

PARKS

&

RECREATION

SURVEY

2020

Parks & Recreation Survey 2020

In the fall of 2020, the Whitewater Township Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee created a park improvements survey in order to gather input from residents and taxpayers regarding their level of interest in a wide-ranging list of potential improvements at township parks. In an effort to reach everyone who lives in or owns property in the township, various methods of distribution were utilized. A copy of the survey was mailed to 1,557 properties with the December tax bills and newsletter. The newsletter invited those with internet access to fill out the survey on the township website or to complete and return the paper copy enclosed with the newsletter. An e-mail “blast” was sent to 800+ residents/taxpayers notifying them of the opportunity to participate in the survey. A handful of survey copies were available at the township hall.

After allowing approximately six weeks for responses, 213 surveys were tabulated. The survey results are represented in graph form and document the level of interest that the community assigned to the proposed park improvements. Respondents were also able to add comments to the survey. All survey comments have been compiled into a document for publication with the survey results.

In addition to the goal of finding out from the community the types of park improvements they would like to see, conducting the survey assists in meeting the Public Input Process criteria for state-approved Recreation Plans as required by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Any township that wishes to apply for grant funds through the State of Michigan must have a current 5-Year Recreation Plan on file with the state.

The Whitewater Township Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee and the Whitewater Township Board will also utilize the survey results to plan and budget for future park improvements.

Acknowledgements

The Parks & Recreation Survey 2020 was developed, tabulated, and published through the efforts of Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee members Melissa Melton, Brandon Hubbell, Dennis Leach, Fran Butler, Tom Cosgrove, and Linda Slopsema, as well as Parks & Recreation Administrator Cheryl Goss.

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Parks & Recreation Survey 2020

We want to hear from you!

The Whitewater Township Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee is in the process of updating the township's 5-year Recreation Plan. In order to plan for future improvements, the committee would like to know what improvements the public is interested in. Using the following list of ideas, please indicate your level of interest for each. The survey can be taken online at <https://www.whitewatertownship.org/parks--recreation-survey.html> or by filling out this form and returning it to the outside drop box at the township hall or mailing it to Whitewater Township, P.O. Box 159, Williamsburg, MI 49690. **Please submit your response by December 13, 2020.**

Check the box indicating your level of interest.

Very Somewhat Not

Ideas for Park Improvements

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Battle Creek Natural Area – Re-establishing the trail to the lake |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Battle Creek Natural Area – Linking the trail to Lossie Trail |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Battle Creek Natural Area – Making the existing trail a loop (instead of a dead end) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Hi Pray Park – New bleachers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Hi Pray Park – Improve west access drive off Old M-72 and parking area at lower ball field |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Hi Pray Park – Install walking path |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Hi Pray Park – Pave parking lot at Elk Lake Road entrance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Lossie Road Nature Trail – Trail improvements/boardwalk over wet area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Lossie Road Nature Trail – Create parking area at Skegemog Point Road entrance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Lossie Road Nature Trail – Upgrade walking bridge over Battle Creek |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Petobego Natural Area – Establish walking trail |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Whitewater Township Park – Upgrade pit toilets at boat launch/pavilion area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Whitewater Township Park – Improve/pave Whitewater Township portion of Park Road |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Whitewater Township Park – Install courtesy dock at boat launch |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Develop disc golf course |

If you have other ideas for park improvements, please list them below.

