



## **Village of Elberta Recreation Plan 2025–2029**

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## Acknowledgments

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## Introduction

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Situated along the stunning shores of Lake Michigan, Elberta is a community rich in history and in parklands, with a commitment to preserving its natural beauty. As the village continues to grow, the importance of accessible and engaging recreational spaces is evident. This Community Park and Recreation Plan aims to enhance the quality of life for Elberta’s residents by providing well-designed parks and recreational opportunities that promote health, wellness, and social connections among community members.

This plan is designed to reflect the unique character of Elberta, embracing its scenic landscapes and fostering a sense of belonging among residents. By identifying current strengths, challenges, and community aspirations, this initiative seeks to create a sustainable framework for developing and maintaining recreational facilities and programs. With input from local stakeholders and a vision grounded in community needs, the plan will not only serve as a roadmap for future investments in parks and recreation but also as a catalyst for fostering a stronger, more connected Elberta.

The Village of Elberta’s Recreation Plan concludes with an action program that suggests the direction and the activities that can be adopted for future recreational development and programming. This action program establishes program priorities, identifies financial requirements, and discusses the general administration of the overall program. This plan has been prepared to identify and propose a strategy for eliminating those deficiencies in the Village’s recreation opportunities that can be accomplished within a five-year time frame. The plan has also been prepared to satisfy recreation planning requirements established under Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) guidelines.

# Community Description

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Elberta Village is located in Benzie County, Michigan (Figure 1). The Village was first inhabited by European settlers in the 1850s and soon became a center for the commercial shipping industry, specifically lumber.

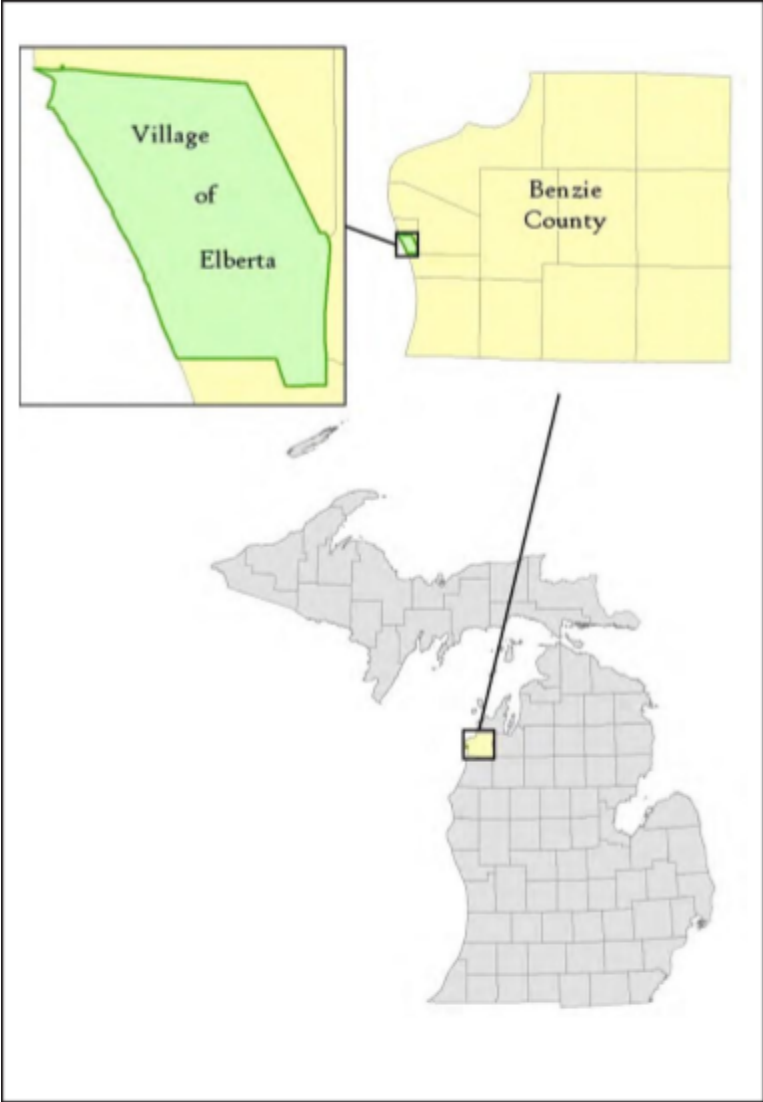


Figure 1. Benzie County map to include the Village of Elberta.

In 1866, the federal government constructed the first navigational channel in the area. This channel acted as the catalyst for the economic growth of the Village and the region. The channel served as the means for the development of sawmills, an iron works, a Lake Michigan car ferry, and other port-based businesses until the early 1980s when the Ann Arbor Railroad ceased its operation.



Figure 2. Municipal map of Elberta Village.

Today visitors are attracted to the Village because of its pristine beaches, fishing industry, numerous public parks and opportunities for outdoor recreation. The Village owns 10 parks and recreational facilities. There are numerous regional attractions, including the Arcadia Dunes, Betsie Valley Trail, Green Point, Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, Point Betsie Lighthouse, Frankfort Beach, and Empire Bluffs.

This recreation plan is prepared for the Village of Elberta and encompasses all the parks and recreation areas owned by the Village.

Elberta Village’s unique geographic location and topography, as well as its abundance of natural and park lands, underscore the importance of natural area management and planning. Bordered on three sides by Betsie Bay and Lake Michigan, Elberta Village is a peninsula with 480 total acres of land. Half of this land, 240 acres, is designated as critical dune areas, and 38 acres are designated as wetlands (Source: EGLE, State of Michigan Geographic Data Library). A further 100 acres of Elberta are designated as parkland.

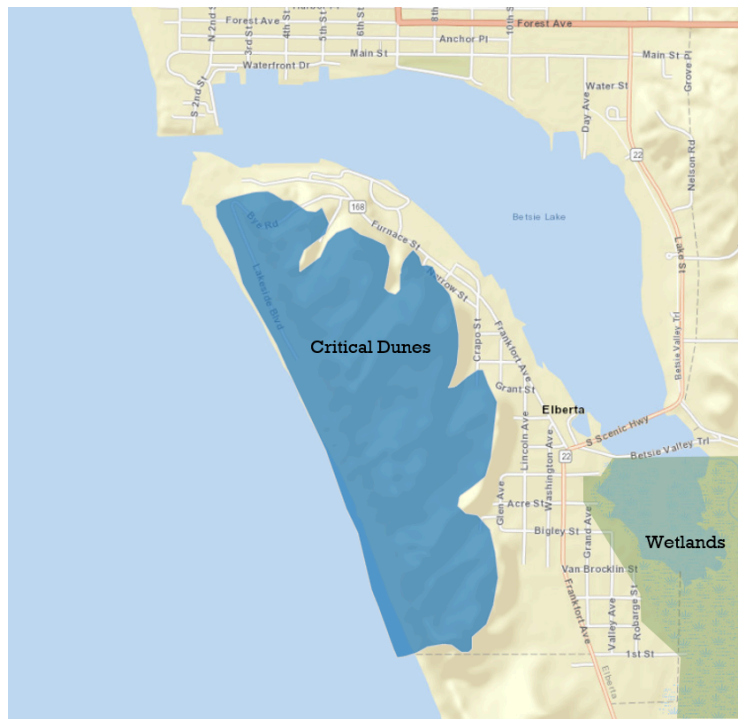


Figure 3. Topographical map of Elberta Village.

According to the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE), Michigan's critical dunes are a unique and vital ecosystem found along the Great Lakes shoreline and are legally protected by Part 353, Sand Dune Protection and Management, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451. Characterized by their steep slopes, sandy composition, and diverse plant life, these dunes serve as essential protective barriers against coastal erosion and flooding, while also providing habitat for a variety of flora and fauna, some of which are rare or endangered. The critical dunes are recognized for their ecological significance, as they support a range of specialized plant communities adapted to harsh



conditions. In addition to their environmental importance, these areas offer recreational opportunities and scenic beauty, making them cherished landscapes for both residents and visitors alike.

Also according to the EGLE, high-risk erosion areas are those shorelands of the Great Lakes and connecting waters where recession of the zone of active erosion has been occurring at a long-term average rate of one foot or more per year. The erosion can be caused by one or several factors. High water levels, storms, wind, groundwater seepage, surface water runoff, and frost are important factors causing erosion. The high-risk erosion area regulations establish required setback distances to protect new structures from erosion for a period of 30 to 60 years, depending on the size, number of living units, and type of construction. Other setback requirements are applicable for home restorations and additions to existing structures. Any person or local government agency proposing to erect, install, move, or enlarge a permanent structure on a parcel must obtain a permit before the commencement of construction.

