



Create ahead.

Parks and Recreation Plan 2023–2027

Baldwin Township, Iosco County, Michigan

Draft Issued November 8, 2023

Final Plan Adopted Month Day, 2023

**C2AE
123 Main Street
Gaylord, MI 49735**

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Community Description

Baldwin Township is located in Iosco County and situated along the western shoreline of Lake Huron in the northeast lower peninsula of Michigan. The Township is directly north of the City of East Tawas on Tawas Bay. According to the community Master Plan, Baldwin Township was established in 1869, five years after the City of East Tawas, and has a history of commercial fishing, logging, mining and farming. Today the area is supported by tourism as well as commercial and industrial uses.

The area of Baldwin Township is approximately 31 square miles, which is about 1.6% of Iosco County. The Township’s land cover is primarily woodland and lake, according to the Township Master Plan. The largest lake is Tawas Lake, which is centrally located within the Township and forms part of its southern boundary. See Figure 1 for the location of Baldwin Township within the County and State of Michigan.

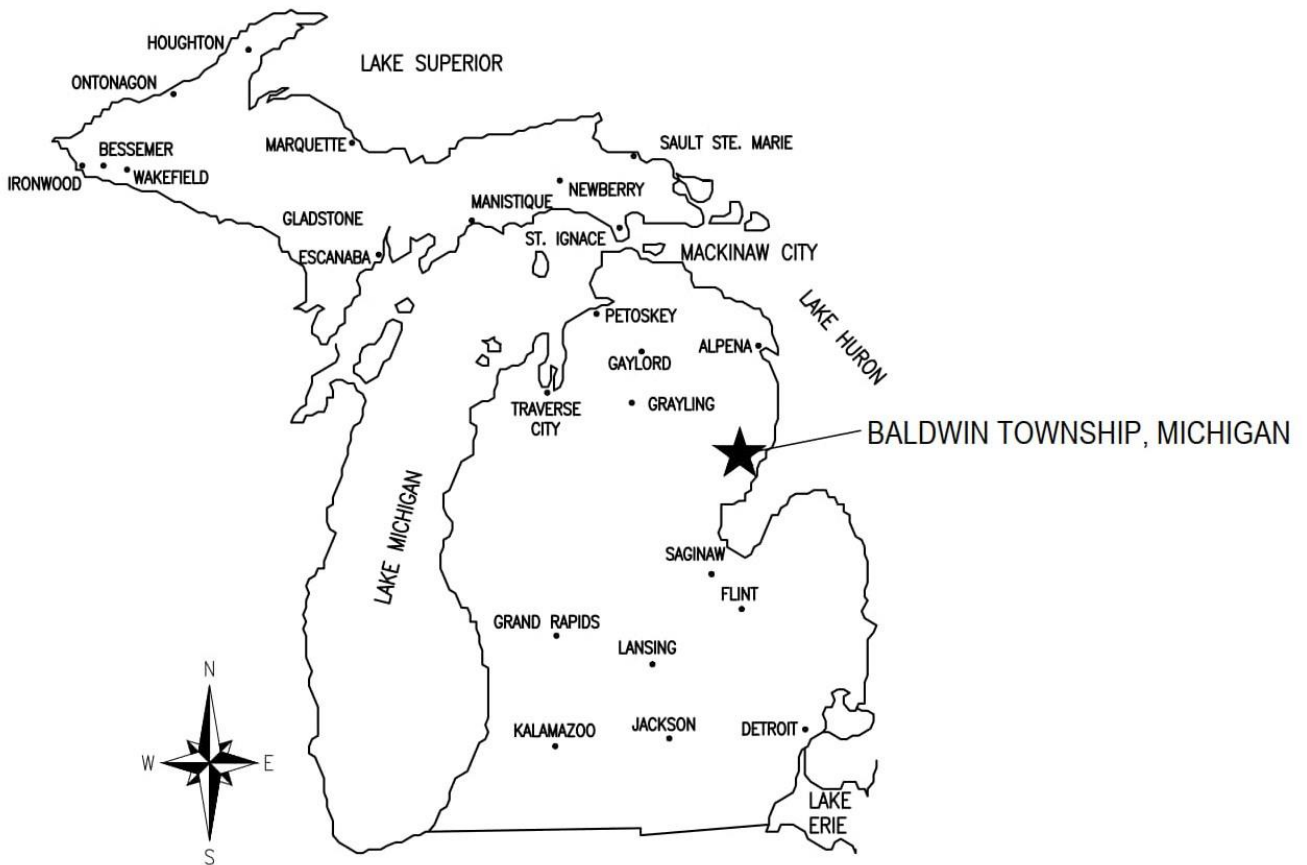


Figure 1 Baldwin Township Location

The current population of Baldwin Township is approximately 1,831, according to the 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. This represents a 16% increase since 2016, according to the American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, when the population was 1,583. The age distribution of Baldwin Township is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Population

Age Group	Percentage of Total % in 2021
Under 5	4.6
5 to 19	18.8
20-24	5.1
25-64	56.4
65+	20.2
Age Group	Percentage of Total % in 2016
Under 5	2.3
5-19	12
20-24	4.8
25-64	50.9
65+	30

The percentage of children under age 5 increased by 2.3% while the percentage of school-age children also increased by 6.8%. The largest increase of 9.8% during that time is in the over 65 age group. The population density is 59 people per square mile as compared to that of Iosco County which is just 13.5.

Almost all the housing in Baldwin Township (93% according to the 2021 US Census American Community Survey data) is designated as recreational, seasonal or for occasional use as shown in Table X-X. This suggests that the population of Baldwin Township grows during certain times of the year. Particularly in summer, seasonal residents may increase the Township's population. This seasonal population is not accounted for in the census data, which is usually collected in April and does not account for non-permanent residents. In addition to seasonal homes, visitors staying at rentals or with friends and family, may further increase the Township's population.