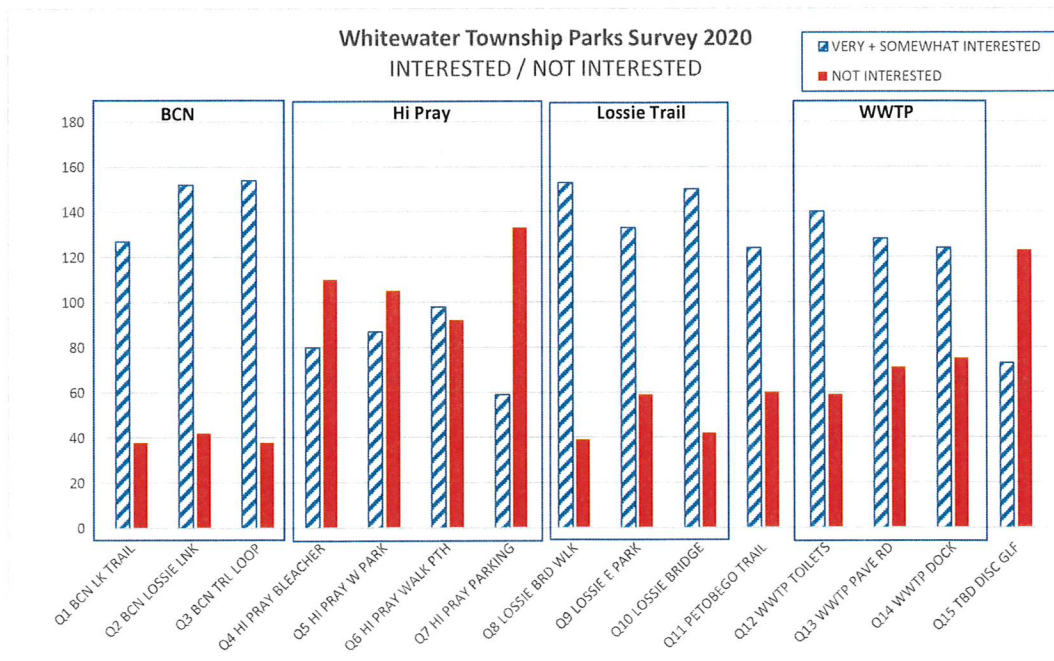
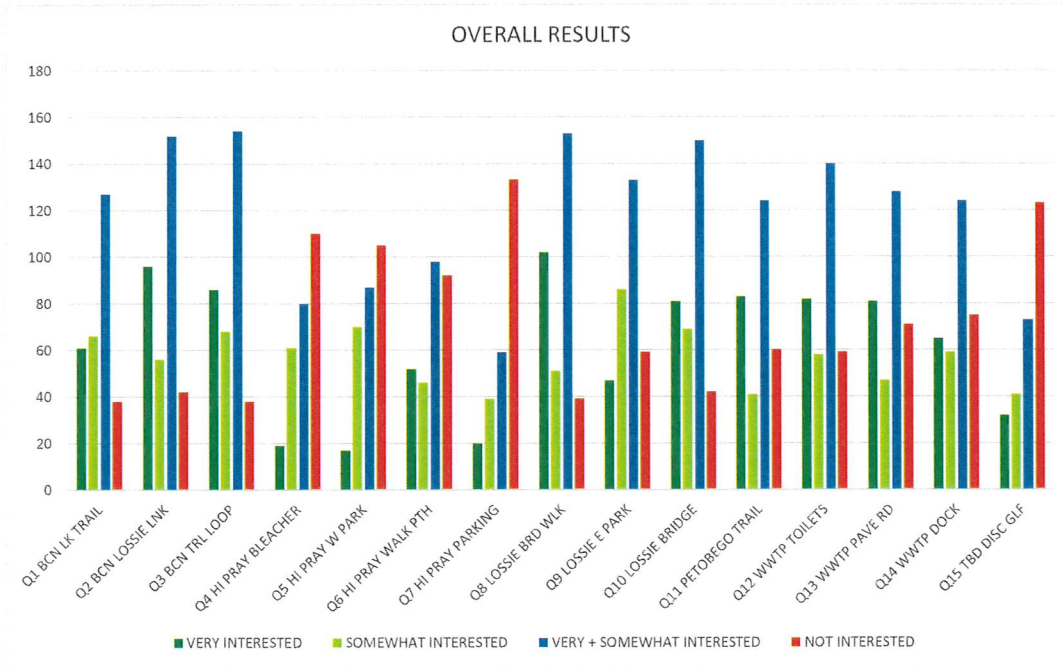
Comment _____

Thank you for participating in the survey!