## Administrative Structure

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The park and recreation functions in the Village of Elberta are overseen by the Village Council. The Village also has a Parks and Recreation Commission whose role has been to orchestrate fundraising events to maintain and upgrade parks. The Village Clerk, Village Treasurer, and Utility Billing Clerk provide administrative support with payment of bills. The Village President manages the coordination of bids and grant administration. The Village Department of Public Works is responsible for maintaining the parks. A Village administrative chart is shown in Figure 4.

The Village has two full time employees within its Department of Public Works (DPW). The DPW is responsible for maintaining all the Village public spaces as well as the Village buildings, roads, waterworks and sanitary sewer system. The maintenance of most of the Village parks comes from the Village General Fund. Current funding sources are grant awards and revenue from Life Saving Station rentals.

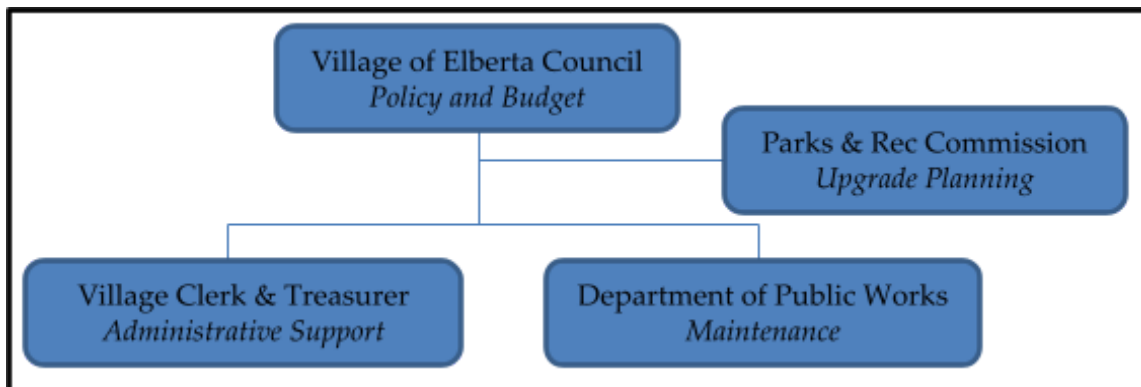


Figure 4. Elberta Village administrative structure.

The Parks and Recreation Commission is a volunteer organization. The Village currently collaborates with the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (GTRLC), Networks Northwest, The Betsie Valley Management Trail Council, Friends of the Betsie Valley Trail, the Frankfort/Elberta Chamber of Commerce, and the City of Frankfort.

## Previous Grant Assistance

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The Village of Elberta has received a total of five grants from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources from 1998-2020.

**Project Title: Ann Arbor Railroad Park/Betsie Valley Trail Head Development**

Project No. TF98-033. Project Year: 1998

Grant Amount: \$314,545.00

Project Description: Development of 21 acres on Lake Betsie, including a fishing deck along the lakeshore, park building with restrooms, utilities, stairways, lighting, landscaping and park furnishings.

**Project Title: Elberta Historic Waterfront Trailhead Park**

Project No. TF99-014. Project Year: 1999

Grant Amount: \$258,000.00

Project Description: Development of additional park improvements along the Betsie Valley Trail.

**Project Title: South Elberta Dunes Natural Area Acquisition**

Project No. TF08-034. Project Year: 2008

Grant Amount: \$1,158,800.00

Project Description: Project Description: Acquisition of 58 acres with critical dunes and 1,425 feet of Lake Michigan frontage.

**Project Title: Penfold Park Restroom and Accessible Boat Launch**

Project No. TF17-0036. Project Year: 2017

Grant Amount: \$220,000.00

Project Description: Development to construct a universally accessible restroom building, canoe/kayak launch, ADA parking, paved pathways and other amenities.

**Project Title: Elberta Lake Michigan Beach Improvement Project**

Project No. TF20-0013, Project Year: 2020

Grant Amount: \$300,000.00

Project Description: Development at the Village of Elberta's Lake Michigan Beach to provide beach access and protect the high-quality dunes.

## Recreation Inventory

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### Special Concerns for this Recreation Plan Period

***Rising Water Levels.*** In the last decade, Lake Michigan water levels have changed drastically, and at one point reached the highest levels documented in over 30 years. With four recreation areas on the water's edge, erosion has become a major concern. For example, portions of the Betsie Valley Trail that run through Elberta and Elberta's Boat Launch were underwater for the entirety of the 2019 summer season. Lake Michigan has backed up into the mouth of the Betsie River not only submerging the portions of the Betsie Valley Trail, but making the mini pond fill with leaves and debris as the natural water flow cannot clear it. The high lake waters have eroded the waters edge at Waterfront Park and have undercut the fishing pier, making it periodically unsafe in recent years. Elberta Beach has also experienced the impact of high water. The high water has not only endangered the Village Parks, but it has also periodically shut down recreational access for sustained periods of time within the Village, limiting and even preventing fishing, boating, kayaking, and biking along Betsie Valley Trail and Village park and beach areas. While the Village is at the mercy of Lake Michigan for some low lying areas within the Village parks, other areas need to be addressed.

***Funding of the Parks.*** As indicated in Parks Inventory; Goals, Objectives, and Action Program; and Open Public Input and Survey Results, Elberta Village parks need funding for repair and maintenance, historic preservation, and addition of public facilities and equipment. Funding support is also needed to maintain and protect park lands and the natural resources therein, such as designated critical dune areas and wildlife preserves. Elberta Village parks needs funding for removal of invasive plant species and the additional planting of native plant species; for the establishment of park regulations and safety equipment; and parks employees to improve safety and enforce regulations.

## Village Recreation Inventory Details

This section provides a description, current facilities and future facilities list for each of the 10 public parks located within Elberta Village.

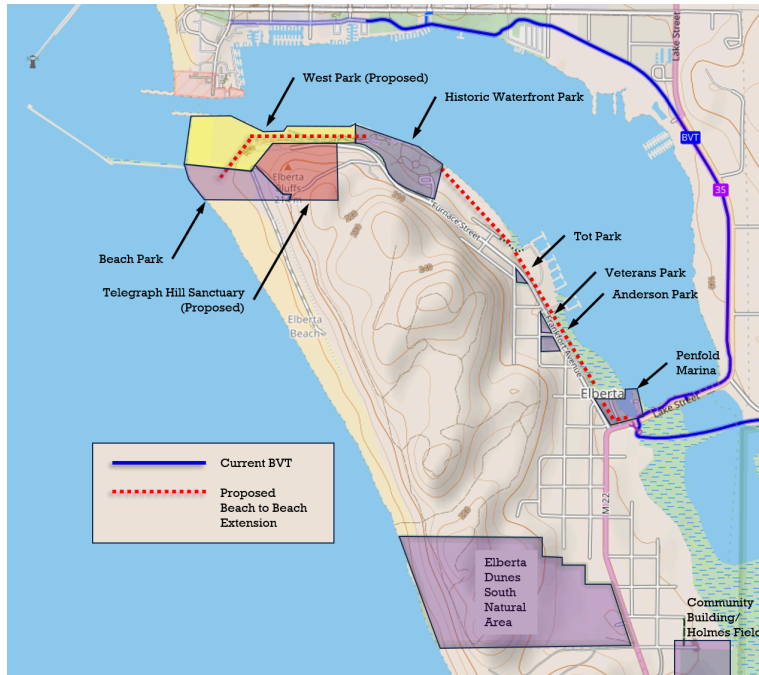


Figure 5. Map of Elberta Village Recreation Areas.

The Accessibility Assessments were based on criteria provided in the Michigan Department of Natural Resources’ Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenways Plans. All playground equipment in Village parks is maintained by Elberta Parks and Recreation, volunteers, and DPW staff.

