

# Solon Township Parks & Recreation Plan 2017 Leelanau County



## **Table of Contents**

Cover Page.....	Page 1
Table of Contents.....	Page 2
Solon Township Officials.....	Page 3
Introduction.....	Page 4
Community Description.....	Page 5
Administrative Structure.....	Page 9
History of Maintenance.....	Page 10
Programs.....	Page 11
Program Funding & Maintenance.....	Page 12
Solon Township Parks.....	Page 13
Census Information.....	Page 20
Goals & Objectives.....	Page 22
Appendix	
Item I Cedar River Project .....	Page 23
Item II Solon Township Budget .....	Page 24
Item III Public Input.....	Page 26
Item IV Accessibility Evaluation.....	Page 28

## **Township of Solon**

### **Township Board:**

**James Launtner – Supervisor  
Shirley Mikowski – Clerk  
Joan Gauthier – Treasurer  
Ron Novak– Trustee  
Steve Yoder – Trustee**

### **Parks and Recreation Committee:**

**Ron Novak  
Kathleen Hughes  
Zach Baker**

## Introduction

The Township of Solon has developed this Parks and Recreation Plan to serve as a guideline to improve recreation facilities and develop new recreational opportunities. To that end, this document forms the basis to guide policy for implementation of improvements and new initiatives that will meet the recreational goals and interests of the Solon Community.

Before any recreation plan is adopted and enacted, it is first important to understand what the needs of the residents are, what recreational opportunities already exist, and what sort of projects are relevant for residents based on age, ability, population, density, and the availability of recreational opportunities in neighboring communities. This plan has carefully considered input and suggestions via active communication from area residents, Solon officials, and other community stakeholders. This input is a critical component to this plan, and together, the voices of Solon have united to develop a recreation plan to enhance the quality of life for everyone.

The Leelanau County Planning Department estimated that the summer population in the county swells four to seven times its year-round population. This indicates that Leelanau County's population could exceed 100,000 and Solon Township could reach almost 10,000 summer inhabitants. The entire region is similarly affected. Recreation planning should incorporate these statistics when laying out a plan for the future.

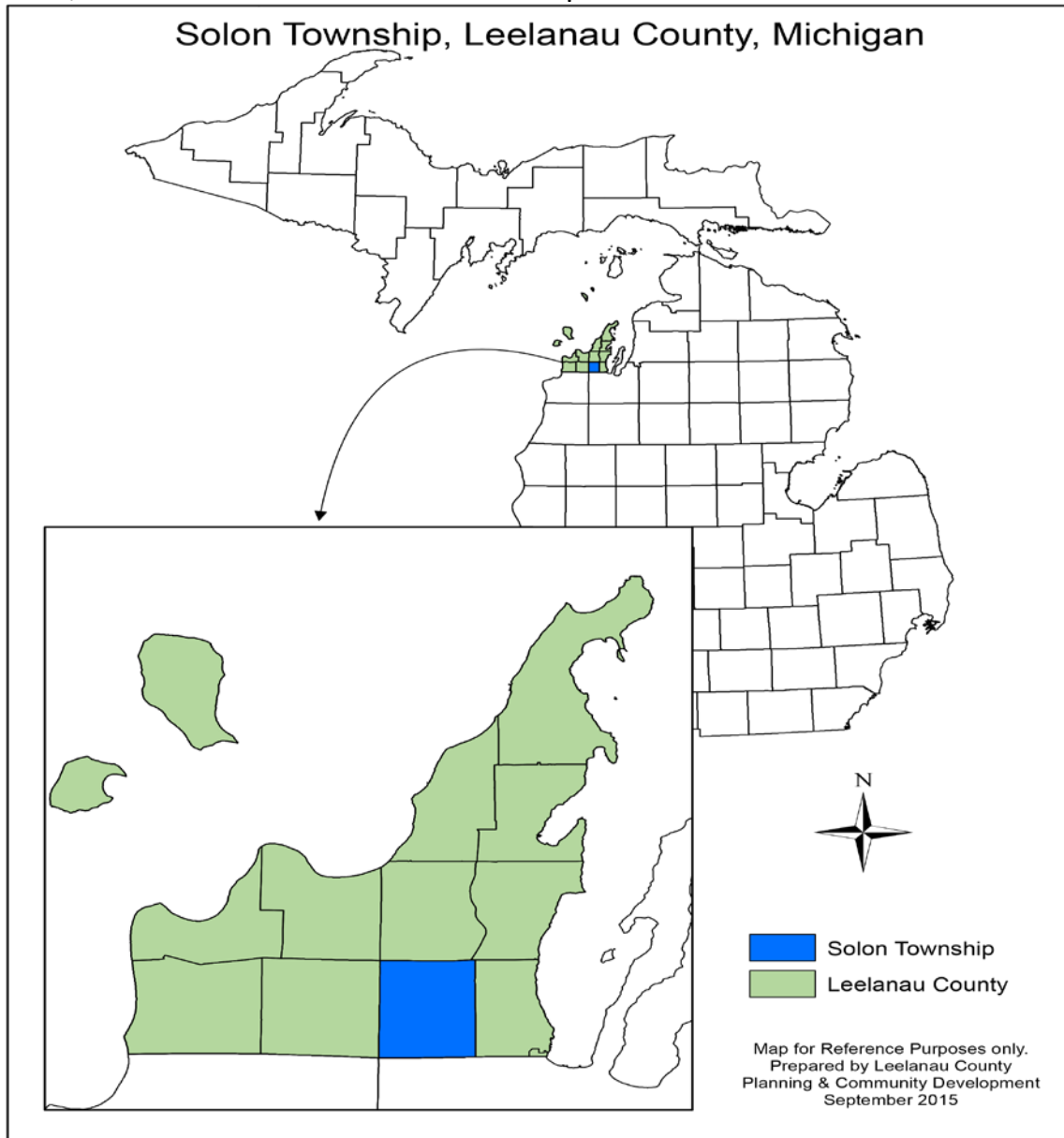
The Solon Township Board has appointed a Parks and Recreation Committee. This Parks and Recreation Committee meets at least four times a year; (January, April, July, October), and is responsible for overseeing recreation activities, programs, and park maintenance in the township.

This Plan describes the park and recreation opportunities in Solon Township and establishes goals, objectives and an overall vision for our community's parks and recreation future.