**2020 PARKS RECREATION SURVEY
WHITEWATER TOWNSHIP**

REV. 1/21/2020

	Q1 BCN LK TRAIL	Q2 BCN LOSSIE LNK	Q3 BCN TRL LOOP	Q4 HI PRAY BLEACHER	Q5 HI PRAY W PARK	Q6 HI PRAY WALK PTH	Q7 HI PRAY PARKING	Q8 LOSSIE BRD WLK	Q9 LOSSIE E PARK	Q10 LOSSIE BRIDGE	Q11 PETOBEGO TRAIL	Q12 WWTP TOILETS	Q13 WWTP PAVE RD	Q14 WWTP DOCK	Q15 TBD DISC GLF
VERY INTERESTED	61	96	86	19	17	52	20	102	47	81	83	82	81	65	32
SOMEWHAT INTERESTED	66	56	68	61	70	46	39	51	86	69	41	58	47	59	41
VERY + SOMEWHAT INTERESTED	127	152	154	80	87	98	59	153	133	150	124	140	128	124	73
NOT INTERESTED	38	42	38	110	105	92	133	39	59	42	60	59	71	75	123



PARKS & RECREATION SURVEY 2020 - COMMENTS

(Comment # corresponds to Survey #)

If you have other ideas for park improvements, please list them below.

1. playground equipment at WWTP
3. One entrance to Hi Pray Park off of elk lake road would be more beneficial than the random parking everywhere that is currently going on. Much safer for the kids
6. I would like to see the beach area at the Park moved to the other side of the boat launch. It would be more user friendly to the campers and to the residents of Whitewater. An upgrade is definitely needed in that area. You should look at West Bay's Grelickville beach and picnic area. It's fantastic and it would be a great thing for the residents of this township!
11. Have some professional topographical maps of the parks, with trails, made and available for viewing and downloading. Include some history of the area and specifically those parks. Your historical association surely has information that could be added.
16. Pickle ball courts. Curling shed. Curling club
24. Would be nice to have a fish cleaning station at whitewater park. DNR is stocking Elk Lake with trout which will draw anglers.
32. It's very odd that Battle Creek trail leads to someone's yard. Beginning in a secluded, wooded area is beautiful but very anti-climatic to dead end at a driveway. Why doesn't the trail stick to the woods like it did in years past? I know the storm took out many trees but the trail could certainly stay in the forest growth. Both that and Lossie trail are treasures and we appreciate their existence.
33. It's very odd that Battle Creek trail leads to someone's yard. Beginning in a secluded, wooded area is beautiful but very anti-climatic to dead end at a driveway. Why doesn't the trail stick to the woods like it did in years past? I know the storm took out many trees but the trail could certainly stay in the forest growth. Both that and Lossie trail are treasures and we appreciate their existence. (2nd response from same IP address as comment #32)
34. Putting paddings on the dock to protect boats from damage esp when the water is rough. Nature trails at park are having issues with the invasive autumn olive overgrowth
36. I do not know where the other natural areas and trails are located. I am an avid walker in all weather and would love additional places to walk. Very interested in all improvements.
41. As far as creating a parking area at Skegemog Pt Rd & Lossie Trail, I don't know where the township expects to put that. Whitewater township had an opportunity to purchase the 1 acre on the southwest corner of Skegemog Pt Rd and Lossie Trail and didn't and now it is privately owned. As it is, the township has cut off any land owners' access to the back of their property via Lossie Trail, which in my opinion is unlawful. I think the township should consider the parking lot to be put down Lossie Trail at, what the locals call, the turnaround. At the bottom of the hill where it makes a 90 and goes down to the creek. Hunters and walkers have been parking there for years until Whitewater Township decided there shouldn't be any motor vehicle traffic down that trail anymore. If parking was allowed at the turnaround and the conservatory property was linked to Lossie Trail, the turnaround would be very close to where the conservatory trail would come out on Lossie Trail. Also, if the parking lot was down there, I think more people would use the trail. From there they could go all the way to Cook Rd., the Conservatory property and the Lake, if the trail was improved. Making the existing trail at Battle Creek Natural area, a loop instead of a dead end, is very important to me. When people

get to the dead end, they find it easier to trespass on private land to get up to the road and back to their place of origin, rather than turning around and going back the way they came. It would severely cut down on the people trespassing on our land.