Administrative Structure

Baldwin Township is led by a Township Board and Planning Commission, as shown in Figure 2. The Township does not have a designated Parks and Recreation Commission, so planning for parks and recreation is carried out primarily by the Township Planning Commission. Oversight of public properties in the Township is the responsibility of the Township Board and maintenance is carried out by Township staff, based on their available time.

Currently, the Township maintains two properties: the fishing pier on Nunn Road and the access point on Tawas Bay. Maintenance is limited to occasional trash and brush removal. The Township Board also has the power to purchase property, designate funds for parks and recreation area improvements and maintenance and other capital improvements within the Township with input from the Planning Commission.



Figure 2 Baldwin Township Administrative Structure

Budgets and Proposed Funding

The Township does not currently have any funds set aside for parks or recreation lands or programming. Their budget for maintenance is small, given the Township only maintains the fishing pier and access to Tawas Bay sites. Maintenance funds for these properties come from the Baldwin Township general fund. Currently the Township does not have any volunteer groups or private organizations involved in parks or recreation, largely due to the lack of such properties. In the future, the Township would encourage volunteer groups involvement in planning and maintenance of parks and recreation areas.

The Downtown Development Authority (DDA) maintains jurisdiction over the commercial district along US 23 and industrial district along Aulerich Road and part of Lincoln Street in Baldwin Township. Goals of the DDA include providing trails, benches and lighting within their Tax Increment Finance Authority (TIFA), which are planned out in the DDA's capital improvement plan and budget.

Community Relationships

The Township officials encourage positive relations between surrounding Townships, including AuSable, Wilber and Tawas, as well as nearby Tawas City and East Tawas. In the past, the Township has had contact with the State of Michigan related to Tawas Point State Park as well as Iosco County and Tawas Area Schools officials.

Recreation Inventory

The Planning Commission was responsible for updating the list of recreation areas within and around Baldwin Township for the purpose of creating this plan.

