar Bay Recreation Facility is owned by Osceola Township and located on Main Street in Dollar Bay. The park consists of an ice rink, warming hut, basketball court and horseshoe pit. The site is heavily used in all seasons for general recreation by residents of Dollar Bay and surround communities. Fencing surrounding the hockey rink needs repairs as well as the rink side boards. The hockey rink is smaller than the DNR recommended 85' x 200' size. A proposal has been made to build a roof over the rink and construct a covered structure with a kitchen area to allow for community events year-round.



Accessibility assessment=3/5

Hungarian Falls

A prized recreational spot located just inside of the Township’s boundaries, Hungarian Falls is one the most visited destinations for both tourists and residents of the area. A series of impressive waterfalls cascade down the steep gorge before draining into Torch Lake near the small town of Tamarack City. In 2013, the Keweenaw Land Trust (KLT) assumed responsibility for the 10 acres containing the uppermost falls, historic dam, and pond. The surrounding area is owned by the state of Michigan. The Hungarian Falls Nature Area is open year-round to the public.



Hungarian Falls, Image by David C. Riewe

Accessibility assessment = 1/5

Gooseneck Park

Owned by the Township, this approximate 4-acre site is located on M-26 just outside of Dollar Bay. The property transferred ownership to the township from Michigan Department of Transportation for recreation use only. At one time Gooseneck Park was a roadside park complete with picnic and fishing areas. Currently, the site consists of a dirt road and grass areas which are maintained by the Township. Potential projects include park signage, site access through Township-owned property, a privacy screen/barrier separating the park from the adjacent private property, and a parking area.



Accessibility assessment = 1/5

Quincy Dredge

The Quincy Dredge is a 6.4 acre historic site owned by Osceola Township located in a historic district on the waterfront of Torch Lake. The site contains a partially submerged dredge (owned by the Houghton County Historic Society) and smokestacks, which provided power to the former mill. Collaboration between the Township and regional partners for maintenance of the site is ongoing. A common photo stop for tourists along M-26 and also viewed from the recreation trail that runs along the site. General access to the site is limited.



Accessibility assessment=1/5

Sandy Bottom Park

Sandy Bottom Park is a Township owned 2.7-acre waterfront recreation site located on Lower Point Mills Road providing access to Portage Canal and Portage Lake. It is a day-use park consisting of a swimming beach, picnic area, pavilion, and boat launch. The nearby private Onigaming Boat Club has expressed interest in partnering with the township to dredge the inlet to Dollar Bay allowing access to larger recreation boats. Given its proximity to the Dollar Bay Recreation Area, a pedestrian or biking trail to Sandy Bottom would allow for non-motorized site access. Township residents and visitors are the primary site users.

Accessibility assessment=2/5



Tamarack Mill Park

Tamarack Mill Park is a 6.12-acre site owned by Osceola Township and is a former stamp mill site that has been partially remediated. A Department of Environmental Quality Grant in 2004 provided soil with seed on the southern portion of the park, and a sidewalk was constructed to provide barrier-free access to much of the site. New developments since include covering sections of the industrial site with soil/sand and vegetation as well as enclosing a well on site. The park also includes a basketball court, playground, pavilion, and electricity. It is used by residents and visitors of Tamarack City and the Township.

Accessibility assessment=2/5



Veteran's Field

Veteran's Field is a 4.57-acre site owned by Veterans of Foreign Wars and includes a baseball field with dugouts, barbeque pits, a memorial bridge and a monolith that honors the veterans. The baseball field is used by youth and adult community baseball leagues during the summer. Potential improvements include restoration work on the memorial signage; new or repaired bleachers; on-site parking; and field surface improvements.

Accessibility assessment=3/5



Dollar Bay Community Garden

A 0.3-acre Community Garden owned by the Township in Dollar Bay on the corner of 5th Street and Fir Avenue. The site provides residents access to fresh, seasonal vegetables. The garden serves local Dollar Bay residents and is also used for educational activities by the Dollar Bay – Tamarack City School students (elementary through high school).