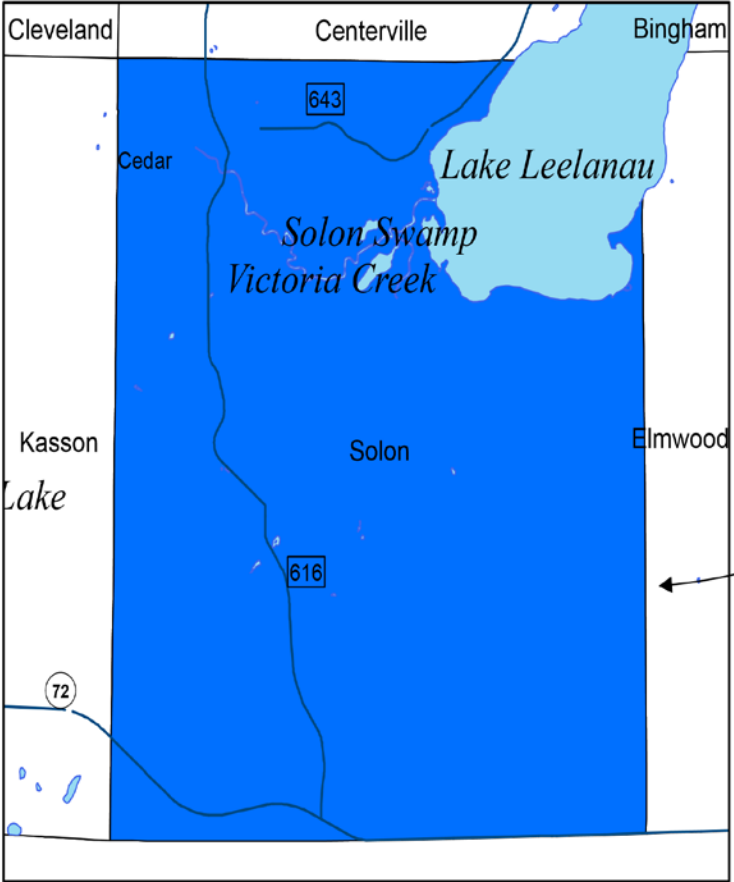
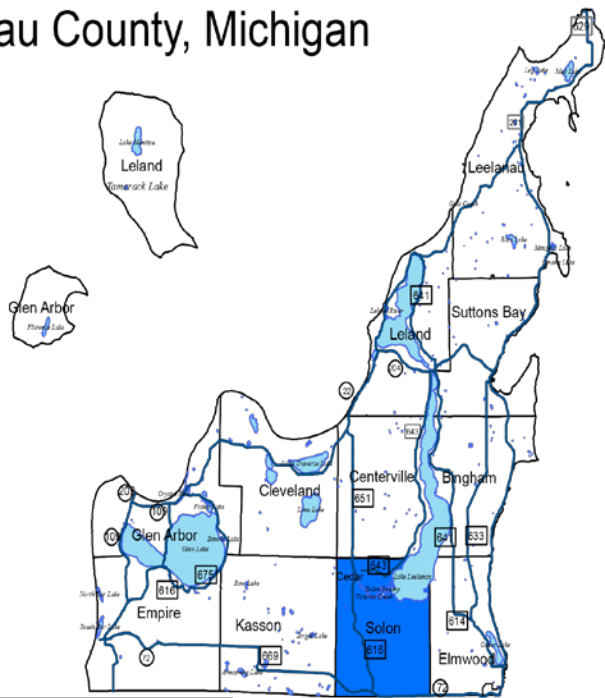
# Community Description & Physical Characteristics

## Location

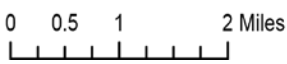
Solon Township is one of the eleven townships in Leelanau County. Leelanau is most often described as the “little finger” of Michigan located in the northwestern portion of the Lower Peninsula. Solon Township is nestled between the picturesque Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lake Shore and the largest lake in the county, Lake Leelanau. Nearly one eighth or 29 square miles of Solon Township’s land is the Pere Marquette State Forest. The dominant geographical feature of the township is the Solon Wetlands Tract, which combined with small lakes, covers over a third of the township’s area.



# Solon Township, Leelanau County, Michigan



- Solon Township
- Leelanau County



Map for Reference Purposes only.  
 Prepared by Leelanau County  
 Planning & Community Development  
 September 2015

## **Water Resources & Drainage**

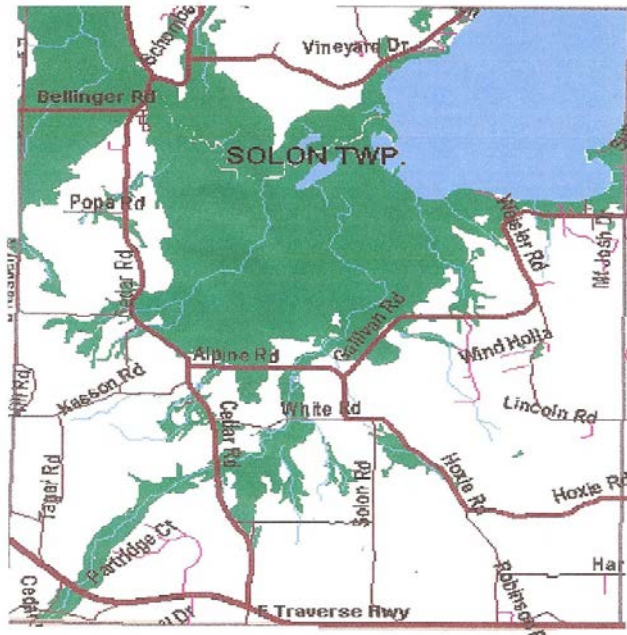
One of the main geographic features of the Township is the Solon Wetland Tract. The area is a vast drainage basin that covers much of the northern part of the Township. The wetlands draw from both the Grand Traverse and Leelanau County watersheds, via numerous tributaries, but mainly the Cedar Run and Victoria Creeks, which ultimately empty into Lake Leelanau at the northeast corner of the Township. Rolling countryside surrounds these waterways with farms, orchards, forests and residences.

## **Vegetation, Fish and Wildlife**

Leelanau County generally has four habitat types: open land, wooded, wetland, and bodies of water. Solon Township is fortunate to have all four. Many upland areas are covered by pine and hardwood forests, predominantly beech/maple. Lowland forested areas associated with the lakes and rivers are primarily white cedar, balsam fir and spruce. Vast orchards and croplands provide habitat for wildlife such as woodchuck and red fox. The woodland areas provide cover for white tail deer, rabbits, turkeys, opossums, squirrels, raccoons, porcupines, owls, woodpeckers, hawks, and song birds. Wetland or swamp areas have a multitude of animals as well including muskrats, beavers, otters, ducks, geese, minks and cranes, and on occasion, you might spot a black bear in the Cedar Wetlands.

