



Wexford County

RECREATION AND BUILDING COMMITTEE

Julie Theobald, Chair

NOTICE OF MEETING

The Recreation and Building Committee of the Wexford County Board of Commissioners will hold a regular meeting on Thursday, June 01, 2023, beginning at 4:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Room, 437 E. Division St., Cadillac, Michigan.

TENTATIVE AGENDA

- A. CALL TO ORDER
- B. ROLL CALL
- C. ADDITIONS / DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA
- D. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA
- E. APPROVAL OF THE MAY 04, 2023 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES..... 1
- F. PUBLIC COMMENTS
The Committee welcomes all public input.
- G. AGENDA ITEMS
 - 1. Maintenance Report (*A. Kerr*)
 - 2. Civic Center Report (*M. Figliomeni*)
 - 3. Recreation Plan Memo..... 3
- H. CORRESPONDENCE
- I. ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS
- J. PUBLIC COMMENTS
- K. COMMITTEE COMMENTS
- L. CHAIR COMMENTS
- M. ADJOURN

WEXFORD COUNTY
RECREATION & BUILDING COMMITTEE MEETING
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
May 04, 2023

The Recreation and Building Committee regular meeting was called to order by Chair Julie Theobald at 4:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Room, Historic Courthouse, 437 E. Division St. Cadillac, Michigan.

Members Present: Julie Theobald, Jason Baughan, Jason Mitchell, and Ben Townsend
Members Absent: None.
Also Present: Jami Bigger, Deputy County Administrator/HR Director; Mike Figliomeni, Boon Sports Management; Adam Kerr, Maintenance Director; Megan Kujawa, Sr. Exec. Admin. Assistant; and Joe Porterfield, County Administrator/Equalization

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA
None.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA
A motion was made by Comm. Townsend and supported by Comm. Baughan to approve the agenda. A vote was called, all in favor. Motion passed 4-0.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES
A motion was made Comm. Baughan and supported by Comm. Mitchell to approve the April 06, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes. A vote was called, all in favor. Motion passed 4-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS
None.

AGENDA ITEMS
G.1. Maintenance Report

Mr. Adam Kerr, Maintenance Director, was present. A report was provided and discussed.

G.2. Civic Center Report

Mr. Mike Figliomeni, Boon Sports Management, was present. A report was provided and discussed.

G.3. Parks and Recreation Plan Memo

No new updates. Chair Theobald informed the Committee that Cadillac News will be doing an article on the Plan to help create some awareness and encourage more people to complete the survey.

CORRESPONDENCE
None.

ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS

Mr. Porterfield informed the committee that they are looking to receive payment from Fox Motors and talk to them about clean up. The project to replace the sidewalks outside will be starting soon.

PUBLIC COMMENTS
None.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS
None.

CHAIR COMMENTS

None.

ADJOURN

A motion was made by Comm. Townsend and supported by Comm. Baughan to adjourn the meeting at 4:17 p.m. A vote was called, all in favor. Motion passed 4-0.

Julie Theobald, Chair

Megan Kujawa, Recording Secretary

DRAFT

May 25, 2023

To: Wexford County Building and Recreation Committee – Board of Commissioners

Fr: Mathew Cooke, Community Planner

Re: Wexford County Parks and Recreation Plan

Firstly, I wanted to say thanks to all those that spoke on the Wexford County Parks and Recreation survey and process in the Cadillac News article. I was unfortunately out of the state when the story was being developed but greatly appreciate others speaking!

Plan Development – Community Description

Attached for your review and comment is the draft language and content for the Community Description chapter. Please note that this is just the language draft, we are working on the formatting of the final product in the meantime. As always, please let me know if you have any questions or concerns, or if there is additional information you would like to be included in this section.

Community Pop-up Sessions

I have scheduled myself to attend the following June events in the community to distribute a business card (attached) to drive survey results and future engagement. This also allows an opportunity to get some brief dialogue with residents and visitors on Wexford County Parks and what they think is missing or could be improved upon. The rationale for the event selection is that I believe we will get more interaction with residents at the Farmers Markets while the Freedom Festival will allow us to reach both residents and visitors to the County.