Accessibility assessment = 1/5

Electric Park

The Electric Park property is owned by Osceola Township. It is a 40-acre historical site, previously a stop on the 1930s Houghton County Streetcar Company’s route, and the proposed projects will restore the site to its former use as a public recreation area. Potential projects include interpretive signage and trail connections.



Accessibility assessment = 1/5

Tamarack Hill Location

The Tamarack Hills property is 0.5-acre lot currently owned by Osceola Township. There are not presently similar recreational opportunities in the near vicinity, which is located in a well-populated residential area. The site has access to electricity and could include elements such as a basketball court, picnic area or a dog park.

Accessibility assessment = 1/5



Tamarack City Recreation Area

A 2-acre area owned partially by the Township, near the Tamarack Mill Park. The two lots owned by the Township include an unusable basketball court. The remaining site consists of a vacant field owned by C & J Land Development.

Accessibility assessment = No structures/elements on site.



Status Report for Grant-Assisted Parks and Recreation Facilities

Support from Michigan’s Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has been instrumental in providing and developing recreational opportunities for Township residents. Below is a list of grants received from DNR received by the Township. All these grant funded facilities are still present and open to the public.

<p>Dollar Bay Recreation Facility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project No. 26-00648 (1975) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Source: Land & Water Conservation Fund ○ Amount: \$17,938.84 ○ Project Description: 3 tennis courts/ice rink, basketball court lighting, and funding acknowledgment signage.
<p>Veterans’ Field</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project No. TF86-068A (1986) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Source: Michigan DNR Trust Fund ○ Amount: \$25,500.00 ○ Project Description: Acquisition of 13 ½ lots for expansion of baseball fields • Project No. TF86-068D (1986) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Source: Michigan DNR Trust Fund ○ Amount: \$43,500.00 ○ Project Description: Development of new ballfield with support facilities including vault toilets, dugouts, bleachers, backstop with fencing, utilities and parking.
<p>Sandy Bottom Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project No. TF02-172 (2002) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Source: Michigan DNR Trust Fund ○ Amount: \$46,000.00 ○ Project Description: Provided improvements such as pathways, play area, boat dock, picnic area, retaining wall, parking lot paving, ramps to beach, and toilet facility.
<p>Electric Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project No. TF03-158 (2003) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Source: Michigan DNR Trust Fund ○ Amount: \$27,000.00 ○ Project Description: Acquisition of the 40-acre Electric Park parcel for historic preservation, open space conservation, and future recreation use.

Recreational Sites Within Houghton County

Osceola Township is one of many recreational providers within Houghton County. There are several additional recreational facilities within proximity to Osceola Township that provide opportunities to residents and visitors including. A non-comprehensive list of nearby recreation amenities include:

- 1. Houghton County Arena**—Located in the City of Hancock, the arena is a multi-purpose facility serving many County residents through various programs and services year-round. It serves as the primary practice and game facility for over 600 Junior Hockey players including senior and high school teams. Figure skating and public skating for youth and senior citizens are also scheduled at the facility. Ice is maintained at the Arena for six months of the year. The grounds also serve as a rest station for the adjacent Maasto Hiito ski trails. It is used extensively for 4-H, the County Fair, and other recreational and community programs and organizations.
- 2. Houghton County Marina**—The marina is located just outside the City of Hancock to the east of the Portage Lake Lift Bridge and three miles west of Dollar Bay. The marina is full-service offering 54 slips, gas/diesel fuel, transient slips, pump-out station, picnic facilities for boaters, ice cooler, and nautical charts.



**Houghton County Marina Image by
Marinas.com**

3. **Mont Ripley**—Mont Ripley is a ski hill owned and operated by Michigan Technological University. It is open during the winter season and offers a complete rental shop and skiing and snowboarding lessons. A snow machine supplements the 20 feet of natural snow Mont Ripley receives each year. Mont Ripley hosts a racing league for adults as well as ski and snowboard cross racing and is home to various school-based ski teams. A National Nordic Ski Patrol provides first-aid and other services.