## **Soils**

The soils of the Township, although varying widely, are predominantly sandy, which allows for various types of agriculture, but especially in combination with the climate conditions



*Map of Solon Twp. Wetland*



*Map of Solon Twp. Topography*

created by the Great Lakes on all sides of the Leelanau Peninsula, orchards, vineyards, and various traditional crops. Land outside of the wetlands and its watershed that is unfarmed is largely forested with northern hardwoods or deliberate plantings of red pine. Open grassy meadow areas remain where farming has ceased, but mixed hard wood forests are starting to reclaim the land.

### **Transportation**

The primary mode of transportation for residents within Leelanau County is by automobile. The state highway in Solon Township is M-72, located at the very southern end of the township. The remaining roads in the township are county roads. All are maintained by the Leelanau County Road Commission. Other opportunities for transportation are sidewalks for walking, biking and Victoria Creek for watercraft.

### **Public Transit**

Cedar is served by the Bay Area Transportation Authority. On weekdays, a fixed bus route runs five times daily from Glen Arbor to Maple City and then Cedar, with connections available to Traverse City.





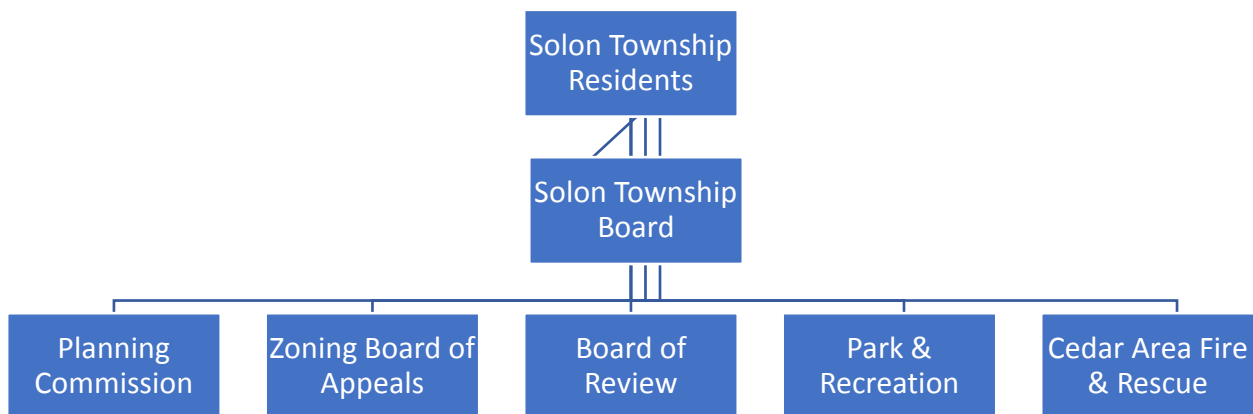
# Administrative Structure

The Solon Township Board is made up of five elected officials that govern Solon Township. The Board includes the supervisor, clerk, treasurer and two trustees. The Township also has a Parks and Recreation Committee, Planning Commission, Fire Department, Zoning Board of Appeals, a Zoning Administrator, and a Tax Assessor. The Township Board works cooperatively with all of these groups in developing plans for the township.

Solon Township has appointed a Parks and Recreation Committee. This Parks and Recreation Committee meets at least four times a year, and is responsible for overseeing recreation activities, programs, and park maintenance in the township.

In addition to the Solon Township government listed above, there also exists the Cedar Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber is made up of residents and local businesses. The Cedar Chamber has been an avid contributor to the parks in Solon Township.

## Solon Township Organizational Chart



## History of Maintenance

Although park maintenance and recreation improvements has never ceased in Cedar or throughout the township, many of these activities were formed with no particular structure or direction. In the past, most monies for improvements for the Solon parks came from both the township and the local Cedar Chamber of Commerce. The first recreation committee was formed in 1976 and that group created the first Solon Township Recreation Plan in 1977.

In December of 1991, community groups and their leaders met and set out a course that included public forums, to reorganize the township's parks and recreation plans. The local Cedar Chamber of Commerce commissioned a general survey of Solon Township's property owners. This survey provided a vision and general goals of the community and served as a basis for a township comprehensive development plan. The result of these efforts was a new Community Recreation Plan created in 1993. Once the Parks and Recreation committee received all the needed information, the work began in the parks.

In spite of the exceptional quality of many of the township's recreational facilities, as population and tourism grows, the need to improve and augment existing facilities increases. The 2010 Census showed that Solon Township's younger population (between the ages of 15-19) and the older population (between the ages of 65-74) has become very similar. When comparing the numbers in the 2000 Census, there were 123 individuals between the ages of 15-19, and 120 individuals between the ages of 65-74 reside in Solon Township. Therefore, the township needs to provide recreational needs for both young and old.

In April of 2014 the community saw another need to update the Parks and Recreation plan. Those results are reflected in this document, titled Solon Township Parks and Recreation Plan.

The Leelanau County Parks and Recreation Plan was adopted on January 17, 2013. This plan will serve as a guide for the development, assessment and recreational needs for all the parks in Leelanau County.

## Programs

Vegetation, fish and wildlife is what you will find in the natural habitats of Solon Township also providing recreation for not only local residents, but, for sportsmen and tourists from all of Michigan and out-of-state as well. Lake Leelanau and Lake Michigan can be reached by different types of water craft. Whether it's a kayak or motorized boat, you will enjoy the scenic view while you travel down the beautiful Victoria Creek, also known as the Cedar River.

The hilly terrain provides great opportunities for winter sports, including ice fishing, snowmobiling, with easy access to local snowmobile trails, cross-country skiing, snow shoeing, and just west of the township, The Homestead offers excellent downhill skiing.

Victoria Creek Park is home for many recreational programs. This park has provided opportunities to residents in the entire central Leelanau County area, as well as to others throughout the region, and tourists from the rest of the state and beyond, through organized sports activities, and by providing access to the township's natural resources. Some of those activities include the adult softball league and pickle ball. The adult softball league plays ball evenings during the week. Softball tournaments are held on many weekends throughout the summer months. Additionally, there are youth leagues that play baseball and softball. During the summer you will be able to find one of these games being played nightly on the diamonds in the park. In the winter months, the Victoria Creek Park is used for a winter softball tournament, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, or just building snowmen or making snow angels in the fresh snow.