June 9th – Manton Farmers Market

June 23rd – Cadillac Farmers Market

July 6th – Cadillac Freedom Festival – Vendors in the Park

Community Description

Wexford County is located in the northwestern part of the Lower Peninsula, surrounded by Manistee, Grand Traverse, Missaukee, Osceola, and Lake Counties. Wexford County has two cities, three villages, and sixteen townships with separate boards and officials who make decisions at the local level.

The natural features and vast public land in Wexford County provide a diversity of recreational opportunities, including areas for hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, skiing, and hiking, among others.

Population Characteristics

The County's permanent population estimate in 2021 is 33,552 people. The population grew 2.8% since 2010. The southeast corner of the county is the population center. City of Cadillac and surrounding townships have the largest populations in the county: the city has 10,317, Haring Township has 3,528, Clam Lake Township has 2,827, Cherry Grove Township has 2,642, and Selma Township has 1,975.

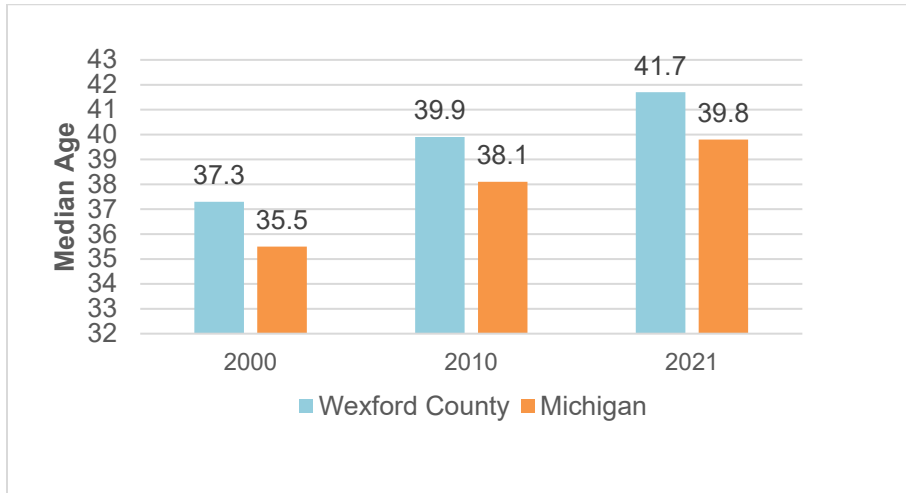
Wexford County and Municipalities Population Estimates, 2010-2021				
Municipality	2010 Estimated Population	2021 Estimated Population	Numeric Change	Percent Change
Wexford County	32,653	33,552	899	2.8%
Buckley Village	580	844	264	45.5%
Harrietta Village	113	209	96	85.0%
Mesick Village	454	373	-81	-17.8%
Antioch Township	660	870	210	31.8%
Boon Township	571	782	211	37.0%
Cedar Creek Township	1,644	1,732	88	5.4%
Cherry Grove Township	2,488	2,642	154	6.2%
Clam Lake Township	2,593	2,827	234	9.0%
Colfax Township	897	989	92	10.3%
Greenwood Township	562	618	56	10.0%
Hanover Township	1,364	1,691	327	24.0%
Haring Township	3,167	3,528	361	11.4%
Henderson Township	168	217	49	29.2%
Liberty Township	891	824	-67	-7.5%
Selma Township	2,196	1,975	-221	-10.1%
Slagle Township	595	439	-156	-26.2%
South Branch Township	303	272	-31	-10.2%
Springville Township	1,780	1,579	-201	-11.3%
Wexford Township	934	955	21	2.2%
City of Cadillac	10,384	10,317	-67	-0.6%
City of Manton	1,456	1,295	-161	-11.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-Yr Estimates