### Public Parks

#### Elberta Historic Waterfront Park

**Description.** This Neighborhood Park is located on 8.6 acres on the shores of Betsie Bay and includes over 1,200 feet of scenic water frontage. This park’s amenities provide for activities such as fishing, picnicking, fitness, and group gatherings that include: weddings, reunions, outdoor theater, and other gatherings. Development of this park was made possible through 4 grants awarded in 1998 and 1999. Two MNRTF grants (TF98-033 and TF99-014) provided

funding that allowed for the development of elements such as: utilities (water & sewer), park furnishings, landscaping/plantings. a picnic pavilion, performance pavilion, entry road and parking lot (54 spaces), site lighting, viewing event deck, landscaping, and drinking fountain. The fishing deck was procured through the Great Lakes Fisheries Trust. The Traverse City Rotary Charity provided the grant for the handicapped-accessible children's playground. The match was in-kind, with community labor. No tax dollars were used to build this park.

Recent improvements include a bicycle rack, nine inches of playground approved bark bedding fall zone, three new interactive panels on the climber 2023, two recycled plastic arbors with swings on accessible concrete pads 2022, a scenic spot bench made in Michigan from recycled materials, new park signage, and six signboards with historical information and pictures of the land's prior use and Village history provided by the Elberta Parks and Recreation. A fitness circuit was created in 2017 with the Building Healthy Communities Grant Funds and matched with in kind labor from the Village DPW and volunteers. Several pieces of fitness equipment were relocated from Anderson Park to Waterfront Park as part of the fitness circuit installation.

Waterfront Park is maintained with funds from the rental of the Lifesaving Station with the labor of the Village DPW, volunteers, and contractors. All the elements built with funding from the MNRTF grants are in good condition. The fishing pavilion is in need of repair, as high water levels have eroded the ground beneath the structure.

***Accessibility Assessment.*** 5: The entire park was developed using the principles of universal design.

***Current Facilities.***

- A. Historic Life Saving Station
- B. Historic Ironworks Ruins
- C. Covered fishing pavilion
- D. Outdoor amphitheater
- E. Covered Picnic Pavilion housing 12 picnic tables and fire pit/grill station
- F. Two parking lots including handicapped parking
- G. Fitness circuit with exercise equipment
- H. Children's playground with bark bedding
- I. Swing set with 6 swings and 1 ADA compliant swing (replaced in 2022)
- J. 1 bicycle rack on a concrete pad
- K. Lighted paved paths/trails ADA compliant
- L. 13 park benches (refinished in 2021)
- M. Drinking fountain

- N. Informative historical placards
- O. historic railroad turntable
- P. 2 Arbor swings

***Future Facilities.***

- A. Permanent public restrooms
- B. Historical display of remnants of iron foundry
- C. Additional fitness equipment

**Elberta Lake Michigan Beach**

***Description.*** This community park is located on beautiful Lake Michigan and includes just over one mile of public beach access. Along with beach access, this park is often used for fishing from the beach and from the pier. The Elberta Lake Michigan Beach Improvement project was undertaken in 2024, with support from Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. Beach improvements were designed to improve public access while also preserving natural resources. They include an ADA accessible path connecting parking, pavilion, and pier; a picnic pavilion; permanent public restrooms; expanded and graded roadway; 48 defined parking spaces; and delineated pedestrian beach access points. There are designated ADA picnic tables, benches, and extensive dune grass restoration. Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy provided a grant match of \$550,000, and MNRTF provided \$300,000 towards this project. The village approved and paid for road grading, and the well and septic for flushable toilets.

***Accessibility Assessment.*** 4: The entire park meets accessibility guidelines.

***Current Facilities.***

- A. ADA compliant permanent public restrooms
- B. ADA compliant boardwalk to pier
- C. ADA compliant picnic pavilion with ADA compliant picnic tables
- D. Pier accessible for walking and fishing
- E. Scenic overlook parking
- F. Handicapped parking at beach access
- G. Boardwalks
- H. Feet-washing station
- I. Signage and blockade prohibiting motorized vehicles in critical dune areas

***Future Facilities.***

- A. Beach Cleanup Station

- B. Additional ADA compliant boardwalks
- C. Beach Safety Equipment Upgrades
- D. Lakeside Boulevard extension to third public access point on beach
- E. Additional parking at the third access point

### **Dudley Penfold Memorial Park (Penfold Park/Elberta Marina)**

**Description.** This 4-acre Neighborhood Park is located in the heart of Elberta on Betsie Bay and is directly accessible from M-22 and the Betsie Valley Trail. Since 2002, Penfold Park has hosted the Elberta Farmers’ Market on Thursday mornings from May to October. Penfold Park was designated a bus stop for the Benzie Bus in 2015. In 2019, a dedicated glass enclosed bus stop shelter was constructed near the entrance to the park from M-22. The marina includes a small concrete boat ramp and pilings for docks. Construction of an accessible kayak launch with a public restroom was completed in 2020. The park amenities are fully accessible with a paved path connecting the handicap parking area, kayak launch, restroom, information kiosk, and seating area. The restroom building includes two accessible unisex restrooms connected to the Village water and sewer systems, a drinking fountain with a water bottle filling station, and a covered concession area. The information kiosk features exhibits on local history and culture. The kayak launch, restroom, and accompanying amenities were funded by grants from the MNRTF, the USDA, and Traverse City Rotary Charities. The wooden footbridge was designed and built by volunteers, funded by Elberta Parks and Rec. The Pavilion and wooden playground train were funded by Parks and Rec along with the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, although the train playset has deteriorated over time and was removed for repairs or replacement in 2024.

**Accessibility Assessment.** 4: The entire park meets accessibility guidelines.

#### **Current Facilities.**

- A. Covered picnic pavilion
- B. 9 picnic tables including one ADA compliant picnic table
- C. Small concrete boat ramp
- D. Pedestrian bridge to Frankfort Avenue
- E. Access to the Betsie Valley Trail
- F. Trailhead parking (unpaved)
- G. Paved handicap parking
- H. benches, culture and history kiosk
- I. Universally accessible kayak launch
- J. Two ADA restrooms, drinking fountain with water bottle filling station



- K. Bus Stop Shelter for the Benzie Bus
- L. Wetland park area
- M. Little Community Garden
- N. Bike rack
- O. Wooden footbridge for walkable side access to park

***Future Facilities.***

- A. Concession area
- B. Paved entrance drive
- C. Additional picnic tables
- D. Wooden playground train surrounded by bark bedding

**The Community Building / Holmes Field**

***Description.*** This Neighborhood Park sits at the south end of the Village on several acres that were originally part of the local school property. The property was split and the school side was sold. The remaining portion is used for sports and a public meeting room and classes/party rental. The Community Building was funded through a grant and fundraising efforts of the Elberta Economic Development Community. The building can be rented for parties, meetings, classes, or any small gathering. The ball diamond, bleachers, and dugout are maintained by the Frankfort–Elberta Athletic Association.

***Accessibility Assessment.*** 2: Some facilities meet accessibility guidelines.

***Current Facilities.***

- A. The Community Building
- B. Restrooms
- C. Baseball field and bleachers
- D. Well house #3

***Future Facilities.***

- A. Soccer field / multi-use sports field
- B. Lighting for sporting events
- C. Water stations
- D. Additional bleachers
- E. Pickleball court
- F. Expanded parking

## Tot Park

**Description.** This 0.25-acre mini-park is located within the residential area of the Village.

**Accessibility Assessment.** 1: None of the facilities meet accessibility guidelines.

### **Current Facilities.**

- A. Sandbox
- B. Swing set
- C. Slide
- D. 2 picnic tables
- E. Park bench
- F. Fencing on three sides
- G. Flower garden

### **Future Facilities.**

- A. Early childhood appropriate playground equipment
- B. Updated fencing
- C. Garden pathway with memorial plaques

## Veterans Park

**Description.** This ½ acre mini-park is maintained as open space within the residential area of the Village.

**Accessibility Assessment.** 1: None of the facilities meet accessibility guidelines.

### **Current Facilities.**

- A. Gravel parking along Steele Street
- B. ADA accessible benches
- C. Permanent park sign
- D. Well house #2 and DPW equipment and P&R storage

### **Future Facilities.**

- A. Gazebo
- B. Veterans Memorial Garden
- C. American flag with lighting
- D. Handicap parking with solar panel covered parking

## Anderson Park

**Description.** This 0.25-acre mini-park is located within the residential area of the Village and is used for recreation sports.

