



city of frankfort

# Recreation Master Plan Update 2022-2026

Approved by the City of Frankfort City Council September 21, 2021

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# Acknowledgements

## City Council

Liz Dobrzynski, Mayor  
Daniel Walenta, Mayor Pro-tem  
JoAnn Holwerda  
Paul Luedtke  
Mary Ann Short

## City Officials

Joshua Mills, City Superintendent  
Christine Spence, City Clerk/Treasurer  
Robert Lozowski, Police Chief

## Planning Commission

Sam Baressi, Chair  
Scott Harrison  
Mary Link  
Melina Penne  
Leslie Roach  
Jay White

## Recreation Board

Brady Olsen, Chair  
Myra Elias  
Jared Lowry  
Alma House  
Mary Ann Short



Originally produced by:

B R i

Beckett & Raeder

Updated with assistance from:



Networks  
Northwest

Talent / Business / Community

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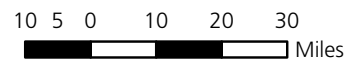
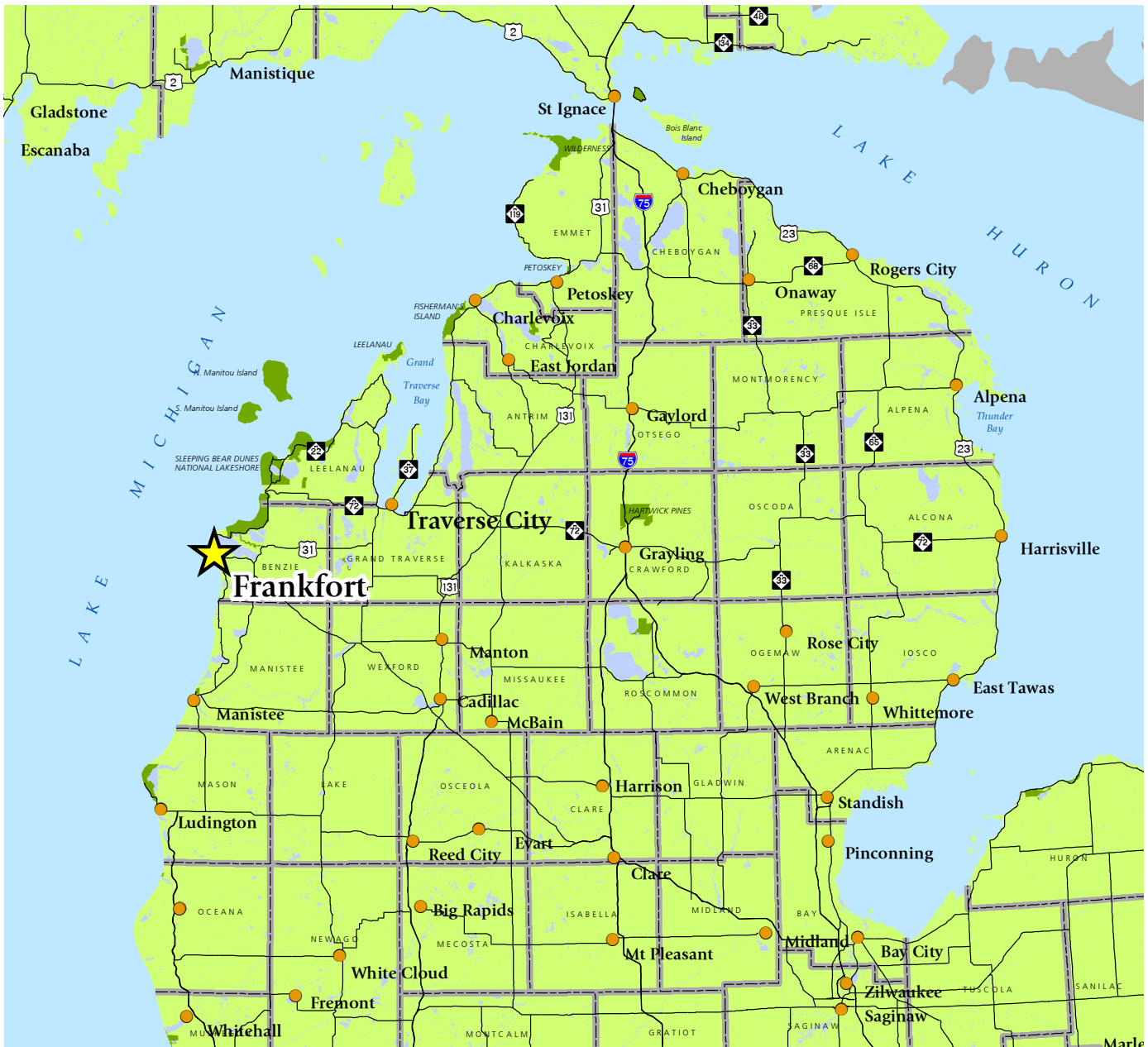
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# CITY OF FRANKFORT Regional Location

- County Boundary
- Major Highway
- State or National Park



# Foundations

## Planning Process

In the summer of 2020, after delays from the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Frankfort began updating their existing Parks and Recreation Plan. Utilizing the existing framework created by Beckett and Raeder, Networks Northwest was contracted to work with City Officials, the Recreation Board, Planning Commission and City Council to complete the update.

Upon discussion with City Officials and the Recreation Board, it was determined that continuing work towards the identified goal, objectives, and action items would be the focus of this update. Public input was collected through an Action Item Survey to help reaffirm and enhance the action items. The survey was available for response from September 8, 2020 to October 9, 2020.

Using the results of the survey, input from City Officials, the Recreation Board, and the Parks and Recreation Plan foundation created from previous years, an updated draft was created. The initial draft was reviewed by the Recreation Board on September 29, 2020 for comment. Once the survey period ended, comments from both the Recreation Board meeting and Survey were incorporated into a second draft for the Recreation Board in October 2020.

Once the draft had been reviewed it was sent to the Planning Commission for review as well as released for public comment from October 30, 2020 to December 4, 2020. Around this time, some additional COVID-19 restrictions were imposed. City Officials determined they would not have the capacity to apply for any grants in 2021 and it was decided to postpone the approval process.

In April 2021, the Recreation Board was able to meet where it was decided to host a second Public Comment period from June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021 until July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021 to capture additional public comment. Following the second public comment period at their August 2, 2021 meeting, the Recreation Board approved and recommended approval of the Frankfort Parks and Recreation plan to City Council.

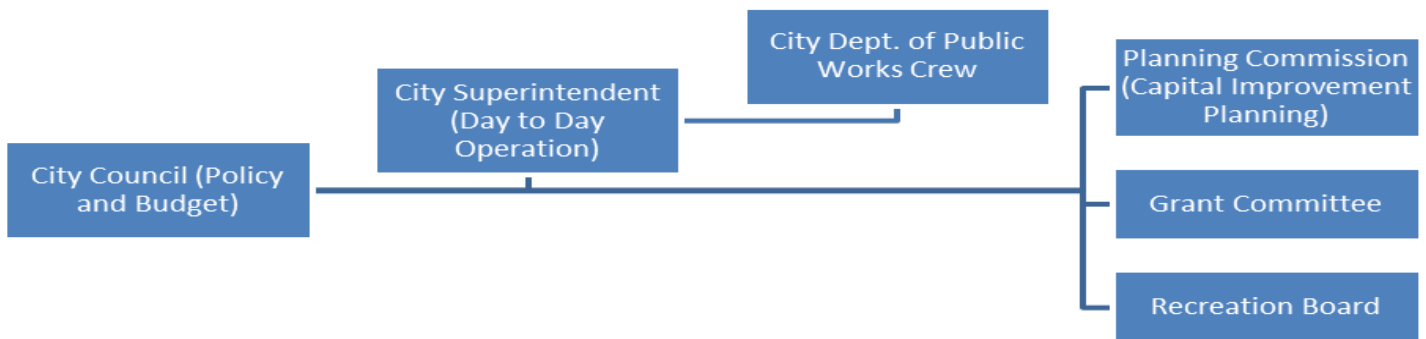
This was followed by the August 10, 2021 Frankfort Planning Commission meeting where they gave approval and recommendation to City Council to approve the plan. Finally on August 19, 2021, the City Council held a public hearing during their regular meeting. With no significant changes resulting from the public hearing, the Frankfort City Council approved the 2022-2026 Frankfort Parks and Recreation Plan.

## Community Description

Frankfort began as a lumbering town, capitalizing on the direct connection via boat to Chicago and Wisconsin. Car ferries were used to haul freight and lumber across Lake Michigan.

When the initial lumber trees were depleted, commerce was driven by the fishing industry. Whitefish were shipped to restaurants as far away as Detroit and Chicago. Farming began to stimulate the economy, with families growing peaches, pears, cherries, and apples.

Non-motorized flight, known in the area as “soaring,” brought national attention to the City of Frankfort in the early 1930s. The high bluffs and steady Lake Michigan



winds made Frankfort an ideal place to ride the engine-less planes.

Today, visitors are attracted to the City because of its pristine beaches, fishing industry, and numerous public parks. The City owns or controls fourteen (14) parks and recreation facilities, including a park located outside of the City limits on nearby Crystal Lake. There are numerous regional recreational assets, including the Arcadia Dunes, Betsie Valley Trail, Green Point Landing, Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, Point Betsie Lighthouse, Elberta Beach, and Empire Bluffs Trail.

This recreation master plan is prepared for the City of Frankfort and encompasses all the parks and recreation areas owned by the City.

### Administrative Structure

Parks and recreation programs in the City of Frankfort are carried out by the City's Department of Public Works. The DPW is staffed with four full-time and three part-time employees. Administration of the City employees overseeing the parks are performed by City Council, the City Superintendent, and the DPW crew leader (foreman). Normal day-to-day maintenance of the parks, such as mowing and trash removal, is performed by the Department of Public Works.

Planning for the City's parks is performed by the Recreation Board and the City Planning Commission. The Recreation Board is an advisory group that provides support to the Planning Commission and City Council on all park and recreation projects. The mission of the board is "to advise the Frankfort City Council about the recreational needs of the City and to plan, promote and coordinate the development of City recreational sites, equipment and programs for use and enjoyment by all City residents and visitors" (Frankfort Recreation Board Gift Catalog 2010). The board was established under the Michi-

gan 1917 PA 156, which states that "any city, village, county or township may operate a system of public recreation and playgrounds; acquire, equip and maintain land, buildings or other recreational facilities; employ a superintendent of recreation and assistants; vote and expend funds for the operation of such system" ([www.legislature.mi.gov](http://www.legislature.mi.gov)).

The Parks and Recreation Board is made up of a committee of volunteers who are appointed from within the community. Volunteers are also sought through word of mouth, advertisements in the local newspaper, and on the City of Frankfort website. Volunteers may be asked to assist with various events, including park improvement projects.

	Current Fiscal Year July 2020 to June 2021	Projected July 2021 to June 2022 (based on a 3% Increase)
<b>Expenditures</b>		
City Launch Ramp	\$35,343	\$36,400
Marina Fund	\$293,445	\$302,250
Rec Board	\$5,500	\$5,665
Parks & Recreation	\$134,134	\$138,160
<b>Funding</b>		
Property Taxes	\$136,977	\$141,086
Marina Fund	\$370,157	\$381,261
Parks/Rec and Launch Revenues	\$38,000	\$39,140



Funding for the Park and Recreation budget is provided through taxation, State and Federal grant programs, budget control, and community donations. Nine percent of the general fund budget is allotted for arts, culture and recreation. Sources of funding which may be available to the City of Frankfort include, but are not limited to, the following: the Michigan DNR Recreation Division, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the MEDC, the Great Lakes Fishery Trust, millage, bonding, various grants and foundations, and user fees. As a note, the Marina Fund is an enterprise fund that does not use property tax dollars.

