

**COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION**

Understanding the social and physical characteristics of the Village of Homer is an essential element to planning parks and recreation areas that will meet the existing and future local needs. This Plan is intended to serve the residents of the Village of Homer, although ultimately the Village would have an open parks policy that would not require users to live in the Village specifically. This section provides an outline of the community characteristics that will influence the Village’s parks and recreation planning decisions. Furthermore, data is included for portions of the surrounding Township, which are likely to use the park and recreation facilities in the Village. This area is referred to as the Homer Service Area or H.S.A., and is described as the Village of Homer, along with portions of Homer Township, Clarendon, Eckford and Albion Townships. The H.S.A. covers approximately 81 square miles.

**SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS**

People are a community’s most valuable asset. Ensuring that adequate parks and recreation areas are available to meet the existing and future population is important to a healthy community. Furthermore, as the Village’s population increases the amount of parks and open space needed increases. Understanding this population increase is important.

**Population**

Because of the direct relationship between parkland and population this section notes the population of the Village of Homer at the time of the last decennial census (2000) was 1,851 persons. This was a 5.3 percent increase over the 1990 population of 1,758 persons. Population estimates for 2005 show this population has decreased slightly to 1,789 and will continue to decline thought 2010 to 1,753.

TABLE 2-1 POPULATION 1990-2010

	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005 *</b>	<b>2010**</b>
Village of Homer	1,758	1,851	1,789	1,753
Homer Service Area (HAS)	4,411	4,530	4,588	4,651
Calhoun County	135,982	137,985	139,193	140,293
* Claritas Data Services Estimate, ** Claritas Data Services Projection				

SOURCE: Claritas Data Services; Gove Associates Inc. 2006

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The population of the H.S.A. in 2000 was 4,530 persons up 119 persons from 1990. While the 2005 population estimates for the Village have declined the H.S.A. is estimated to have increased by 58 persons to 4,588. This population increase is projected to continue through 2010 to 4,651 persons.

**Age Composition**

The distribution of the Village’s population by age group is an important factor to consider when developing parks and recreation areas. The parks and the amenities developed in those parks should be suited to meet the needs of the residents it is intended to serve. For example, based on the age distribution in Table 2-1 the Village should consider park facilities that will address youth (under age 19) and other facilities that can serve the 30-49 year old group. These segments of the population make up more than 63 percent of the population. An example might be a linear trail that is suitable for walking, biking, rollerblading and other activities by residents of all ages.

TABLE 2-2 – AGE DISTRIBUTION VILLAGE OF HOMER 2000

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Under 9	296	15.9
10-19	341	18.4
20-29	251	13.5
30-49	535	29.0
50-64	237	12.9
65 and older	191	10.3
Total	1,851	100
Median Age	31.4	N/A
Male	907	49
Female	944	51

SOURCE: 2000 U.S. Census of Population; Gove Associates, Inc. 2006

**Housing Characteristics**

Many community elements, individually and collectively, comprise a community’s quality of life. However, housing is one of the forms of development that can have the greatest impact on not only the quality of life, but also the physical landscape of the Village and the H.S.A.. The housing characteristics within the Village and the H.S.A. also play a major role in the area’s social and economic dynamics which includes the development of new park and recreation facilities. The following

housing characteristics should be considered when planning new parks and recreational facilities.

**Housing Units and Tenure**

The 2000 Census reported 1,671 housing units in the H.S.A of which 754 housing units were located in the Village of Homer. Table illustrates just over 93 percent of the housing units in the Village occupied year-around compared to 94 percent in the H.S.A. and more than 92 percent in the County. The Village of Homer has more renter occupied housing units at 30 percent of all units than does the H.S.A. at 20.3 percent and slightly more than the County at 27.1 percent. Whether a household owns or rents their home has little impact on parks and recreation, however it can be an indicator of the wealth of the community.

TABLE 2-3- HOUSING UNITS

	<b>Village of Homer</b>	<b>Homer Service Area</b>	<b>Calhoun County</b>
Total Units	754	1,771	58,691
% of Total	100%	100%	100%
Occupied Year-Round	707	1,671	54,100
% of Total	93.7%	94.4%	92.1%
Owner-Occupied	495	1,332	39,476
% of Total	70%	79.7%	72.9%
Renter-Occupied	212	339	14,624
% of Total	30.0%	20.3%	27.1%

SOURCE: 2000 U.S. Census; Gove Associates, Inc. 2006

**Disabled Persons**

Understanding that all residents are not fully able is important, as the Village should consider the needs of all residents when planning and developing parks, trails and recreation areas. In 2000 the Census reported that 321 persons (17.3%) between the age of 5 and 64 had some form of disability. This was slightly higher than the 13.7 percent of the County population reporting some form of disability. While the reported disability may or may not be associated with mobility it is important for the Village to ensure all future development of parks and recreation areas are ADA accessible.

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**Income**

Income is a key indicator of the economic condition of the Village and the resident’s ability to pay park fees, additional taxes/special millages for the purchase of land for new parks, park use or park development. Table 2-4 depicts the 1990 and 2000 median household incomes for the Village of Homer, Homer Service Area and Calhoun County. This table shows that in 2000 the Village’s median household income was 9.47 percent lower than the County, 8.73 percent lower than in the Homer Service Area.

TABLE 2-4 – MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOMES: 1990-2005

	1990	2000	2005	% Increase 1990-2005
Village of Homer	\$22,652	\$35,714	\$41,071	81.3%
Homer Service Area	\$24,906	\$38,835	\$44,229	77.6%
Calhoun County	\$27,476	\$39,098	\$42,669	55.3%
Michigan	\$31,020	\$44,667	\$52,527	69.3%

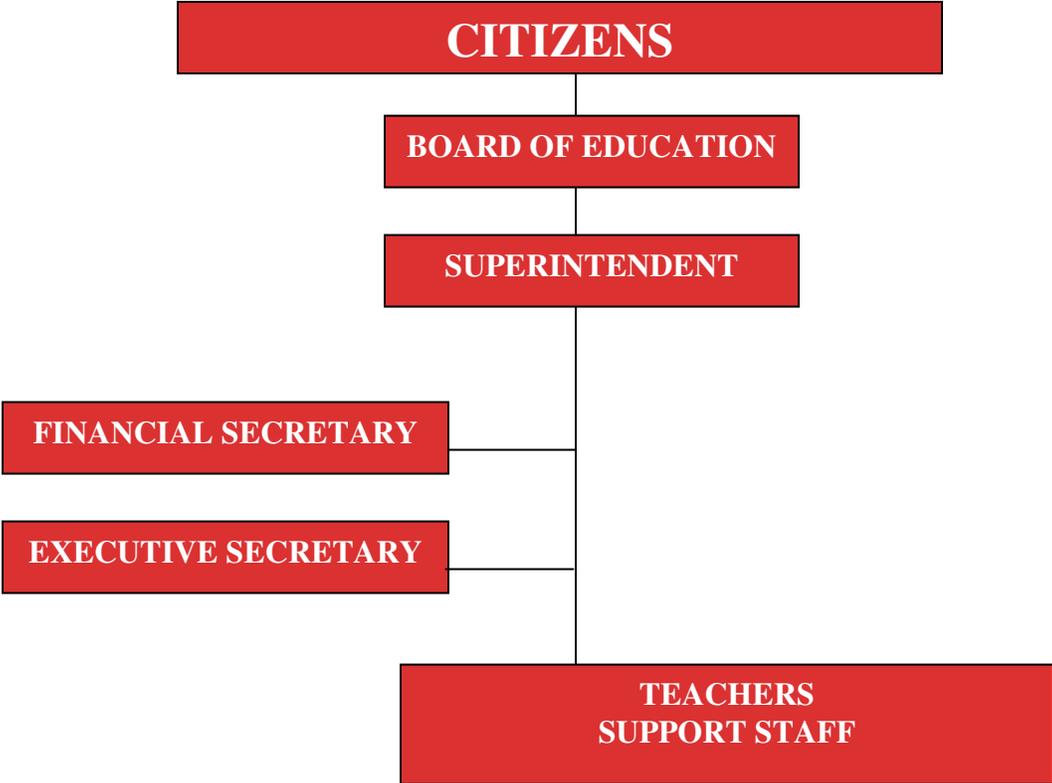
SOURCE: 1990-2000 U.S. Census; Gove Associates, Inc. 2006

The Village’s median household income, however, experienced a relatively higher growth rate between 1990 and 2005 than the Service Area, County and the State as a whole.

**Homer School District**

The community school district services a population of 5,006 persons within a 93 square mile area. Enrollment for 2005-2006 was 1,048 students for the schools in the district: Lillian Fletcher Elementary (376 students), Homer Middle School (307 students) and Homer High School (365 students).