We also have a Cedar Area Foundation that provides many activities in the park, such as canoeing the river, walking with friends on the tennis court, pickle ball, tennis lessons, and an ice cream social in the park.

If you stop by the tennis courts on the last weekend in June you will find the largest Polka Festival in Northern Michigan. The tennis courts provide a great venue to hold large events. The Polka Fest often fills the courts to capacity on a given night. This event is sponsored by the Cedar Chamber of Commerce.

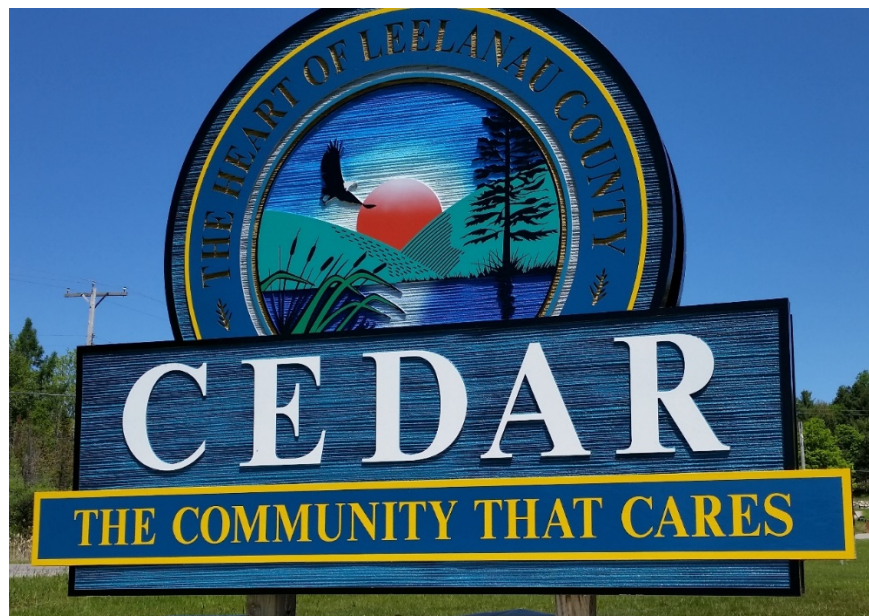
## Program Funding & Maintenance

Maintenance and improvements of the parks is funded mainly by the Solon Township Board, and annual donations by the Cedar Chamber of Commerce. The Cedar Chamber of Commerce, having invested over \$350,000 in parks and recreation in the community since their existence, provides a financial and manpower base for future improvements and maintenance far beyond the resources not normally available to a community of this size. Through expansion and improvements of its parks, Solon Township will promote its recreational resources and continue the positive impact on the local economy.

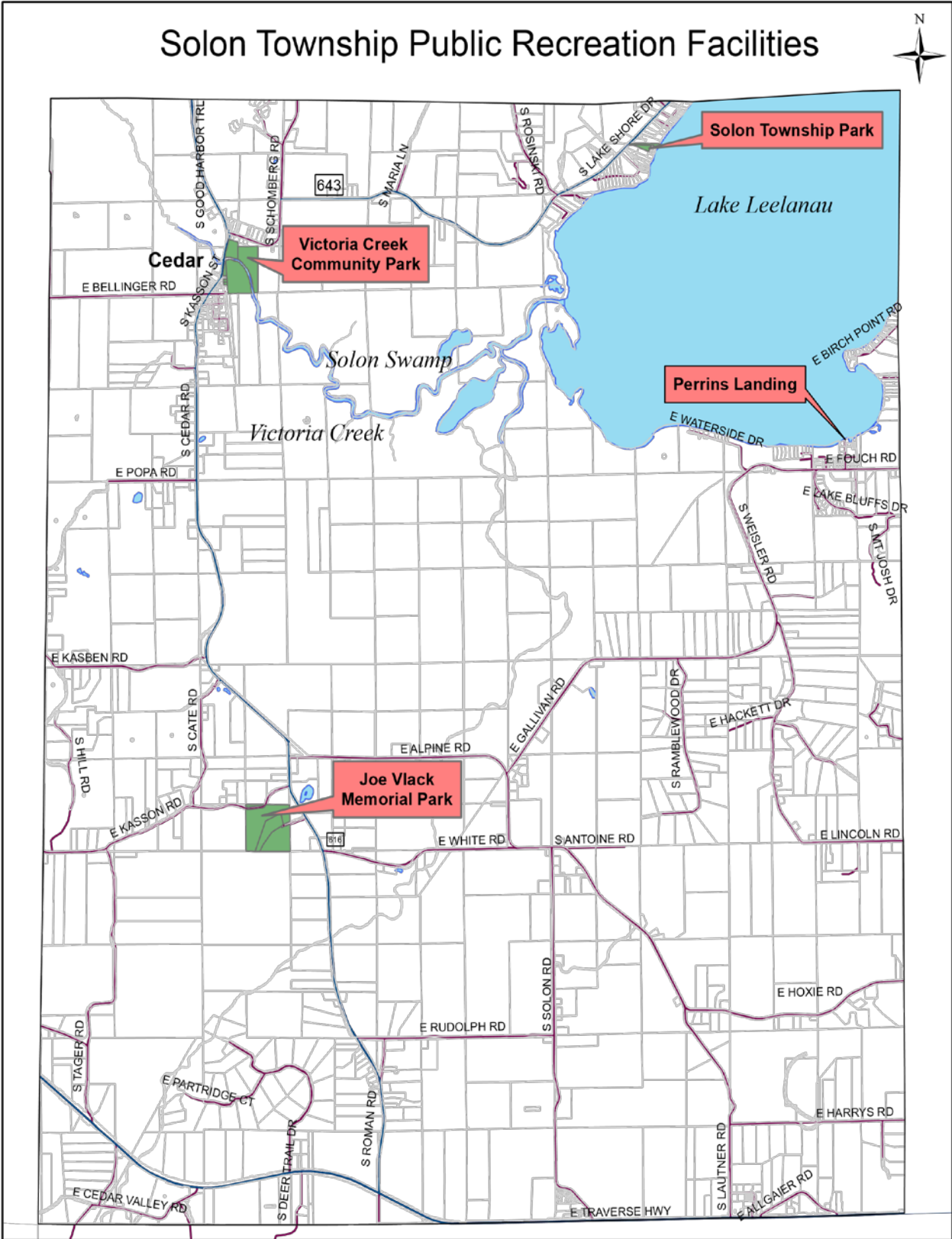
The township hires maintenance work done at the Solon Township Park, and Joe Vlack Memorial Park. Through a management agreement, the Cedar Chamber of Commerce provides maintenance of the Victoria Creek Community Park.