44. Maybe a small covered area next to the tennis courts for shade?
47. It would be wonderful to have a paved walking trail here in our area. Exercise is always encouraged and having a paved trail to walk on would be Great
49. Especially interested in 'Lossie Road Nature Trail – Trail improvements/boardwalk over wet area' On the side closest to Cook Rd, the path is almost unusable in areas due to water/swamp and exacerbated by the tractors and off-road vehicles that chew up the ground which then floods.
55. I am nearly 80 years and can't hike anymore. Therefore, I didn't respond to your questions because I don't know the current condition of the trails. I fully support your efforts to improve our Township and I wish you all the success you have worked to achieve. Thank you for supporting our Township.
63. I think the improvements to the Battle Creek trail and the Lossie Trail would make them more appealing and would get more people using these community gems. Hi Pray park, being centrally located, is kind of a place to showcase what the township has to offer so I think improvements there are very good. I think paving the parking area is not necessary. I like the nice amenities with the more rustic feel. Thank you and good luck!!
64. We think that boat wash station(s) are important at the Township Park boat launch area. And that they be required before boats are able to launch.
67. We'd love to see the old Williamsburg - Elk Rapids train line turn into a walking path. Parking area for Lossie Trail designated more clearly on Cook Road. Love the disc golf idea!
69. Extremely interested in a trail at Petobego, disc golf at Whitewater Park. Curious if the township has any control over the former railroad - seems ideal for Rail Trail project.
89. This was a good chance to review the parks and recreation areas in Whitewater Township. I love Battle Creek Natural area. It is one of my favorite places to walk. I think I remember a route to Elk Lake that was marked by an Eagle scout. I did not know that Lossie Rd Trail had access on Cook Rd. Until this survey I did not know Petobego Natural Area existed! I would love to see all these Natural Areas enhanced. Thank you Katherine Lawrence 9019 Skegemog Pt. Rd.
90. Elk Lake, along Gay Road/Innis Lane/Orchard Lane had significant Swimmer's Itch issues this during Summer 2020.
92. Thank you for your efforts!
94. None at this time, thank you.
97. The disc golf course will just bring in those dang Millennials. - Signed a Xennial
99. Install more campsites at Whitewater township park to the northwest of the current location
100. Emphatic 'NO!' to disc golf!
104. There are many other things in the township which our tax dollars could be utilized for the benefit of ALL twp residents. Let's take care of these needs first!
110. Obtain a wooded area about 1 mile by 1 mile or more to set aside for recreational hiking, biking, and horseback riding with dedicated trails for each. Also include separate mountain biking trails if terrain is hilly. All the better if the area includes a stream or pond to further diversify wildlife.
112. Lossie Road Nature Trail is not suited to any motorized vehicles due to the high water table, soils and topography. Water-filled ruts, 8 to 10" deep have been left by motorized vehicles, making the trail very difficult and hazardous for walkers. Pistol shooting witnessed near the Skegemog Point Rd entrance to Lossie Road Nature Trail is very dangerous and illegal.

Resident near entrance yelled at hikers to not use the trail because her visitors were shooting there (a young couple with a year-old child, no less) and the shooters were on private property, which may be true. However, shooting near a public trail and endangerment of the public is illegal. Other walkers we met were frightened at hearing the shooting and turned around to leave the trail as fast as possible. A sign posting "No Firearm Shooting Permitted" at Lossie Road Nature Trail is needed to protect the public.