Mont Ripley Map, Image by Michigan Technological University

4. **Pilgrim Community Forest**—Located in Portage Township, the Pilgrim Community Forest is a 276-acre property acquired in 2014 for public recreation, natural and scenic qualities, and sustainable forestry. The property was a result of a partnership between the Keweenaw Land Trust, Copper Country Chapter of Trout Unlimited, and local landowners. The Pilgrim Community



Pilgrim Community Forest, Image by Keweenaw Land Trust

Forest has a 2.5-mile recreation trail open for hiking, snowshoeing, mountain biking, and backcountry skiing. The river is a notable cold-water trout stream popular with local fishermen, while the forest is enrolled in the Michigan Commercial Forest Program and available for hunting. A trailhead for hikers and bikers can be found near the intersection of Pilgrim and Paradise Roads in Houghton County. This project started with partnerships from Copper Country Audubon, Copper Country Trout Unlimited, Keweenaw Land Trust, Keweenaw Trail Alliance, Partners in the Forestry Coop and Northwoods Alliance.

5. **Quincy Mine**—One of the largest tourist draws and historical assets in the Keweenaw, Quincy Mine is located in Franklin Township just north of the City of Hancock. Once known as “Old Reliable” due to its consistent economic profitability, copper mining operations at the Quincy Mine have been closed since 1945. The Quincy Mine properties are owned and operated by the Quincy Mine Hoist Association, and the site is preserved as a cooperating site of the Keweenaw National Historical Park. Visitors are able to participate in guided tours of the grounds, the Nordberg steam-powered hoist engine and hoist house, a ride on a cog-rail tram car down to the mine entrance, and an underground mine tour. The site also contains a museum and a video-tour of the No. 2 Shaft-Rock House.

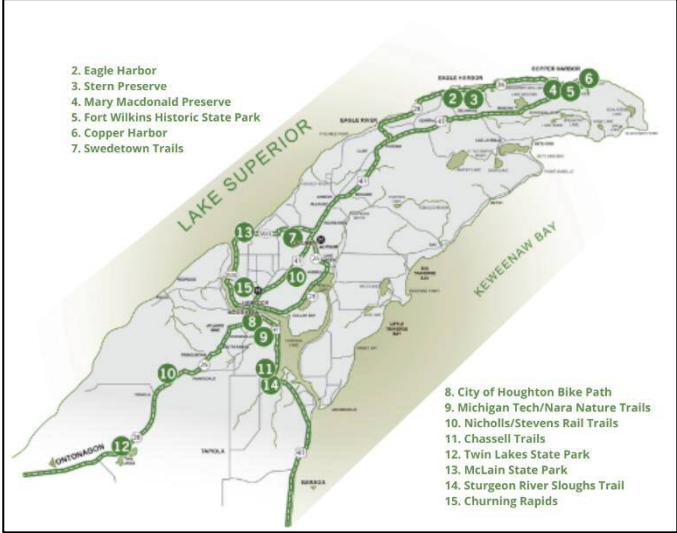
6. **Quincy Mine Smelter**—The historic Quincy Smelter is located in Ripley, MI on M-26 near the Portage Canal. The smelter is the only intact copper smelter from the American Industrial Revolution around the turn of the 20th Century. The Quincy Smelter Association preserves the site and hosts tours monthly. Much of the original machinery remains that used to turn ore into copper ingots.

7. **Beaches**—Several sandy beaches are accessible to the public and provide opportunities for swimming and sunbathing. Nearby Houghton County beaches include Lake Linden Recreation Area, Hancock Beach and Campground, Houghton Waterfront Park, and Calumet Waterworks Park.