Following is a list of properties and facilities owned and operated by Baldwin Township.

1. Baldwin Township Hall, 1119 Monument Road, Tawas City, MI 48736
2. Baldwin Township Public Works building, 639 Aulerich Road, East Tawas MI 48730. This property includes several acres of land.
3. 21-Acre Fishing Site located on Nunn Road at the Tawas River bridge. A boardwalk with thirty-one foot dock and parking for eight to ten cars exists at this site along with a small boat launch for canoes and kayaks, two picnic tables and several benches. This property was donated to the Township by Walleyes for Iosco County.
4. Easement to Tawas Bay off the northwest side of Tawas Beach Road. This is a gravel composite road surface that is used to access Tawas Bay, primarily by ice fishermen and -women, some kayakers and kite boarders. The area between the end of the paved surface and the Bay is wet and somewhat marshy.
5. One acre of undeveloped land located on Cable Drive at Park Street in the Lubaways Subdivision between Butler Boulevard and Chaney Drive.
6. Various small undeveloped easements on the east side of Tawas Lake along Cranberry Pike Road.
7. Road ends at the end of Julie Street and Sue Streets on Lake Huron.
8. The Township owns an easement to Tawas Bay adjacent to Jerry's Marina on Tawas Beach Road.

Following is a list of recreation sites in the area that are owned by non-profit or other governmental units.

Table 3 Non-Profit/Governmental Recreation Sites

Site Description	Location	Owner or Operator
Tawas Point State Park	Baldwin Township	State of Michigan
Bicycle and pedestrian trail	extending from the intersection of Tawas Beach Road and US 23 to Tawas Point State Park	Iosco County Road Commission
Ted Ingall Nature Site	Bischoff Road	Iosco Soil Conservation District
Iosco County Airport	Aulerich Road	Iosco County
Tuttle Marsh area	North of Baldwin Township	US Fish and Wildlife Service, operated by Ducks Unlimited
Silver Valley Recreation Area		US Forest Service, operated by Corsair Ski Council
Huron National Forest	North of Baldwin Township	US Forest Service

In addition to the assets owned by non-profits or other governmental agencies, a general recreational inventory of private assets within the Township includes Jerry's Marina and Tawas Bay Yacht Club on Tawas Beach Road along Tawas Bay, Tawas Creek Golf Course on Monument Road, Hubies Miniature Golf on US 23, and Iosco Sportsman's Club on US 23.

Red Hawk Golf Course is in adjacent Wilber Township. In addition, Tawas Area Schools, located on M-55 in Tawas City, have extensive recreational facilities that are used by the Baldwin Township Community.

Recently the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan has begun developing their property on the northwest portion of Tawas Lake for their traditional activities, such as harvesting wild rice. The two cities that adjoin the Township, City of East Tawas and City of Tawas City, have extensive recreational facilities, including gyms, courts, fields, and open areas. See Appendix A for a Recreational Facilities Map.

Accessibility Assessment

The Township consultant, C2AE, conducted an assessment of the only improved Township-owned recreation facility, the Nunn Road fishing site, using the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design. This facility's ranking is 1 since it does not meet accessibility guidelines.

The site includes one accessible parking space, which meets the requirement. The sign, however, is non-compliant. The provided seating (picnic table and benches) are non-accessible and do not include ADA companion seating. The height change of greater than ½" between the concrete and the fishing platform does not meet accessibility requirements. An accessible route to the benches and along the water is not available. Finally, the railing height along the fishing platform does not meet ADA standards.