The Homer Community School district serves the Homer regional area which includes parts of Homer, Clarendon, Albion, Eckford, Tekonsha, Fredonia, Litchfield, Butler and Jackson Townships. Administration of the school system is under the guidance of the Homer Community School Board of Trustees and Superintendent Brent Holcomb. Refer to Diagram 2 for a representation of the school district's organization.

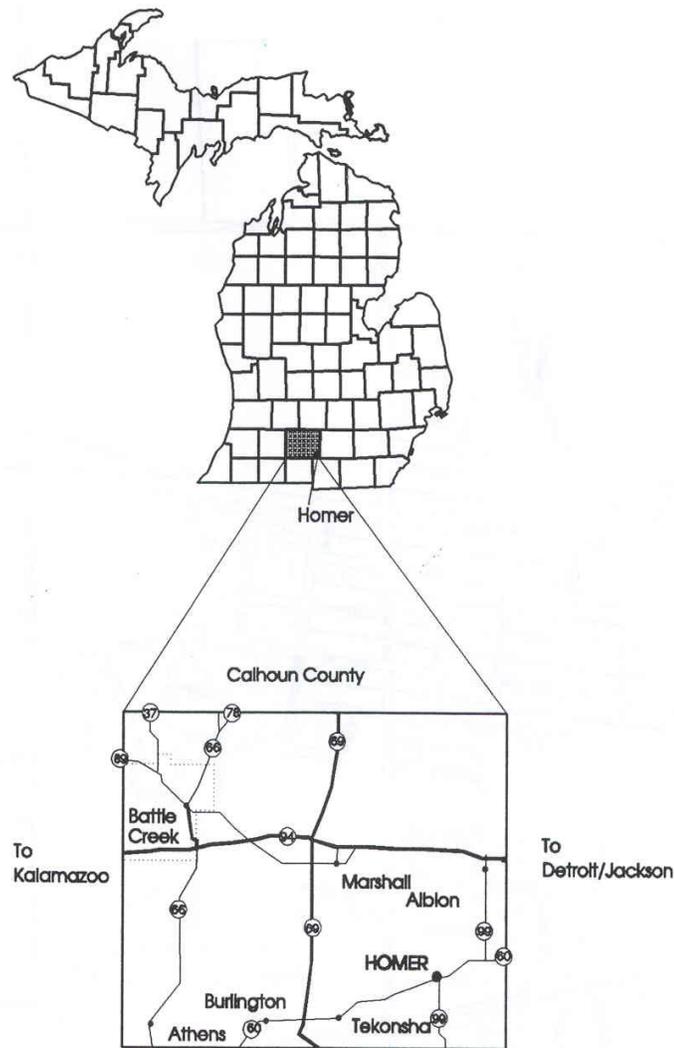


**PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS**

**Location**

The Village of Homer covers an area of approximately a square mile. The village is located within Calhoun County on the eastern shore of Homer Lake. The south branch of the Kalamazoo River cuts through the eastern part of the Village. Refer to Map 1 for the regional location of Homer.

Homer is located 9 miles south of Albion, 25 miles west of Jackson and 35 miles southeast of Battle Creek, Michigan with state highways M-60 and M-99 providing access to the Village. Homer is 30 minutes from downtown Jackson and 60 minutes from Kalamazoo and Lansing. Refer to Map 1 for the legal boundaries of Homer.



MAP 1 – Homer Location Map

**Village of Homer  
Parks, Recreation and Trailway Plan**

**NATURAL RESOURCES AND PHYSICAL FEATURES**

The land and water resources within the Village define the base upon which all man-made activities occur. The general climate of the area, the composition of local soils, the predominant vegetation that exists within the Village, and the quality and expanse of both surface and ground water all determine the ability of the Village to sustain development. These factors also impact the type and location of parks, recreation areas and other natural areas ideal for open space preservation. The following describes these elements in more detail and are in part used to determine what areas of the Village are suitable for park and recreation development and preservation:

**Existing Land Use**

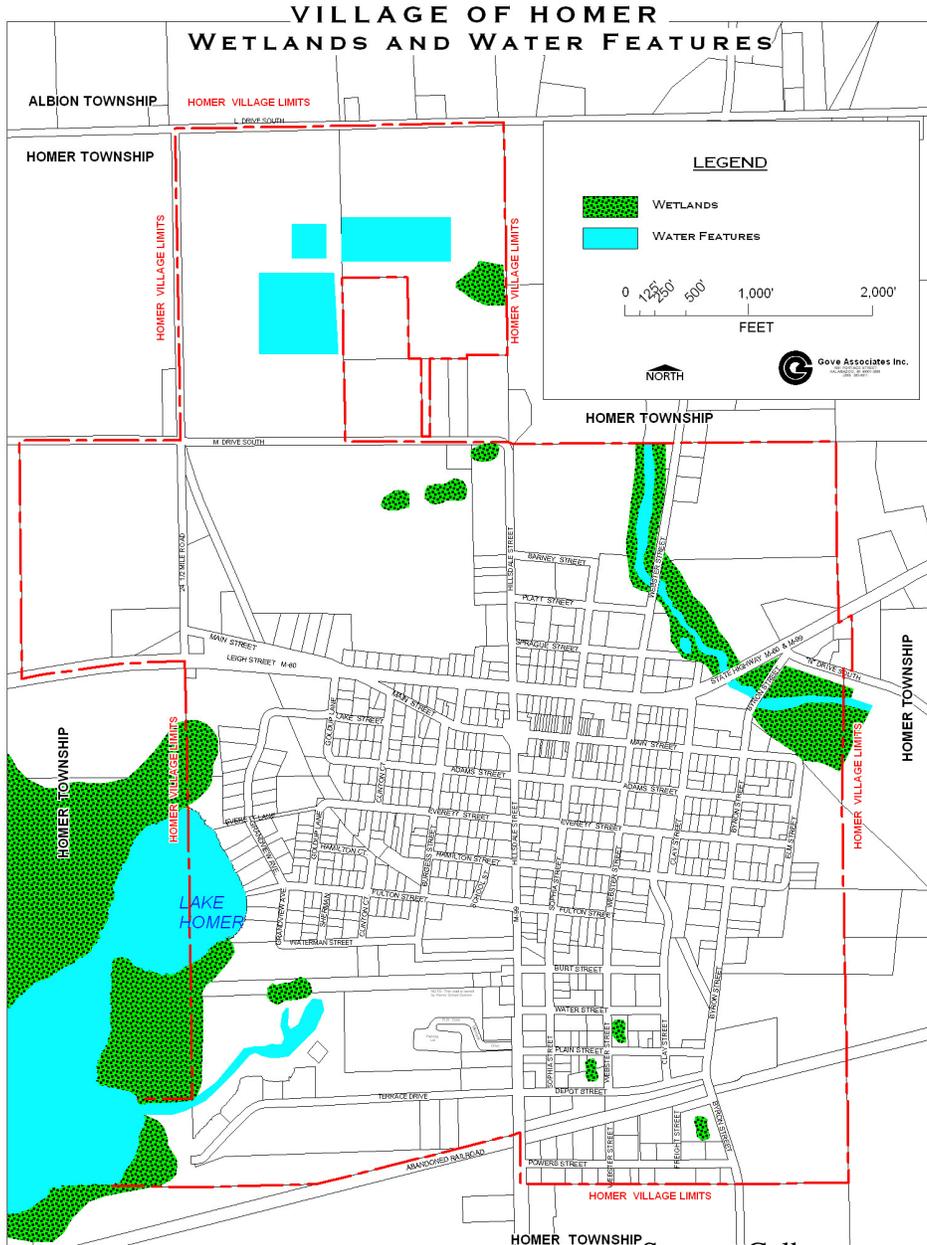
The Village of Homer has 913 acres within its boundaries according to GIS Mapping files maintained by Calhoun County. Approximately 48% of that land is vacant or agricultural, 18% is residential, 13% is public or quasi public, 13% is streets, 4% is industrial, 2% is commercial and 2% is surface water.

**Environmental Features**

The south branch of the Kalamazoo River flows through the northeast corner of the Village of Homer, flowing in a northerly direction. Homer Lake on the western edge of the Village is the other significant body of water within the Village. Public access to the lake is provided at the Villages Lakefront Park where a boat launch and fishing pier are provided. The Village and School District own wetlands adjacent to the lake which act as a natural storm water filter. Improving water quality of Homer Lake has been a concern of the community for many years and is a top priority of the Lake Management Board. The Lake Management Board is composed of representatives from all governmental units in the watershed area and the Drain Commissioner, and has the power to assess taxes for lake improvements. Refer to Map 2 for further information regarding wetlands and water resources.

# Village of Homer Parks, Recreation and Trailway Plan

## Map 2



Source: Calhoun  
County

### Soils and Topography

Portions of the Village of Homer are located within the flood plain of the Kalamazoo River. Soils are primarily Fox Loam. Topography is gently undulating with good drainage. Underlying stratified beds of gravel and sands have a high percentage of limestone.