The City of Frankfort also partners with the Lakeside Shakespeare Theatre for two weeks during the summer. The City allows Lakeside Shakespeare Theatre to use one of the parks as the stage for outdoor performances of Shakespeare.

The City of Frankfort has partnered with the Frankfort-Elberta Athletic Association, the Frankfort-Elberta Youth Sports Boosters, and the Frankfort-Elberta Area Schools in order to operate and maintain Lockhart Field. Lockhart Field is owned by the City of Frankfort, operated by the Frankfort-Elberta Athletic Association, and used by the public as well as the Frankfort-Elberta Area Schools. The Frankfort-Elberta Youth Sports Boosters are responsible for youth sports activities such as Pop Warner football, baseball, and tee-ball.

**Previous Grant Assistance**

The City of Frankfort has received a total of six grants from the MDNR from 1972 to 2020.

**10th Street Boat Launching Site**

Project No. 26-00126 Project Year: 1972  
 Grant Amount: \$31,000.00  
 Project Description: Develop boat launch, and area.

**Frankfort Park and Marina**

Project No. 26-00741 Project Year: 1976  
 Grant Amount: \$15,195.00  
 Project Description: Acquire .75 acres of land for outdoor recreation.

**Mineral Springs Park**

Project No. 26-00893 Project Year: 1977  
 Grant Amount: \$81,040.00  
 Project Description: Acquire 5.5 acres addition to Mineral Springs, Park Marina, for outdoor recreation.



*CJ Kibby Memorial Boat Launch*



*Frankfort Municipal Marina*



*Mineral Springs Park*



*Lockhardt Field*



*Lake Michigan Beach*

Table 2: 2014-2020 Recreation Action Items

Action Item	Progress
Modernize Public Restrooms	Market Square Park Restroom in Progress CJ Kibby Interior Renovation (2018) Lake Michigan Bathroom moved to Planning Commission for further consideration of location and design
Enhance Beach Facilities	Bellows Pavilion, Roof being finished in 2020 (Crystal Lake) Rain Garden Development (Crystal Lake) Volleyball Court Addition (Lake Michigan Beach)
Market Square Improvements	Bathroom (finish in 2021) Drinking fountain (2019)
Lighthouse Maintenance	Ongoing, fundraising needed (SHPO could free up money)
Dog Park	Potential locations identified by Recreation Board in 2019
General Maintenance of Parks	Nippising Street Stairs Ongoing
Community Recreation Center	Planning for Community Rec Center is Ongoing
Other Relevant Projects	Reroofed Fish Cleaning Station, Mineral Springs Pavilion, Mineral Spring Restrooms,

### Mineral Springs Park & Marina

Project No. 26-01017 Project Year: 1978

Grant Amount: \$107,795.76

Project Description: Develop: finger piers, and service dock, driveway, walkways, and parking, picnic shelter, restroom addition, play equipment, tree planting, landscaping, and seeding and LWCF sign, picnic equipment and lighting.

### Lockhart Athletic Field

Project No. BF90-025 Project Year: 1990

Grant Amount: \$42,800.00

Project Description: Redevelop athletic baseball facility, including bleachers, electrical, regrade/seed ball field outfield and infield, and pave parking lot.

### Lake Michigan Beach Park Restoration

Project No. TF03-175 Project Year: 2003

Grant Amount: \$92,000.00

Project Description: Renovate parking lot, provide additional barrier-free parking, and install a restroom facility at the City's Lake Michigan Beach Park.

### Market Square Park

Project No. RP16-0094 Project Year: 2018

Grant Amount: \$45,000.00

Project Description: Develop universally accessible family restroom facility at Market Square Park.



Market Square Park

### Lake Michigan Beach

Project No. XXXX-xxxx Project Year: 2021

Grant Amount: \$225,000.00

Project Description: Develop new restroom facility and install Mobi-Mat for accessible beach and water access.

### Previous Planning

A recreation plan is not a stand-alone effort; instead it is one planning effort among many in the area aimed specifically at outlining the parks and recreation goals and action plan for the next five years. In this section, previous and concurrent planning efforts are examined in order to develop a recreation plan that dovetails into them.



## 2015—2019 Recreation Master Plan

The previous Parks and Recreation Master Plan for Frankfort was completed in 2014. An extensive process was completed by Beckett and Raeder which further anchored commitment to the goal *“to have a balanced system of parks and recreation opportunities for all parts of Frankfort, all age groups, and all abilities”*. This work provides the base of this plan update and the community input gathered during this update can be found in the “Consulting Community” section.

### Park Improvement Plans

Preliminary park improvement plans have been prepared for several of Frankfort’s primary parks, including Lake Michigan Beach, Cannon Park, Mineral Springs Park, Open Space Park, and the Municipal Marina. Since most of the plans were prepared over 10 years ago, some of the proposed improvements may have already been implemented. Copies of these site plans can be found in the appendix.



Cannon Park

A preliminary site plan was prepared for Lake Michigan Beach in 2001. Proposed improvements included a re-configured parking lot (which was completed in 2005), a prefabricated restroom structure at the main entrance and north of the Sac Street entrance, a patio at the Sac street entrance, an elevated walkway, bicycle parking facilities, and play equipment.

A preliminary site plan for Mineral Springs Park was completed in 2001, which included a new asphalt path through the park which would connect the sidewalk to the many proposed improvements. Proposed elements include two sand volleyball courts, two bike stations, refurbished shuffleboard courts, reading pods and a ter-

raced reading center near the library, and a proposed paved parking lot for the library.

Cannon Park’s preliminary site plan was prepared in 2002, with several versions proposed. All iterations of the plan included improved accessible pedestrian facilities such as a sidewalk along Main Street and pedestrian lighting. A small plaza around the historical cannon was proposed, along with additional picnic tables and an optional gazebo. In one version, a playground was proposed near the center of the park.

A site plan for Open Space Park was completed in 2002 and proposed a 10’ asphalt bike path along the waterfront with a spur connecting to the Main Street sidewalk. Picnic tables with trees and shrubs for shade and screening were proposed in the northwest corner of the park near Main Street. A fishing pier, canoe/kayak launch and horseshoe pits were also proposed.

A master plan for the Frankfort Municipal Marina began in September of 2008 and was completed in January of 2009. The plan report contained an examination of existing conditions, a market analysis to compare Frankfort’s marina to other marinas in the area, a master plan, and a cost estimate. The final master plan was influenced by input from the public and from City Officials. Rather than focusing only on the current marina parcels, the master plan extended eastward from the current marina through Mineral Springs Park and Open Space Park to the area north of the boat launch parking lot. The plan was broken down into a phased approach, with all phases estimated at a total of \$7.28 million dollars. Phase one included upgrading existing boat slips and building new slips, adding a new dingy dock, a t-dock, and a new fuel sales and marina master building (\$1.5 million). Phase two would push out the existing sea wall to create additional land in the park, install three new t-docks, install a new pier for large boats, a new accessible playground, a carousel, a new multi-use shelter, an addition to the marina building, and a drop-off and parking entrance for the library (\$3 million).

Phase 3 would include new pavilions with restrooms and fireplaces, an accessible multi-use path, a parking lot, and landscape improvements (\$750,000).

### Frankfort Master Plan

Frankfort completed a master plan process in 2010, which included many action items that pertain to the future of the City’s park facilities, open spaces, and overall outdoor experience. The following excerpts from the plan highlight the applicable action items that should be

considered when developing recreation goals and objectives.

#### Natural Environment Actions

- Review a steep slopes ordinance, using contour maps to identify steep slope areas.
- Continue to identify and inventory wetlands and significant tree cover.
- Create a joint task force to develop Best Management Practices (BMPs) to protect the long-term water quality of the Betsie River, Betsie Bay and Lake Michigan.
- Implement Stormwater Best Management Practices and create incentives to reduce stormwater runoff through the use of devices like pervious pavers, rain gardens, rain barrels.
- Work with Betsie Lake Utilities Authority (BLUA) to identify financial strategies and pricing that reward property owners for a reduction in stormwater runoff.
- Develop maintenance standards and policies for street trees, parks, and natural areas.

#### Parks and Recreation Actions

- Develop a recreation, facilities, and open space network which is interconnected by open land corridors, conservation easements, public roadways, and utility corridors.
- Improve the Beach-to-Beach trail between City Hall and Lake Michigan to provide improved wayfinding and enhanced safety.
- Develop an informational brochure and distribution plan which describes the recreational and open space offerings and opportunities available to residents and visitors.
- Provide opportunities for the involvement of City residents in the identification, selection, and development of recreational activities.
- Over time, develop an integrated and multi-purpose open space and park system which helps to maintain the City's valuable lakeshore character while it addresses local recreational needs and open space priorities.

- Improve and expand the recreation facilities in the waterfront parks.
- Define, improve, and regulate the Lake Michigan



*Fishing Pier at Open Space Park*

Beach area for the safety and well being of the public.

- Cooperate with the Frankfort-Elberta Area Public Schools to operate joint recreation facilities in the City of Frankfort and the Village of Elberta and formalize this cooperation by institutionalizing it.
- Renovate, repair, replace and upgrade existing parks and park facilities to expand each park's usefulness for all age groups.
- Expand and improve the hiking, biking, nature and walking trails.
- Hire a part-time parks and recreation director to supervise summer programs, sports camps, art workshops, volleyball tournament, horseshoe tournaments, and community gardens.
- Recreation areas should be conveniently located, accessible, and well designed in each neighborhood area.
- Recreation areas should be developed with the visitor in mind, with continued use of the City's park system as an economic development tool.
- Support the creation of additional facilities for indoor wellness activities, potentially including aquatics, walking, and other fitness-related programming.

## Environmental Stewardship Assessment

In 2012, the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments completed a grant-funded Environmental Stewardship Assessment for the City of Frankfort and ten other communities in Northern Michigan. This assessment benchmarked the current level of environmental stewardship in Frankfort and created strategies for economic development based on protecting the natural resources in the community. Results of the assessment are summarized on the Environmental Stewardship Dashboard in the Appendix. Frankfort scored favorably in most areas of the assessment, but received less than favorable scores in the areas of EnergyStar Portfolio Manager, Renewable Energy Use, DMR Pollutant Releases, and having no Certified Clean Marinas.

The Michigan Clean Marina Program is a voluntary stewardship program that encourages marinas to reduce waste and prevent pollution in environmentally sound and economically feasible ways. The program results in a Clean Marina Certification through a ten-step process. The overall goals of the program are to improve the water quality in the Great Lakes and Michigan's inland waterways. The program can help marinas reduce pollution, enhance the public image of boating and marinas, and save money by reducing disposal fees and insurance costs. None of the four marinas in Frankfort are currently certified.

## Beach Infrastructure Plan

In 2013, four Michigan State University students studied Frankfort's beach infrastructure as part of their Urban and Regional Planning practicum coursework. The end product of the study was a Beach Master Plan for Lake Michigan Beach, which would include improvements to the adjacent Cannon Park, based on site analysis and the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of each site. The study included recommendations for a beach visitor economic analysis, parking, signage, restroom facilities, sand control, and ideas for revenue streams.