The Solon Township Recreation Committee works with non-profit organizations, such as the Cedar Chamber of Commerce, the Cedar Hilltoppers Snowmobile Club, and the Cedar Rod and Gun Club, to ensure varied and comprehensive recreation in the area.

In addition to the non-profit organizations, community volunteers are a vital part of our Solon Township Parks. Without the many hours put in by our community members, our parks would not be what they are today.



# Solon Township Parks



0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

 Solon Township Parks

Map for Reference Purposes only.  
 Prepared by Leelanau County  
 Planning & Community Development  
 September 2015

## **Victoria Creek Community Park**

The Victoria Creek Community Park, also known as the Cedar Community Park, is a 36 acre year-round facility, and is located in the heart of Cedar. In 1952, a twelve and a half acre parcel was purchased, with an additional eleven acres acquired in 1964. Over the years, smaller adjacent parcels have been added. The surrounding Village of Cedar is a mix of commercial and residential buildings.

Victoria Creek Community Park has become a premiere recreation complex for Solon Township and the surrounding Leelanau County. The two (2) adult softball diamonds are busy week nights with the summer adult league, and on weekends, the diamonds are the venue for numerous tournaments.

Victoria Creek (aka Cedar River), which lies on the north end of the park, is a primary source for boaters to access the river. It offers spectacular views of the wild life and preserved wetlands while traveling down this picturesque waterway that leads to the bigger water of Lake Leelanau. Whether it's a small motorized boat or personal paddle boat, this access to the Victoria Creek is used on a daily basis in the summer, and weekly in the spring and fall.

In the summer months, this park has also been used as a pit stop for the Leelanau Harvest Tour, Ride for Life, Cherry Roubaix and many recreational bikers. During the winter, this park is active with snowmobilers, cross country skiers, snowshoeing and also an annual winter softball tournament.

### **Current Planning:**

Currently being worked on is the river project/recycling center. Prince-Lund Engineering, PLC has completed an engineering design that has been approved by the township. In anticipation of grant funding, this project will begin in 2017.

In addition to the river plan, the Parks and Recreation Committee sees need in other areas of the park. The current playground has antiquated equipment, the parking lots need improvements, public flushable restrooms, reconstruction of the tennis courts, softball field drainage, upgrade of the bleachers, development of natural and paved trails, a pet walk, and continued improvements to sidewalks.

Park recreational amenities include:

- Four (2) tennis courts. The entire court is 120' x 240'
- Snack shack / press box (20 x 20 building)
- A small diamond for boys and girls youth league
- Adult softball diamonds (2)
- Bleachers for all diamonds
- Pickle ball (2)
- Basketball court
- Playground area
- Pavilions (3) 16 x 20
- Picnic tables (6)
- Grills (2)
- Boat launch
- Dug outs (4)
- T-ball diamond
- Shade Trees
- Portable toilets
- Parking lots (4)



***Playground Area***



***South Softball Field***



***Victoria Creek River aka Cedar***



***Tennis and Basketball***

**Victoria Creek Park/Cedar Community Park**



**Cedar River Marina Project**





## Joe Vlack Memorial Park

This 40 acre natural area offers a superb recreation component for the township. Its tranquil beauty is a real treat to experience with your family and friends. This park has an easy access dirt road and is located just five minutes from downtown Cedar, off of South Cedar Road.

The natural, undisturbed setting provides an ideal location for hikers, naturalist, and wildlife and bird watchers.

Park Amenities:

- Picnic area
- Hiking trails
- Parking Lot



## Solon Township Park

This one acre park, acquired on January 17, 1928, has a beautiful swimming and picnic area. The park hosts an open space area, picnic tables and grills. Whether it's a family gathering or just one person, Solon Park has a place for you. The picnic areas include two pavilions with each having two picnic tables. The pavilions are shaded by trees.

### Park Amenities:

- Boat launch
- Pavilions (2) 16 x 20
- Picnic Tables (4)
- Beach front
- Parking Lot



## **Perrins Landing**

South Perrin's Landing Dr., which exits north from East Fouch Rd., provides access to the most southern shore of Lake Leelanau. Although there is no park or facilities to be found, it does give one a chance to get up close and personal to the water and great views. In the winter, when the ice is deemed safe, a 10 mile ice bridge to the North is formed for fishing, hiking, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, and snowmobiling.

### Amenities

- This landing area provides a 3'X30' dock.
- Access to the southern end of Lake Leelanau

## **Solon School**



This school established in 1898 and on a rural lot is one of the oldest buildings in Solon Township.

## **Solon Township Hall**

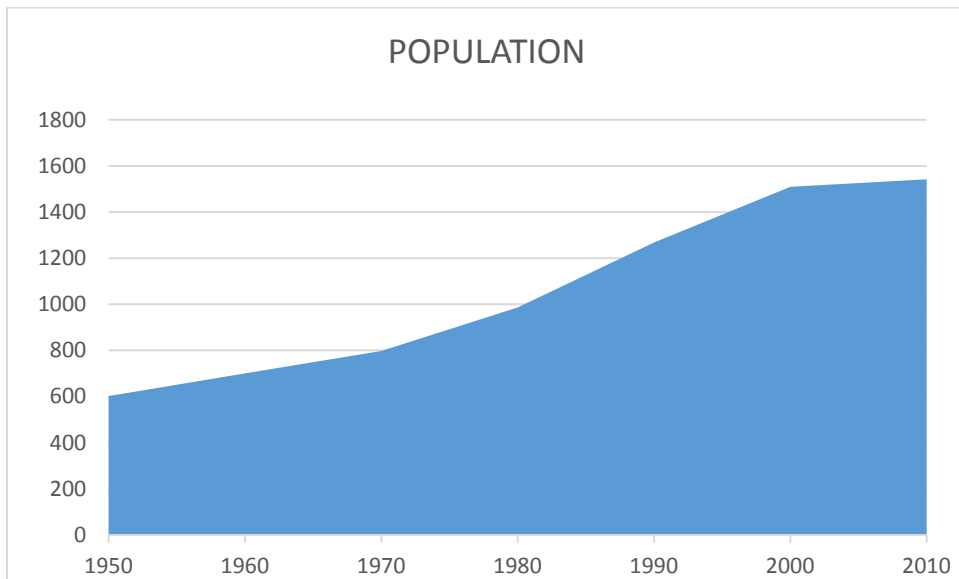
This hall is used for elections, township meetings, and private events such as wedding receptions and fund raisers. The Solon Township Hall is located in downtown Cedar.