## **Village of Homer Parks, Recreation and Trailway Plan**

### **Vegetation**

Existing vegetation is generally urban plants. Wetland species such as cattail, arrowheads, and bulrushes are found in marsh areas adjacent to the Kalamazoo River and Homer Lake. Some of the Village's wetlands are forested with species such as Elm, Ash, and Red Maple. The environment in the vicinity of the Village of Homer is predominantly agricultural vegetation in nature, and surrounds the Village limits.

### **Historical Cultural Features**

Homer has three structures identified as historic sites by the State Historic Preservation Office in addition to dozens of properties within the Village listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The three historic structures listed on the Michigan Registry include the First Presbyterian Church located 309 South Sophia Street, the Cortright-Van Patten Mill located at 109 Bryon Street and the Homer Fire Station located at 128 East Homer Street.

The Cortright-Van Patten Mill is also listed on the National Register List in addition to much of downtown Homer. The historic downtown consists of 188 sites and structures that all contribute to the historic nature of the community. Maps 3 illustrates the location of the historic district and several notable structures and community facilities. The Homer Historical Society operates the Blair Farm as a cultural resource for community events. The Village also features many fine field stone buildings such as the Public Library built in the 1940's.



**PARK AND OPEN SPACE INVENTORY**

Within the Village of Homer there are a number of parks and recreational facilities that serve the Village residents and individuals living in the surrounding Townships, Calhoun County, the Homer Public Schools, and the State of Michigan. Nearby communities also provide recreational opportunities to Village residents. Many of these facilities are active recreation areas consisting of playgrounds, baseball diamonds, and linear trails; while other facilities include less developed facilities and provide opportunities for hiking, bird watching etc.

The following is an inventory of the existing parks and recreation areas available to Village residents. This inventory can then be used in part to identify the facilities in the area and help make decisions on the facilities that should be developed.

**Recreation Inventory**

Recreation opportunities in Homer are available through a cooperative relationship between the Village and the Homer school system. Recreational facilities found in the Village are presented below and illustrated on Map 3, they include public and school recreational sites.

County Canoe Launch

The Kalamazoo River flows through Homer and offers opportunities for hiking, canoeing and fishing. A 0.5 acre improved canoe launch maintained by the County is located along M-99/M-60 in Grist Mill Park.

Lake Front Park

The largest of the Village parks at 3.5 acres, Lake Front Park offers Public access to Homer Lake for fishing, boat launch, picnicking, observation deck and parking lot.

Greg Barton Circle

A small garden, with a paved walkway and flagpole are the key focal points to the Village Center. The Barton Circle is a traffic roundabout occupying 0.25 acres and is a local gathering spot with handicap access adjacent to the business district.

## **Village of Homer Parks, Recreation and Trailway Plan**

### Grist Mill Park

Acres: 1 acre

Facilities: This park is located on the shores of the Kalamazoo River adjacent to M-60. It has two shelter areas, one for picnicking and one as a scenic overlook of the park and historic grist mill dam along with covered bridges, canoe launch, fishing pier, scenic pedestrian trail, park benches and picnic tables.

### Webster Street Park

Acres: 1 acre

Facilities: This park is located in the northeastern section of Homer, is bounded by Webster Street, Platt Street, Spaquest Street and Sophia Street. The park contains an outdoor ice rink, shelter, playground, sand volleyball courts, parking lot and walking paths.

### Roadside Park

Acres: 2 acres

Facilities: This proposed park (currently undeveloped) is to be located adjacent to Webster Street along the Kalamazoo River.

### Water Tower Park

Acres: .25 acres

Facilities: This park is located adjacent to Sophia Street and the Water Tower area along state highway M-60. It acts as a gateway into downtown Homer. Current developments include parking, benches and a kiosk. It is part of the Linear Park and Trail System. The Downtown Beautification and Landscaping Plan has identified this location as a possible site for a farmers market.

### Homer Linear Park.

Length: 1.5 miles

Facilities: This park is a linear park/trail which begins at Webster Street Park, running north to Drive South, then running west to 24<sup>th</sup> Street, then south to West Main Street. Additional trail sections are required to complete this linear park: including new trail from Grist Mill Park along M-60 and Webster Street, new trail from 24<sup>th</sup> Street to downtown along West Main Street.

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Homer Community House

This recently renovated 1930's structure has a stage, small kitchen, restrooms, and improved sound system. It is available to the community for social events, reunions, elections, private family events, dances and other special events. The Community House capacity is between 250 - 500 persons, and is used approximately 35 times per year.

Homer Fire Museum

The Homer Fire Museum is a historical site open from July 4th and through the month of September. Annual attendance to the museum is approximately 100 persons.

Blair Farm and Historic House

The Blair Farm is sponsored by the Homer Historical Society. Three main events are scheduled annually to celebrate the heritage of the Homer Area.

**Homer Public Schools**

R. K. Curry Athletic Facility

Acres: 60 acres

Facilities: One all-weather 440-yard track with multi-purpose field

Four softball diamonds

Two baseball diamonds

Two outdoor tennis courts

Two soccer fields and/or a football field

Two basketball courts

Lillian Fletcher Elementary

Facilities: One gymnasium (70)

Three playgrounds (lower, middle and upper elementary)

Homer Area High / Middle School

Facilities: One weight room

One cafeteria for special programs

Two full size gymnasiums

## **Village of Homer Parks, Recreation and Trailway Plan**

### Summer Recreation Programs

The area recreation programs have been in existence for 26 years. Initial funding for the summer recreation programs was provided by a collaboration of the townships and Village through the Homer Public School system. Subsequently the municipal funding lapsed and the school system continues to sponsor the programs with the assistance of user fees and a United Way grant.

Currently community volunteers oversee the administration of recreation programs with input from the Public School staff. The Homer Public Schools employs the Athletic Director to administer the recreation programs over the summer months.

The Homer school's summer recreation programs operate for seven weeks during the summer and serves 300 children ages five and older. The following programs are provided: arts and crafts, field trips to zoos and Detroit Tiger baseball games, weekly visits to a swimming pool in neighboring Litchfield, and supervised play. Softball and baseball teams are also sponsored through the summer recreation program. In 1998 there were 23 coed teams in eight divisions for children age six to twelve.

Other recreation programs provided are Homer Youth Basketball for children age six and older. Pickup basketball games are available to adults for two divisions one evening per week. School plays and music are presented through the school curriculum.

Soccer is available for children to participate in a fall and spring program sponsored by Homer Concord Soccer League. One hundred and fifty children participated in the soccer league in 1998.

### **School Facilities**

#### Homer Community Schools

Operation of the recreational programs and maintenance of the school recreational facilities are under the direction of the School District and volunteers. The Homer Community Schools has assumed the responsibility for the administration of recreational programs in the Homer area. The school administration employs a Recreation Director from their annual budget. The programs are additionally funded through a grant from the Albion United Way, entry fees of participants and candy sales.

### **Calhoun County Facilities**

Calhoun County maintains four parks located throughout the County. Of these four parks three are located in Emmett Township just east of the City of Battle Creek and one is located in Bedford Township north of the City of Battle Creek. The following text describes these County parks.

#### **Historic Bridge Park**

Historic Bridge Park, formerly known as “County Park” is located at 14930 Wattles Road. The park is located along the Kalamazoo River and Dickinson Creek. The park offers a variety of passive recreational opportunities including: picnicking, walking/hiking, bike riding, fishing, boating and wildlife observation.

The park also serves a trailhead for the County Linear Trailway that will eventually connect to the Battle Creek Linear Trail to the west and the Marshall Riverwalk to the east.

The park is unique in that it contains a number of restored iron or steel bridges. The park when fully developed will have a total of 15 bridges.

#### **Kimball Pines County Park**

Covering nearly 100 acres of plantation pines planted in 1930's and 1940's. Planted in the 1930's and 1940's, Kimball Pines Park is one of the oldest stands of urban pines in Michigan. The park also contains deciduous woodlands, ponds and a creek that is a tributary of the Kalamazoo River.

Kimball Pines offers scenic areas, hiking trails, picnicking facilities, cross-country skiing, and nature observation. The park is located off of Michigan Avenue behind the Calhoun County Medical Care Facility in Emmett Township.

#### **Ott Biological Preserve**

Ott Biological Preserve is often considered to be "hidden jewel" in Calhoun County. Located just east of Battle Creek, at the end of Arlington Street, off of Michigan Avenue in Emmett Township. The undeveloped park covers approximately 300 acres of natural habitat shaped by glaciers. Within the park there are two spring fed kettle lakes, as well as the east edge of Dexter Lake, wet peaty lowlands and dry, sandy uplands. Activities available in the park include: hiking on trails and boardwalks and wildlife viewing.