The key recommendations are summarized here.

### *Beach Visitor Study*

- City of Frankfort should conduct an economic analysis of beach spending and the benefits of Lake Michigan beach, which would include a comparison of revenue from Lake Michigan Beach compared to the beach-related costs.

### *Parking*

- In order to provide additional parking spaces for the beach, Frankfort High school could be used for beach parking (84 additional spaces), using a trolley or horse-drawn carriage as a shuttle. Also, the Lake Michigan Beach parking lot could be changed to one-way traffic to open additional space for parking.

### *Signage*

- In order to improve pedestrian and traffic flow between Cannon Park and Lake Michigan beach, the City should implement a wayfinding signage system that provides maps, a business directory, public parking signs, and historical and informative signage for Cannon Park and Lake Michigan Beach. This has been completed.

### *Restroom Facilities*

- The study recommends a restroom facility be located in Cannon Park due to the availability of sewer lines, the favorable proximity to the beach, the large amount of available space, and the limited obstruction of beach views from Main Street. The restroom should have four stalls for women and two for men with three urinals. A patio space for outdoor seating is recommended

### *Sand Control*

- In order to decrease the wind erosion of beach sand, tall vegetation or dune grass could be planted around the perimeter of the beach is recommended to decrease wind erosion of sand. Cleanup of sand in the downtown area with a street sweeper is recommended, as well as the implementation of a wooden dune fence. Old Christmas trees can be used on the beach to form a seasonal wall.

### *Revenue Increase Strategies*

- Some strategies to increase revenue include the installation of parking kiosks in the designated beach parking lot and within ¼ mile of Lake Michigan Beach, limiting kiosk parking time to 3 hours during weekend peak hours to facilitate parking turnover and maximize revenue, and performing a cost-benefit analysis to determine the appropriateness of a beach concessions stand.



# Frankfort City Parks



4th Street Pocket Park



C.J. Kibby Memorial Boat Launch



Frankfort Municipal Marina



Father Charlevoix "Cannon" Park



Karl Luedtke Rotary Park



Lake Michigan Beach



Lockhart Field



Market Square Park



Mineral Springs Park



Open Space Park



Park Avenue (Tank Hill)



Seventh Street Beach



Father Marquette Memorial Marker



Elizabeth Lane Oliver Center for the Arts

CITY OF FRANKFORT  
RECREATION MASTER PLAN

# Existing Recreation Facilities



0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles

Legend

**City of Frankfort**

- 1 4th Street Pocket Park
- 2 C.J. Kibby Memorial Boat Launch
- 3 Frankfort Municipal Marina
- 4 Father Charlevoix "Cannon" Park
- 5 Karl Luedtke Rotary Park
- 6 Lake Michigan Beach
- 7 Lockhart Field
- 8 Market Square Park
- 9 Mineral Springs Park
- 10 Open Space Park
- 11 Park Avenue (Tank Hill)
- 12 Seventh Street Beach
- 13 Elizabeth Lane Oliver Center for the Arts
- 14 Father Marquette Memorial Marker

**Frankfort Public Schools**

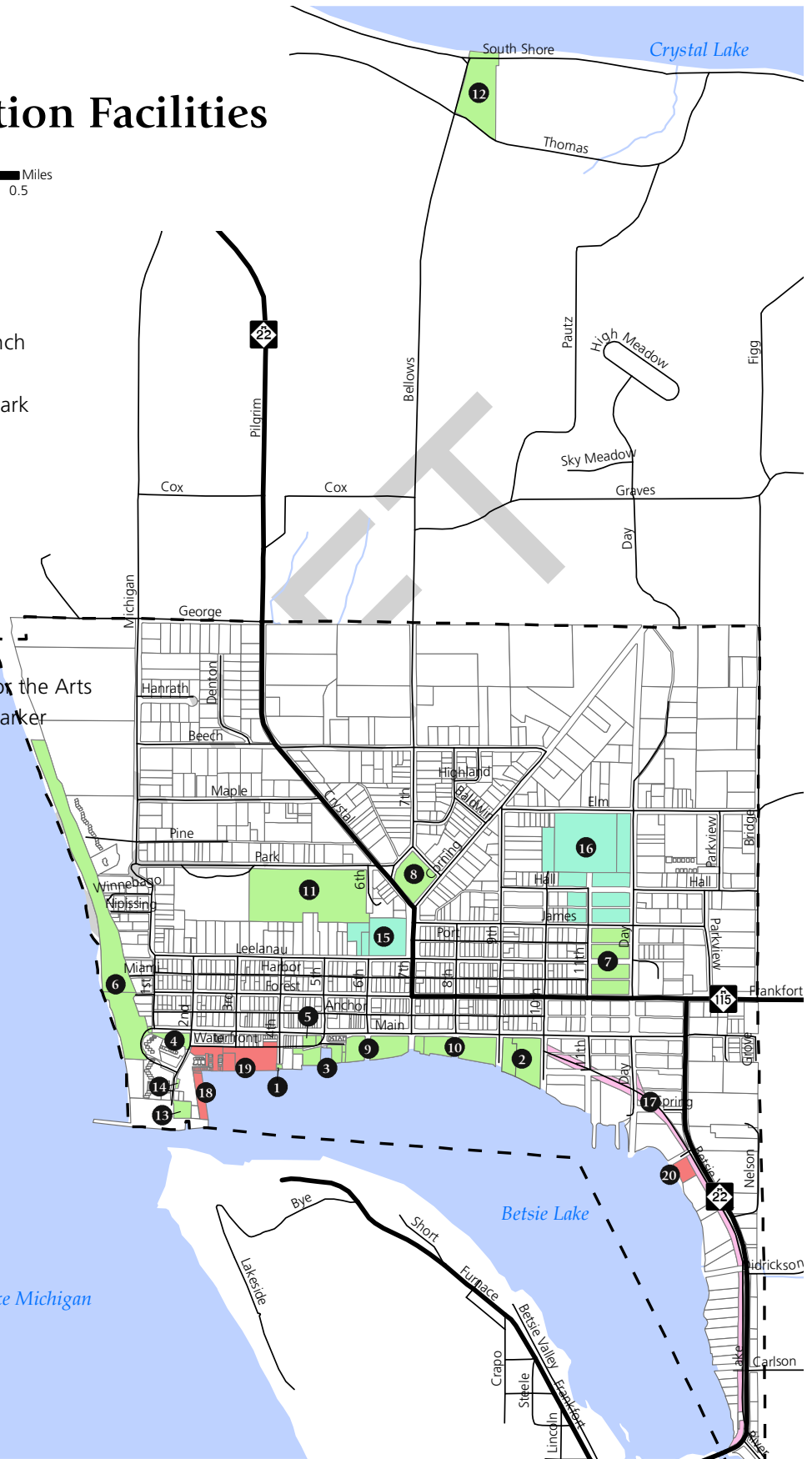
- 15 Frankfort Elementary School
- 16 Frankfort High School

**State of Michigan**

- 17 Betsie Valley Trail

**Private**

- 18 Goldcoast Marina
- 19 Jacobson Marina
- 20 East Shore Marina







# Recreation and Resources

## Park Facility and Accessibility Inventory

An inventory of existing parks and recreation facilities owned and operated by the City of Frankfort took place in the summer of 2013. Beckett & Raeder visited each park and took a detailed inventory of recreation equipment and facilities, including the number, type, and condition of available equipment. In 2020, Networks Northwest staff and City Officials examined and updated the existing inventory for accuracy. A detailed inventory sheet for each park can be found in the Appendix. Basic facts about each park such as size and general use can be found in Table 4. For a summary of the recreation facilities available at each park, see Table 5.

In order to determine the level of universal access to each park, an accessibility evaluation was completed by Beckett & Raeder in conjunction with the parks inventory. On August 23, 2020, Networks Northwest visited each park to assess the accessibility of each park, utilizing the initial assessment performed by Beckett & Raeder in 2014. The accessibility evaluation for each park can be found in Table 4.

A detailed assessment of slopes and clear widths would be needed to determine full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources published a scale for evaluating park accessibility in its Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans. It ranks the accessibility of parks on a scale of 1-5 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 principles of universal design

The City of Frankfort owns or operates 13 parks and one site with a historic marker. The following is a brief description of those parks and the summary of comments from the on-site inventory.

### *4th Street Pocket Park*

This park provides pedestrian access to the shore of Betsie Lake through a permissive use agreement. It is a very small “pocket” park that is used for snow storage in the winter. It provides an overlook to the south side of the channel and the historic sites. There is no universal access to this site since there is no curb cut or pathway adjacent to the park. Ideas for improvement include a gazebo or picnic area, refuse containers with recycling capabilities, wayfinding signage, day docks or dingy docks, or a cantilevered dock along a sheet piling.

This park provides a good opportunity for a passive experience such as interpretive signage regarding the maritime history of Frankfort.



### C.J. Kibby Memorial Boat Launch

This Park is located on the Betsie Lake and consists of a parking area and a boat launch ramp. It is a well-used public access site to Betsie Lake. Amenities include a floating dock, a staging dock for the boat launch, and a recently re-roofed fish cleaning station. Ideas for improvement include increasing the accessibility of the boat launch and other amenities, more seating and picnic opportunities, improved access to the Open Space Mason's Lodge on Main Street, a high-speed ferry dock, improved buildings such as the restroom facility, office area, and fish cleaning station siding, to re-pave and increase green spaces in the parking lot, and an accessible canoe/kayak launch. Other ideas for improvement include day docks along the waterfront, historical and way-

finding signage, a dog park, a new flag pole, a drinking fountain with a water bottle filling station, an irrigation system, and refuse containers with recycling capabilities.

### Frankfort Municipal Marina (and Borwell Yacht Basin)

This city-owned marina on Betsie Lake provides boaters with a place to tie up and enjoy the downtown. The marina has shower facilities and restrooms as well as fuel. There is also a well-used picnic area and tables that are shared between boaters and playground users.

Please see the appendix for a detailed inventory of the existing boating inventory. This detailed inventory contains information such as the annual maintenance schedule, dredging, and general information of the marina.