**Accessibility Assessment.** 1: None of the facilities meet accessibility guidelines.

### **Current Facilities.**

- A. Basketball court with two hoops and lighting
- B. Fencing on all 3 sides
- C. Permanent Park sign

### **Future Facilities.**

- A. Multi-use court with tennis/pickleball court markings and net
- B. Resurfaced basketball court
- C. New basketball backboards, hoops, and nets
- D. Benches

## Betsie Valley Trail

**Description.** Betsie Valley Trail is a designated trail in place of the old Ann Arbor Railroad Corridor. This paved multi-use trail park extends approximately 23.5 miles throughout Benzie County. It extends into the Village of Elberta for 0.5 miles. This trail is widely used for both hiking and biking. It serves as a safe pedestrian and bicycle connection between Elberta and Frankfort for shopping and errands as well as recreation, and to other communities and parks within Benzie County.

A formal plan to extend the trail along the south shore of Betsie Bay to Elberta Beach will be enacted when funding is obtained.

**Accessibility Assessment.** 5: The entire park was developed using the principles of universal design.

### **Current Facilities.**

- A. Paved bike trail
- B. Parking
- C. Wayfinding signage

## Elberta Dunes South Natural Area

**Description.** The former site of the Allmendinger farm and later Thorpe residence. The Thorpe family gave this 58-acre parcel to the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy to hold in trust with the intention that it would eventually be acquired by the Village of Elberta. From the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy website: “*Protected in 2010, Elberta Dunes South features majestic glacial moraines, towering dunes, untouched forests and a 1/4 mile of sandy Lake Michigan beach. A hiking trail leads to sweeping views of Lake Michigan and the surrounding Betsie Valley. This property hosts the Pitcher’s Thistle, listed federally and by the state as a threatened species; the Lake Huron Locust, a state threatened insect; and Piping Plovers, a federally listed endangered species, have used this part of Lake Michigan’s shore for nesting.*” With the help of Natural Resources Trust Grant TF08-034, the Village took possession of the property in early 2011.

**Accessibility Assessment.** 1: None of the facilities meet accessibility guidelines.

### **Current Facilities.**

- A. Nature trails
- B. Parking lot
- C. Welcome signage and informational kiosk
- D. Natural history signage kiosk
- E. Mutt mitt station
- F. Shoe brush-off station
- G. Two benches located at scenic points along the trail
- H. Viewing platform

### **Future Facilities.**

- A. Trail maintenance tool shed
- B. Covered seating area
- C. Paved parking lot to improve accessibility
- D. Expansion of trail network

## West Park

**Description.** Formerly the location of ferry docks for the Ann Arbor Railroad, this parkland extends from Elberta Beach to the Historic Waterfront Park and from the park to the village’s northern edge. It features 578 feet of Lake Michigan frontage, 3,120 feet on Betsie Bay. This

park was gifted to Elberta Village by the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, which purchased the land on December 15, 2024.

**Accessibility Assessment.** 1: None of the facilities meet accessibility guidelines.

**Current Facilities.** None.

**Future Facilities.**

- A. Paved bike trail
- B. Fishing piers or docks
- C. Permanent public restrooms
- D. Benches
- E. Picnic areas
- F. Development of footpaths or trails
- G. Paved parking
- H. Dark-sky compliant lighting
- I. Nature placards
- J. Historic placards

**Private Amenities**

**Betsie Bay Marina**

**Description.** This privately owned marina is located on Betsie Bay and includes 96 boat slips and a boat storage and maintenance shed.

**North Star Marina**

**Description.** This privately owned marina is also located on Betsie Bay and includes 24 boat slips.

**Telegraph Hill Sanctuary**

**Description.** This 10-acre parcel of critical dune habitat along Bye Street between Elberta Beach and West Park is owned and managed by the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy.

## Inventory of Existing Recreational Boating Facilities

**Description.** The Village has two public water access locations for boaters. The Elberta Marina in Penfold Park has an existing improved facility for small boat launches into Betsie Lake. Elberta Beach provides unimproved water access to carry boats to Lake Michigan. Private boating facilities are provided by the above described.

### Elberta Marina

**Description.** Located in the center of Elberta Village on M-22, in the eastern portion of Penfold Park, this facility provides a concrete boat ramp that primarily serves small fishing boats. While most boats launched from Penfold Park are used for fishing in Betsie Lake, boaters can transit south up the Betsie River through the State Game Refuge, or north through Betsie Lake into Frankfort Harbor and Lake Michigan. From 2020, Penfold Park has hosted an universally accessible kayak launch with additional amenities described above.

The boat launch serves both locals and visitors to the Frankfort-Elberta area. The Penfold Park Boat launch is used as an alternative to the City of Frankfort Municipal Boat Launch also located on Betsie Lake. On peak fishing weekends, the Elberta Marina in Penfold Park can become congested with parked vehicles and trailers.

Overall the condition of Marina facilities is poor. In 2019, Betsie Lake water levels, driven by high water levels in Lake Michigan, flooded the boat launch and parking area for most of the boating season, making the facility unusable. Additionally the high water made transiting the Betsie river south of the M-22 impossible. The remaining docks were washed away. Since the marina's construction over 60 years ago the waterway has silted considerably and requires dredging.

**Dredging.** During periods of low water (i.e. 2013-2016) plans were made to dredge portions of Betsie Lake. The Elberta Marina was not included in those plans due to location challenges and prohibitive costs for a small municipality. Even in low water level years, the Penfold Park water depth is sufficient to allow the passage of small fishing boats, kayaks, and canoes into the connecting waterways but would benefit significantly from improvements that would expand capacity.

**Annual Maintenance Schedule.** Due to extensive damage and changing environmental conditions it has been difficult to establish an annual maintenance cycle. Previously the dock was repaired and boards were replaced by the Village DPW as necessary using Village General Funds

allocated to general Penfold Park maintenance. Volunteers maintain the honor box and paint the propellers as necessary. The Village Parks and Recreation Commission purchases the paint from fundraising proceeds.

### **Goals, Objectives, and Action Program**

**Goal.** Improve access to recreational opportunities that enhance the character and setting of Elberta Village.

**Objective 1.** Promote connections between recreation areas.

**Action Strategies.** Connect Elberta Lake Michigan Beach and the City of Frankfort’s Lake Michigan Beach with a trail extension from the Betsie Valley Trail (Segment D).

This includes improving the trailhead parking area on M-22 to provide better accessibility for the disabled and access to the Village downtown area. Promote the connection between the State Game Area and Elberta Beach/parks via the Betsie Valley Trail. Promote the economic benefits of linking communities by water and land trails. Improve and create sidewalks and designated bike lanes to connect all Village recreation areas via an intra-Village safe route for bikes and pedestrians.

Utilize Major and Local Street funding to create a safe route for bikes and pedestrians from Penfold Park to Elberta Dunes South via Lincoln Avenue. This will be a combined effort of the Parks & Rec Plan and the Village Streets Capital Improvement Plan.

**Objective 2.** Improve Elberta Beach access and safety.

**Action Strategies.** Provide year-round access to the beach by extending the Bestie Valley Trail’s Beach-to-Beach Trail from the Historic Waterfront Park to Elberta Beach.

Work with the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy and Friends of Betsie Valley Trail to procure grant funding and obtain additional sources of monetary support.

Collaborate with organizations that can provide expertise and resources for beach safety such as Great Lakes Water Safety Commission (GLWSC), Great Lakes Surf Rescue Project, Michigan BeachGuard, and Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

**Objective 3.** Provide permanent public restroom facilities.

**Action Strategies.** Build permanent restrooms at Waterfront/West Park.

**Objective 4.** Enhance placemaking through signage, way-marking, and historical projects.

**Action Strategies.** Protect and stabilize the remains of the Foundry Building in advance of repurposing for community events, theater, historic sites, etc. Maintain and continue restoration/preservation projects in the Elberta Life Saving Station interior and exterior. Continue collecting items for historical display in ELSS. Seek other funding from donations and grants specified for historic restoration and cultural preservation.

**Objective 5.** Develop sustainable revenue sources for park projects and maintenance.

**Action Strategies.** Build endowments into fundraising campaigns for various projects. Designate paid parking areas and provide annual parking passes for residents. Develop other revenue streams through concessions and regular annual fundraising drives, which could include the beach boardwalk planks and picnic table name, and memorial bench fundraisers. Provide advertisement rental space on permanent structures such as public restrooms. Consult with Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation and Rotary Foundation. Seek grant writers in the community.

**Objective 6.** Improve Penfold Marina access and safety.

**Action Strategies.** Provide and improve access to local waterways by dredging the marina approach, replacing docks, and improving parking areas. Request input and planning assistance from organizations that specialize in coastal management programs.