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**Custer Green Golf Course**

A 9-hole 2,380 yard public golf course, Custer Greens Golf Course is managed by Calhoun County Community Development/Board of Park Trustees. It is located at 5500 Armstrong Road off of Dickman Road in Battle Creek. The course can be completed by four golfers in less than 2 hours, carts are also available.

**State Parks**

**1) Meridian-Baseling State Park** - This unique, landlocked park designates the spot where all township, range and section measurements begins for the entire state of Michigan. It is not accessible to the public, but is being preserved for its historic value.

**2) Yankee Springs Recreation Area** - This 5,017 acre facility west of Village of Homer in Barry County has 325 campsites and offers a variety of recreation opportunities including picnic facilities, playground equipment, swimming, boating, a beach house, a boat launch, mountain biking, hunting, fishing, hiking, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, and horseback riding.

**3) Fort Custer Recreation Area** - This 2,962 acre recreation area is located in Kalamazoo County southwest of Village of Homer and has 112 campsites. Fort Custer also offers a variety of recreational opportunities including picnic facilities, playground equipment, mountain biking, swimming, boating, a beach house, a boat launch, hunting, fishing, hiking, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, and horseback riding.

**4) Waterloo Recreation Area** - This park is over 20,000 acres and offers campgrounds, a swimming beach, several picnic sites, fishing, boat launch, hiking trails, horseback riding, hunting, and cross-country skiing.

**5) Hayes State Park** – Located in southeastern Jackson County, Hayes State Park covers 654 acres. Users of the park can enjoy the several playground areas, a beach house for swimming, fishing, boating and picnicking.

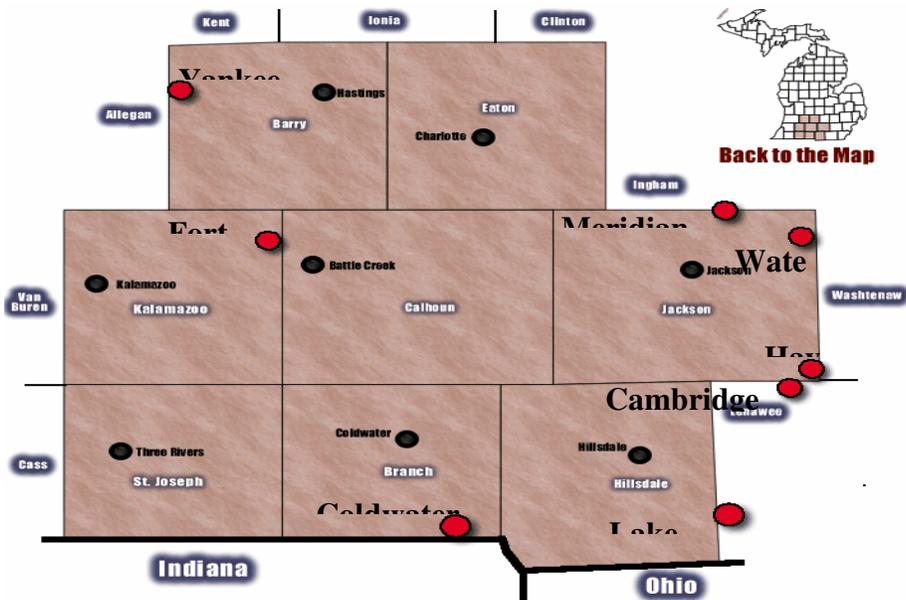
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**6) Lee Lake Park** – DNR lake access

**7) Cambridge Junction Historical Park** – A relatively small state park, 80 acres, Cambridge Junction Historic State Park is the site of Walker Tavern, a major stopping place for stagecoaches traveling between Detroit and Chicago in the early nineteenth century. The park consists of a visitors center and a picnic area.

**8) Lake Hudson Recreation Area** – Lake Hudson Recreation Area has 2,796 acres of recreational opportunities around Lake Hudson. Popular activities in Lake Hudson include: Hunting, swimming, fishing, and the use of metal detectors.

**9) Coldwater Lake State Park** – An undeveloped park covering 400 acres. Users of the park can hunt, fish, hike and use the trails for snowmobiling and cross country skiing.



**COMMUNITY INPUT AND NEEDS**

Parks, trails and open space needs of Village of Homer and the Homer Service Area (based on a 2005 population of 4,588 and a projected population of 4,651 by 2010) can be determined in many different ways, and each method will likely indicate different needs. As a result, it is important to collect a variety of information and develop a list of parks, recreation and open space needs that will best meet the needs of the Village.

Some of the more common methods for identifying these needs include:

- Comparing the Village's existing facilities with standards established by the National Recreation and Parks Association.
- Acquiring input and feedback on a day-to-day basis by residents and users of the park.
- Community input survey regarding parks and recreation issues.
- Public input workshops or charettes.
- Need based on population distribution.

Many communities use only one or two of these methods, however, Village of Homer utilized several of these methods. A summary of the public input collected and the basis for actions of this plan follows:

**Recreation Standards**

The following table illustrates the suggested facilities needed based on a total projected population of 4,600 persons by 2010, and the standards established by the National Recreation and Parks Association and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. These standards serve only as a guide and may not meet the actual needs of the community as they are broad and general.

**Village of Homer  
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**TABLE 5-1 - RECREATION STANDARDS AND INVENTORY FOR VILLAGE OF HOMER OWNED AND MAINTAINED FACILITIES**

<b>Type of Opportunity</b>	<b>Applicable Standard (a)</b>	<b>Quantity for Population in 2010 (4,600)</b>	<b>Existing Village of Homer Facilities</b>
<b>Total Local Park Land (acres)</b>	<b>6.25 – 10.5 acres / 1,000 persons</b>	<b>28.75 - 48.3 acres</b>	<b>25.0 acres</b>
<b>Mini-Park*</b>	<b>.5 acres / 1,000 persons</b>	<b>2.25 acres</b>	<b>1.5 acres</b>
<b>Neighborhood Park*</b>	<b>1 - 2 acres /1,000 persons</b>	<b>4.5 - 9 acres</b>	<b>3.5 acres</b>
<b>Community Park*</b>	<b>5 - 8 acres /1,000 persons</b>	<b>22.5 - 36 acres</b>	<b>20 acres</b>
<b>Linear Parks*</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b>7,000 LF</b>
<b>Special Use Areas*</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Conservancy Areas*</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b>1</b>
Ball Fields	1/3,000	1	1
Outdoor Basketball Courts (youth)	1/5,000	1	1
Outdoor Ice Rinks - Artificial	1/20,000	0	0
Picnic Tables (tables)	1/200	23	6
Playgrounds	1/3,000	1	1
Sledding Hills	1/40,000	0	0
Soccer Fields	1/20,000	0	1
Outdoor Swimming Pools	1/40,000	0	0
Outdoor Tennis Courts	1/4,000	1	1
Boat Launches	1/ 4,000	1	2
Fishing Access (feet)	1,000/1,000	4,500	4,000 LF
Fishing Piers	1/100,000	0	1
Land Open to Snowmobiling (acres)	10/1,000	20	0
Swimming Beaches	1/25,000	0	0
(a) Units/population			
* Definitions provided in Appendix C			

SOURCE: Michigan Department of Natural Resources, 1986; Building Michigan's Recreation Future, Appendix B, pages 100-101; Gove Associates, Inc. 2005

### **Local Input at Planning Commission and Village Board Meetings**

Over the course of the planning process, the Village received input from local residents at the regularly scheduled Planning Commission and Village Board Meetings. In all, the public was invited to two meetings: June 29th 2005 and July 7th, 2005. The following is a summary of the comments and general nature of parks and recreation facilities desired.

- There was an interest in walking paths that would be sensitive to wildlife and the natural environment.
- A fishing pond and access to the Grand River for fishing and other activities.
- Incorporating trails in wetland areas was an idea.
- It was suggested development of a park could be developed similar to what exists in Aurelius Village next to the Village Hall, complete with 2 softball and 2 soccer fields, a basketball hoop, picnic shelter, and playground.

### **Community Input Survey**

In order to better understand the desires and perspectives of its residents, the Village conducted a community opinion survey during the Village's Comprehensive Plan updating process. The survey developed jointly between the Planning Commission and consultants from Gove Associates contained a number of questions relating to parks, recreation and open space needs of the Village. The survey was distributed to 1,000 property tax payers in the Village, and collected over a three week period ending in late May of 2006. Of the 1,000 distributed surveys, 183 were returned for a strong return rate of 18.3 percent.

The following text summarizes the results of the survey as they relate to future parks, recreation and open space preservation needs in the Village.

### **Issues**

Survey respondents were given a list of issues that could potentially be perceived as problems. Several questions on the list related to land preservation and natural resources. Of the issues on the list more respondents felt that "division of farmland" and "protection of ground water" were perceived to be a moderate to serious problem. Table 5-2 illustrates how those surveyed responded to the issues presented.

