



Shelby Township rolls out recreation plan update

CREATING PLAN IN-HOUSE SAVES MORE THAN \$10,000

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SHELBY TOWNSHIP — On Jan. 17, Planner Glenn Wynn laid out the most recent update to the township's recreation plan during a public hearing at a Board of Trustees meeting.

The five-year recreation plan is due for an update this year. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources requires the township to have a recreation plan on file, and it is also a prerequisite to apply for state grants, Wynn said.

This year, the Shelby Township Planning and Zoning Department and Parks, Recreation and Maintenance Department teamed up to create the plan update in-house. By not contracting out the service, Wynn said the township saved \$10,000-\$15,000.

"(The PRM Department) recently received some grant funding for the Iron Belle Trail and some other projects," Wynn said. "Those grants wouldn't be available if we didn't have a current recreation plan on file."

Wynn said the state largely establishes the plan's format, requiring chapters on the community's description, its administrative structure, an inventory of recreation facilities, public involvement, and goals and objectives.

Besides the public hearing, Wynn said the township offered an online survey and received more than 600 responses.

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The update's broad recreation goals include providing a range of recreation opportunities based on current and anticipated needs, preserving natural features necessary for recreation, ensuring all neighborhoods are adequately served and have access to parks, expanding parks to better serve the northern half of the township, and expanding the scope of nonmotorized trails.

"The action plan includes some projects (such as) the Iron Belle Trail along the Clinton River, the splash park at Gene Shepherd Park, Macomb Orchard Trail park improvements, the Whispering Woods tot lot and a few other activities," Wynn said. "The township can amend the recreation plan at any time, but we do need to have this on file if we're going to be eligible for grants."

Joe Youngblood, director of the PRM Department, said the

departments are still finalizing a few more details, but the final step is for the Board of Trustees to approve and adopt the plan.

"Over the next five years, this is a plan to help guide us," Youngblood said. "It puts us in the right direction for quality of life and improvements."

He said the more than 600 survey responses influenced the update, with residents weighing in on expanding trails, the splash pad, and adding more soccer fields and various other forms of recreation.

For more information about the recreation plan update, call the Shelby Township Planning and Zoning Department at (586) 726-7243 or the Shelby Township Parks, Recreation and Maintenance Department at (586) 739-0300.

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