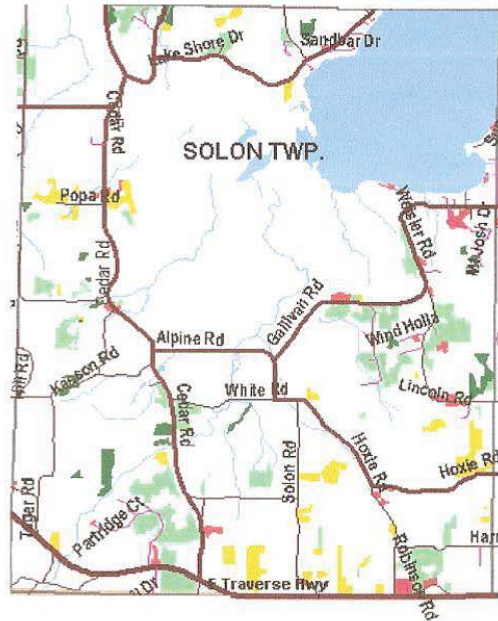
# Census Information

## **Solon Township Population Growth**

According to the 2010 Census there are 1542 people residing in Solon Township with the largest congregation of 200 people living in the village of Cedar. The people of Solon Township are predominantly white, middle class, family-oriented and have moderate incomes. There are still a number of full-time farmers in the area, but, as elsewhere, they are now far outnumbered by construction tradesmen, professionals, individuals in service trades and many commute daily out of the township to work.

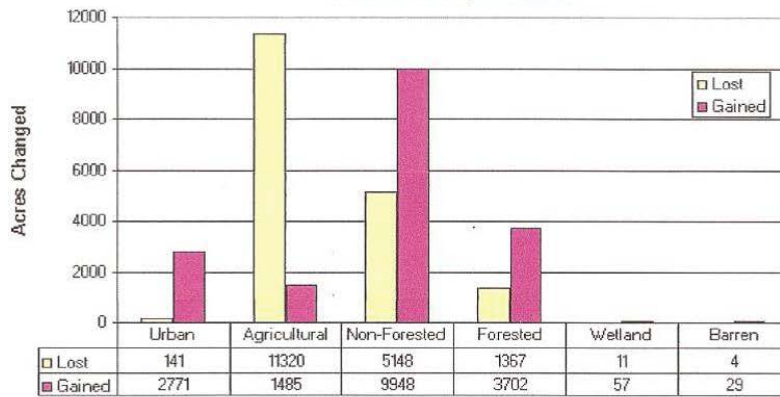


**LAND USE CHANGE BY TYPE GAINED 1990-2000**



**LAND USE CHANGE BY TYPE GAINED FROM 1990 TO 2000**  
 This map shows areas of the county where land use changed between 1990 and 2000. See the table below for general information about the changes.

**Land Use Change 1990-2000**



## Goals and Objectives

**Goal:** The improvement of existing parks and recreational facilities. In addition to the specific park goals below, an additional goal is to conduct a new community survey to update local sentiment and opinion regarding the direction and future of township parks.

### North of the river projects:

- Improvements to the recycle area such as crushed stone for recycle bin landing, eight(8) foot high by one hundred sixty two(162) foot long decorated chain link fence, eight(8) foot tall evergreen trees, improvements to boaters parking lot.
- Also included in the engineered drawings; dredging the river, silt prevention under water fans, repainting and re-decking of the existing pedestrian bridge, boat ramp dock access, ADA accessible canoe and kayak launch, expanded aluminum docks and decks, pavilion on the deck, and a dry hydrant for the use of fire departments

### South of the river projects:

- Address drainage issues in ball fields, reseed out field areas, incorporate sidewalks with lights, install suitable drinking fountains, plant trees and shrubs, create walking and bike paths around entire park, create nature trails, replace portable grandstands with maintenance free all metal structures along with concrete pads for ease of cleaning, replace all damaged fence, explore a possible ice rink option, incorporate a dog run area
- Update an antiquated playground area with new and safer structure and handicap accessible.
- Construct much needed public restrooms with garbage housing
- Reconstruct existing tennis courts, remove all old surface and fencing. Design a state of the art four season pavilion style building that would include public restrooms. This building would be one of a kind and versatile to be able to be used for tennis, pickle ball, basketball, and many large events.