**Houghton Waterfront Park, Image by
City of Houghton**

8. Trails—The region hosts a network of snowmobile/multipurpose trails including the Jack Steven’s Rail-Trail from Hancock to Calumet, the snowmobile trail from Hancock to Lake Linden, the Chassell-Houghton Rail-Trail, MTU Ski Trails, the Swedetown Trails in Calumet and the Maasto Hiihto/Churning Rapids trails. Opportunities for these trails provide motorized and non-motorized activities such as biking, cross-country skiing, hiking, snowshoeing, skijoring, ATV and snowmobiling.



Map of Major Trails in the Region, Image by Keweenaw Convention and Visitor’s Bureau

Houghton County also serves as one of the primary gateways to Isle Royale National Park. The Western Upper Peninsula also has countless sites offering more passive recreational opportunities and would include the Keweenaw National Historical Park, Copper Country Trail National Byway, museums, mine tours, scenic drives, etc.

Outside of Houghton County are numerous facilities that allow for any number of recreational pursuits, most notably the Porcupine Mountains State Park, Ottawa National Forest, and Fort Wilkins State Park.



Copper Country Trail National Byway, Image by Keweenaw Convention & Visitor's Bureau

RECREATION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of Osceola Township is to define an affordable and achievable recreation improvement program for the Township that will provide for the needs of residents and visitors and increase use and user satisfaction at Township facilities. Osceola Township is active in pursuing recreation improvements at all its recreational sites to provide for a wide range of needs related to its diverse range of residents and long winter months. Needs in the Township include updating facilities, expanding, and extending the use of existing facilities, increasing public access to water, and acquisition of additional recreation sites. The Township also encourages regional non-motorized trail improvements by participating with other local units of government in the Houghton County Recreation Authority.

ACTION PROGRAM

To expand and extend the use of facilities as well as add to the current inventory, several projects have been proposed. These projects were identified in previous plans and through community input. Recreation projects were identified based on results from a community survey (see Appendix A), previous plans, and according to the current and projected needs of Osceola Township determined by the Recreation Committee. The projects are addressed in the following five-year capital improvement schedule. The capital improvement schedule will be reviewed annually by the Recreation Committee and Township Board and acted upon based on available funding and changing priorities or needs. It is the intent of Osceola Township to review and amend this plan and implementation schedule as needed to support local efforts in recreational programming.

Table 5: Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan

Year	Project	Cost	Funding Source
2023			
	Dollar Bay Rec Area — Resurface recreation area for seasonal ice rink and basketball court	\$143,000	Township/Other
	Tamarack Hill Location—Install picnic tables	\$500- \$1,000	Township/ Volunteers
	Veterans’ Field — Upgrades and enhancements to baseball fields including adding new seating and bleachers, and dugout upgrades	\$25,000	Township/ Volunteers
2024			
	Dollar Bay Rec Area – Repair fencing and sidewalls around ice rink, and installation of pavilion cover	\$75,000	MDNR/Township/Other
	Tamarack City Mill Park— Fence in pillars and add historical signage	\$30,000	MDNR/Township/Other
	Gooseneck Park—Install fencing for dog park and initiate other park improvements (picnic tables, benches)	\$25,000	MDNR/Township/Other

2025			
	Tamarack Hill Location—Install children’s play area	\$30,000	MDNR/Township/Other
	Veterans Field—Infrastructure improvements such as new bleachers and surface improvements	\$5,000- \$10,000	MDNR/Other
2026			
	Tamarack City Mill Park—Install safety fencing along industrial site pillars and add parking barriers to basketball courts	\$9,000	Township/Other
	Sandy Bottom Park – Buoy replacement, improved bathroom facilities, resurfacing parking areas and boat launch, and enhancements to picnic area, 8 ft channel for boats, a professional assessment and proposed treatment plan for the Eurasian Watermilfoil	Varies based on project	Township/MDNR/ Onigaming Yacht Club /Other
2027			
	Electric Park – Install historical signage	\$2,000	Township/Other
	Tamarack City Recreation Area – Construct nature trail with interpretive signage	\$15,000	MDNR/Township/Other

Rationale for improvements at each site includes:

Electric Park

Project rationale: The Electric Park property is owned by Osceola Township. It is a 40-acre historical site, previously a stop on the 1930s Houghton County Street Car Company’s route, and the proposed project would honor those stories through the installation of historical signage. There is also potential collaboration for content with neighboring communities and the Keweenaw National Historical Park.