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TABLE 5-2- FACILITY NEEDS

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
Indoor Recreation Center	55%	15%	<b>30%</b>
Visual/Performing Arts Center	60%	30%	<b>10%</b>
Family Recreation Center	<b>55%</b>	33%	12%
Trailway	<b>30%</b>	60%	10%

SOURCE: Gove Associates, Inc. 2006

Other issues on the list that were perceived as not being a need were ballfields, tennis courts, bowling, football, soccer and ice rink in the Village. While these issues were not considered to be high priorities, with increased development this could change quickly. Forty percent of those responding felt accessibility barriers existed for persons with disabilities.

**Recreation Programs - Issues and Concerns**

Survey respondents were asked if they support or not support a series of activities. These statements were intended to determine if in the perception of the Village residents, with regards to the services, if they should be enhanced or if they were sufficient. Table 5-3 illustrates the Recreation Program Issues and Concerns within Village of Homer as they relate to parks, recreation and open space preservation.

TABLE 5-3 – RECREATION PROGRAM ISSUES AND CONCERNS

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
Music, Visual Arts, Dance	<b>58%</b>	37%	10%
Football, Tennis, Softball, Soccer	20%	<b>70%</b>	10%
Weight Training and Exercise	<b>70%</b>	20%	10%
Organized Trips, Activities	<b>50%</b>	42%	8%

SOURCE: Gove Associates, Inc. 2006

Among the recreation program issues and concerns that respondents felt most passionately about included 70 percent of respondents feeling “some form of exercise and activity was needed, while 58 percent stating that “music, arts and dance was unimportant.” In terms of services and amenities offered, the statement of “accessibility to parks and recreation facilities was a problem” was supported by 40 percent of the respondents.

**BASIS FOR COMMUNITY NEED/ACTIONS**

Village of Homer has both developed and undeveloped parks and recreation facilities, as illustrated in Table 5-1. Furthermore, the Village and other organizations such as the schools, maintain undeveloped/under developed land in the Village as open space or passive recreation uses. The recreation standards in Table 5-1 indicate that the Village should have between 28.75 and 48.3 acres of parkland. Due to the rural setting of the Village, and relatively scattered population, the Village should consider the acquisition of a larger (20+ acres) tract of property for the purpose of development as a community park versus development of smaller park parcels.

Development of such a park would principally focus on those recreation activities primarily desired by the survey respondents. Development that would be appropriate in a community park would consist of links to multi-use trails, a formal playground, picnic shelter, ballfields, soccer fields, ice skating, and family activities.

Finishing the linear or multi-use trails throughout the Village connecting them to existing and future parks or open space areas are another recreation facility the Village has an interest in developing. These trails would be built specific to the location and may consist of wood chip paths through a wooded nature area or elevated boardwalk through a wetland or along the Kalamazoo River, but mostly a paved path along major streets in Homer, linking to residential areas.

While the needs of the Village have been identified and the specific location of the park and linear trails identified on the following map and text represent potential locations for future parks or open spaces and the justification for each location.

Certain indoor recreation programming and activities were included on the survey responses; a “recreation center” for youth-adult-seniors being paramount. Visual and performing arts, craft arts, dance and workout rooms were also mentioned by the majority of respondents.

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**TABLE 6-1 – Park, Recreation and Open Space Basis for Action**

<b>Park Number and Location</b>	<b>Use Amenities Offered</b>	<b>Justification</b>
1) Located in the south corner of the Village around Homer Lake	A park in this location would be primarily a community park used for passive and active recreation areas. Serving as open space as well as an active recreational park in this area could offer cross-country skiing, picnicking, bird watching or family activities and ball fields	Some locations within this area are flood prone or are designated wetlands. Development for residential or other uses is limited. Protection of Homer Lake should be encouraged.
2) Located in the Community House, in the central area of the Village.	Indoor family and community activities would be suitable in this location. Amenities could include work out area, arts, crafts, dance, center for trips, etc. for all age groups of the community.	This activity scored high with many respondents to the survey. The Community Center, a long-time facility in the Village, was renovated several years ago. It is centrally located to all residents in the greater Homer area, with existing parking facilities. The center could accommodate several hundred people for one activity or smaller groups for different programs.
3) Located partly in sections 8, 9, 16 and 17 in the west central portion of the Village.	This location is well suited for an undeveloped passive recreation area. If some development were to occur, amenities could include walking and hiking trails, cross-country skiing, picnic area, bird watching or other low impact activities.	Area 3 is generally undeveloped and open, it has some woodlands, agriculture areas, drains and other undeveloped open spaces. Located in the northeast section of the Village, an open space preserve or park would be easily accessible to all residents of the Village. Map 3 also shows this area is located in a portion of the Village with some elevation change thus making portions of it more desirable for a park or open space.
4) Located along the Kalamazoo River in Homer.	Developed and undeveloped parks and recreation areas are both located in this area. Development of a fishing site tied to hiking trails, picnic areas and playgrounds.	The Kalamazoo River is an asset that the Village should take advantage of. Much of the Area is located in flood prone and wetland areas making it more desirable for preservation and recreational uses. This location is also close to a County park to the east. A facility in the Village of Homer in this location could be a part of a regional parks system connected via trails and the river.
<b>OTHER PARKS AND OPEN SPACES</b>		
Village of Homer should review future residential developments within the Village and when possible encourage open space / cluster development. Through open space / cluster development the Village can retain open space and encourage developers to include passive or active recreation amenities in future developments. For additional information on open space and clustered developments refer to the Village of Homer Comprehensive Plan.		

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**TABLE 6-2 Linear Trail and Bike Path Basis for Action**

Trail Letter and Location	Trail Type and Users	Justification
<b>1 M-60 Trail Eastside</b> -from Sophia St. /Water Tower Park connecting to Grist Mill Park at Clay Street	A multiple use path separated from the road as an "sidepath for 80% of its length, some nearer to Sophia Street is a "side path" trail separated by curb lawn from vehicular traffic. Since the trail were separated from the road the user base would increase to include cyclists, walkers, joggers, snowmobilers, and roller bladders.	This pathway is a critical link connecting the downtown business district to the highly used "Grist Mill Park". Only a small section of paved surface is required to make this connection which will provide a safe route to encourage pedestrian walking, biking, running and activity within the Village and Downtown.
<b>2) Clay St. Trail</b> – a primary north south trail which would connect the Homer High/Middle School and Athletic Complex to the downtown	A paved shoulder or multiple use side path is anticipated which would be primarily separated from the road where room allows. If the trail were separated from the road the user base would increase to include cyclists, walkers, joggers, and roller bladders.	M-99 is a busy thoroughfare and non-motorized transportation on M-99 is very hazardous if not impossible. A non-motorized path separate from M-99 would provide a safe means of transportation within the Village limits that would provide that critical north to south connection to the Village. This connection would provide the missing link from Depot St Trail down to the Grist Mill Park and the Downtown area.
<b>3) Lake Front Park Trail</b> – Homer Lake Park to M-60 West Main St.	A combination of side path and paved shoulder running parallel to the Homer Lakefront properties. The trail would primarily be an extended paved shoulder which would include an informational kiosk, overlook decks for fishing or wildlife viewing, interpretative signage and benches down at the Homer Lake Front Park Trailhead. Users would include residents of all ages who enjoy viewing and studying the natural environment, walking, cycling, rollerbladers, and joggers.	The Lake Front Park Trail will provide a logical non-motorized pedestrian connection for the many residents that reside on the west side of M-99 in the Village. These folks would have walking access to the Lake Front Park and all its amenities.
<b>4) Webster Park Trail</b> – Grist Mill Park to Webster Park.	A paved shoulder or multiple use paths separated from the road. The primary users of a paved shoulder would be cyclists. If the trail were separated from the road the user base would increase to include cyclists, walkers, joggers, snowmobilers, and roller bladders.	The proposed trail routing falls within the Village Right of Way, however it is recommended that some citizen involvement be incorporated for this new pathway. This path will provide a well needed link from the current Grist Mill Park Boardwalk directly to the Webster Park.
<b>5) M-60 Trail Westside</b> - from Triangle Park /West Main St. to Water Tower Park at Sophia St.	This trail would primarily function as a side path that would follow the M-60 R.O.W. Enough right of way is anticipated that the path could function as multi-use path. Users would include residents of all ages who enjoy viewing and studying the, walking, cycling, rollerbladers, and joggers.	This path will provide a critical link from the west side of town to the downtown. Currently, there is no direct connection along M-60 from Triangle Park to the downtown. This link would provide a complete connection from the west side of town to the east side of town and Grist Mill Park. This park has a tremendous historical significance for the Village.