Age and Household Characteristics

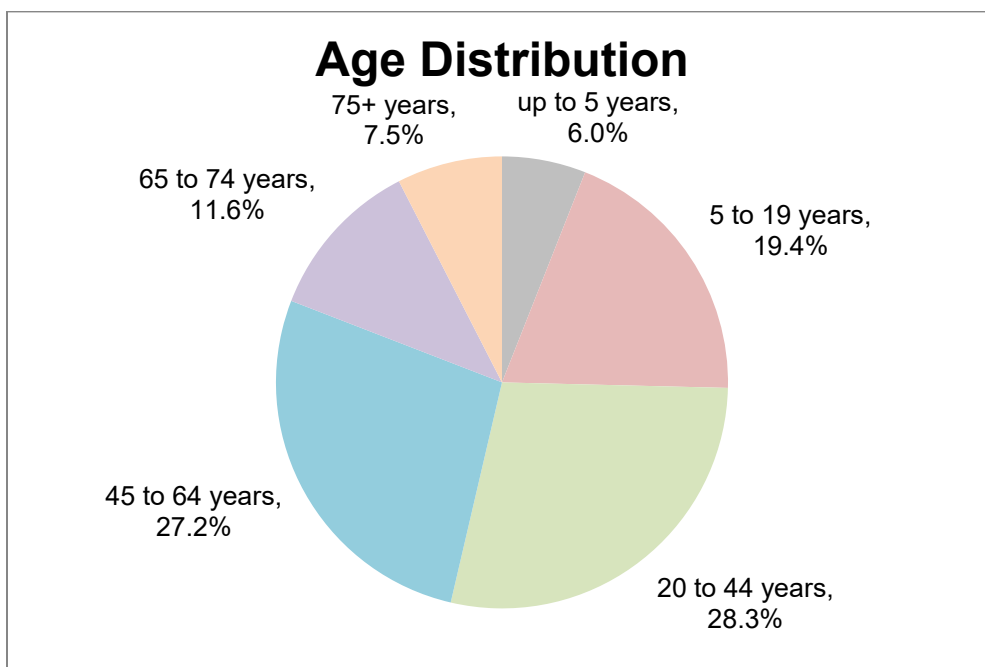
The age of a community's residents is an important factor in determining recreation needs. Communities can work to provide diverse recreation opportunities to accommodate the varying abilities and interests of residents at different stages of life.

The median age divides the age distribution into two equal parts; half of the cases fall below the median value and half are above the median value. Wexford County's 2021 median age is 41.7, about two years older than the state median age (39.8). The median age of Wexford County and the State of Michigan has been steadily increasing since 2000.



The total 2021 Wexford County population is broken down into the following age groups:

Category	Age	Total	Percent
• Preschool	Under Age 5	2,012	6%
• School Aged	Age 5 to 19	6,506	19.4%
• Family –Forming	Age 20 to 44	9,481	28.3%
• Empty Nest	Age 45 to 64	9,136	27.2%
• Senior	Age 65 to 74	3,888	11.6%
• Elderly	Age Over 75	2,529	7.5%



The majority of county population (28.3%) is in the family forming age group, between the ages of 20 to 44. The second largest group is empty nesters (27.2%) between the ages of 45 to 64. The third largest group are youth, ages birth to 19 years old (25.4%). The median age and the age cohorts describe an aging population where the empty nest and senior population groups will continue to grow. As individuals age, the need increases for facilities that accommodate passive recreation such as walking. Barrier-free access and universally accessible to recreation is particularly important for persons with a disability as well as senior and elderly adults. Barrier-free access and universally accessible to recreation such as hard-surface pathways and accessible kayak launches allows aging seniors and the elderly access to activities they might not otherwise enjoy. Additionally, all recreation facilities should adhere to standards set by the Americans with Disabilities Act for barrier-free access.

The youth population groups (preschool and school aged) are holding steady at 25.4% when compared to the 19 and under population in the previous plan. Youth-oriented recreation opportunities will continue to be important for both current residents and as an amenity to draw new families to the county.

Income and Poverty

When planning for recreation, it is important to ensure that activities and amenities in the community are within the financial means of the majority of residents. The American Community Survey reports that 2021 per capita income in Wexford County was \$27,772, compared to \$34,768 the statewide per capita income. In 2021, the median household income in the county was \$54,114, which is 16.8% below the state's median household income of \$63,202. 8.9% of all families in Michigan had income below the poverty level; similarly, 8.1% of all families in Wexford County had income below the poverty level.

Families in Wexford County and throughout the nation are dealing with higher prices of goods and services due to rising inflation levels as well disruptions to the food supply chain (GAO Office, 2023). "While food prices generally increased about 2% in prior years, they increased about 11% from 2021 to 2022." In 2022, the annual inflation rate 6.5%, as measured by the consumer price index, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics. Prices for eggs, butter and margarine, lettuce, white bread, and dairy and related products rose dramatically. Lower income residents can face greater challenges in accessing recreation, and providing recreational opportunities to those with limited means is an important consideration when planning for recreation in Wexford County.

