

# CLINTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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## Administrator

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Diane Zuker

## RESOLUTION 2022-1

### Local Support for Asphalt Paving of the rural 34 miles of the Fred Meijer CIS Trail Section of the Mid-West Michigan Trail Authority between Ionia and Owosso, Michigan

**WHEREAS**, on June 10, 2021 as part of Governor Whitmer's plan for the allocation of Federal American Rescue Act (ARPA) Plan relief dollars, she proposed a significant and essential investment of \$250 million for infrastructure improvements to State Parks and Trails. On July 6, 2021 the Governor also announced a historic investment of \$150 million for local Parks and Trails using ARPA funds, to boost local economies, enhance tourism and recreation, rebound from the COVID public health crisis and help support Michigan businesses; and

**WHEREAS**, Governor Whitmer also said in her June 10, 2021/July 6, 2021, News Releases that:

- "Tourism is vital to Michigan's economy and to our economic health, and COVID disproportionately harmed our tourism and hospitality sectors. Investments in our public spaces make Michigan a more competitive and attractive destination for tourism, position us as a recreation leader, and are critical components of our seasonal and rural economies. This is a valuable use of our federal funds to help the communities who rely on tourism rebound from the public health crisis...."
- "As people found creative ways to socially distance during the pandemic, the state saw a 30% increase in visitors to state parks and recreation areas. Michigan's outdoor recreation industry supports billions in state GDP and sustains 126,000 jobs and over \$4.7 billion in wages and salaries in Michigan."
- "These two new investment programs, totaling \$400 million, mark a once-in-a-generation chance to improve quality of life for our residents, support local economies and bring people back to Michigan as the state continues its recovery from the effects of the pandemic. "These investments will ensure our children and grandchildren continue to enjoy the rejuvenating benefits of natural beauty and outdoor spaces so prized by Michiganders. I look forward to working with the Legislature to secure this investment for our communities..., and

**WHEREAS**, the 42-mile Fred Meijer CIS (Clinton, Ionia, Shiawassee) Trail passes entirely through Clinton County and significant parts of Ionia and Shiawassee Counties, spanning between the general vicinities of Ionia and Owosso, Michigan and this Trail would be a prime candidate for these proposed federal funds, where the three counties comprise nearly 200,000 residents; and

**WHEREAS**, Michigan Milk Producers Association (MMPA) dairy cooperative partnered with Michigan State Government, Clinton County Board of Commissioners and Ovid, to assist MDOT, MDNR and Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance, in initially acquiring the entire 42 mile Right of Way for the Fred Meijer CIS Trail. MMPA subsequently acquired necessary real estate near the CIS Trail to expand their Ovid dairy processing plant and has invested over the past decade more than \$100 Million in their Ovid dairy processing facility and added more than 50 jobs to the local economy; and

**WHEREAS**, the Fred Meijer CIS Trail was first dedicated and opened back in 2015, approximately 8 miles of it were paved with asphalt, essentially within the municipal limits of Muir, Pewamo, Fowler, St. Johns and Ovid. The City of St. Johns appropriated \$50,000 of local funds during the last decade as a match to MDNR and MDOT for paving with asphalt the Trail within their jurisdiction and other local governments also appropriated local funds for the Fred Meijer CIS Trail. Paved trails are common with National Park Trails and many State Parks Trails, and these paved sections of the Trail are popular for walkers, runners, bicyclists, cross country skiers, etc.; and

**WHEREAS**, the remaining 34 miles of rural areas of Fred Meijer CIS Trail were not paved with asphalt, rather with crushed limestone under MDNR and MDOT supervision. Unfortunately, several miles of the Fred Meijer CIS Trail were paved with inferior crushed limestone. This varying surface portion of the Trail results in many local and regional residents and visitors choosing not to use this section of the non-motorized CIS Trail, which is parallel to M-21 State Highway and instead may travel on M-21. It's well-known that asphalt paved trails provides greater inclusivity of non-motorized users and will attract more individuals, seniors and families to take greater advantage of these improved trails and enhance local recreational amenities; and

**WHEREAS**, in an effort to put the Governor's \$400 Million proposal into action, the Michigan Senate has introduced the following: Michigan State Senator Ed McBroom has recently introduced SB 703 –to appropriate \$250 Million for State Parks and Trails infrastructure, \$30 Million for Northern MI tourism and sports fund, and \$30 Million for Mackinac Island State Park Fund; and Michigan State Senator Michael McDonald has recently introduced SB 704 to appropriate \$150 Million for local parks and trails; and

**WHEREAS**, the Clinton County Commissioners recognize how vital to the local economic health this Fred Meijer CIS Trail would be if paved with asphalt the entire 42 mile length, using American Rescue Plan funds; now

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, the Clinton County Commissioners encourage our Governor and Michigan State Legislators to designate enough funding of the proposed \$400 million investment in modernizing State Parks and Trails and local parks and trails, in the effort to enhance tourism, boost local economies, rebound from the public health crisis of COVID and increase the quality of life for surrounding communities by paving with asphalt the remaining rural 34 miles of the Fred Meijer CIS Trail from Ionia Township east to Owosso Township.

## **STATE OF MICHIGAN**

### **COUNTY OF CLINTON**

I, DIANE ZUKER, Clerk of the County of Clinton do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly adopted by the Clinton County Board of Commissioners at the regular meeting held January 25, 2022 and is on file in the records of this office.

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Diane Zuker, Clinton County Clerk