## Description of the Planning and Public Input Process

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**Public Input Announced.** On October 15, 2024, the Parks & Rec Commission announced a public input meeting (to be held October 29) and survey (open October 15-30) through the Elberta Alert resident listserv and on the Elberta Village website.

**Public Input Survey Disseminated.** October 15-30, 2024, a survey was used to collect public input. The survey was shared by a URL linked through the Village website, a QR code posted in the Village Post Office, and hard copies of the survey available at the Village Office. On October 30, 2024, the survey was closed.

**Public Input Meeting Held.** On October 29, 2024, a public input meeting was held from 5:00-7:00 PM in the Life Saving Station at Waterfront Park.

**30-Day Review & Hearing Announced.** On November 15, 2024, a 30-day public review and notice of public hearing (to be held December 19) was announced in the *Benzie Patriot Record*, the *Elberta Alert*, and on the Elberta website. Hard copies of the revised 5-Year Parks Plan were made available at the Village office and available for download (PDF) from the Village website.

**Public Hearing and Council Vote.** On December 19, 2024, a public hearing was held before the regular Village council meeting. After the public hearing, the Village council voted to adopt the revised 5-Year Parks Plan.

**Parks & Rec Plan Adopted.** On December 19, 2024, the 2025-2029 Parks and Rec Plan was adopted and published (PDF) to the Village website ([www.villageofelberta.com](http://www.villageofelberta.com)), with a hard copy filed at the Village office.

# Appendix A: Public Input Documentation

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<b>Document</b>	<b>Page</b>
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Summary: Public Input Survey	A-6
Summary of Responses from Public Review and Comment Period	A-8
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## Public Input Survey

Every five years, the Village of Elberta updates its Recreation Plan. The Parks & Recreation Commission needs your input to create the new plan for 2025-2029. Please take a few minutes to answer these questions. Your input is appreciated and needed by October 30, 2024. A digital survey can be accessed from the Village website ([VillageofElberta.com](http://VillageofElberta.com)) and paper copies are available at the Village Office (231-352-7201). Please return your completed paper survey to the Village Drop Box or by regular mail to P.O. Box 8, Elberta, MI 49628.

1. All Parks and Rec projects are funded by volunteer fundraising. What types of fundraisers or fundraising events would you attend or suggest that Parks and Rec offer?

2. How do you use each of Elberta's Park areas, and how often?

The Historic Waterfront Park:

Elberta Beach:

Penfold Park (Betsie Valley Trailhead/Marina):

Tot Park (Corner of Crapo Street & Frankfort Avenue):

Veterans Park:

Anderson Park (Basketball Court):

Elberta Dunes South:

The Community Building/Baseball Field:

3. There is a proposal to expand Waterfront Park westward to the beach. What activities would interest you in this newly expanded area? Check all that apply:

Fishing

Kayaking

Swimming

Bird watching

Cycling

Walking / Running

Hiking

Cross-country skiing

4. What changes would you like to see in Elberta's parks (equipment, maintenance, facilities, etc.)?

5. What could the Village do in the next five years to make Elberta an even better destination for recreation?

6. Would you like to volunteer with Parks & Recreation Commission activities? Check all that apply:

I'd like to participate in workdays.

I'd like to join the Parks and Rec Commission.

I'd like to help with Historic Preservation.

I'd like to help with projects at \_\_\_\_\_ park(s).

I'd like to participate in Life Saving Station maintenance.

I'd like to help put on a fundraising event.

I'd like to help with Betsie Valley Trail projects.

7. If you checked any boxes indicating that you would like to help/be involved with Parks & Rec, please provide the following information:

First & Last Name:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

Please return your survey to the Village Drop Box  
or by regular mail to P.O. Box 8, Elberta, MI 49628.

Thank you for your support!

**Got an opinion? Park it here.**

Public Survey for the Village of Elberta  
2025-2029 Recreation Plan

Every five years, the Village of Elberta updates its Recreation Plan. The Parks & Recreation Commission needs your input to create the new plan for 2025-2029. Please take a few minutes to answer the survey questions. Your input is appreciated and needed by October 30, 2024.

Survey QR Code:



The digital survey is also available on the Village website ([VillageofElberta.com](http://VillageofElberta.com)) and paper copies are available at the Village Office (231-352-7201). Please return paper surveys to the Village Drop Box or by regular mail to P.O. Box 8, Elberta, MI 49628.

## Summary of the Public Input / LSS Open House

Approximately 20 members of the community attended the Parks Plan Open House at the Life Saving Station held on October 29, 2024. The previous Parks and Recreation Plan along with the proposal for the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy West Park was used as a jumping off point in discussion.

***Elberta Beach.*** Enthusiastic support for the proposed Betsie Valley Bike trail extension to Elberta Beach. Enthusiastic support for the nearly completed beach project to include expanded parking, public restrooms, picnic pavilion and newly added accessibility features. Request for poison ivy mitigation along beach paths. Concerns about the condition and maintenance of the public pier and its pedestrian access for fishing, walking, bird watching, and more. Concerns about security and compliance with park rules for maintaining the beach to a high level of safety, cleanliness, and quality.

***Historic Waterfront Park.*** Requests for a permanent public restroom. Concerns for repair and maintenance of Life Saving Station. Concerns for restoration and preservation of Ironworks.

***Tot Park.*** No public input.

***Veterans Park.*** General conversation about adding a memorial or gazebo to appropriately develop space.

***Anderson Park.*** Questions about adding pickleball; several residents adjacent to Anderson Park voiced support of pickleball court. Suggestion to limit pickleball to daytime use.

***Penfold Park.*** Questions about the removal of wooden train set and requests for a new train/play area for kids. Requests for maintenance to non functioning bathroom facilities. Appreciation for kayak launch.

***Elberta Dunes South.*** No public input.

***The Community Building/Holmes Field.*** Little public input: lack of parking.

***West Park.*** Vocal and enthusiastic input for any preservation/public access. Request for permanent public restrooms. Strong interest in bike trail and ADA compliant fishing pier that improves access away from rocky and weed-choked shorelines.

## Summary of Public Input / Survey Responses

Thirty-two community members completed the survey. Responses are summarized below.

1. Family-friendly community events utilizing existing facilities to include music, movies, games, arts and crafts, yard sales, and village merchandise and food sales. Competitions such as 5-k and 10-k runs, chili cook-offs, and bake-offs. Holiday and seasonally themed events. Sponsorships, and bench and brick sales. Historical reenactments.
2. Waterfront Park: 16 weekly (or more); 9 monthly; 7 less than monthly; 0 no use. Types of use: exercise (walking; dog walking; use of equipment; running); sharing with visitors (grandchildren); boat watching
3. Elberta Beach: 16 weekly (or more); 7 monthly; 9 less than monthly; 0 no use. Types of use: walks/dog walks; sun and swim; fishing; seaglass/rock collecting; sharing with visitors.
4. Penfold Park (Betsie Valley Trailhead/Marina): 18 weekly (or more); 8 monthly; 6 less than monthly; 0 no use. Types of use: Farmers Market; accessing Betsie Valley Trail; wooden train; dog walks; kayak launch.
5. Tot Park (Corner of Crapo Street & Frankfort Avenue): 1 weekly (or more); 2 monthly; 7 less than monthly; 12 no use. Types of use: taking grandchildren; resting at picnic tables.
6. Veterans Park: 3 weekly (or more); 0 monthly, 0 less than monthly, 29 no use. Types of use: walks/dog walks. (Note: 5 reported not knowing park existence or location.)
7. Anderson Park (Basketball Court): 1 weekly (or more); 4 monthly; 6 less than monthly; 11 no use. Types of use: Basketball; pickleball; dog walks.
8. Elberta Dunes South: 12 weekly use; 7 monthly, 10 less than monthly; 3 no use. Types of use: Trail hikes; beach hikes; trail runs; dog walks in the open field; sledding; star and moon gazing. (Note: 2 complaints: poison ivy; ticks.)
9. Community Building/Holmes Field: 0 weekly (or more); 5 monthly; 9 less than monthly; 18 no use. Types of use: Municipal meetings; voting; fetch with dog; family baseball.