**Table 3: City of Frankfort Parks**

	Size	Service Area	Purpose / Use	Accessibility Evaluation
4th Street Pocket Park	<1 acre	Local, Downtown	Mini-Park. Small open space on Betsie Lake	Score: 1. No accessible public R.O.W. sidewalk
C.J. Kibby Memorial Boat Launch	4 acres	Regional	Special Use Regional Park. Boat launch, restrooms, and parking	Score: 2. Fair, not many amenities.
Frankfort Municipal Marina	1.6 acres	Regional	Special Use Regional Park. Public Marina with boat slips and restrooms	Score: 3. Fair to good
Father Charlevoix "Cannon" Park	0.9 acres	Local, Downtown	Mini Park. Parking, cannon, picnic facilities	Score: 2. Sidewalk connects to two benches, but most facilities have no access path.
Karl Luedtke Rotary Park	0.5 acres	Local, Downtown	Mini Park. Play structure, picnic tables, water fountain	Score: 4. Very good
Lake Michigan Beach	15.5 acres	Regional	Regional Park. Restrooms, parking, swings, benches, volleyball areas, dog run	Score: 3. ADA walkways
Lockhart Field	5.5 acres	Community	School-Park. Athletic fields and grandstands	Score: 2. No accessible public R.O.W. sidewalk or accessible walk through site.
Market Square Park	3 acres	Community	Community Park. Basketball and tennis courts, play structures, picnic facilities, parking, restrooms	Score: 1. Restrooms not accessible. No accessible route to basketball courts, no accessible route within park from one component to another.
Mineral Springs Park	3.26 acres	Community	Community Park. Play structures, picnic facilities, restrooms, parking, benches, bike racks, shuffleboard and volleyball areas, mineral spring	Score: 3. Public restroom not accessible, no doors on stalls
Open Space Park	4 acres	Community	Community Park. Community Center, Restrooms, parking, benches, t-dock	Score: 2. Fair, not many amenities.
Park Avenue (Tank Hill)	15.6 acres	Community	Natural Resource Area. Nature trails	Score: 1. Not accessible. No accessible public R.O.W. sidewalk or accessible walk through site.
Seventh Street Beach (Crystal Lake Beach)	6.5 acres	Community	Neighborhood Park. Restrooms, boat launch, parking, picnic facilities	Score: 1. No accessible public R.O.W. sidewalk or accessible walk through site.
Elizabeth Lane Oliver Center for the Arts	0.8 acres	Regional	Special Use Regional Amenity. Arts education building with kitchen	Score: 4. Building: Very good. No accessible public R.O.W. sidewalk.
Father Marquette Memorial Marker	<1 acre	Local, Downtown	Historical marker, passive recreation	Score: 1. No accessible route including public ROW Sidewalk



### *Father Charlevoix “Cannon” Park*

A small park located near Lake Michigan beach, “Cannon” Park is recognizable by the 7-ton cannon brought to the City in the late 1800s. The park also marks the beginning of the Frankfort-Elberta Beach to Beach Trail. This park offers a passive recreation experience as it links downtown to waterfront and beach. A new concrete sidewalk runs through Cannon Park, improving its accessibility by connecting to two benches; however, most amenities in the park do not have an access path. Ideas for improvement include a restroom facility with a pavilion, additional picnic facilities, historical and wayfinding signage, the extension of the park in front of the existing tile wall to create a picnic area, adding pavement around the cannon, an irrigation system, refuse containers with recycling capabilities, and a splash pool.

### *Karl Luedtke Rotary Park*

This is a beautiful, landscaped, meticulously maintained community garden area relatively close to the center of downtown. It is located adjacent to City Hall and can serve as entertainment for children while adults, residents and visitors alike are shopping downtown, or as a place to relax in tranquility during the work day. This space also serves as a passive experience as a walk-through from Main Street to the parking lot behind City Hall.

The accessibility of this park is very good. Ideas for improvement include parallel parking on the Bay side of the park, potential lighting upgrades to LED, replacing the drinking fountain with a fountain / water bottle fill station, refuse containers with recycling capabilities, historical and interpretive signage, wayfinding signage, expanding into the corner lot adjacent to 5th and Main and/or improving the corner lot for the benefit of the public.

### *Lake Michigan Beach*

This park is located at the entrance to the Betsie Lake. It provides a public Lake Michigan beach at the west end of Main Street (downtown). This beach is a well-used space that attracts many visitors. Benches provide accessible seating options, and ADA walkways allow access to the beach.

The main focal point of this park, and perhaps the entire town, are the twin piers and lighthouse that extend into Lake Michigan and create Frankfort Harbor. These structures are under the jurisdiction of the Army Corps of En-

gineers, and even though they are not designed for public access, walking down the pier to the lighthouse is a favorite Frankfort experience. The City of Frankfort is committed to improving pier safety with ideas such as installing an access gate, utilizing a flag or LED light system for safety measures when the weather is dangerous to people on the pier, and enhancing education and awareness. Recently, a committee has formed to discuss the preservation and renovation of the pier and lighthouse.

The current restroom facilities at Lake Michigan Beach are approaching 16 years of age. They are the most commonly used restrooms of all the parks. Upgrading, replacing, adding, and relocating bathrooms have all been discussed. The restroom could include changing stations with foot wash and shower heads. In 2020, the Planning Commission was tasked with the Lake Michigan Beach bathroom matter.

Another topic of discussion includes erosion issues along Lake Michigan, especially at the bluff area. One of the main factors in the erosion is high water. Some of the ideas to remedy the erosion include coastal resilient strategies or examining beach nourishment which does not remedy the physical forces of erosion but mitigates the effects.

The parking lot at Lake Michigan Beach is the most used of all the parks. Discussions have occurred on possible redesign of the parking lot and entrance to be more defined as the entrance to Lake Michigan Beach and the pier. Redesign of the parking lot could see additional spaces added and a better flow of pedestrian and vehicle traffic from its current form.

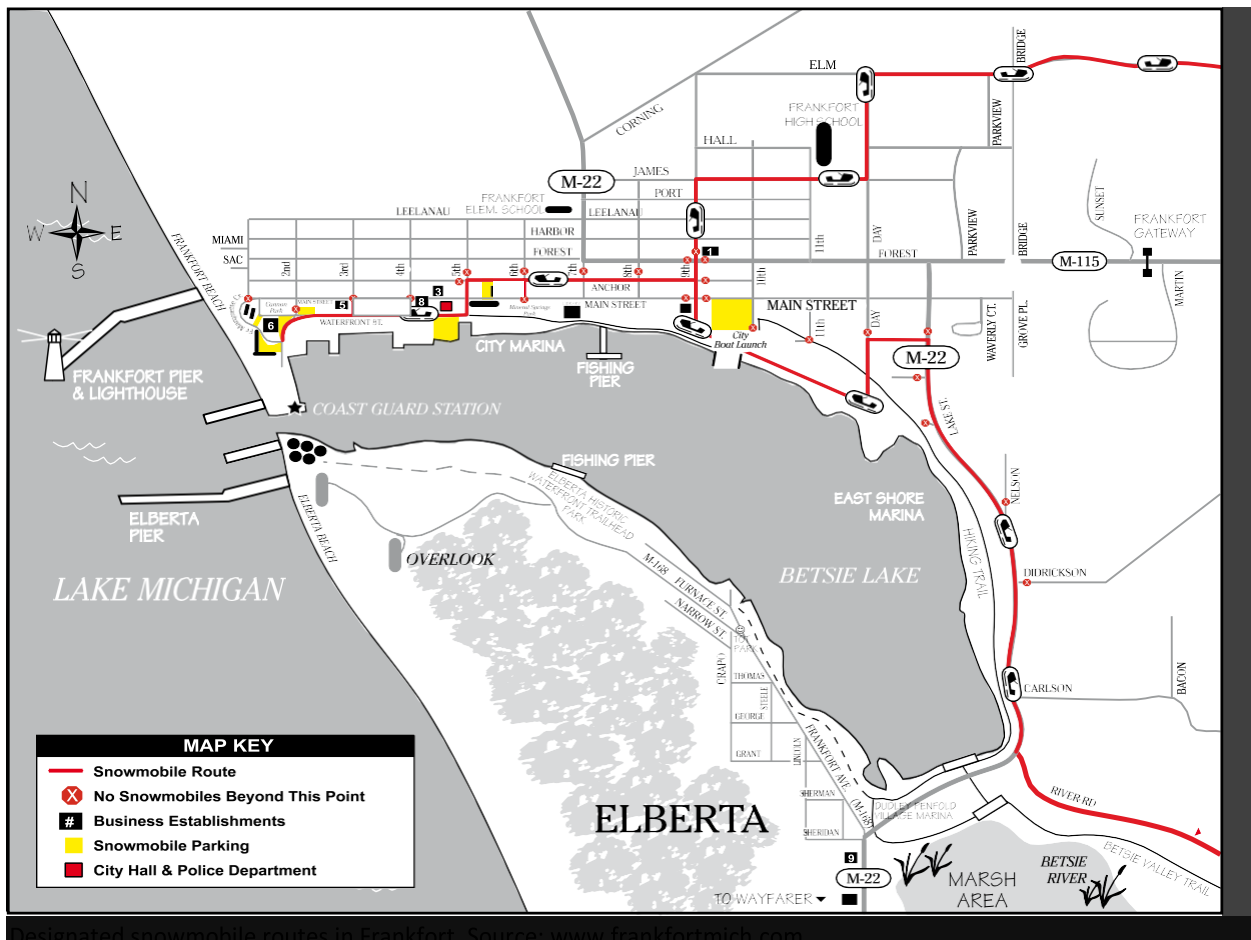
Other ideas for improvement include restoration of the lighthouse, the creation of a designated swimming area, and the unification of signage. On Nipissing Avenue, a viewing platform could be constructed and the stairway to the beach could be further improved. Throughout the beach, mobility mats could improve universal access to the beach. Additional ideas include a larger play structure, parking for bicycles, a community fire pit, a new swing set at Sac Street, refuse containers with recycling options, the renovation of the existing wall at the main entrance, and exploiting kite surfing and stand up paddleboard (SUP) opportunities.

### *Lockhart Field*

Easily recognizable by its chain link fence, this athletic field is maintained by the Frankfort/Elberta Athletic Association, but is open to the public. It is mainly used for



Betsie Valley Trail Map. Source: <http://www.betsievalleytrail.org/>



school athletic events. This park is owned by City of Frankfort and leased by the Frankfort/Elberta Athletic Association. The athletic fields are well used; the football field is in very good condition, but the baseball field could be improved. Portable bleachers have been placed to supplement the grandstand. There is no accessible public sidewalk or access route through the site. Ideas for improvement include new refuse containers with recycling capabilities, a new batting cage, to renovate and preserve the baseball grandstand, to erect decorative brick entries, to install wrought iron fence along M-22 and at facility entries, to install brick cornices on all 4 corners, to construct split-faced block bleachers on the home side, to improve surface water drainage around the facility, to add historical and interpretive signage associated with athletic accomplishments, and to construct a new softball field on school property located on the southeast corner of James Street and Day Avenue (existing Little League field).

#### *Market Square Park*

This park is located in the 4-acre octagonal shaped block in the center of town. It is a general purpose playground and open space used for special events such as two annual art fairs. The park has new play equipment and some older surfaces that need attention. The existing trike track needs resurfacing or, if it is little-used, removal. Ideas for improvement include a bike rack, historical and interpretive signage, wayfinding signage, additional play structures, an accessible paved trail around the perimeter of the park, a rock wall, renovate the multi-purpose court, replace or upgrade play equipment, an irrigation system, improvements to landscaping, a small pavilion, and new refuse containers with recycling capabilities.

#### *Mineral Springs Park*

This Park includes almost twenty-five percent of the Betsie Lake shoreline with a lineal footage of approximately 1,180 feet. It is a rare and valued asset to have this much waterfront in public ownership. This park is large enough (6+ acres) to be a multiple use facility, including the City-owned Marina and District Library.

Overall, this park has a well-used playground with accessible options; however, the shuffleboard is not often used. The public restrooms are not accessible, and there are no doors on the stalls. The park has many possibilities; ideas for improvement include improving or rebuilding a pavilion with fire pit, to renovate the Mineral Springs fountain area, a splash pad, an outdoor story telling area, a skating rink under the pavilion, to con-

struct ADA-compliant restroom facility, historical and interpretive signage, wayfinding signage, a drinking fountain / water fill station, additional benches and tree plantings, new refuse containers with recycling capabilities, to replace grills and picnic tables, new bike racks, to improve building finishes, to construct additional picnic pods, add equipment to existing playground area, convert existing volleyball court to a beach volleyball court, and improve the shuffleboard court.