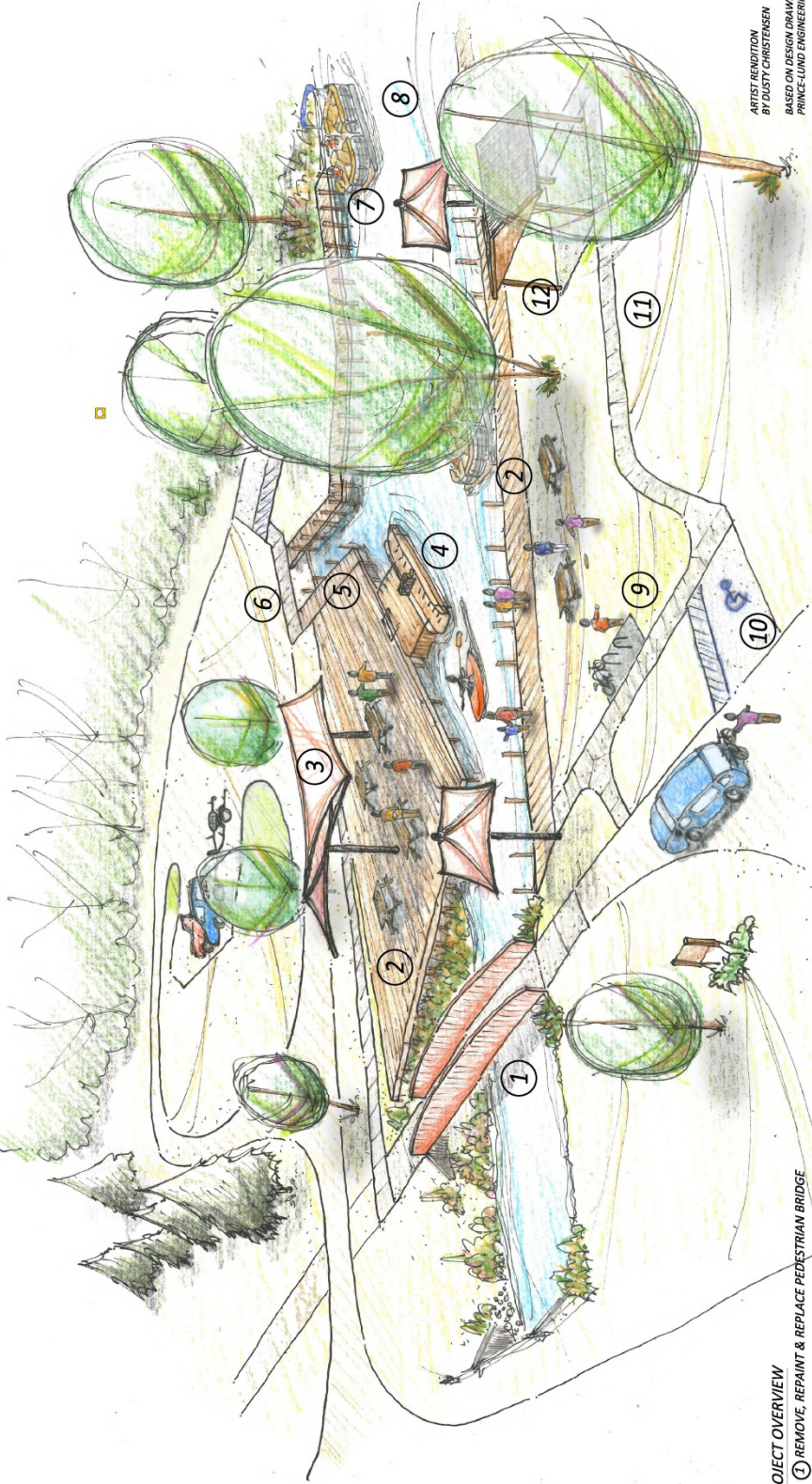
### Solon School

- Update 24'x40' existing one room Solon School located on the SW corner of Solon and Hoxie roads.

HELP SUPPORT THE

# CEDAR RIVER MARINA PROJECT

A PROJECT TO IMPROVE VICTORIA CREEK PARK BY SOLON TOWNSHIP



**PROJECT OVERVIEW**

- 1 REMOVE, REPAINT & REPLACE PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
- 2 NEW ALUMINUM DOCK & DECKING
- 3 TENSION MEMBRANE SHADE STRUCTURES
- 4 ACCESSIBLE CANOE & KAYAK LAUNCH
- 5 WHEEL CHAIR LIFT (NOT ILLUSTRATED)
- 6 REFURBISHED BOAT RAMP
- 7 IMPROVED BOAT MOORING
- 8 DREDGED BOAT ACCESS
- 9 BIKE BACKS
- 10 PAVED ACCESSIBLE PARKING
- 11 NEW CONCRETE WALKWAYS
- 12 EXISTING PICNIC PAVILIONS

**PROJECT SCHEDULE**

- 2016 PRELIMINARY DESIGN
- FUNDING SUPPORT
- 2017 FINAL DESIGN
- PERMITTING
- FUNDING VIA GRANTS, SPONSORSHIPS & DONATIONS

DESIGNED & ENGINEERED BY:



**Prince-Lund Engineering, PLLC**  
 P. O. Box 1268, Traverse City, Michigan 49685  
 (888) 418-2695 www.build-on-prince.com

**SPONSORSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE**

INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS ARE ALSO BEING ACCEPTED  
 FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:  
 RAY PLEVA (231) 631-5150  
 RICK PRINCE (231) 642-1099

## **Appendix Item II**

### Solon Township Budget

#### **SOLON TOWNSHIP FISCAL YEAR BUDGET 2016-2017**

##### **PROPOSED RECEIPTS 2016-2017**

State Shared Revenues	115,000.00
Hall Rental	2,000.00
Township Tax	55,000.00
Taxes: Interest Earned	500.00
Swamp Tax	2,000.00
Cemetery	250.00
Permits and Fees	2,000.00
Fire and Ambulance Operation Millage 1.50 mills	137,000.00
Interest	100.00
Charges for Services	0.00
Metro Act Fund	3,000.00
State Education Tax	3,200.00
1% Administration Fee	20,000.00
Recycling	<u>0.00</u>
<b>ESTIMATED RECEIPTS 2016-2017</b>	<b>340,050.00</b>

**PLUS ACTUAL FUNDS AVAILABLE** **81,004.79**

##### **OTHER FUNDS**

Road Improvement (Gov't Oper)	28,117.41
Fire Sinking (NWS)	31,733.14
Sidewalk Fund (5th/3rd)	<u>3,165.91</u>
<b>TOTAL OTHER FUNDS</b>	<b>63,016.46</b>

**TOTAL ANTICIPATED INCOME** **\$484,071.25**

##### **ESTIMATED EXPENSES 2016-2017**

Supervisor Salary	9,810.00
Supervisor Operating	0.00
Assessor Salary	14,200.00
Assessor Operating	2,500.00
Clerk Salary	15,000.00
Clerk Operating	4,000.00
Treasurer Salary	14,500.00
Treasurer Operating	3,000.00
Trustee Board Salaries	6,000.00



**Appendix Item II**  
 Solon Township Budget

<b>ESTIMATED EXPENSES 2016-2017</b>	
<b>TOWNSHIP BOARD EXPENSES</b>	
Public Utilities	10,000.00
Advertising	2,000.00
Professional/Legal/Audit Fees	10,000.00
Miscellaneous	2,000.00
Sidewalks/Roads	0.00
Board of Review	1,500.00
Planning Commission Budget	35,000.00
Board of Appeals	2,000.00
Cemetery Operating	3,000.00
<b>SOLON TWP. HALL EXPENSES:</b>	
Custodian Salary	3,000.00
Hall Lights	1,000.00
Hall Gas	2,000.00
Hall Operating	10,000.00
Pension	4,000.00
Elections	5,000.00
Insurance	8,500.00
Parks and Maintenance	5,000.00
Twp. Annual Support of Fire and Amb. 1.50 mills	143,312.00
<b>ANTICIPATED EXPENSES 2016-2017</b>	<b>316,022.00</b>
<b>CONTINGENCY:</b>	<b>5,000.00</b>
<b>FUND BALANCE:</b>	<b>100,032.79</b>
<b>OTHER FUNDS</b>	<b>63,016.46</b>
<b>TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES:</b>	<b>\$484,071.25</b>

## **Appendix Item III**

### **Planning Process/Public Input**

#### **Township Meetings**

Throughout the year all meetings of the Township Board and Parks and Recreation Committee have been open to the public.