Tamarack Hill Location

Project rationale: The Tamarack Hills property is an undeveloped site currently owned by Osceola Township. The Township does not have any recreation facilities in the near vicinity, which is in a well-populated residential area, although there are some owned by neighboring

municipalities. Proposed projects include installing playground equipment of school-aged children and picnic facilities (e.g. tables, seating, grills, etc.) for residents. Enhancing this space will provide recreational opportunities within walking distance for community members.

Tamarack City Mill Park

Project rationale: The park features several large, unstable and degrading concrete pillars and machinery which are both historic as well as public safety hazards. To mitigate safety hazards to park visitors and historical enthusiasts, fencing needs to be installed between the industrial structures and the park's playground. The community survey also indicated a high priority interest in adding historical education signage.

Tamarack City Recreation Area

Project Rationale: This area is located at the south east end of 3rd Street in Tamarack. Hidden behind some trees is a basketball court than can be accessed via a small dirt trail. Adjacent to the basketball court is a large field owned by C & J Land Development, who also owns some of the surrounding properties. The township aims to develop a nature trail area with interpretive signage.

Sandy Bottom Park

Project Rationale: According to the community survey, a playground for children and a water line are the highest rated priorities for the site. Respondents also indicated support for developing a non-motorized trails connecting Sandy Bottom to the nearby Dollar Bay Recreation Facility so that residents can safely walk or bike to the beach without walking on the roadside. Over the next five years and beyond, community members also requested a campground located across the street from the beach, upgrade to bathroom facilities, resurfacing of parking area, dredging of boat channel, buoy replacement, and development of a two-way boat launch. During the Plan's public hearing, residents voiced a need for county-wide management of the aquatic invasive plant, Eurasian Watermilfoil as it continues to expand throughout local waterways destroying fish habitat and negatively impacting regional water recreation.

Dollar Bay Recreation Facility

Project Rationale: The facility is already a heavily used recreation area and resurfacing the tennis and basketball courts for multipurpose use will expand its accessibility. The site also needs repair/replace fencing and sideboards around the ice rink, an identified high priority from the community survey.

Veterans Field

Project Rationale: Veterans Field is a heavily used facility that requires additional surface upgrades and improvements to the bleachers. The topic of improving to the ball field has come up regularly during Township board meetings.

Gooseneck Park

Project Rationale: Gooseneck Park is an undeveloped greenspace on the north side of M-26 in Dollar Bay. The property is owned by the Township, but many residents are unaware that it exists. The space could be used by residents for picnicking and public gatherings with the installation of benches, tables and grills. Community survey respondents indicated an interest for installing fencing for a dog park.

SOURCES OF FUNDING

A number of possible sources of funding for recreation projects within Osceola Township are available and include the following:

Table 6: Possible Funding Sources

Description	Match	Source
Township Funds	—	Township
Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI)	—	GLRI
Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF)	75/25 grant	MDNR
Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)	50/50 grant	MDNR
Boating Infrastructure Grants (BIG)	75/25 grant	MDNR
Off Road Vehicle (ORV)/Snowmobile Grants	—	MDNR
Coastal Zone Management (CZM)	50/50 grant	MDNR
National Scenic Byway Grant Program (NSBG)	80/20 grant	NSBG
Community Foundation/Fundraising/Other (local service organizations and businesses)	Varies	Other

DESCRIPTION OF PLANNING PROCESS

The Osceola Township board recognizes the need for a recreation plan in order to effectively maintain current recreational resources and identify opportunities for new recreation investments to enhance recreation opportunities for Township residents and visitors. The Township Supervisor appointed a recreation plan committee to represent interests of the Township as a whole and facilitate the recreation plan update process. The Board contracted with Western Upper Peninsula Planning and Development Region (WUPPDR) to work with this committee in updating this plan.