#### *Open Space Park*

This park is an extension of Mineral Springs Park, extending eastward along Main Street and Betsie Lake. This park contains approximately 860 feet of the Betsie Lake shoreline. It is a beautiful green space that is utilized for numerous community events and serves as an area of overflow parking for the boat launch. This park is intended to be a multiple-use facility, including a Recreation Center and Farmers Market. The Farmers Market brings in 60 vendors on Saturdays. This park plays host to a fall festival in mid-October, concerts, and a wedding venue. The Betsie Valley trail runs along one edge of the park, but since that is one of the only paths in this park, accessibility is low. The space is adjacent or very close to picnic, playground, and restroom facilities and can share those opportunities.

Ideas for improvement include new refuse containers with recycling capabilities, outdoor movies, a see-through band shelter, historical and interpretive signage, wayfinding signage, to remedy and/or control goose problem, to construct a boardwalk adjacent to the shoreline, to place day dock and dingy docks between the municipal marina and corps dock, to utilize corps dock for day cruises and/or water taxis, an irrigation system, to improve the farmers market environment, picnic pod areas, to construct a new community center on the northeast corner to accommodate a multitude of community need, and promote events that combine water and land access.

#### *Park Avenue (Tank Hill)*

This park is located by the City's water tower and includes about 20 acres of forest. There are hiking trails, an outdoor theatre area, and mature maple trees. Lakeside Shakespeare performs in the open space area two weeks a year. This park was used as an ice rink but has not been for nearly 20 years. This park is not accessible, since there is no formal parking or pathways to or through the site.

This park is in a transitional stage; several large and some landmark trees had to be removed and areas are being re-vegetated. A walking trail winds around the perimeter. There is good potential for an interpretive walking trail describing the history of the park, and environmental features, events, and improvements. Ideas for improvements to this park include a disc golf course, a camp for kids, a community fire pit, a viewing deck by the water tank, improved accessibility and parking, the formalization and expansion of trails, a webcam on the elevated tank, and interpretive signage.

#### *Seventh Street Beach (Crystal Lake Beach)*

This park is a small beach on Crystal Lake north of the City limits. The Park serves as a beach and picnic area, as well as a primitive boat launch. It is owned by the City of Frankfort, but located in Crystal Lake Township.

In the past, this park contained a brick building with a fireplace. It now has a picnic shelter and park grills; however, there is no access route through this park.

Ideas for improvements include nature trails and a boardwalk through the wetland area, the eradication of ash trees, a disc golf course, a new pavilion with solar power and fireplace, porous hardscape surfaces and rain gardens, collaboration with the Benzie County Road Commission to control stormwater on Bellows, a pedestrian crossing from the park area to the beach, a new accessible restroom, enhanced landscaping and irrigation, a floating boat ramp or improved boat launch, an improved swimming area, as well as bike racks, wayfinding and interpretive signage, and additional play equipment.

#### *Elizabeth Lane Oliver Center for the Arts*



The former home of the historic Coast Guard Boathouse and living quarters, the Art Center leases the LEED Plati-

num-rated building from the City of Frankfort. This year-round facility has retail space, classrooms, art exhibits, and hosts community sponsored events. The building has very good interior accessibility, but there is no accessible public R.O.W. sidewalk on site. Ideas for improvement include an outdoor sculpture display and parking shuttles.

#### *Father Marquette Memorial Marker*

This site, listed on the state register of historic places, was landscaped in 1995 and contains a historic marker sign, which reads:

#### *Marquette's Death*

*On May 18, 1675, Father Jacques Marquette, the great Jesuit missionary and explorer, died and was buried by two French companions somewhere along the Lake Michigan shore of the lower peninsula. Marquette had been returning to his mission at St. Ignace which he had left in 1673 to go on an exploring trip to the Mississippi and the Illinois country. The exact location of Marquette's death has long been a subject of controversy. Evidence presented in the 1960's indicates that this site, near the natural outlet of the Betsie River, at the northeast corner of a hill which was here until 1900, is the Marquette death site and that the Betsie is the Riviere du Pere Marquette of early French accounts and maps. Marquette's bones were reburied at St. Ignace in 1677.*

Ideas for improvement include new refuse containers with recycling capabilities, a sidewalk through the park to the Oliver Art Center, historical and interpretive signage, and wayfinding signage.

#### *Other Facilities*

In addition to City-owned and operated facilities, Frankfort has three private marinas, two school properties, and a connection to the Betsie Valley Trail. The Village of Elberta has a kayak launch on 10th Street, and discussion could take place of possible partnership opportunities between Elberta and Frankfort to show what both communities offer. The Frankfort Elementary School and Frankfort High School grounds are open to the general public for recreation use. Regionally, residents of Frankfort have access to several spectacular recreation opportunities. The Sleeping Bear National Lakeshore offers cross country skiing, nature trails, hunting, fishing, beaches, hiking, and camping, just 10 miles north of Frankfort. Crystal Mountain Ski Area has both alpine and cross country skiing, a pool, tennis facilities, lodging, and 36 holes of golf. Frankfort was home to the Northwest Soaring Club until 2012.



Historically, the United States Coast Guard has operated on a year round basis out of Frankfort, but over the past five years operations have been seasonal (typically from May to September). The Coast Guard is vital to the safety of the pier.

### *Trails*

The Betsie Valley Trail is 22 miles long and extends from Frankfort through Elberta and Beulah to Thompsonville in Benzie County. From Frankfort to Beulah it is non-motorized. The trail is well suited for bicycles and pedestrian use. The 6 miles from Frankfort to Mollineaux Road is asphalt and good for roller blading. From Beulah to Thompsonville (13 miles) the compacted aggregate trail is open to snowmobiles from December through March. The trail is owned by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and is operated and maintained by Benzie County. The Friends of the Betsie Valley Trail is a Michigan not-for-profit corporation formed in 1993 “to advocate, promote and encourage the development and successful operation of a recreational trail on the former Ann Arbor Railroad corridor in Benzie County.”

The group is a benevolent friend of the trail. It supports the efforts of the DNR and County and intends to see that the trail is built, maintained and enjoyed. The Beach to Beach Trail within Frankfort is linked to the Betsie Valley Trail. The trail map is shown on page 20.

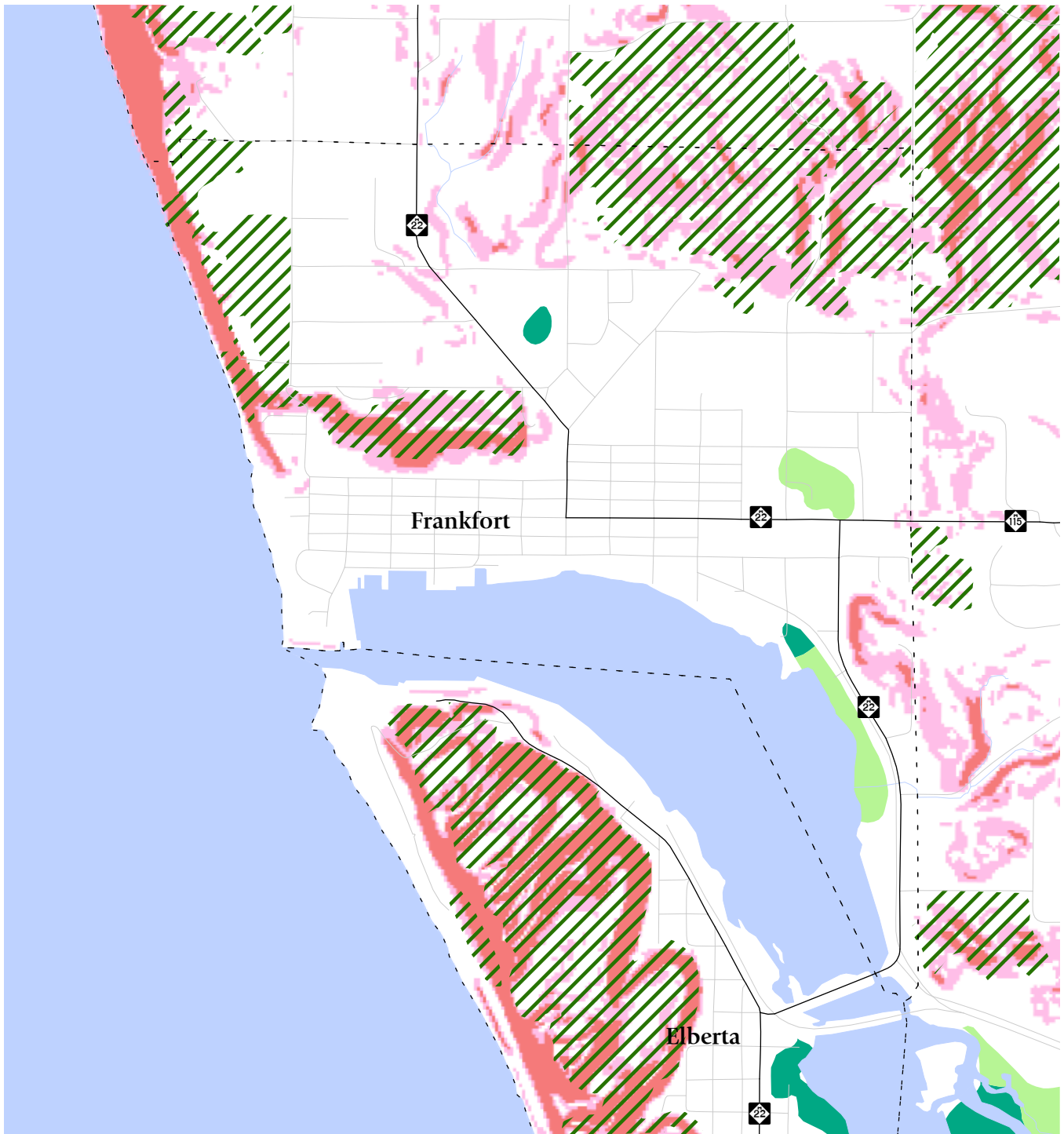
There are designated snowmobile trails within Frankfort as shown on the map on page 20. The route enters Frankfort on the north side of Betsie Lake on Elm Street and winds into the downtown area on Anchor Street and Waterfront Street, ending at Lake Michigan Beach. From the South, the trail comes into Frankfort on River Road and follows Lake Street into town. Snowmobile parking is available at the Municipal Boat Launch, the Municipal Marina, and several locations downtown.

### *Parks Service Area*

In Table 4 on page 17, the service area of each park owned and operated by the City of Frankfort is indicated as either local, community, or regional. Local parks serve the immediate area, drawing visitors from within a short walking distance or those who are passing by. Community parks serve all of Frankfort, with recreational facilities that typically serve a wider audience, such as athletic fields or larger parks. Regional parks serve visitors from Frankfort and surrounding communities because of their unique characteristics, such as access to Lake Michigan or Betsie Lake.

### *Resource Inventory*






The “Resource Inventory” map on page 22 shows the location of woodlands, wetlands, and steep slopes in the area and was created using available GIS data. A large portion of the woodlands and steep slopes nearest to downtown Frankfort are already protected within Tank Hill and Lake Michigan Beach parks. The 2010 Frankfort Master Plan reported that there are approximately 170 acres of wetlands within Frankfort’s limits, 130 of those which have characteristics of wetland soils.



