



PLAINFIELD CHARTER TOWNSHIP

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

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MEMO

TO: Cameron Van Wyngarden, Township Superintendent

FROM: Bill Fischer, Community Development Director and
Joe Ketchum, Manager, Facilities & Assets Department

DATE: May 6, 2026

RE: Non-Motorized Public Trails and Recreation Areas Millage Renewal

This is a request for the Township Board to approve and certify a resolution for the Non-Motorized Public Trails and Recreation Areas millage (TRAM) renewal proposal. Approving the resolution (attached) will allow voters to consider the millage renewal on August 4th.

As a refresher, at the April 13th meeting, we presented a recommendation from staff and the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee (P&R Committee) to place the millage renewal on August's primary ballot, which the Township Board discussed without any objections. In addition, we shared the following:

Background - Current (Expired) Millage:

In August of 2016, township voters approved (53% YES) a 0.5 mill TRAM to be levied for 10 years. Due to required Headlee rollbacks, the most recent rate has been reduced to 0.4648 mills, which equates to \$0.4648 per \$1,000 of taxable value. For a property with a \$150,000 taxable value, the annual cost at that millage rate is \$70. The final millage revenue, collected with the last tax bill, generated about \$910,000.

During the past decade, the TRAM raised about **\$6.4 million**. Thanks to this funding, roughly **9 miles** of public trails have been built. After finalizing expenses for the South Rogue River Trail, which will be completed next month, the remaining balance in the TRAM fund is expected to be between \$1.3 and \$1.4 million. Considering the TRAM has expired, the remaining funds will be reserved for operation and maintenance of our existing trails rather than for another trail project.

Attached is a Trails Millage Information handout with additional fun facts.

Renewal Details:

Staff and the P&R Committee recommend asking voters to approve a renewal of the 10-year TRAM at the current rate, with no increase. Other options considered were renewing with an increase to the original 0.5 mills or creating a new millage at a different rate. After discussion, based on the current economic environment, we believe this is not the right time to request a higher or different millage.

Please note that the resolution's ballot language uses the recently released 2026 Headlee reduction fraction from Kent County Equalization. The 2026 millage rate is \$0.4596 per \$1,000 of taxable value, slightly lower than last year. For a property with \$150,000 taxable value, the annual cost for the TRAM

would be about \$69—down \$1 from last year.

If approved and levied, the TRAM is estimated to raise approximately \$980,000 in the first year of levy.

Ballot Procedure – Millage Renewal:

To be considered in the August primary election, the Township Board must approve a millage renewal resolution and submit it to the Township Clerk’s office by 4 p.m. on May 12th, the day after the Township Board meeting. After the resolution is received by the Township Clerk’s office, the Clerk must submit it to the Kent County Clerk.

Arrangements have been made to meet this timeline should the Township Board approve the resolution at the upcoming meeting.

Recommendation:

Over the past decade, the millage has directly enabled the construction of 9 miles of public trails, greatly enhancing recreational opportunities and community connectivity for our residents and visitors. To continue this success, we feel it is important to ask our voters to support a renewal of the millage which will ensure that these valuable assets are properly maintained for years to come, protect the investment residents have already made, and expand well-kept trails throughout the township for everyone to enjoy.

Accordingly, staff and the P &R Committee recommend that the Township Board approve the resolution to place the millage renewal proposal on August’s primary ballot.

If the Township Board is inclined to approve the resolution, we offer the following motion for their consideration:

“I move that the Township Board approved the resolution to approve and certify a Non-Motorized Public Trails and Recreation Areas Millage Renewal Proposal as presented.”

Attachments