

B. Administrative Structure

1. Village Management Structure

The Elk Rapids Village Council has ultimate authority over the development and management of recreational facilities within the Village. The organization of the Village is shown in Figure B-1

Appointed commissions related to parks and recreation include the Parks & Recreation

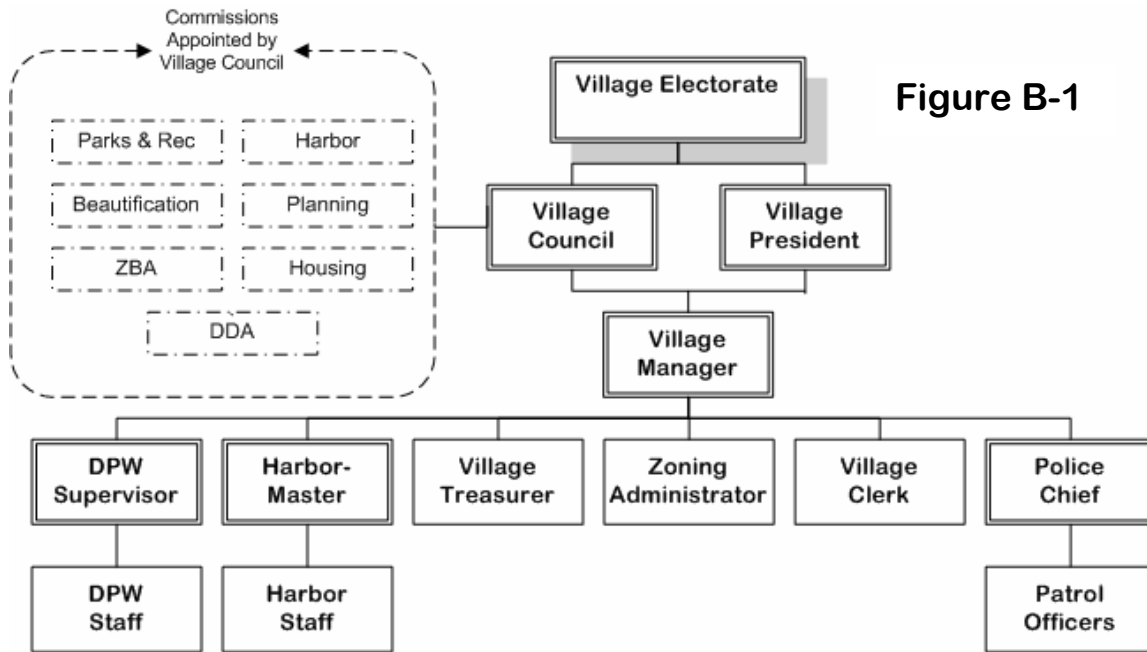


Figure B-1

Commission, Harbor Commission, and Beautification Commission. The Planning Commission reviews all recreation development proposals. Village staff members, under the Village Manager’s overall direction, operate and maintain village recreational facilities. The following sections describe the roles of these commissions and staff.

2. Parks & Recreation Commission

This Parks and Recreation Commission serves in an advisory capacity regarding the development of parks and recreational programming within the Village of Elk Rapids. Its main concerns are parks, public access sites, seasonal recreational facilities, and recreational activities and events. The Village President appoints seven members with the consent of the Village Council. One Village Council member is also appointed by the Village President to sit on the Parks & Rec Commission. Current Commission members are Kathy Peterson, Gordon Stewart, Dave Lien, Jan DiGiovanni, Linda Pillsbury, Don Marker, and Howard Yamaguchi. Mr. Marker is the Village Council representative on the Commission.

The Parks & Recreation Commission was established under Public Act 156 of 1917 in June of 1993 by Ordinance Number 223. The Parks & Recreation Commission consists of seven appointed members and one Village Council representative who meet on a monthly basis. The primary role of the Commission is to make recommendations to the Village Council regarding the development and maintenance of parks. The Commission also serves as a liaison between the Village Council and community members, and keeps an open line of communication with the County and neighboring townships in order to be informed about possible shared recreational

opportunities in the area. A yearly parks and recreation budget is also recommended to the Village Council by the Parks and Recreation Commission. The Village Council has final determination over the Parks and Recreation budget. See Appendix A for the Village Code.

3. Harbor Commission

The Harbor Commission, under authority from the Village Council, plans, builds, operates, and maintains Edward C. Grace Memorial Harbor and the Elk River Upper Harbor. The Commission supervises the work of the Village Harbormaster who in turn supervises seasonal dockworkers at the public harbor facilities. It also reviews all village projects that may affect the streams, lakes, rivers, and shorelines within the village. The Harbor Commission makes recommendations to the Village Council regarding harbor operations and harbor projects. The Harbor Commission comprises 7 members who meet monthly. The Village President appoints the members with the consent of the Village Council. One Village Council member is also appointed by the village president to sit on the Harbor Commission.

The Harbor Commission is currently involved in formulating a Harbor Master Plan, a pre-design feasibility study that will guide the course of public waterfront facilities in Elk Rapids. The Harbor Commission is partnering with the Parks & Recreation Commission in compiling this Community Recreation Plan. The Recreation Plan's action plan items for water recreation and waterfront facilities have originated from the Harbor Commission's work in their Harbor Master Plan.

4. Beautification Commission

The **Beautification Commission** works to improve the appearance of the Village by planning and implementing projects that add to the beauty of the public areas and preserve the tranquility of natural areas. The Beautification Commission was established July 17, 1978 for the purpose of creating programs that care for "passive recreational sites" and beautification throughout the Village. The duties of the Beautification Commission include, but are not exclusive to, recommending the replacement plantings of trees and shrubs where deemed appropriate and acting as a liaison with Elk Rapids Garden Club and Village Council. The eight members of the Commission meet monthly, and regularly report to the Village Council on their activities.