CITY OF FRANKFORT  
RECREATION MASTER PLAN

# Resource Inventory

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library

- City Boundary
- Major Road
- Minor Road
-  Woodlands
-  9.1 - 16 Degree Slopes
-  16.1 - 80 Degree Slopes
-  Freshwater Emergent Wetland
-  Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland





# Consulting Community

## 2020 Action Item Survey

The 2020 Action Item Survey was developed to help the continuation of identified action items from the previous process. The questions were targeted to specific action items to help enhance the action items. The 2014 community process is described in detail following this section. The 2020 survey was released on September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and was available for response until October 9, 2020. The survey was distributed through the use of social media by Networks Northwest and the City of Frankfort. Additionally, some community organizations were asked to help spread the survey for response.

### Survey Results

156 responses were received with varying total responses to each question (noted in the full survey results located in the appendix). Nearly 85% of respondents identified as full time residents or seasonal/part time residents of Frankfort, while the rest of the respondents were primarily from the surrounding areas.

### Modernizing Public Restrooms

The first question asked respondents were they would like to see the next restroom modernization take place. The most popular location for restroom modernization was at Mineral Springs with 40.5% of respondents, followed by Canon Park (which currently has no facilities)

and 7<sup>th</sup> Street Beach. It was noted that the Lake Michigan Beach bathroom project and discussions had moved in 2020 to the Planning Commission for consideration.

### Upgrade Beach Facilities

The next 4 questions looked at upgrades to the beach facilities. When asked if beach facilities met the needs of users, 7<sup>th</sup> Street Beach received 55.1% yes votes while Lake Michigan Beach had 61.8% yes votes.

At Lake Michigan Beach, the most popular projects for consideration included renovating parking and access from Miami Street to Sac Street, designated markers for swim area, surf area, and dog area, and improving the staircase at Nippising followed closely by the purchase of a beach groomer and enhanced signage.

7<sup>th</sup> Street Beach's top response for project consideration was flushable restrooms. This was followed by installing a foot wash/drinking station, nature trail, replacement or expansion of dock, ADA accessible dock, and updating of park equipment.

### Market Square Improvements

At Market Square, the improvements most sought after were a perimeter trail, addition of benches, and updated lighting. A pickle ball/shuffleboard convertible court was also a top mention. Bathrooms were mentioned by a few

which was not a prepopulated answer as the restroom project is being worked on in the fall of 2020.

#### *Lighthouse Maintenance*

With knowledge that the cost of lighthouse renovations was estimated be around \$850,000, respondents were asked to identify their priority level. Moderate priority was the highest level at 38% followed by high priority (26%), low priority (20%), and no priority (9.7%). There were a few comments mentioning the safety of the pier which should be noted as a Army Corps of Engineer's responsibility.

#### *Dog Park*

A long discussed item, the dog park priority level most popular was 32% with low priority which was followed closely by moderate priority (31%). High priority held 20% of responses, while no priority held 16%. A concern noted by a couple of respondents noted dogs on beach particularly while unleashed.

It was also asked where respondents would most like to see a dog park should one be pursued. 56% marked the grassy area by the boat launch as their preferred location, while 31% preferred a site located near Betsie Lake Utility Authority.

#### *General Maintenance of Parks*

Open ended questions were asked to examine the strengths of the park maintenance and where improvements could be made. Many noted that the parks are generally clean, trash is picked up, and grass is mowed. Many offered comments that parks were well maintained.

Improvements to the maintenance of the parks most popular responses were more regular bathroom cleaning and working on the Mineral Springs playground flooding issue resulting from high water issues. Other items mentioned included additional trash cans and more regular emptying among other comments.

#### *Community Center*

In continued planning efforts of a potential community center, the survey asked what respondents would like to see in a community center. The most popular answer was activities focused on children followed by aquatic center, senior center, ice rink, pavilion, and capacity to host events.

#### *Renewable and Green Infrastructure*

Solar Energy, recycling, and rain gardens were identified as the top 3 renewable energy and green infrastructure items the City should consider. These were followed by permeable pavement and wind energy. Other comments included support for all renewable energy and green infrastructure options.

#### *Frankfort Parks and Recreation Support*

When respondents were asked in what ways would they be willing to support the growth and development of the parks and recreation system, donations and volunteer activities were mentioned the most, followed by user fees and crowd funding.

#### *Other Improvements*

The responses to an open ended question regarding what other improvements respondents would like to see to Frankfort's Park and Recreation system were wide and varying. Mineral Springs playground flooding was the most mentioned while other items such as a splash pad and seasonality of current parks and services were mentioned multiple times. Indoor recreation opportunities were also frequently listed.

#### **2014 Community Input Process**

The community input process was three-fold. First, a survey was conducted that was available both online and in paper form. Next, two community visioning workshops were held to give community members another chance to voice their opinions about the future of the parks and recreation programs in Frankfort. Finally, after the draft plan was complete, a public hearing was held to hear final comments. The public was invited to attend all Frankfort Recreation Board meetings throughout the planning process.

#### *Survey Results*

The community survey was available to the public from March to May of 2014. There were a total of 89 respondents, with 82 surveys completely filled out. Some surveys were completed on paper, which allowed some questions to be skipped. The incomplete surveys are included here to gather all available input.

#### *Overall Participation in Programs*

The results from the first question showed that 67 percent of respondents participated in parks and recreation programs offered by the City of Frankfort in the past five years.

### *Recreational Activities*

Out of the fifteen choices and “other” responses possible in Question 2, the recreational activity that survey respondents most frequently participate in is walking, followed by swimming and biking.

### *Recreational Facilities*

Question 3 listed all of the City of Frankfort parks and asked respondents to note how frequently they used each park. The most frequently used park was Lake Michigan Beach followed by Mineral Springs Park, Cannon Park, Open Space Park and Market Square Park.

### *Parks Maintenance*

Overall, survey respondents feel that the City of Frankfort parks are well maintained. Out of the 14 parks listed, the park with the most favorable maintenance rating was the Oliver Art Center, followed by Mineral Springs Park. The park with the least favorable maintenance rating was the Community Center, followed by the Seventh Street/Crystal Lake Beach.

### *Recreation Ratings*

In Question 5, survey respondents were asked to rate the variety of park facilities, recreation programming, arts and cultural events, and other areas of concern within the City of Frankfort Parks and Recreation system as either excellent, good, fair, poor, or no opinion. Out of the three choices, the variety of park facilities was the highest rated, followed by art & cultural events.

These two options were rated very similarly. Recreation programming scored the least favorably.

### *Parks and Programs for Age Groups*

Question 6 inquired to what extent Frankfort’s outdoor parks and recreation activities meet the needs of young children, youth, adults, and senior adults. Although the general consensus was that the parks and recreation activities meet the needs for all age groups, elementary school age and preschool age groups scored slightly higher than the rest. The groups that scored the least favorably were the high school and middle school age groups.

### *Planning and Development Priorities*

Question 7 asked survey respondents to indicate what they feel should be the planning and development priorities in Frankfort. Beach facilities scored the highest, with 74 respondents saying that they were a high priority.

Walking/nature trails were the second highest priority, and the enhancement of parks to include accessible play structures and restrooms was third.

### *Desired Beach Restroom Location*

Cannon Park    On the beach    Build a facility at both sites

Public Restroom Location and Quantity Questions 8 asked respondents to identify whether they would prefer to have modern restroom facilities at Cannon Park, on Lake Michigan Beach, or at both locations. Seventy-five percent of respondents favored Cannon Park as the ideal restroom location, and the remaining responses were split between on the beach or at both locations. Twenty-seven respondents chose to leave a comment on this question; the majority of responses included statements supporting a facility at Cannon Park and disapproval of the facilities at Lake

Michigan Beach. Other sites that were suggested include Seventh Street Beach, Mineral Springs Park, Market Square Park, and Open Space Park.

Question 9 asked respondents to consider that Frankfort has 10 municipal bathrooms but a reduced number of City employees, and to indicate whether they would prefer to have fewer restrooms open to the public that were cleaned and maintained regularly, or to have the same number of restrooms but cleaned less frequently. The responses were split – 49% of respondents favored closing some restrooms in order to have them better maintained and 51% preferred to have a larger number of restrooms open. Almost half of all respondents left a comment about this question. In general, respondents either felt the Lake Michigan Beach facility should be closed, or that all bathrooms should be kept clean regardless of the number. Many respondents did not know where all of the public restrooms were located.

### *Demographics*

Questions 10, 11, and 12 asked respondents about the age of their household members, the age of the respondent, and the City in which the respondent lives.

The majority of survey respondents were 61 and older (44%). Thirty-eight percent of respondents were between 41 and 61 years old, and 7% were between 21 and 40 years old. Fifty-six respondents reported their location as Frankfort, 8 respondents were from the nearby area, 11 were from the southern lower peninsula, and 4 were from out of state.

### *Additional Comments*

Question 13 gave respondents the opportunity to add any comments or suggestions regarding the development of the Recreation Master Plan. The full comments can be seen in the appendix.

### *2014 Community Visioning Workshops*

In addition to the community survey, the City of Frankfort held two community visioning workshops to gather public opinion on the future of Frankfort's parks and recreation programs. The sessions were held on Wednesday, August 6th, 2014 at 6:30 pm and Thursday, August 7th at 10:00 am. The first session drew 30 participants, and the second session had 16 participants. The sessions were advertised through the local newspaper, the City's Website, e-mail blasts, and flyers.

Attendees arrived to find tables set with exercise sheets and other materials. The tables were numbered, and these numbers are referenced throughout this summary. The facilitator asked a series of six questions, giving the groups approximately five to ten minutes to develop as many answers as possible. Each individual then used dot stickers to indicate his or her preferred answers.

Participants voted for four items during Exercises 1 and two items during Exercise 4. When each table had generated and voted on its top three visions for the future, participants were asked to offer three strategies for achieving each vision. A representative from each group then presented these visions and strategies to the audience as a whole. During the presentations, a facilitator wrote the visions on poster-sized sheets.

Repetitive elements were combined, and the facilitator reviewed each entry with the group to ensure clarity. The "Collective Priority" sheets were hung near the exit, and attendees were asked to use their remaining three voting stickers to indicate their top priorities among all of the suggested visions.

In addition, comment cards were available for participants to voice opinions that were not addressed in the course of the discussions. Full results from the sessions and comments can be found in the appendix.

### *Likes and Dislikes*

Participants in the vision session began the brainstorming exercises by discussing what they liked about Frankfort's parks and recreation programs as they currently are and what they thought could have been done better. In terms of the positive aspects of Frankfort's parks, par-

ticipants frequently mentioned the natural beauty of Frankfort and its open spaces, including the beautiful sunsets at Lake Michigan Beach and the scenic landscaping at Rotary Park and Mineral Springs Park. Participants mentioned the playgrounds that are loved by the children, and that the parks are generally clean and well maintained. Group members appreciated the pet refuse bags and the dog-friendly areas of Lake Michigan Beach. Some participants mentioned the number, diversity, and location of the parks as positive attributes. Other participants mentioned that the parks are family friendly, used by all ages, and well-used.