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<p><b>6) Hillsdale St. Trail</b> – from downtown north to the Athletic Complex High School and the Depot St. Trail</p>	<p>A side path trail, or multiple use paths separated from the road. The primary users of the path would be would include cyclists, walkers, joggers, and roller bladders.</p>	<p>This trail falls along the east side of M-99. Currently, there is a 3' broken path which is not used within the Right of Way. A wider path 10' would allow the surrounding residential children and adults a safe route to school as well as a looped connection from the downtown to the existing East West Depot Street Trail.</p>
<p><b>7) West Main St. Trail</b> – from 24.5 mile road to the M-60 West Main St. and Triangle Park</p>	<p>A paved shoulder trail, an extension of the existing paved shoulder trail along 24.5 mile rd., this trail will complete and connect the loop from the north side of Homer to the southside in Homer. The primary users of the path would be would include cyclists, walkers, joggers, and rollerbladders.</p>	<p>This trail falls along the south side of M-60, currently, there is a 3' broken path which is not used within the Right of Way. A wider path 10' would allow the surrounding residential children and adults a safe route from the west side of the Village to the downtown and the east side of the Village with the two highly used parks: Grist Mill Park and Webster Park.</p>

## GOALS AND ACTIONS

Village of Homer has identified a number of physical and social characteristics and important issues that are important in the creation of the parks and recreation master plan for the Village which include:

Key social characteristics of the community that can play a role in the development of park and recreation facilities or the preservation of open spaces have been identified.

- The Village has made clear its intentions for developing this report in the Introduction.
- One key element mentioned was to provide a new trail master plan that connected the primary focal points and parks throughout the Village.
- Important physical characteristics that are unique to the Village, which will be key to identifying suitable areas for new and expanded parks and recreation facilities, along with areas that should be considered for open space preservation have been identified.
- Community input was collected, and the parks, recreation and open spaces needs and desires of the community were identified.
- Potential locations for parks, open spaces, and trails were identified based upon population density, community need, and unique physical characteristics.

These elements along with the goals and objectives outlined in the Homer Village Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2000, and the former Parks and Recreation Plan make up the basis for the following Goals:

- Preserve open spaces and natural resources through the acquisition of land within the Village.
- Develop select portions of acquired property for use as a Community Park.
- Finish the development of a series of non-motorized trails within the Village for recreational use and access to natural areas for education and passive recreational enjoyment.

For the Village to achieve the identified goals, more specific information needed to be provided. The following action program summarizes and presents the proposed improvements necessary to meet the identified goals. The Action Program Identifies the year the action should occur, possible locations for the action, estimated cost, and potential funding sources. The Action Program is

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flexible and should be reviewed and modified as necessary to meet the changing needs of the Village and its residents.

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<i>Year</i>	<i>Potential Location</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Estimated Cost</i>	<i>Potential Funding Sources</i>
<i>2007-2009</i>	<i>Various Village Locations</i>	<i>Develop remaining links to Homer trail system, parks and the downtown.</i>	<i>Probable Estimate of Cost is found in the Appendix of this document for each trail segment.</i>	<p><i>Methods of acquiring property will include existing fee simple ownership mostly, through conservation easements, land donation, bargain sale, transfer of development rights, or purchase of development rights (for definitions see Appendix B).</i></p> <p><i>Funding sources could include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>• MDNR Grant</i></li> <li><i>• Village General Funds</i></li> <li><i>• Other Funds</i></li> </ul>
<i>2007-2009</i>	<i>Trail Priority #1, 2, &amp; 3</i>	<i>As determined at the trail meetings, a list was constructed that identified the priority developments for each trail segment. Beginning with #1 priority as the first goal of the Village. #2 and #3 seemed equally important.</i>	<i>A list of probable costs for each trail segment has been established by the consultant as a foundation for the development of each trail segment. The Village should contact land owners via mail, follow-up phone calls and public meeting to do a walking audit of the new routes. Additionally, the estimates of probable costs will become a basis for the grant application for each segment. However, a survey is needed to produce an accurate accounting of the existing conditions along the proposed trail path and a more accurate assessment of costs.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>• Village General Funds</i></li> <li><i>• MDNR Grant</i></li> <li><i>• County Bicycle Association Grant</i></li> <li><i>• MDOT Transportation Enhancement Grant</i></li> <li><i>• Private /Foundations</i></li> </ul>

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2009-2012	Trail Priorities ,4,5,6,7	As determined at the trail meetings, a list was constructed that identified the priority developments for each trail segment. Beginning with #1 priority as the first goal and #2 and #3 seemed equally important to the Village.	A list of probable costs for each trail segment has been established by the consultant as a foundation for the development of each trail segment.(reference appendices) The Village should contact land owners via mail, follow-up phone calls and public meeting to do a walking audit of the new routes. Additionally, the estimates of probable costs will become a basis for the grant application for each segment. However, a survey is needed to produce an accurate accounting of the existing conditions along the proposed trail path and a more accurate assessment of costs for the trail development..	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village General Funds</li> <li>• MDNR Grant</li> <li>• County Bicycle Association Grant</li> <li>• MDOT Transportation Enhancement Grant</li> <li>• Private / Foundations</li> </ul>
2008	Community Park Site	Explore the acquisition of land for the park and prepare design concept	In the range of 10,000-12,000 for design, legal and surveying.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donations</li> <li>• Village / Township Funds</li> <li>• Private Funds</li> <li>• Foundations</li> </ul>
2009-2010	Community Park Development	Conduct the design bidding and construction of park facilities	In the range of 100,000 – 250,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donations</li> <li>• Village / Township Funds</li> <li>• Private Funds</li> <li>• Foundations</li> </ul>
2010	Adult Recreation Survey	Conduct a survey among all age groups, including seniors to learn recreation needs	• \$4,000-\$8,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village / Township Funds</li> <li>• Private Funds</li> <li>• Foundations</li> <li>• Business Grants</li> </ul>
2011	Not Applicable	Review and update Plan as necessary to remain grant eligible and establish Village of Homer commitment to providing parks and recreation facilities and preservation of open space.	• \$4,500 - \$7,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village General Fund</li> </ul>

**VILLAGE ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE AND BUDGET**

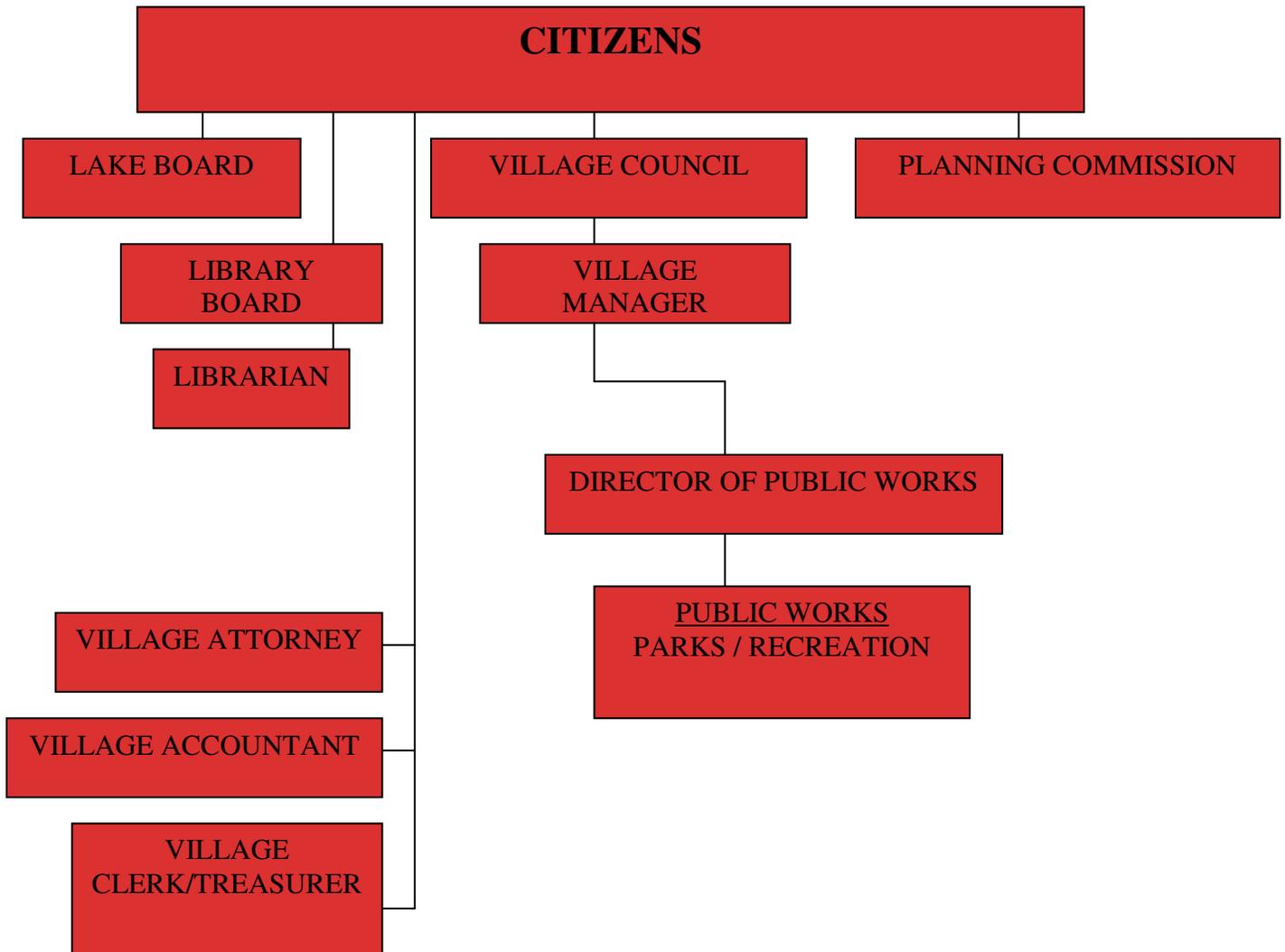
The Village of Homer is run by a General Law Village Council with a full time manager. There is a permanent staff of 12 full time employees. The current Village council members are Gerald Stonebraker, Brent Michael, Jewell Burkwalt, Mike Warner, Chris Miller, Jeff Sherman and Kelly Sullivan. The Village Manager is George Strand, who is in charge of Village staff. See Diagram 1 for a description of the administrative structure as it relates to parks and recreation.