#### **Public Input**

##### ***Exercise I***

A resident survey was sent out with the 2017 winter tax bill to all township residents/land owners. The results of the survey were compiled and will be used by the township board, planning commission, and parks and recreation committee. The survey and corresponding results are attached.

##### ***Exercise II***

The Parks and Recreation Committee had a meeting Wednesday August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 asking for public input/discussion on the township parks. The meeting was well attended, and each park was discussed individually. The public was encouraged to bring up and discuss the current state of each park, future repairs/maintenance, and upgrades that they would like to see.

In general, the public would like to see the parks generate more revenue and be promoted more. That revenue could be as simple as a donation box at some of the township parks, especially the boat ramp at Solon Township Park, to as complex as possibly creating a township campground at Vlack's Park. Restrooms were also important additions or improvements for all parks. More specifically:

##### ***Vlack's Park:***

Completion of new road will be completed in the fall of 2018. Grants should be pursued for stream rehabilitation. The property is heavily wooded, and it was suggested that the township should consult with a forester regarding the health and maintenance of the woods. Another suggestion as a possible use of the property and long-term revenue generator was creation of a campground on the property.

##### ***Solon Township Park:***

Overall this park is in great shape. The recent road repairs and drainage has worked well. The pavilions, dock and other equipment is well maintained. It was mentioned that tie offs be added to the dock and possibly a rail as well as a donation box near the ramp as is common at other launches.

##### ***Victoria Creek Park:***

This is by far the largest park with the most traffic and number of uses. The components of the park were discussed individually as the river project, the playground, ballfields, and tennis courts. The Cedar River Marina Project was well received by the public. The recent grants received and report in the paper have started to generate more support and interest. The playground is over due for repairs and there was interest in volunteer work, fundraisers, and how to best use the money the township has budgeted for equipment. The possibility of moving the playground closer to the river and addition of restrooms was also part of the discussion. The ballfields are used during the summer months but concerns over grading/drainage has been brought up. In addition, how many softball or baseball fields we need to keep and maintain was discussed. Finally, the topic of the tennis courts had many great ideas. The courts need to be resurfaced. The area is also used for the Cedar Polka Fest and other township

activities. Discussion was had over the cost of resurfacing the courts and if they could be converted to a covered pavilion. Covering the courts would create an area that could be used for a large variety of township or public activities.

*Perrins Landing:*

This access point to the South end of Lake Leelanau was considered to be a valuable asset to the community. While the concrete of the ramp is in need of repair the public would like to see the ramp remain. It is suggested that repair costs and future plans for the ramp be researched along with additional sources of funding outside of the township.

*Solon School:*

The historic school building is limited by the size of the property it sits on. The small parcel limits the potential usage of the building as well as any future improvements. The building itself needs repairs such as painting and new windows. The schoolhouse has no plumbing or heat. It was suggested the township outline potential future uses for the building and associated costs of bringing the building up to code. These uses, and costs could then be used to determine if it is a property worth keeping if no long term plans for the building can be found.

*Solon Township Hall:*

The hall is overall in good shape but needs to continue to be maintained. The next items to look at for maintenance could be replacement of the windows or air conditioning. It is a good potential source of revenue through rentals for the township and should be promoted for events.

In conclusion, Solon Township has some incredible parks and properties that are tremendous assets to the residents and visitors of the township. The location of Solon Township within Leelanau County makes it a major thoroughfare for anyone not just visiting the township, but the entire county. As such the promotion of these properties should be a priority along with their continued maintenance and future improvements.

## **Appendix Item IV**

### **Accessibility Evaluation**

Victoria Creek, Solon Park Road, and Joe Vlack parks were surveyed for compliance with the American Disabilities Act related to accessibility. The results of the survey are shown in a series of checklists developed by the New England ADA Center and downloaded from [www.adachecklist.org](http://www.adachecklist.org).

In summary, all three of Solon Township's parks fall short of current ADA requirements for new facilities for the primary reason that Victoria Creek and Solon Park Road parks were developed prior to the first ADA requirements, and Joe Vlack park is still largely undeveloped. None of the parks have accessible parking spaces or signage due to lack of hard surface paving. The paved parking area near the primary ball fields and playground at Victoria Creek park is adjacent to, and also serves, the fire station. This parking area was also constructed prior to current ADA requirements and therefore may need regrading to meet maximum slopes in addition to restriping and sign additions to create an accessible parking space.

It follows then that if there are no accessible parking spaces, then there are no accessible routes between parking areas and the recreational facilities within the parks. There are no hard surface paths that connect parking areas to recreational facilities in any of the three parks. An exception are the tennis courts within Victoria Creek park. If an accessible parking space was created on a paved shoulder of Railroad Street, and the paved surface between the street and the courts met ADA requirements for cross- and running slopes, then an accessible route could be created with pavement striping.

Victoria Creek park falls short of current ADA requirements for accessible seating for team players or spectators. Again there are currently no hard surfaces or ramps to access grandstands or dugouts.

The playground at Victoria Park does not contain a "firm and stable" ground covering and therefore does not meet the many ADA requirements for accessible playground facilities.

The picnic pavilions at Victoria Creek and Solon Park Road parks have hard surfaces that meet ADA requirements, but no accessible routes or parking spaces to serve them. The same condition occurs at the boat ramps at these parks. In addition, the current boarding docks that serve the boat ramps do not meet the general minimum width requirement of 60 inches. Again, these facilities were created long before ADA requirements existed.

Joe Vlack park has always been a rustic park, that is, it is undeveloped except for the existence of a native soil and gravel two-track trail that extended about one-quarter of a mile into the park. This trail is now cut off from most of the park due to a dam failure that impounded the former pond that was a feature of this park. The stream that fed the pond is now returning to its previous path through the park.

Victoria Creek and Solon Park Road parks do not have significant slopes that would deter the creation of accessible parking spaces and routes, therefore, upgrading these parks to current ADA standards can be completed on a project-by-project basis without much difficulty.