The vision session attendees had many diverse thoughts when asked what they thought could have been done better in Frankfort's parks. Overall, the most frequently mentioned items related to the Lake Michigan Beach bathroom's need of upgrades, maintenance, cleaning, modernization, or relocation. Others mentioned that all restroom facilities should be modern with flush toilets and connected to the City utilities. Another frequently mentioned item was the accessibility of the parks; participants felt that all bathrooms need to adhere to ADA standards, that there should be accessible parking at the parks, and that other facilities should be accessible, including playground equipment. Bellows Park was mentioned several times as needing upgrades, such as a new pavilion, upgraded restrooms, and power. The fifth most commonly mentioned item was a dog park.

Other suggestions that were not as frequently mentioned pertained to maintenance, safety, amenities, and signage at the parks.

### *Regional Recreation Assets*

The next exercise gathered information from participants about what other recreation amenities in the region are used by Frankfort residents. There were a great number of assets mentioned by participants, which speaks to the richness of recreational amenities available in the area. The most frequently mentioned regional assets were the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, Crystal Mountain, the Betsie Valley Trail, the Platte River, Interlochen, and Pointe Betsie.

### *Future Priorities*

The next exercise asked participants to envision what they would like Frankfort's parks to be like in the future. The most commonly mentioned or voted items

included improved restroom facilities for all major parks (including the beach restrooms) a skateboard park, a dog



park, upkeep of the lighthouse, improved facilities for outdoor concerts and gatherings, programs and amenities specifically for the youth of Frankfort, and park accessibility. Other items that were frequently mentioned were signage to commemorate Frankfort's history, and features that focus on keeping families and children safe.

### *Taking Action*

Each table of participants voted on their top three future items, and then they were asked to come up with some specific actions to achieve their vision. A list of all of the priorities and action items can be found in the appendix, but as an example, some action items that were listed as a way to improve park restroom facilities included identifying the priority parks, acquiring matching funds and grants, ensuring that proposed restrooms are ADA compliant, and securing funding for construction and maintenance of the facilities.

### *Barriers to Success*

In the next exercise, participants were asked to think about what barriers would prohibit their preferred vision from becoming a reality. Not surprisingly, the most frequently mentioned barrier was a lack of funding. A lack of staff, general community apathy and lack of community involvement, lack of community consensus or a common vision were other frequently mentioned barriers.

### *Collective Priorities*

As participants were leaving, they were asked to vote on their top two collective priorities. The modernization of restroom facilities was clearly the top priority, and was mentioned at both the morning and evening sessions.

Enhancement of the waterfront for public gatherings, activities and cultural events was second, followed by youth programs. The items receiving a moderate number of votes were family areas at the pier / renovation of the pier, connecting Cannon Park to the beach, a dog park, a skate park, and accessible parks and facilities.

### 2012 Restroom Facility Survey

In the spring of 2012, the Frankfort Planning Commission surveyed the year-round and summer residents of Frankfort to “gather information and gain insight before setting any standard” for current and future public restroom facilities. In total there were 77 complete survey responses, 37 of which were completed by year-round residents of Frankfort. The survey asked respondents which restroom facility features and amenities were most important to them in municipal restrooms, and also which additional amenities are desired for Lake Michigan and Crystal Lake beach parks. The importance of each item was signified by a number ranging from 1 to 5, with

5 meaning strongly important, 4 meaning important, 3 meaning somewhat important, 2 meaning hardly important, and 1 meaning not important. The responses were aggregated by zip code to determine if the desires of Frankfort residents differed from summer residents.

Regarding all municipal restroom facilities and all answers combined, the items with an average score of 4 or above (important or strongly important) were 1) restrooms are cleaned and sanitized on a scheduled basis, 2) sinks with running water and soap available,

3) flush toilets connected to municipal sewers, 4) restrooms regularly monitored for and repaired to eliminate graffiti and vandalism, and 5) more than one stall to accommodate multiple users. Items that scored an average of around 3 (somewhat important) were baby changing stations for both the men’s and women’s restrooms, a security camera system, and access to water on the outside of the building.

Regarding amenities that would be specific to a beach park area restroom, the most important feature was an outdoor drinking fountain (3.96 score), followed by an outdoor foot washing station (3.31 score), followed by an outdoor quick rinse cold shower (2.82 score).

In addition to the community survey, the Planning Commission completed a field survey of seven City- owned restroom facilities. The information collected included the number of stalls (including how many were ADA compliant), amenities present, general condition and cleanliness, and repairs needed. Of the seven locations, three had ADA-compliant stalls but the restrooms themselves had exterior doors that were difficult to open. The full results of the Restroom Facility

Survey and the field survey can be found in the appendix.

**Table 5: Beach Facility Survey Results**

Importance of Amenities for All Municipal Restroom Facilities						
Item	City Residents	Rank	Non Residents	Rank	All Responses	Rank
Restrooms cleaned and sanitized on a scheduled basis	4.86	1	4.75	3	4.81	1
Sinks with running water and soap available	4.51	2	4.80	1	4.66	2
Flush toilets, connected to municipal sewers	4.51	2	4.78	2	4.65	3
Restrooms regularly monitored for & repaired to eliminate graffiti and vandalism	4.51	2	4.70	4	4.61	4
More than one stall to accommodate multiple users	4.27	3	4.48	5	4.38	5
Baby changing stations for both men and women restrooms	3.43	4	4.05	6	3.75	6
Security Camera System	2.84	6	3.77	7	3.32	7
Access to running water on the outside of the building	3.03	5	3.51	8	3.28	8
Importance of Additional Amenities at Frankfort Beach Park Areas						
Item	City Residents	Rank	Non Residents	Rank	Combined	Rank
An outdoor drinking fountain	3.81	1	4.10	1	3.96	1
An outdoor foot washing station	3.08	2	3.53	2	3.31	2
An outdoor quick rinse cold shower	2.24	3	3.35	3	2.82	3
5=Strongly Important, 4=Important, 3= Somewhat Important, 2=Hardly Important, 1=Not Important						

# Demographic Dashboard

## Frankfort Population

2018 ACS: 1108  
 2010 Census: 1286

## Household Units

2018 ACS: 999  
 2010 Census: 942

## Median Age

Frankfort 2018 ACS: 62.7  
 Benzie County 2018 ACS: 49.6  
 Michigan 2018 ACS: 39.7

## Occupied vs. Vacant Housing

Occupied: 498  
 Vacant: 501

\*Vacant units may be one which is entirely occupied by persons who have a usual residence elsewhere

## Median Household Income

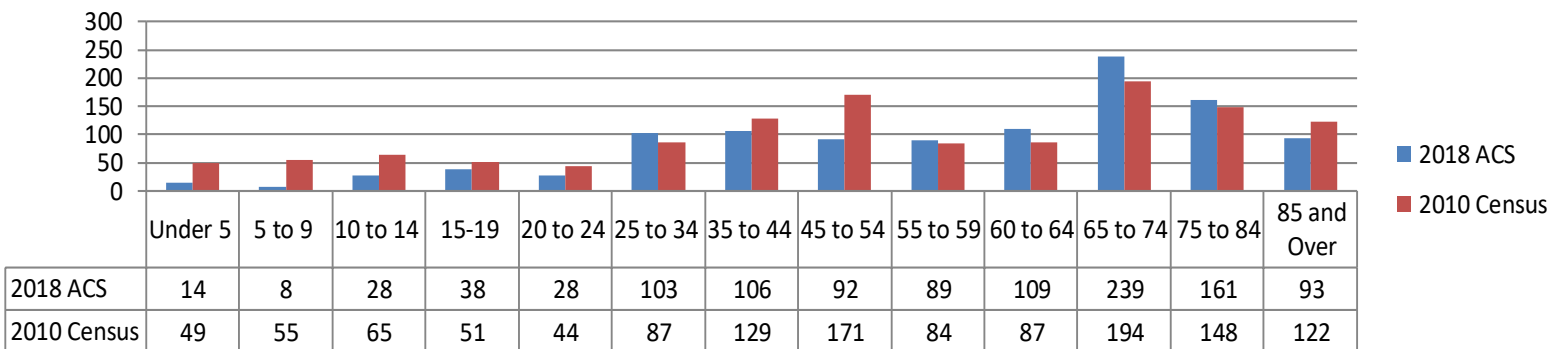
Frankfort: \$40,000  
 Benzie County: \$56,639  
 Michigan: \$54,938

## Disability Status

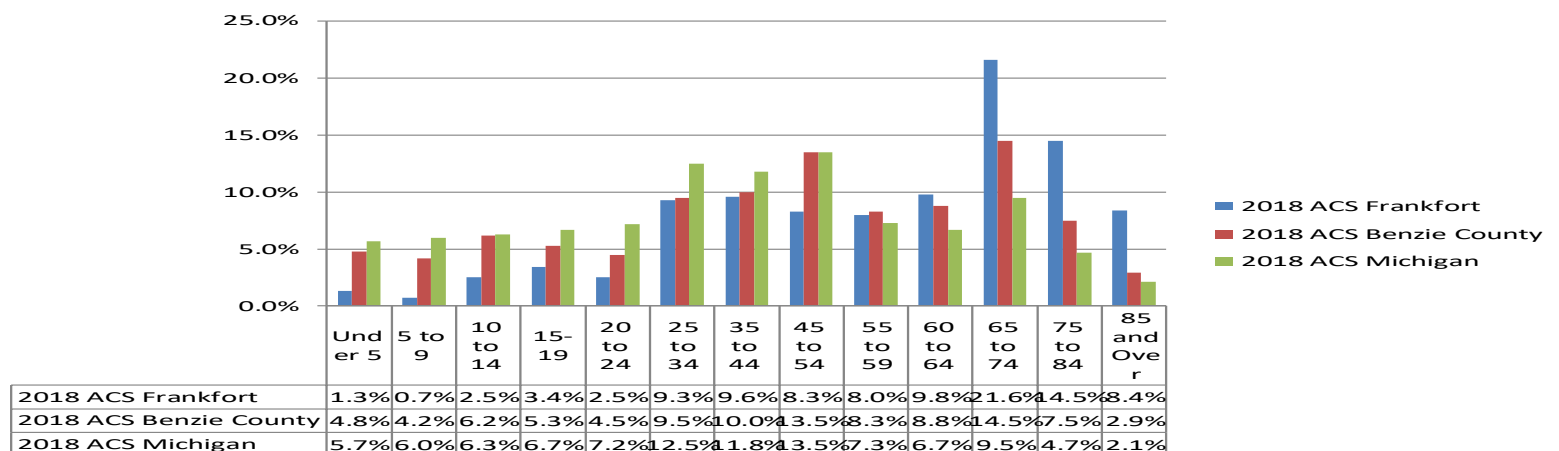
Under 18 years: 0  
 18 to 64 years: 132  
 65 years and over: 132

Sources: 2010 Census, 2018 American Community Survey

### 2010 Census v. 2018 ACS Population By Age



### 2018 ACS Percentage of Population





# Cornerstones

## Process

After the completion of the existing recreational facilities inventory and public input gathering, the next step in the formulation of the Recreation Master Plan was to determine the goals, objectives, and action plan for the next five years. The goals of this plan are based on the needs of the community as identified through the facility inventory, public input process, and the unique demographics of the community.

## Community Demographics

The 2018 American Community Survey estimates that the City of Frankfort population sits at 1108, which is a decrease from the 2010 Census results of 1286. The population over 65 is estimated to be nearly 45% of the total population while less than 19 years of age holds 8%. According to the 2010 Frankfort Master Plan, the population of Benzie County is estimated to be the oldest of the northwest Michigan communities. In comparison, only 17.7 percent of the Michigan population is estimated to be over the age of 65.