On August 18th, 2022, the recreation committee held a kick-off meeting and met with WUPPDR representatives to overview the plan update process. The committee reviewed the previous recreation asset inventory and discussed opportunities for public engagement and input. The committee determined that a community survey was the most effective means of gathering preliminary public input from its wide array of stakeholders. The committee also reviewed the previous plan's stated goal and determined that the language was suitable. A number of necessary revisions were identified including updates to Township recreation asset descriptions, addition of new Township recreation assets, updating non-Township recreation assets and their descriptions, updating the Township community description, and brainstorm potential projects for the new Recreation Plan cycle.

Members of the recreation committee visited each Township recreation asset site to identify needed facility improvements/projects and conduct facility accessibility assessments. Pictures were taken of each site to document the current status of recreation sites and its equipment and facilities.

A survey of Township residents was conducted to gather public input to inform the plan's recreation goals, action plan and project justifications. A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix A. Beginning on September 2, 2022, the survey was distributed to residents by paper copy and hosted online using Survey Monkey. Links to the survey were provided on WUPPDR's website and Facebook page as well as the Township's website. Paper surveys were available at "high traffic" locations such as the Township Office, Dollar Bay Post Office, Hubbell Post Office, Richie's Market in Dollar Bay, Campioni True Value in Calumet, Holiday Gas Station in Calumet, and Copper Mine Restaurant in Tamarack City. A notice of the survey (Appendix B) was submitted to local radio, television, newspaper, and online news outlets on September 2, 2022. The survey generated responses from 97 participants (survey results are located in Appendix C). Based on survey results and needs identified by the committee during a meeting on November 17, 2022, a list of prioritized recreation projects was created.

A public draft of the recreation plan was made available online on the Township’s website, its Recreation Committee’s Facebook Page, and WUPPDR’s website. Printed copies were made available at the Township Office in Dollar Bay. A notice (Appendix D) was published in the Daily Mining Gazette on January 13th, 2023, announcing the 30-day public review period and announcing the date and location of a public comment session. Residents were instructed to submit written comments to WUPPDR via mail or email by February 12, 2023.

The Township Board called a public meeting for citizens after the 30-day public review period to comment on the proposed recreation plan update. The public hearing was held at 5:30 pm on February 22nd, 2023. The meeting agenda and minutes are provided in Appendix E. The public comments discussed include:

- Install a new potable water line and fire hydrant at the Sandy Bottom picnic area and remove the submerged, abandoned water line and burial overburden from the entrance channel to the boat launch and bay
- Remove bottom debris and old crib from the entrance channel and boat launch approach to improve navigability safety in and out of the bay
- Assess the extent of Eurasian milfoil growth (an invasive seaweed) in the bay and develop a mitigation plan to treat it
- Install a floating, handicap accessible, fishing pier extending from the beach back along the channel to the boat launch area
- Expand the boat launch ramp to be able to accommodate two boat trailers simultaneously with a 6-8 ft x 60 ft floating dock placed in the middle of the expanded ramps
- Create a pedestrian/biking path to Sandy Bottom from Dollar Bay along the existing Lower Point Mills Road shoulder right of way
- Install fencing around the perimeter of the township’s old sand pit to better restrict access to stop dumping, and reduce liability from off-road vehicle joy riding and firearms use in the residential/park area

The plan was subsequently adopted by resolution (Appendix F) by the Osceola Township Board at a special Board meeting held on March 8th, 2023 at 5:30 pm.

All notices of hearings were publicized to invite citizen comment and review of the new recreation plan.

APPENDIX

- Appendix A: Recreation Survey
- Appendix B: Recreation Survey Press Release
- Appendix C: Recreation Survey Results
- Appendix D: 30 Day Public Review Announcement & Public Hearing Notice
- Appendix E: Public Comment Session Agenda & Minutes
- Appendix F: Plan Adoption Resolution