10. West Park: 31 walking or running; 28 cycling; 25 hiking; 23 kayaking; 21 bird watching; 19 fishing; 18 cross-country skiing; 14 swimming.
11. Elberta's parks (equipment, maintenance, facilities, etc.): Historic preservation and maintenance of Life Saving Station and Ironworks; enhanced maintenance to existing recreation/arts/entertainment structures; Dark Sky compliance; pickleball courts; new/more fishing piers; additional trash cans; more native plant species; indoor recreation facilities for kids; more playground and fitness equipment; splash pad; public art; space for outdoor movies; removal or upgrade of Tot Park; improved grounds maintenance; permanent bathrooms at Waterfront Park; daily monitoring of bathroom facilities and parks; added benches; concessions stands/food trucks along Betsie Valley bike trail and parks; additional parking; improved/alternative access to Elberta Beach.
12. Five-Year improvement recommendations: Extend Betsie Valley Trail to Elberta Beach; extend Lakeside Blvd to the third public access point; add snack shops, grocery or convenience stores, ice cream shop; food trucks; pave boat launch and trailheads; add kayak, canoe, bike rentals; improve publicity/marketing; indoor/year-round sports facilities; improve maintenance and cleaning; education/outreach to increase resident and local business involvement; add Elberta all-parks map to every park; public composting; dog run/park; permanent games for all ages.
13. Interest to become involved: 12 work days; 7 historic preservation; 6 fundraising; 6 Betsie Valley Trail projects; 6 Life Saving Station maintenance; 3 join Parks & Rec Commission.
14. Help with projects at a specific park: 9 Elberta Beach; 8 Waterfront Park; 8 Elberta Dunes South; 7 Penfold Park; 6 Anderson Park; 4 Veterans Park; 3 Tot Park; 2 Community Center/Holmes Field.



## Summary of Responses from Public Review and Comment Period

The following requests and recommendations were received from members of the public during the 30-day review and comment period:

- Add a dedicated sled or toboggan run.
- Create an ice skating area at Waterfront Park.
- Add two or three metal supported swings located along walking paths of West Park
- Add a dog run/park.
- Add Elberta Beach rental chairs and sunshades.
- Plant shade trees planted in irregular patterns on Elberta Beach (e.g., silver poplar).
- Plant Elberta peach trees along parking lots with plaques available for purchase.
- Enact measures to mitigate erosion along Elberta Beach sand bluffs.
- Institute Elberta Beach parking fees/parking meters.
- Establish and enforce quiet zones/noise ordinances within parks.
- Levy fines and enforce park rules to include littering.
- Enforce speed and parking laws with ticketing/fines throughout the Village, especially along Frankfort Avenue, Furnace Avenue, and Bye Street. The addition of new parks as well as improvements to existing parks has dramatically increased seasonal vehicular and pedestrian traffic within the Village, and speeding and parking violations go unchecked.

# Legal Notices

## Village Website ([villageofelberta.com](http://villageofelberta.com))

### Village Parks & Recreation 5-Year Plan 2025–29

November 16, 2024

The draft [Village of Elberta Parks & Recreation 5-Year Plan](#) is ready to view and download!

Public comment is open on the draft [Village of Elberta Parks & Recreation](#) 5-Year Plan. The public review period is 30 days beginning November 14, 2024. A public hearing will be held at 7pm on December 19, 2024, prior to the regular meeting of the Elberta Village Council, at the Community Building on 401 First Street, Elberta, MI 49628 to accept verbal comments before the plan is presented to the Elberta Village Council for adoption.

The DRAFT 2025-2029 Village of Elberta Recreation Plan is also available in hard copy at the Village Office at 151 Pearson Street Elberta MI, 49628 by request. Written comments may be mailed to Village of Elberta, PO Box 8, Elberta, MI 49628, or emailed to [clerk@villageofelberta.com](mailto:clerk@villageofelberta.com), subject line "Park Plan."

**November 15: Open 30-Day Public Review**

**December 19: Public hearing + vote on plan**

October 14, 2024 — Please take some time to fill out this survey for our 2025-2029 Parks and Recreation Plan. This is your opportunity to weigh in on how you'd like our parks to be managed and what features you'd like to see, including down by the waterfront. The survey is available online here: [Elberta Parks & Recreation Survey](#), in hard copy at the Village Office, and as a [downloadable pdf](#). See more information below about the timeline for adopting the plan.

## Benzie County Record Patriot ([recordpatriot.com/publicnotices/](http://recordpatriot.com/publicnotices/))

### PUBLIC HEARING-REC PLAN 12.19-ELBERTA

2024-11-20

Public Notice

Benzie County Record Patriot

Osceola, Benzie, Manistee, Mason, Mecosta, Newaygo

[View Notice](#)

#### Notice of the Draft Village of Elberta Recreation Plan 30-day review and Public Hearing.

Public comment period is open on the draft Village of Elberta Parks & Recreation 5-Year Plan. The public review period is 30 days beginning November 14, 2024. A public hearing will be held at 7:00pm on December 19, 2024, prior to the regular meeting of the Elberta Village Council, at the Community Building on 401 First Street Elberta MI 49628 to accept verbal comments before the plan is presented to the Elberta Village Council for adoption.

The DRAFT 2025-2029 Village of Elberta Recreation Plan is available for view and download

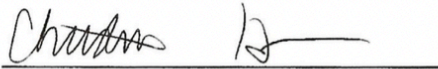
# AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
County of Benzie

Christine Hren, being duly sworn, deposes and says that she is one of the editors, publishers, representatives of the Benzie County Record Patriot, a newspaper published and circulated in said County of Benzie, and the annexed notice was duly printed and published in the said newspaper on the following dates:

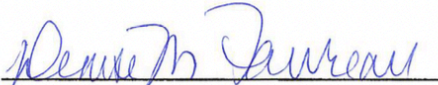
November 20, 2024

Notice of the Draft Village of Elberta Recreation Plan  
30-day review  
and Public Hearing.  
Public comment period is open on the draft Village of Elberta Parks & Recreation 5-Year Plan. The public review period is 30 days beginning November 14, 2024. A public hearing will be held at 7:00pm on December 19, 2024, prior to the regular meeting of the Elberta Village Council, at the Community Building on 401 First Street Elberta MI 49628 to accept verbal comments before the plan is presented to the Elberta Village Council for adoption.  
The DRAFT 2025-2029 Village of Elberta Recreation Plan is available for view and download at [www.villageofelberta.com](http://www.villageofelberta.com), and in hard copy at the Village Office at 151 Pearson Street Elberta MI, 49628 by request. Written comments may be mailed to Village of Elberta, PO Box 8, Elberta, MI 49628, or emailed to [clerk@villageofelberta.com](mailto:clerk@villageofelberta.com), subject line Park Plan.  
Nov. 20, 2024



Christine Hren

Subscribed to and sworn to me this 20th day of November 2024.



Notary Public: Denise M. Favreau  
State of Michigan, County of Benzie  
My Commission Expires: July 16, 2028  
(Acting in the county of Benzie)



Copy of Minutes from Public Meeting held December 19, 2024

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**Minutes**

**Regular Meeting with Public Hearing of the Elberta Village Council**

401 First Street | ELBERTA, MI 49628

December 19, 2024 @ 7 pm

**Call to Order 7:00 pm**

**Roll Call**

President Jennifer Wilkins – PRESENT | Pro Tempore Emily Votruba – PRESENT | Ken Holmes – PRESENT | Ryan Fiebing – PRESENT | Brett McGregor – PRESENT

**Audience**

Ken Mlcek (Fleis & VandenBrink), Gary Sauer (County Commissioner), David Beaton (Gilmore Twp. Board) and Arlene Sweeting (Elberta Labor Heritage Center/WUWU), Justin Towle (DPW), Rachel Perkins (Clerk), Steve Radionoff (Betsie Valley Trail Management Council rep), Jon Ottinger (UB Clerk), Lori Talo (resident), Bill Soper (Parks & Rec)

**Approval of Minutes**

**Motion** by Wilkins, seconded by Votruba, to approve the **November 21, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes** with these changes: rename Resolution -006 to Resolution -007, Resolution -007 to -008. **All Ayes. Motion passed.**

**Approval of Agenda**

**Motion** by Votruba, seconded by Holmes, to approve the **December 19, 2024, Regular Council Meeting Agenda** as presented. All ayes. Motion passed.

**— PUBLIC HEARING on the DRAFT 2025–2029 Village of Elberta Parks & Recreation Plan —**

President Wilkins closed the Regular Meeting and opened the public hearing at 7:03 p.m.