Seasonal Population

Like many northwest Michigan communities, Wexford County experiences an influx of seasonal residents and tourists throughout the year. However, the decennial Census and the American Community Survey only consistently and comprehensively track the permanent population. Networks Northwest's *2022 Seasonal Population Study for Northwest Lower Michigan* analyzed the 2020 seasonal population for the ten counties in northwest Michigan: Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, and Wexford. The study collected data for permanent and part-time residents and overnight visitors in accommodations and short-term rentals (STRs) by county. Northwest Lower Michigan's permanent base population is 310,802 and expands to include its largest amount of part-time residents and overnight visitors in July at an estimated total of 676,052 persons, a 118% increase.

Wexford County is the least-seasonal county in the region, with the total population change of 42% between 40,879 in the month of February and 58,168 in July. The permanent population represents roughly 78% of the total population in the off-season and 61% of the total population in the on-season. The seasonal growth of the county is driven by people staying in traditional accommodation businesses (hotels, motels, bed & breakfasts, campgrounds, etc.). Table 5 illustrates the monthly estimated differences between the permanent population and seasonal residents/overnight visitors for the county.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Average
Permanent Population	33,673	33,673	33,673	33,673	33,673	33,673	33,673	33,673	33,673	33,673	33,673	33,673	
Combined Part - Time Population Overnight Population	7,799	7,206	10,952	11,196	19,258	22,637	24,495	24,388	19,273	13,028	11,297	7,737	14,939
Total	41,472	40,879	44,625	44,869	52,931	56,310	58,168	58,061	52,946	46,701	44,970	41,410	48,612
Percent Change	23%	21%	33%	33%	57%	67%	73%	72%	57%	39%	34%	23%	

Land Use and Planning

Any recreational expansion or newly-created recreational facilities should be coordinated with the community to ensure appropriate location for the proposed activity, and consistency with the township, village, or city master plan and zoning ordinances as applicable. The Wexford Joint Planning Commission reviews land use and zoning decisions for the following jurisdictions: Antioch Township, Boon Township, Cherry Grove Township, Hanover Township, Liberty Township, Selma Township, Slagle Township, South Branch Township, Springville Township, and Wexford Township.

Transportation

Wexford County is served by six state/federal highways including US-131, Old US-131/Business US-131, M-115, M-55, M-37, and M-42. The Cadillac/Wexford Transit Authority, or WexExpress, is a door-to-door public transit service for residents and visitors of Wexford County. The WexExpress also provides regional transportation with daily trips to/from Traverse City. Additionally, the Wexford County Airport, owned by the City of Cadillac and Wexford County, is open to the public and is a general aviation airport. It is located two miles north of the City of Cadillac. Wexford County is also serviced by the Great Lakes Railway Company from Clare, Mt. Pleasant, Midland and points north to Traverse City, Yuma, and toward Petoskey. The railway north of Yuma (a settlement in Springville Township within Wexford County) has been removed.

Trails

Trail facilities enhance recreation opportunities, and provide a unique opportunity to combine physical activity with transportation, linking destinations while providing alternatives to motorized transportation. Trail development and connections between existing trails are increasingly recognized as important economic strategies, generating tourism and visitor spending, and even drawing new residents.

Access to a diverse and vast trail network is especially great in Wexford County. The County hosts a number of both motorized and non-motorized trail systems. Information on the specific trails is provided in Chapter 3, Recreation Inventory. Snowmobiles and off-road vehicles (ORVs) are authorized to use road shoulders on County road rights-of-way, and a number of motorized trails are available on the County's public land. Trail opportunities for ORVs were recently expanded with Public Act 288 of 2016, which opens state forest roads to ORV use unless posted.

Natural Features

The natural resources of Wexford County are vital to the economic health and quality of life of area residents. The abundance of quality public forest land and water resources make this area a popular tourism destination, particularly for hunters, fishermen, and snowmobilers, and are an invaluable asset in attracting new visitors and investment to the area.

