

A paved walking trail at the Myles Kimmerly Park is a top goal in the 5 year Community Parks and Recreational Plan (2020-2024) for Leelanau County. This has been a popular request of the community for several years.

A trail like this at Myles Kimmerly would be used by walkers, joggers, walkers with a cane or walker, wheelchairs, or scooters for the disabled. It would be a looped trail around the perimeter of the main recreational field area of the park. Unlike the wooded trails in the park, it would be safer by being out in the open, on flat terrain, and paved. It would be a universal access (UA) trail. Crossovers would be included. (figure 1)

The trail would be used by young and old. It will encourage our seniors to engage in healthy outdoor activities, especially important in the era of the COVID-19 pandemic and onward. It will also help with social isolation. The younger generation will benefit too; they will find it an excellent spot for toddlers to walk, play and be pushed in a stroller. Indeed, it will have many users.

Due to the cost of the project, it may need to be done in stages: 1) defining and clearing of growth for the trail, (2) adding an appropriate trail bed, and (3) finishing off with the paving. Alternatively, a shorter loop could be considered in lieu of the proposed one mile loop with crossovers. Trail amenities, such as benches, exercise stations, etc, could be added at any stage.

The Myles Kimmerly Park, centrally located in the County, is very active, visited and enjoyed by all age groups in the Leelanau. Playground equipment, basketball hoops, tennis courts, baseball fields, soccer fields, hiking trails, hunting, and an 18 hole disc golf course bring residents from all over the County and beyond to enjoy the outdoors. Various sports leagues in the County use the park regularly for soccer and baseball; and disc golf events are often scheduled at the park.

Especially needed now is something for our more senior group and the disabled...the UA walking trail. Adding this type of trail to the park will round out the activities/venues available across all the age groups when they visit Myles Kimmerly.... activities and venues suitable for everyone. The paved loop would be an ideal addition.