- **Council Discussion on the Draft 2025-2029 Recreation Plan** Votruba: Thanked Brett and Bree for an overall excellent, readable, informative plan. Suggested: change “permanent” to “European” settlers; “nonnative” to “invasive” species, do we need to add Benzie Conservation District as collaborators (no); change “grating” to “grading”; “foundry” to “Ironworks” Holmes: P&R has done a great job.
- **Open Public Comment** Sauer: chg to “Betsie Valley Trail Management Council.” Talo: those who fish on the wall/shore fishermen don’t need a fishing platform (hard to cast from), save money; suggested recycling no-trespassing signposts into a feature in the park McGregor: some have asked for a platform; before anything happens P&R will ask for more input. Sweeting: paid parking is an enforcement cost and potentially offputting/unworkable (per other community’s experience).
- **Draft Recreation Plan Recap with Council Trustees** No further comments

President Wilkins adjourned the public hearing and reopened the regular meeting at 7:19.

**Correspondence**

1. **Jennifer Wilkins – Tree Lighting Letter of Appreciation** See att’d.
2. **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Jeff Johnson (former Lake Township supervisor) Dredge & Discharge Project** Township requests to dredge at 6830 Lake Michigan Road, Honor (Platte River canoe outlet). See att’d.

- 51       **3. Glen Chown – Donation in honor of the Village from Barb Wirtz and Hugh Lindsey**  
52       Thank you, Barb and Hugh!
- 53       **4. Frankfort Fire & Rescue Report – Cederholm/Written & Verbal Report** (See website  
54       for full report). Noted fire on Memory Lane. David R. Gum awarded for most fire runs  
55       (72), Alex Johnson for most EMS runs. Pancake breakfast fundraiser a success.  
56

57       **Inquiry of Conflict on Agenda Items**

58       Wilkins and Votruba recused from Payroll vote.

59

60       **Brief Public Comment on Agenda Items (3 min)**

61       None.

62       **Approval of Bills**

- 63       • **Check register in the amount of \$718,745.20 AP and \$12,192.00 Payroll.** AP large  
64       amount because most items listed were expenses approved at previous meeting(s) but  
65       recently paid. **Motion** by Wilkins, seconded by McGregor, to approve the accounts  
66       payable expenditures in the amount of \$718,745.20. **Roll call: Votruba Aye | Fiebing**  
67       **Aye | Holmes Aye | McGregor Aye | Wilkins Aye | All Ayes. Motion passed. Motion** by  
68       McGregor, seconded by Fiebing, to approve the payroll expenditure in the amount of  
69       \$12,192.00. **Roll call: Holmes Aye | Fiebing Aye | McGregor Aye | Votruba Recused |**  
70       **Wilkins Recused | 3 Ayes. Motion passed.**  
71

72       **Financial Reports**

- 73       • **Rev/Exp Sheets - Fiscal Year 2025** Still don't have a complete financial picture  
74       because bank reconciliations aren't current but soon will be. General Fund is  
75       reconciled thru September, UHY training, Erlewein has caught up the Park Fund, now  
76       working on Municipal Streets, Major Streets next week. UHY returns in January. BS&A  
77       training also in January.
- 78       • **MiClass Investment Account November 2024 Statement** Beginning balance  
79       \$414,151.26, ending balance \$415,792.76.  
80

81       **Unfinished Business**

82       None

83

84       **New Business**

- 85       1. **Amended Resolution #2024-007 Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Wage and Compensation**  
86       **Pay Scale for Appointed Officials – Clerk and Treasurer.** The wages have not changed,  
87       just the math. Amended resolution reflects the correct wages for the remainder of  
88       FY2024–25. See att'd. **Motion** by Votruba, seconded by McGregor, to adopt the  
89       Amended Resolution #2024-007. **Roll call: Holmes Aye | Fiebing Aye | McGregor Aye |**  
90       **Votruba Aye | Wilkins Aye | All ayes. Motion passed.**
- 91       2. **Rachel Perkins, Clerk, Permissions – State Savings Bank signatory, MiClass,**  
92       **MiBusiness, MiLogin, SAM (Login.gov), SIGMA, Elan Financial Services Credit Card**  
93       **Motion** by Votruba, seconded by Wilkins, to authorize Perkins as a signatory on our  
94       accounts at State Savings Bank, and approved access to MiClass, MiBusiness, MiLogin,  
95       SAM (System for Award Management) (Login.gov), SIGMA (State payments, i.e. Act 51)  
96       and Elan Financial Svcs (Village credit card). **Roll call: Fiebing Aye | McGregor Aye |**  
97       **Wilkins Aye | Holmes Aye | Votruba Aye | All ayes. Motion passed.**
- 98       3. **Jan Erlewein, Treasurer, Permissions – State Savings Bank signatory, MiClass,**  
99       **MiBusiness, SAM (Login.gov), SIGMA, EFTPS** Erlewein has shared some checks and  
100       balances knowledge and says it's proper for her to not be a bank signatory. McGregor  
101       requested an organizational chart showing which personnel have access to which

- 102 services and physical spaces. **Motion** by Wilkins, seconded by Votruba, to authorize  
 103 Erlewein to access the online bank account [but not sign checks], as well as the online  
 104 MiClass, MiBusiness, SAM, SIGMA, and EFTPS accounts. **Roll call: Votruba Aye |**  
 105 **Wilkins Aye | Holmes Aye | Fiebing Aye | McGregor Aye | All ayes. Motion passed.**  
 106 4. **2025 Life Saving Station Management Contract.** Contract is mostly unchanged from  
 107 last year. **Motion by Votruba, seconded by Holmes,** to approve the 2025 contract  
 108 agreement for Elberta Life Saving Station management with Kristine Mills. **All Ayes.**  
 109 **Motion passed.**  
 110 5. **Fireworks policy Motion** by Wilkins to table for further research, **seconded by Fiebing.**  
 111 **All Ayes. Motion passed.**  
 112 6. **2025 Council & Commission Meeting Schedule.** See att'd. **Motion** by Wilkins,  
 113 seconded by McGregor, to approve the meeting schedule. **All ayes. Motion passed.**  
 114 7. **Pro Tempore and Committee Heads.** We still need a code enforcement officer.  
 115 **Motion** Wilkins, seconded by McGregor to approve the committee member information  
 116 as presented, with the addition of Jon Ottinger to the Personnel and Policy Committee.  
 117 **All ayes. Motion passed.** Info to be added to the website.  
 118 8. **MNRTF TF 20-0013 Elberta Beach Improvements Invoice – Fleis & VandenBrink.**  
 119 Some work to be completed in spring. **Motion by Wilkins, seconded by Holmes,** to pay  
 120 Fleis & VandenBrink \$10,000 for oversight of the Elberta Beach Project. **Roll call:**  
 121 **McGregor Aye | Holmes Aye | Votruba Aye | Wilkins Aye | Fiebing Aye| All ayes.**  
 122 **Motion passed.**  
 123 9. **Resolution #2024-009 Village of Elberta Recreation Plan 2025–2029 Motion** by  
 124 McGregor, seconded by Wilkins, to approve Resolution 2024-009, the Elberta  
 125 Recreation Plan 2025–2029 for adoption with the suggested changes. **Roll call: Holmes**  
 126 **Aye | Votruba Aye | Fiebing Aye | Wilkins Aye | McGregor Aye. All ayes. Motion**  
 127 **passed.**  
 128 10. **Resolution #2024-010 Designation of Streets Administrator** Redoing the resolution  
 129 because the authorization document got lost in the office the last time. **Motion** by  
 130 Votruba, seconded by Fiebing, to appoint Justin Towle as Street Administrator **Roll call:**  
 131 **Fiebing Aye | McGregor Aye | Holmes Aye | Votruba Aye | Wilkins Aye. All ayes.**  
 132 **Motion passed.**

133 \*\*\*\*\*

134 **REPORTS TO COUNCIL**

- 135 **County Commissioner Gary Sauer –** Verbal Report. EGLE asked for modifications to plan for  
 136 Pt. Betsie Lighthouse. Casino to open on Hoadley Rd. In former community center. Nice  
 137 juvenile detention center in Roscommon. Airport authority lawsuit having to do with  
 138 encroachment. BOC supports Honor corridor improvement authority. Animal control officer  
 139 quit and is now in maintenance. Officer Ryan Dumont was recognized for being attacked by a  
 140 knife wielding assailant. Sauer would like to see Road Commission wait for a millage request  
 141 until a state election. Rd. Commish building built in 30s and has maintenance and heating,  
 142 space issues: like putting a dress on a pig.  
 143 **LSS – K. Mills/** Written Report. Almost fully booked for 2025, 2 contracts for 2026.  
 144 **Zoning Administrator – J. Mills /** Written Report. ZBA mtg/hearing January 16. Variance request  
 145 by Dan Carter.  
 146 **Betsie Valley Trailway Management Council – S. Radionoff;** No meeting. Excited about the  
 147 GTRLC acquisition and bringing the trail to the beach  
 148 **Planning Commission – Fiebing /** Minutes/Verbal Report. No meeting. Housing workshop put  
 149 on by Housing North and Flywheel. FACLT and other entities were represented. Our zoning  
 150 priorities are in line with current thinking on how to expand housing opportunities. Draft of  
 151 zoning expected for February. Two meetings only with zoning consultant. FACLT is looking for

152 property to buy for the land trust to build houses. Spread the word to potential sellers. Can be  
 153 developed or undeveloped.