Topography

About 50 percent of Wexford County is made up of rolling to steep glacial moraines, with most of the remainder undulating or nearly level glacial out wash plains. The highest point in Wexford County is Briar Hill at 1,706 feet elevation.

Soils

The main soil types found in Wexford County include:

Sandy Soils. Nearly level to steep, somewhat excessively drained and well drained sandy soils. Not fertile, thus not productive for crops or trees. Fast leaching, which tends to make groundwater vulnerable to contamination from the surface. These include: Rubicon-Montcalm-Graycalm, Grayling, Graycalm, Kalkaska, Croswell sand, and Pits.

Sandy Loam Soils. Nearly level, undulating, to steep, well drained loamy and sandy soils. These include: Emmet-Montcalm and Hodenpyl-Karlin.

Loam and Clay-Loam Soils. Nearly level to steep well drained and somewhat poorly drained loamy and sandy soils. Tends to be the more fertile, productive soils. Also tends to be soils that are problems for use of on site sewage disposal systems. This includes: Nester-Kawkawlin-Manistee

Wetland and flood plain Soils. Nearly level and undulating, very poorly drained and moderately well drained mucky and sandy soils in bogs, depressions, drainage ways. These soils include: Tawas-CroswellLupton, Au Gres-Finch sands, Allendale loamy sand, Fluvaquents and Histosols, and Winterfield sands.

Vegetative Cover

The forests of Wexford County include hemlock and other coniferous trees, such as red and white pine, spruce and fir, and deciduous trees, such as birch, beech, maple, basswood, and oak. Swamp and wetland vegetation patterns are also found along with a multitude of shrubs. As a result of intensive lumbering in the past, most of these forested areas are second growth and, to some degree, the original forest habitat patterns have been altered.

Forest cover types represent the largest land cover in Wexford County. The three principal segments are the United States Manistee National Forest, the Michigan Pere Marquette State Forest and the large tracts of land owned by Consumers Energy (formerly Consumers Power) along the Manistee River. All of these areas are under some degree of woodland-wildlife-recreation management plan.

Water Resources

The County is divided between two major watersheds, or drainage areas: the Big Manistee River and the Muskegon River (Clam River/Lakes Cadillac/Mitchell). Both flow into Lake Michigan. Much of the County is within the watershed of the Big Manistee River/Pine River.

Wexford County' surface waters are major attractions for recreation and tourism. The Big Manistee River and the Pine River, a federal Wild and Scenic River, run through Wexford County. The lower 26-miles of the Pine River was designated a National Scenic River in 1992. The Pine River has the fastest average flow of any river in lower Michigan. The Manistee has had a long standing reputation for being a top-quality trout stream, and provides cold water habitat for over 75 species of fish, including trout and salmon.

There are a large number of named and unnamed feeder creeks to the Big Manistee River in the north central part of Wexford County, which represents artesian flow from groundwater moving north from the glacial hills toward the river.

Major Lakes in Wexford County include:

- Lake Mitchell

- Lake Cadillac
- Hodenpyl Dam Pond
- Long Lake
- Lake Gitchegume
- Pleasant Lake
- Stone Ledge Lake
- Lake Meauwataka (Dayhuff Lake)
- Berry Lake
- Woodward Lake
- Round Lake

The streams in Wexford County are quality trout streams because of abundant groundwater discharge into the surface water resulting in cold water streams. The protection of groundwater and riparian zones is therefore important for maintaining and protecting the County's fisheries.

Climate

Wexford County seldom experiences prolonged periods of hot, humid weather in the summer or extreme cold during winter due to the movement of pressure systems across the nation. Wexford County is located about 21 to 28 miles east of Lake Michigan. As a result of prevailing westerly winds, crossing Lake Michigan, Wexford County experiences a lake effect influence on the weather. The lake effect is mainly in the winter, providing increased cloudiness and snowfall. With northeast winds the sky may clear and provide lower temperatures more commonly experienced at interior locations. The lake effect has almost no effect in the summer, or for agricultural purposes. Wexford's climate is characterized by larger temperature ranges than in areas at the same latitude near the Great Lakes.



Wexford County Parks & Recreation Plan
 Resource Page: nwm.org/WexfordRecPlan
 Survey Link: bit.ly/WexfordRecSurvey



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