Table 4 Accessibility Assessment

Feature	Compliant (Y or N)	Notes	Changes Needed
Parking	N	Sign is non-compliant	Replace with a compliant sign
Picnic Table and Benches	N		Provide ADA companion seating and/or accessible seating
Route to Fishing Platform	N		Lower height change to ½" or less according to ADA regulations
Route to Benches and Along the Water	N		Provide an ADA-compliant route
Railing along Fishing Platform	N		Replace with an ADA-compliant handrail



Accessible Parking Space



Access To Fishing Pier



Non-Accessible Route



Handrail Does Not Meet ADA Standards



No Accessible Route To The Benches



Non-Accessible Route Along The Water

Grant-Assisted Parks and Recreation Facilities

Baldwin Township does not have any grant-assisted sites or facilities at this time.

The Planning Process

With assistance from the planning consultant, the Township Planning Commission reviewed the Township and County Master Plans and Recreation Plans, and assessed current recreation opportunities in Baldwin Township and surrounding communities.

They reviewed and compared typical park metrics, based on the National Recreation and Park Association guidelines, to existing facilities and community demographics in Baldwin Township.

Next the Commission solicited input from Township residents with regard to their recreation wants and needs. Finally, the Planning Commission developed a set of goals and objectives that braid together residents' needs and desires with community characteristics and existing recreational opportunities.

Public Input

Baldwin Township Planning Commission worked closely with their consultant to develop a survey of recreation needs for the community. On or about September 26, 2023, the online survey link was posted to the Township website and Facebook as well as printed in the local newspaper.

The Township received 86 responses as of October 25 and those responses are compiled at the end of this report. A survey format was chosen in part to gain feedback from as many residents as possible, including those who might not come to an in-person meeting.

In addition to the community survey, the Planning Commission also made surrounding community governments aware of the recreation plan and asked for their input.

The draft parks and recreation plan was made publicly available for review for 30 days, in order to allow adequate time for feedback and comments. Locations where the draft plan was made publicly available include the Township website, Facebook, Baldwin Township Hall, Iosco-Arenac District Library and East Tawas post office.

After the public comment period, comments and feedback were assimilated and appropriate changes were made to the draft. (Refer to the Goals and Objectives section for a description of the changes made).

Following proper notice, a public hearing was then held by the Township Board to receive additional comments from Township residents. Following the public hearing, the Township Board adopted the parks and recreation plan at their meeting on .

Goals and Objectives

Goal #1: Increase outdoor recreational opportunities in Baldwin Township.

- Objective #1a: Create additional trails for hiking and biking.
- Objective #1b: Build a launch site for small watercraft such as canoes and kayaks.
- Objective #1c: Incorporate American with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements into the Nunn Road fishing site.
- Objective #1d: Construct additional fishing infrastructure, such as docks and platforms.

Goal #2: Increase availability of wellness and fitness programs for adults.

- Objective: Investigate ways to offer adult programming related to wellness and fitness topics.

Goal #3: Increase safety for non-automobile transportation such as bicycles and pedestrians.

- Objective #3a: Extend the bike path along Tawas Beach Road in front of Jerry's Marina.
- Objective #3b: Extend the bike path along US-23 from East Tawas through Baldwin Township.
- Objective #3c: Extend the bike path down Baldwin Resort Road.

Action Program

- Contact the Iosco County Road Commission and the Michigan Department of Transportation to discuss extending the bike path in front of Jerry's Marina, Baldwin Resort Road and along US-23.
- Create a committee to explore expansion routes for hiking trails within the Township.
- Identify potential locations for a small watercraft launch site. Research possible funding opportunities and connect with water-related organizations, such as Paddle Antrim.
- Explore potential sites for new fishing infrastructure. Procure funding and implement ADA requirements at the Nunn Road fishing site.
- Assemble a group of interested residents to research fitness and wellness programs for adults. Encourage them to connect with local healthcare and fitness providers to brainstorm ideas.
- Identify funding sources for desired improvements. Consider leasing or selling Township-owned parcels that are not regularly used, such as the parcel in Lubaway Subdivision.
- Develop a capital improvement plan to address potential funding sources, staffing needs and a maintenance plan for improvements.
- Continue to solicit feedback from residents about recreation in Baldwin Township.