The Village Council is responsible for appropriations of Parks and Recreation funding. The Department of Public Works is responsible for park maintenance and operates from the Recreation and Culture Budget with an annual operating budget of \$14,830. Additionally the DPW provides for the cost of equipment rental, wages and benefits to employees.

A Kellogg Youth Initiative Program Grant for park improvements has allowed for the employment for a youth coordinator in the past for implementation of a grant, as well as coordinating other activities. The management of Homer Lake, an important natural feature of the Village, is handled by the Lake Management Board.

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FIGURE 1 – PARKS AND RECREATION ORGANIZATION CHART



**Village of Homer  
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The following individuals represent the residents of Village of Homer and were vital in the review and preparation of this document. Their efforts will help ensure that future residents of Village of Homer will have parks, recreation and open spaces to enjoy.

*VILLAGE OF HOMER  
COUNTY OF CALHOUN, MICHIGAN*

***VILLAGE BOARD***

***Planning Commission***

**TRAILWAY PLAN – INTRODUCTION / SUMMARY**

Establishing a non-motorized trails system across the Village of Homer is a significant task. The Trails Council has identified more than 10 miles of trail providing access to more than 16 points of interest. As a result of the trails system meetings, this plan separates the network of trails into several phases intended to make the implementation more manageable. These phases are ranked by priority and were identified by their geographic location and connectivity to the various points of interest.

The goal of this plan is to provide safe and efficient alternative transportation facilities to traditional motorized transportation throughout the Village. The trails system will also connect significant points of interest. By connecting these points of interest with non-motorized pathways, the Village of Homer can use the trails system as a marketing tool to attract tourists.

**POINTS OF INTEREST**

The proposed trails will not only provide a network of non-motorized transportation facilities for walkers, bicyclists, inline skaters and others, but the trail will connect points of interest across the Village. These points of interest are listed below:

- Lake Front Park
- County Canoe Launch
- Greg Barton Circle
- Grist Mill Park
- Webster Street Park
- Water Tower Park
- Linear Park
- Depot Street Trail
- Homer Community House
- Homer Fire Museum
- RK Curry Athletic Facility
- Lillian Fletcher Elementary
- Homer Area High/Middle School
- Blair Farm and Historic House
- Triangle Park
- Homer Public Library
- Presbyterian Church

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Lake Front Park



Greg Barton Circle



Grist Mill Park



Water Tower Park

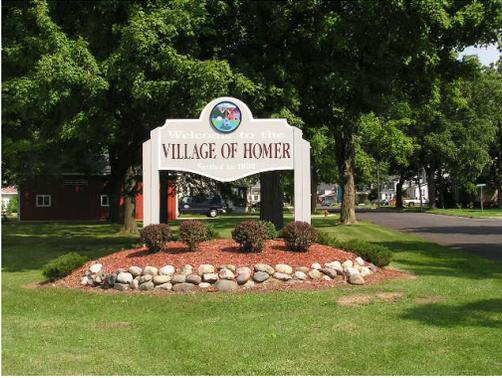


Linear Park



Webster Street Park

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Triangle Park



Homer Community House



Homer Fire Museum



Blair Farm and Historic House



Presbyterian Church



Homer Public Library

## **Village of Homer Parks, Recreation and Trailway Plan**

### **PURPOSE**

The Village of Homer Trails Master Plan has been undertaken to provide the necessary foundation for the development of a non-motorized transportation system within the Village of Homer. This trailway plan promotes the sensible development of county-wide non-motorized transportation facilities within the Village of Homer.

The development of this plan lays the groundwork for the creation of the Village of Homer Trails System and Trails Council consisting of key representatives from the Village of Homer.

The goal of the project is to provide a framework for future non-motorized trailway improvements in the Village of Homer. A most important objective for the new trailway system is to identify the development priorities for new trail improvements within the next 20 years for the Village of Homer.

This document will assist in bridging that gap. Representatives from the Village staff and stakeholders were brought together to identify and discuss future plans for the trail system. The following was some guiding goals and principles which were discussed at the Village trail meetings:

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- Identify and establish non-motorized transportation facility connections between the parks system, schools and the downtown business district, including local points of interest.
- Establish and maintain cooperation between local units of government, local businesses, citizens groups and organizations.
- Identification of trails in areas that are safe, fun, and sensitive to the urban, rural, and natural environments.
- Establish trails through community support and input.
- Develop through concepts of good environmental planning as well as economic benefits to subject and adjacent communities.

### **TRAILWAY VISION**

Design greenways and non-motorized pathways throughout the Village of Homer, that will ultimately connect numerous points of interest including parks, schools, municipalities and other recreation areas within the Village of Homer. Furthermore, the connection of the existing and future trail systems and points of interest in the Village of Homer will create a network of trails for transportation and recreation connecting to the County.

**TRAILWAY BENEFITS**

The numerous community benefits that will be precipitated from this trail system include:

- Drawing people both within the Village of Homer, Homer Township and Calhoun County to enjoy the many natural resources experienced along the trailway, including wetland flora and fauna, parks and recreation, walking, biking and fitness.
- Creating recreation opportunities for all residents and visitors to the Village of Homer including walkers, bikers, hikers, joggers and rollerbladers.
- Bringing economic benefits to the local economy through tourist dollars.
- Connecting the Village parks, existing trailways, schools and the downtown business district to allow transportation facilities other than motorized transportation facilities.
- Providing opportunities for students to be educated outside the classroom on environmental issues such as wetland preservation, flora and fauna.
- Increasing the value of homes near the trailway system.
- Improving the health of citizens and the environment.
- Allowing trail users a historical walk through Homer's Historic Background and Architecture.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The development of the Village of Homer Trails Master Plan involved contributions and cooperation from important involved stakeholders within the community.

The primary goal of the Trails Council is the implementation of various phases of the Plan, however, other responsibilities include:

- Identifying and continuing to generate community support and cooperation for the development of the various trail segments.
- To promote the health, environmental, and economic benefits of non-motorized transportation facilities and their related uses.
- To organize and coordinate grant and funding opportunities for the development and maintenance of trail segment.

**TIMELINE AND KEY EVENTS**

The creation of the Village of Homer Trails Master Plan began in 2005 with a series of preliminary meetings organized and administered by the Village of Homer. Prior to these

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Parks, Recreation and Trailway Plan**

meetings support for the project was strong. However, as a result of these meetings additional support was generated for the development of the trailway system.

**July 2006** – A meeting was held with the stakeholders in the Village of Homer to determine trail development priorities.

**September 2006** – Trail maps were issued to the Village of Homer in preparation for the trail routings and amenities meeting.

**September & October 2006** – The Trail Master Plan section was incorporated with the Village’s new Recreation Plan. The trail’s Master Plan routings were revised from the Trail Committee markups to include trail amenities; such as signage, benches, and interpretive centers.

**November & December 2006** Final trail routing and cost estimate tables were developed, including trail descriptions and a draft plan report.

**January 2007** – Final draft of the Parks and Recreation and Trail Master Plan were sent to the Village for final Council review.

**TRAILWAY TABLES DESCRIPTION & MAPS**

**EXISTING TRAILS IN THE VILLAGE OF HOMER**

Within the Village of Homer there are five primary trail segments which are found in various sections of the community. The following is a general description of each trail:

Grist Mill Park & Trail:

This trail is approximately ¼ mile long. It meanders through the park allowing users a variety of experiences such as strolling along the boardwalk enjoying the wetland flora and fauna, or viewing the historical machinery and architecture of the old Grist Mill. Benches and a covered pavilion allow users a place to rest and enjoy the scenery.