5. Planning Commission

The **Planning Commission** reviews all development activities in the Village of Elk Rapids, including any new recreation projects. Such projects are subject to the Village's Zoning Ordinances. The Planning Commission also updates the Village Master Plan every five years, and may opt to incorporate the Community Recreation Plan into the Master Plan by reference.

6. Role of Volunteers

Unpaid volunteers play a key role in the planning and maintenance of Village recreational facilities. The appointed Commissions described above (Parks & Recreation, Harbor, Beautification, and Planning) all are appointed volunteers who are not compensated for their work. Most of the gardens under the Beautification Commission are maintained by volunteers from the Elk Rapids Garden Club. The Parks & Recreation Commission has occasional activities (annual fish boil, streambank cleanups) that are manned by volunteers from the Commission as well as the general public. The Village Ice Skating Rink (see Section F) will be constructed and maintained mostly by volunteers. Volunteers play an active role in most other aspects of Village community life: church, school activities, Chamber of Commerce, Harbor Days, and so on.

7. Operation of Village Recreational Facilities

The Elk Rapids Department of Public Works (PWD) currently maintains all park facilities while employees of the school district maintain school recreation sites. As such, the operational budget for the Village park facilities is part of the overall PWD budget.

The Village Council has full authority over the affairs of the harbor facilities. These facilities include the Edward C. Grace Memorial Harbor and Elk River upper harbor. Edward C. Grace Memorial Harbor has 213 slips and a launch ramp. Elk River upper harbor has 30 slips and a launch ramp. The revenue generated from these 2 locations is used for operations, maintenance, future improvements, and expansions to waterfront properties owned and leased by the Village.

There is currently no Village parks director that oversees park operation. Previous Recreation Plans have brought up the possibility of establishing such a position, but as yet no action has been taken.

8. Operational Budget

The 2006-2007 fiscal year operational budgets for parks and recreational facilities in the Village of Elk Rapids for are as follows:

Item	2006/2007
Parks Maintenance (DPW)	\$182,585
Parks & Recreation Commission	\$5,850
Harbor Operation and Maintenance Enterprise	\$677,535
Harbor Capital	\$232,000
Harbor Construction	\$156,313
Harbor Bond	\$93,643

Budgets for the future are, in this period of extreme financial austerity, difficult to project. The Village continues to cut costs to balance its budget, and further across-the-board reductions in budget are anticipated for foreseeable future in all budget line items.

Currently, most of the funds for recreational activities under the purview of the Parks & Recreation Commission come from the Village general fund. Occasional donations from civic groups and private individuals for specific purposes are received and applied.

Operational funds for the Grace Memorial Harbor are generated in large part by the revenues from the rental of boat slips and other miscellaneous income.

The recent Elk Rapids Master Plan Opinion Survey commissioned by the Village Planning Commission indicated that there is strong public opposition to levying a millage to finance hi-cost public recreational facilities such as walking paths and bicycle trails. (There was, however, overwhelming support for raising **private** funds for such purposes.) Difficulty in raising public

funds for acquiring and developing recreational facilities will move the Village of Elk Rapids to rely more and more on outside grant funding for these ends.

9. *Inter-Agency Relations*

Liaison between the Parks & Recreation Commission and the Village Council is maintained by the appointment by the Council of one of its members to the Parks & Recreation Commission. (This is the standard procedure for all of the appointed commissions.)

The Parks & Recreation Commission maintains regular liaison with related Village-appointed commissions by having representatives from Parks & Rec attend other Commissions' meetings to brief them on relevant issues and actions taken by the Parks & Rec. Similar visits to Parks & Rec meetings by members of other commissions take place with some regularity. Most recently, in the preparation of this Community Recreation Plan, members of the Parks & Recreation Commission and the Harbor Commission have attended each other's meetings to coordinate planning activities. Finally, in preparation of this Recreation Plan, the Village Planning Commission has been asked to comment on the various drafts as they become available.

The Parks & Recreation Commission also establishes contacts with other park-related public entities around Antrim County as needed for specific purposes. Most recently, Parks & Rec contacted and obtained information from the Helena Township Parks Committee about their structural designs for public rest rooms. Over the past two years, the Parks & Recreation Commission has participated with the Antrim County Parks & Recreation Commission in their planning process for the future of the Elk Rapids County Day Park.

The Parks & Recreation Commission meets as needed with community-based organizations such as the Elk Rapids School Board, the Chamber of Commerce, the Rotary Club, and the Lions Club to coordinate activities and exchange information. In the past, School Board members have served in the Parks & Recreation Commission as well. The Rotary and Lions Clubs are frequent contributors to recreational facility upgrading and construction in the Village.

The Village, Harbor Commission, and the Harbormaster works with regulatory agencies including the DEQ, Army Corps Of Engineers, and Antrim County Soil Erosion to obtain the necessary permits for future construction and maintenance at waterfront facilities in the Village.

10. *Rules and Regulations Governing the Use of Village Recreational Facilities*

Rules and regulations concerning the use of the various recreational facilities in the Village of Elk Rapids are governed by Village Ordinances.

The Village of Elk Rapids has an agreement with the DNR. The DNR has provided the village with rules and regulations to follow for harbor and waterfront operations. The Village Council, the Harbor Commission, and the Harbormaster are responsible for enforcing those rules and regulations. Rules and regulations that are not set by the DNR are recommended by the Harbor Commission to the Village Council. The Village council makes the final decision.