116. Funding is a concern. I am on a fixed income and cannot afford a property tax increase. Fund raisers and donations make sense. COVID restrictions? Rules enforcement? Liabilities? How do you keep campers from hogging the courtesy dock? Extra costs for cleaning flush toilets? The narrow dirt road slows down traffic Altho it is messy after a rain.
117. The Pavilion at the Whitewater Township park could use an update. The trails are great! We walk them all the time. Like the new signs.
122. Add an extension to the current dock. On windy days it is very difficult to safely load your boat because the dock is so short and you have to push your boat out beyond the dock to get the trailer in deep enough to load.
126. Whitewater Township Park - Improve/pave Whitewater Township portion of Park Road Very interested
129. Funds should be available from the state for certain improvements at the Whitewater Twp Park. Glenn and Renee Savage
132. More childrens play equipment, bigger better playgrounds at Hi Pray Park
133. More playground equip. (climbers, slide, merry go round, etc) @ Hi Pray Park
138. Pave "ALL" of Park Road!
139. Improving the beach area and playground at Whitewater Township Park.
141. Play area/jungle gym for younger kids at Hi Pray Par.
143. Does not pertain to the parks, properly pave angel road, have traveled it for 25 years and all you do is patch it!
144. Improve/pave WWT portion of Whitney Rd! At least improve! Thank you.
146. I have walked all of these areas numerous times. Battle Creek and Lossie Road are real gems that could use some work. I would like to volunteer to help although I am not physically strong. I would love to see a trail or viewing platform at Petobego! Whitewater trails are pretty well maintained, though trail markers are confusing.
147. Improve walk at Petobego south end of bay
148. I love the natural areas being preserved and cared for!
161. I think we do a great job!
162. Pushing 80 – don't hike anymore.
163. Please don't create urban areas out of wildlife areas. If we have money to spend, pave our roads.
164. Stiff penalty for abuse.
171. Park improvements are fine when road improvements begin to become a priority in this township! Don't forget everyday use by township citizens. Parks are not used by all residents.
174. With the number of boats using the Township Park, I think the upgrade to the pit toilets should be of high priority as well as paving road
177. After the storm of 2015, \$40,000 was spent to clear this trail. It was re-routed along property lines instead of the original trail in the woods. Total waste of taxpayer money. Leave this section of trail as is.
181. I cannot comment on the others. I don't know them.
182. Trail needs to be cleaned up. Treat wood on lookout deck.
183. Where would this be located? (referring to disc golf course) Improve dock with bumper padding at the park. Clean and water seal the overlook deck to maintain it.

184. Disc golf would be great!
186. Improve but not pave Whitewater Township portion of Park Road (seasonal rd, not make it a raceway to the lake). Develop disc golf course where? Automatic doors and locks at Hipray Park/Spring-loaded shutoff valves @ Hipray/Exhaust fans in bathrooms at Hipray/Repair all wooden fences @ Hipray/Remove all berms and brush @ Hipray.
189. Love the ideas of improving the trails!
191. Need to talk to owners around trail. (Lossie Road Nature Trail)
193. Do what you see best to do! (Hi Pray Park)
196. We've been camping at WW Twp Park for 30 years. Finally bought property on Skegemog Point. The township needs to invest in additional camping at the park. It's very hard to get sites every year. Missed opportunity on your part. Also the camping fees at WWTP are much lower than area campgrounds. You have direct access to the lake! I use to refer to site 15 as my "million \$ view for \$30 per night." Love this campground. But even happier to have my own slice of heaven on Elk Lake!
202. Make a paved walk/bike trail along Skegemog Point Road from 72 to north end.
203. (marina) Go after federal funding and DNR grant for a marina. There is no were to more a boat on elk lake. No were available. No were at the S. end of the lake. It is very apparent from the day use, that this is very much needed. It also brings in lots of money to our area. T.Y. Mike
209. Would like trails to remain rustic, prefer not to be over run with tourists like sleeping bear parks.
212. Never been there (Petobego Natural Area). Battle Creek Trail bridge NEEDS improvement at Lossie Road. Too many downed trees as well.

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