In terms of income, the median household earning in Frankfort in 2018 was estimated to be \$40,000, lower than both Benzie County and Michigan as a whole.

Another unique aspect of Frankfort is the number of summer residents. Frankfort is a beautiful area to spend the summer, and just over half of the 999 total housing

units in Frankfort are identified as vacant, which is defined as being occupied by persons who have a usual residence elsewhere for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use.

While there are no residents under 18 who identify as having a disability, there are over 250 residents over the age of 18 who do have a disability.

## *Goals, Objectives, and Action Plan*

On July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020 the Frankfort Recreation Board met to discuss the update of the Parks and Recreation including the goals, objectives, and action items. It was determined that the update would continue to build on the goals, objectives, and action items that have been previously identified.

The overall goal of this recreation plan is “to have a balanced system of parks and recreation opportunities for all parts of Frankfort, all age groups, and all abilities.” The board felt that this goal was still as applicable to the Frankfort community as it was in 2008 and 2014.

The objectives and action items developed from the 2014 parks and recreation plan process were reaffirmed by the Recreation Board. The Recreation Board wanted to pursue these to continue improving the parks and recreation system. The group recognized that each action plan item supports multiple objectives, instead of just

one. Therefore, the objectives which each action item supports are listed in the Action Plan table.

*Objective 1: Provide recreation opportunities for all age groups.*

The recreation facilities and opportunities in Frankfort must be designed for a wide age range. Although the population is aging with nearly 45% of the population over age 65, 7% are under 19 years of age, 12% are 20 to 34 years of age and 35% are between 35 to 64 years of age. (2018 ACS).

*Objective 2: Provide recreation facilities and opportunities for people of all abilities.*

To create an inclusive parks system that serves residents and visitors of varying abilities, all new and renovated facilities must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act regulations and guidelines. This benefits every citizen by making it easier to access the facilities and recreational amenities provided by the City of Frankfort, while maintaining a diverse array of physical recreation opportunities in the outdoor environment.

*Objective 3: Provide quality recreation facilities and opportunities to all parts of Frankfort.*

Frankfort is a recreation destination for regional residents and visitors alike with its spectacular natural features, including the Lake Michigan shoreline. The City of Frankfort will systematically upgrade and improve its amenities and opportunities to protect the taxpayer's capital investments for future recreation and offer a valuable recreation experience. Site plans for several of the parks were developed circa 2001 (see appendix) as part of a Coastal Zone Management grant, but these site plans may need to be updated with anticipated improvements.

*Action Item: Modernize Public Restrooms*

The City of Frankfort has discussed and acted on modernization of restrooms within the park system. Market Square was selected as one restroom that is currently being worked on for modernization, while Lake Michigan Beach bathroom discussions have moved to the Planning Commission.

Over the next five years, the City of Frankfort will continue to work towards additional restroom modernization improvements. Modernized public restrooms support all three of the Recreation Master Plan objectives, because a newly-constructed restroom would follow the Americans with Disabilities Act standards, it would provide an amenity

that benefits all age groups, and it would be a high-quality facility that will stand the test of time.

*Community Support*

In the Planning Commission's restroom facility survey of 2012, "Flush toilets, connected to municipal sewers" tied for second regarding what is most important to city residents among restroom amenities.

At the 2014 Community Visioning Workshop, modernizing the restroom facilities was the top-voted collective priority, and the most commonly mentioned and voted future priority was improved restroom facilities for all major parks (mentioned four times, received 8 votes).

In the 2014 Community Survey, "Enhance City parks to include accessible playgrounds and restrooms" was the second highest-rated planning and development priority. Seventy-five percent of survey respondents felt that the beach restroom should be located at Cannon Park (12.5% felt it should be located on the beach, and 12.5% suggested building a restroom at both locations).

The 2020 Action Item Survey identified Mineral Springs as the location preferred for the next restroom modernization project. This was followed by Canon Park and 7<sup>th</sup> Street Beach.

*Action Item: Upgrade Beach Facilities*

Frankfort's location on the shore of Lake Michigan and near Crystal Lake and the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore makes it a unique and beautiful place to live and vacation. Not surprisingly, the most popular areas of Frankfort are its beaches. In order for Frankfort to continue drawing visitors and year-round residents, the beaches must have high-quality, convenient, and accessible facilities that make the beach-going experience a remarkable one.

In the park facilities inventory, the accessibility of Lake Michigan Beach was rated 3, meaning that most elements are accessible; and Seventh Street Beach was rated 1, meaning no facilities were accessible. Upgrading beach facilities at both Lake Michigan Beach and Seventh Street Beach / Crystal Lake Beach supports all three objectives because it would increase the level of accessibility to the public, provide amenities that are used by all ages, and would increase the quality of facilities in two geographic areas of Frankfort.

The 2020 Action item Survey showed that 64% of users' needs of were met at Lake Michigan Beach and 53% were met at 7<sup>th</sup> Street Beach.



Specific renovations at 7<sup>th</sup> Street Beach may include flushable restrooms, updated signage, replacing or expanding the dock, an ADA accessible dock, updating park equipment, disc golf course, nature trail, installing a foot wash/drinking fountain, improved lighting, additional trash receptacles, and a boat washing station

Specific renovations at Lake Michigan Beach may include designated signage (for swim, surf, and dog areas), purchase of a beach groomer, expanded volleyball courts, enhanced signage, renovating parking and access from Miami to Sac Streets, and the improvement of the staircase at Nipissing.

#### Community Support

In the 2014 community survey, “Beach Facilities” was rated the top planning and development priority. (Survey Question 7). 90% of respondents rated it as a high priority. Also, Lake Michigan Beach was identified as the most-used park.

In the 2014 Community Visioning Workshop, two of the most frequently mentioned items in Frankfort that could be improved are the Bellows Beach facilities and the Lake Michigan Beach bathrooms.

70% of responses to 7<sup>th</sup> Street Beach checked “flushable restrooms” as a project to be pursued in the Action Item Survey.

The action item survey saw 47% of respondents to Lake Michigan Beach potential projects identify renovating access and parking (from Miami to Sac Street) and 45% for designated markers for swim, surf, and dog areas.

#### *Action Item: Market Square Park Improvements*

Frankfort’s play areas are one of the things that residents love most about the Parks. Even though a large portion of the population is over 60, Frankfort must have adequate facilities for the youth in order to attract and retain new residents.

In the parks inventory, Market Square Park’s play equipment was noted as having some older surfaces that need attention, in addition to needing access paths between components. Also, there were no accessible swings. The park received an accessibility assessment rating of 1, meaning no elements were accessible. An addition to the Market Square Park playground would support all three objectives by providing amenities for residents of young ages, by increasing the accessibility of the park, and by increasing the overall quality of the park amenities.

Specific improvements to Market Square Park may include resurfacing of tennis/basketball courts, a perimeter trail, pickle ball/shuffleboard convertible court, irrigation system, updated lighting, and the addition of benches.

#### Community Support

“Enhance City parks to include accessible playgrounds and restrooms” was the third highest-rated planning and development priority in the community survey, behind beach facilities and walking/ nature trails.

In the 2014 Community Visioning Workshop, incorporating accessible facilities including playground equipment was one of the most mentioned items that Frankfort should do better. In addition, youth play and exercise areas was one of the most mentioned items for desired future development.

The 2020 Action Item Survey showed a perimeter trail, addition of benches, and updated lighting as the top 3 projects to pursue for continued improvement at Market Square.

#### *Action Item: Lighthouse Maintenance*

The care of the lighthouse that guides ships into Frankfort Harbor has been entrusted to the City of Frankfort. As a symbol of the City, the Lighthouse must be preserved for future generations. A Lighthouse Preservation group has recently formed to facilitate this. Items that have already been identified are exterior painting and interior renovations with a cost estimation of \$850,000. This action item supports objective 3 by maintaining Frankfort’s parks to a high degree of quality.

#### Community Support

In the 2014 Community Visioning Workshop, upkeep of the lighthouse was one of the top future priorities (Mentioned twice, received five votes).

In the 2014 Community Survey, Lake Michigan Beach was identified as the most-used park. The lighthouse and pier is the focal point of this park, and a symbol of Frankfort.

Only 9% of respondents marked lighthouse renovations as having no priority, while 23% said high priority, 38% said Moderate Priority and 23% marked low priority in the 2020 Action Item Survey

#### *Action Item: Dog Park*

In the past, Frankfort tested the idea of a dog park in town by providing specific days and times that dogs would be allowed in the grassy area within the track of the Frankfort

High School property. Though the dog park was popular with residents who enjoyed socializing with others while their dogs were in the park, ultimately the dog park was removed due to maintenance problems with the field. Since that time, interest in a dedicated dog park has continued, and would support objective 1 by increasing the variety of recreational opportunities available to all ages. The Recreation Board identified two potential locations in 2019, by the boat launch or by Betsie Lake Utility Authority. In addition, it supports objective 3 by maintaining the quality of Frankfort's Parks through creating a designated area for dogs to be allowed off-leash.

#### Community Support

A dog park was one of the top future priorities in the Community Visioning workshop (Mentioned three times, received five votes).

The desire for a dog park was mentioned several times by those who left comments at the Community Visioning Workshop, as well as in the Community Survey comments.

The Action Item Survey showed priority level of the dog park to be somewhat mixed, with Low Priority identified as the lead with 31.4% followed closely by Moderate Priority with 29.8%. High Priority held 21.5% and 15.7% marked Low Priority.

#### *Action Item: General Maintenance of Parks*

Once an amenity or program is in place, it is important to maintain it in order to protect the investment of the City and its taxpayers. In addition, a high degree of maintenance contributes to the overall aesthetic appeal of Frankfort's parks and encourages greater use of them. Frankfort intends to continue maintaining its parks facilities and amenities in support of objective 3.

#### Community Support

In the Community Visioning Workshop, "Maintain and upkeep all facilities" was a collective priority of the group. In addition, the maintenance of many facilities was mentioned as a future priority, including restroom facilities, the lighthouse, and all parks.

In the Community Survey, parks that were rated as the least well-maintained were the Community Recreation Center, Seventh Street / Crystal Lake Beach, Tank Hill, and Cannon Park.

Many respondents in the Action Item Survey noted that the lawns are mowed and garbage is typically kept clean but during peak seasonal times issues may arise.

#### *Action Item: Community Recreation Center*

Although the summer in Frankfort is beautiful, the cold winter months can make recreation a challenge for some. A Community Recreation Center is in the planning stages in Frankfort, and the City intends to complete the planning process for the building and raise funds for implementation. A recreation center supports all three objectives by offering recreation facilities and opportunities for all ages, especially the growing older population in Frankfort; by creating more accessible recreation opportunities and a higher-quality indoor recreation center.

#### Community Support

In the 2014 Community Visioning Workshop, a Community Center was one of the collective priorities of the group and received three votes.

The existing Community Recreation Center was rated the least well-maintained park facility in the Community Survey.

2020 Action Item Survey identified potential components for a community recreation center such as activities focused on children, an aquatic center, ice rink, and a senior center.

#### **Building Consensus**

In order for any project to move forward, there must be buy-in from the community. Building consensus can be a lengthy process, but it is ultimately necessary for a positive project outcome. The National Parks Service provides a "Community Tool Box" with helpful information, including tips for reaching a consensus. This information is provided on the following pages.