154 **Parks & Recreation Commission** – Winter Fridays begin January 3, 6 to 9pm. Hangout, coffee,  
 155 LaCroix, eventually bingo. Any ideas, email program director Paula Friedrich at  
 156 paulamfriedrich@gmail.com

157 **Employee Team Meetings** – Wilkins / See report.

158 **DPW** – Justin Towle/Verbal Report. Successful tree lighting. Joe Heiler plugged in the tree.  
 159 Thanks to Max Banktson for putting sand down on icy sidewalk/parking lot. Inflatable train and  
 160 red bow lit archway in Penfold. Bishop electric to fix broken trail light at Waterfront Park. Kerby  
 161 pulled kayak launch. Towle will train for water testing licenses in the spring. Sanitary survey site  
 162 visit: EGLE said a check valve in Well 2 and RPZ (pressure relief valve) in Well 3 may need to be  
 163 replaced. Force main pump went out by community building because an electrical outlet was  
 164 installed inside the well, new pump, electrical and alarm being installed. Streets: orange plow  
 165 truck transmission is shaky so being used as needed; smaller plow truck having a controller  
 166 problem. Jeff Banktson and Paul Gerhart helped make lights happen at the top of the tall tree.  
 167 Lots of positive feedback on tree from Elberta and Frankfort residents. McGregor suggested  
 168 finding a way to charge Frankfort to look at the tree.

169 **Clerk** – Report. Enjoyed first two weeks, learning a lot.

170 **Treasurer** – Report. Erlewein was out with stomach bug. Wilkins said Erlewein talked to IRS and  
 171 got over \$2,000 in penalties forgiven from taxes that hadn't been paid by previous staff. Doing  
 172 well on bank recs.

173 **UB Clerk** – J. Ottinger. Has an email address; website updated

174 **BGFAC** – Wilkins & McGregor / No meeting.

175 **Personnel & Policy Committee** – Votruba & Wilkins / See Minutes. New team in place, expect  
 176 new and updated policies in the new year.

177 **BLUA** – Wilkins & Holmes / Verbal Report. Bonds to be issued in January. Removal of blue tanks  
 178 is first on the list.

179 **Village/GTRLC Working Group** – Wilkins & Fiebing. Verbal Report. Press release from GTRLC.  
 180 Michigan Land Bank Authority has purchased the 9 acre property. Votruba asked if the working  
 181 group would continue and who our main contact will be at GTRLC.

182 **Gilmore Twp Report** – Newly elected Gilmore Trustee David Beaton volunteered to give this  
 183 and future reports. Dan Carter and Dave Bissell appointed to fire advisory board. Dan Carter  
 184 apptd to Gilmore planning commission. Two clerk candidates to be interviewed in  
 185 January/February. Need a security camera on ballot box. Reach out to Beaton with township  
 186 questions/concerns. Gilmore meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesdays in the Comm Bld.

187 \*\*\*\*\*

188 **Extended General Public Comment (5 min)**

189 Sweeting: Kudos on Christmas tree lighting event and tree itself. Asked for backup material and  
 190 written reports to be made available to the public before the meeting. Concerned about the  
 191 former Taqueria/catering building becoming another Airbnb. Fiebing said it will be discussed in  
 192 zoning. Talo: Happy that the rumor that one of the tree lights had been cut was not true.  
 193 McGregor: 363 days ago we sat here for 3.5 hours in a hearing on the proposed fence around  
 194 ELHC property. Looking forward to the coming year. Wilkins: Thanks everyone at GTRLC, Helen  
 195 Taylor at the Nature Conservancy and every single donor. "We are finally free."  
 196

197 **Announcements**

198 Note the passing of Village resident and former longtime trustee Joyce Gatrell. Wilkins thanks  
 199 her for her service.

200 Happy Christmas and merry new year! Winter Fridays begin January 3, 6 pm to 9pm  
 201

202 **Adjournment** 8:21 pm

203  
204 Draft minutes prepared by  
205 Emily Votruba, Trustee

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CERTIFIED 12-30-24  
Jennifer S. Wilkins  
JENNIFER S. WILKINS  
VILLAGE PRESIDENT





# Appendix B: Approval Documentation

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# Official Resolution of Adoption by the Village of Elberta Council

## Resolution #2024-009 Village of Elberta Recreation Plan 2025-2029

At a Public Hearing of the Elberta Village Council, Benzie County, Michigan, held at the Community Building at 401 First Street on December 19, 2024, at 7pm,  
The following resolution was offered by Trustee, **Brett McGregor**, and supported by Trustee, **Jennifer Wilkins**.

**WHEREAS**, the Village of Elberta began the process of developing the 2025-2029 Recreation Plan in accordance with the most recent guidelines developed by the Department of Natural Resources and made available to local communities, and

**WHEREAS**, residents of the Village of Elberta were provided with a well-advertised opportunity during the development of the draft plan to express opinions, ask questions, and discuss all aspects of the recreation and natural resource conservation plan, and

**WHEREAS**, the public was given a well-advertised opportunity and reasonable accommodations to review the final draft plan for a period of 30 days, and

**WHEREAS**, a public hearing was held as stated above to provide an opportunity for all residents of the planning area to express opinions, ask questions and discuss all aspects of the Village of Elberta Recreation Plan for 2025-2029, and

**WHEREAS**, the Parks and Recreation Commission has developed the plan as a guideline for improving recreation and enhancing natural resource conservation for the Village of Elberta, and

**WHEREAS**, after the public hearing, the Village of Elberta Council voted to adopt the Village of Elberta Recreation Plan for 2025-2029.

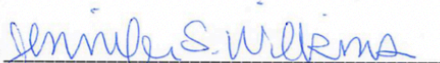
**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** the Village of Elberta Council hereby adopts the Village of Elberta Recreation Plan for 2025-2029.

**AYES:** Ken Holmes, Emily Votruba, Ryan Fiebing, Jennifer Wilkins, and Brett McGregor

**NAYS:** None

**ABSENT:** None

**RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED BY**

  
Jennifer S. Wilkins, Village President

I, the undersigned, Clerk of the Village of Elberta, Benzie County, Michigan, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of certain proceedings taken by said municipality of Benzie County at its public meeting held on December 19, 2024, relative to adoption of the resolution therein set forth; that said meeting was conducted and public notice of said meeting was given pursuant to and in full compliance with the Open Meetings Act, being Act 267, Public Acts of Michigan, 1976, and that the minutes of said meeting were kept and will be or have been made available as required by said Act.

Dated: 12/19/24

  
Rachel Perkins, Village Clerk

## Benzie County Planning Department Approval



### Village Office

151 Pearson Street · PO Box 8 · Elberta, Michigan 49628-0008  
Phone: (231) 352-7201 · Fax: (231) 352-4033

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December 30, 2024

Benzie County Board of Commissioners,

The Village of Elberta approved their 2025-2029 Recreation Plan on December 19, 2024.

The Recreation Plan describes the physical features, existing facilities, and desired actions to improve and maintain the village's recreation areas from 2025-2029.

The updated plan will help create grant opportunities to improve existing and new recreation areas and facilities, benefiting the entire community.

Please see the attached Village of Elberta Recreation Plan for 2025-2029 for your review and archives.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jennifer S. Wilkins".

Jennifer Wilkins  
Village President  
jwilkins@villageofelberta.com

**Letter Transmitting Adopted Plan to Regional Planning Agency, Networks Northwest**



**Village Office**

151 Pearson Street · PO Box 8 · Elberta, Michigan 49628-0008  
Phone: (231) 352-7201 · Fax: (231) 352-4033

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December 30, 2024

Mr. McCauley,

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Jennifer Wilkins  
Village President  
jwilkins@villageofelberta.com