New trail connections are proposed to the Grist Mill Park such as the trailways plan including the Clay Street Trail which will provide a southbound connection to the Depot Street trail and the Homer High School and R.K. Curry Athletic Complex. Another important trailway connection to the park is the M-60 Trail Eastside which is a direct connection from Grist Mill Park to the Water Tower Park and the new streetscape improvements found at Sophia Street and M-60. A third connection is found on the north side of M-60, a continuation of the existing park trail along M-60 on the north side running to Sophia Street, then turning northward to provide an accessible route to Webster Park.

Proposed Trail amenities include a wetland overlook/ interpretive center, located directly on the north side of the M-60 bridge crossing as an addition to the boardwalk. A new informational kiosk is proposed to be located adjacent to the existing shelter to inform trail users of the variety of trail pathways within the Village. New directional signs are proposed to guide pathway users to the park trailheads and important activity and points of interest along the trail. A Rules and Regulations Sign is proposed to be located at the primary entrance to the park.

Linear Park Trail:

This trail is approximately 1-2 miles long. The trailhead begins at the Webster Park parking lot. The trail allows users the opportunity of a long meandering hike through a woodlands and long side of a Kalamazoo River Wetlands. It then continues alongside a rural road providing an access loop back to the M-60 corridor.

Two new trail expansions are proposed 1). The Webster Park Trail which provides a direct connection to the Grist Mill Park Trail, and 2). The West Main Street 24.5 Mile Road Trail which provides the completion of the existing 24.5 mile trail to the downtown.

Proposed Trail amenities include a wetland overlook deck/ interpretive signage center, located directly adjacent to the Kalamazoo River Corridor Wetlands just

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north of Webster Park and a informational kiosk, memorial plaque with a benched seating area and water fountain located next to the existing cemetary.across from M Drive South.

Proposed trailhead signs for the park include a new Rules and Regulations Sign and directional signs.

Depot Street Trail:

This existing trail is approximately ¼ mile long, and it provides an important east-west connection from the Homer High School and Athletic Complex ending at the Heat Treatment Plant at the intersection of Clay Street and Depot Street. A new trail extension is proposed running northward along Clay Street to connect this trail to the downtown and the Grist Mill Park. New Directional and identification signs are proposed to guide users along the trail to the trailheads at the beginning and ending of the trail.

R.K. Curry Athletic Complex Trail:

This existing trail provides an important access route for students, parents and teachers from the high school and the existing Depot Street trail to athletic events such as track and baseball. Another important connection is provided from this Athletic Complex to the Lake Front Park set just to the west on Homer Lake. A new Informational kiosk, and benched seating area is proposed at the complex entrance adjacent to Hillsdale Avenue. This kiosk provides trail users an overall map listing out the Village trail system including important points of interests, trail routings and trailhead locations.

**PROPOSED TRAIL SEGMENTS FOR THE VILLAGE OF HOMER**

There are seven proposed trail segments identified by the Villages Trail Council. Each trail segment was given a priority listing according to its importance for the Community with #1 being given the highest priority for development. The following is a general description of each new trail segment:

**1). M-60 Trail Eastside:**

This trail begins at the Sophia Street/ M-60 intersection at the Water Tower Park. This trail runs parallel to M-60 and allows a highly visible connection to the Grist Mill Park. The Grist Mill Park provides a trailhead for users to begin their trail venture along the east side of the Village. New directional and regulatory signage is proposed at the Grist Mill Park trailhead. A new informational kiosk is proposed adjacent to the existing shelter in Grist Mill Park in the future which will orient trail users to the various trail segments available within the Village. ADA accessibility is provided at all street crossings along the trail.

**2). Clay Street Trail:**

This trail will provide a critical east/west connection from the Homer High School/R.K. Curry Athletic Complex to the downtown business district and the Grist Mill Park. This trail is a ¼ mile northbound expansion of the existing Depot Street trail which is a east/west connection from the High School to the south central part of town. With this new connection, the Village will have a primary connection from the High School/Athletic complex to the downtown and Grist Mill Park. New trail signage, accessibility routes and visible ADA accessible ramps are provided. There are two trailheads for this trail, one beginning at the Grist Mill Park parking lot, the second, terminates at the R.K. Curry Athletic Complex parking lot.

**3). Lake Front Park Trail:**

This ¾ mile trail provides a very important connection from the M-60 corridor and residential areas to the Homer Lake Front Park. Due to the the topographic grade changes from the road to the right of way, along the lakeside route, it is necessary to provide some retaining wall to construct the trail. Additionally, the route will be a paved shoulder trail, widened from the existing road edge to minimize the amount of wall needed to construct the future trail. This trail will provide access from the Homer Lake Front Park Trail to the M-60 Corridor and the existing sidewalk system to the downtown Streetscape. New trail signage, accessibility routes and visible ADA accessible ramps are provided.

The trailhead parking lot is located within the park facility. Existing restroom facilities are provided. New amenities are proposed for this trailhead to include a new entry sign, informational kiosk and rules and regulations signage located at the parks entry, new directional signage, a new drinking fountain and a new lake /wetland interpretive signage and bench located adjacent to the existing dock and alongside the lake adjacent to the existing boardwalk.

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4). Webster Street Park Trail:

A ¼ mile trail which will provide an important connection from the existing Grist Mill Park & trails paralleling the M-60 along its north side, then running northward connecting to Webster Street Park at the Sophia Street intersection. New signage and ADA compliant crossings would be provided along with an informational kiosk and maps located at Webster Street Park. This trail will follow the existing Village right of way and sidewalk system. Currently there is a 3' sidewalk whose width is too narrow to be utilized as a trail. A New 10' wide trail is proposed . New trail signage, accessibility routes and visible ADA accessible ramps are proposed to meet ASSHTO and MUTCD requirements for trails.

The terminus of this trail is Webster Park which is becomes the primary trailhead providing more than 30 spaces for the community and visitors alike.

Proposed trailhead signs for the park include a new Rules and Regulations Sign and directional signs.

5). M-60 Trail Westside:

This trail begins at the West Main/ M-60 intersection at Triangle Park in the western end of the Village. This trail runs parallel to M-60 following the MDOT right of way. The trail terminates at the Sophia Street/M-60 intersection at Water Tower Park. This trail is a transitional link from the west end of town to the center of town and the primary business district sidewalk access. A little more than ¼ mile, this trail provides the western half of the east/west connector from the west side of Homer to the east side. New trail signage, accessibility routes and visible ADA accessible ramps are provided.

6). Hillsdale Street Trail:

This proposed trail replaces the existing 3' wide broken sidewalk paralleling Hillsdale Street (M-99). The trail is a primary north/south connection from the Homer High/Middle School north to the downtown business district. This is a ½ mile trail that has an existing 3' wide concrete sidewalk, 50% is in disrepair. A new 10 wide trail is proposed to encourage students and community residents to bike or walk from the school and the surrounding neighborhood to the downtown business district and restaurants. New trail signage, accessibility routes and visible ADA accessible ramps are provided.

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7). West Main Street / 24.5 Mile Rd. Trail:

This proposed trail addition is less than ¼ mile, and it is an extension of the existing 24.5 Mile Rd. paved shoulder trail developed as part of the Calhoun County Road Commission capital improvements plan. Currently this street is used as a direct route to the downtown / M-60 road corridor. There is no existing pedestrian path along side this road. A separated path is needed a that would allow pedestrians to walk along this route safely. This proposed pathway would complete the last link from the 24.5 Mile Rd. Trail to the downtown. New trail signage, accessibility routes and visible ADA accessible ramps are included in this proposed trail addition.

**VILLAGE OF HOMER  
TRAIL DESCRIPTIONS AND MAP KEY NUMBERS**

<b>I.D.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Classification</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Surface</b>	<b>Width</b>	<b>Length</b>	<b>Lighting</b>	<b>Ownership</b>
1.	M-60 Trail Eastside	Proposed Route	1. Side Path	Asphalt	10'	880'	No	Public M-60 ROW
2.	Clay Street Trail,	Proposed Route	1. Side Path	Asphalt	10'	2840'	No	Public
3.	Lake Front Park Trail	Proposed Route	1.Paved Shoulder	Asphalt	10'	2900'	No	Village/R.O.W
4.	Webster Street Park Trail	Proposed Route	1. Side path	Asphalt	10'	1312'	No	Public/ ROW
5	M-60 Trail Westside	Proposed Route	1.Side Path	Asphalt	10'	1525'	No	Public/ M-60 ROW
6.	Hillsdale St. Trail	Proposed Route	1. Side path	Asphalt	10'	2340'	No	Public / M 99 ROW
7.	West Main St. 24.5 Mile Trail	Proposed Route	1. Side path	Asphalt	10'	1240'	No	Village/ROW