

ALTERNATIVE ROUTE OPTION – HERITAGE TRAIL

PROPOSAL:

From the end of Segment 8 (Corner of M-22 and CR 669), continue the Heritage Trail north alongside CR 669 until the end at Good Harbor Bay. If it is desired to provide additional recreational trail opportunities, the Heritage Trail could be extended east and west by routing the trail in the recreational zone along Michigan Road and Harbor Drive. This option would provide an amazing user experience with beautiful scenic views of Lake Michigan, without the sights and sounds of busy M-22 traffic.



ADVANTAGES:

Same End Destination – The Heritage Trail would still end at Good Harbor Bay and all the goals and objectives of the Heritage Trail would still have been met with more than 23 miles of multi-use recreational trail opportunities from Empire to Good Harbor Bay.

Existing Facilities – CR 669 Beachhead and Michigan Road already have several parking areas, multiple picnic areas, several restroom locations and drinking water options.

Enhanced Opportunities – CR 669 and Michigan Road offers multiple recreational opportunities for a better user experience, including access to CR 669 Beachhead at Good Harbor Bay, Lakeshore scenic views along Michigan Road and other Lakeshore features, including hiking trails.

Designated Recreational Zone – This area is already designated as a recreational zone in the Park's master plan and is located outside of the Wilderness Area.

No Environmental Impact – The area alongside CR 669 is flat and already cleared of trees. Trail construction along CR 669 or Michigan Road would not require crossing wetlands, excavation of protected critical dunes or significant clearing of mature forests – unlike the current routing of Segment 9.

No Human Impact – This proposed CR 669 option does not cross private property and is not routed through a residential neighborhood (unlike CR 651 routing). This option is safer for the trail users, including strollers and wheelchair users, moving them away from residential traffic.

Lower Costs – Construction costs would be much less by avoiding large critical dunes, extensive wetland areas, significant tree clearing and extreme topography challenges that exist with the proposed CR 651 routing.

Extend Heritage Trail Along CR 669 to Good Harbor Bay

With the completion of the multi-use Heritage Recreational Trail from the Dune Climb to Empire, the focus now turns to constructing the trail eastward from Glen Arbor. We highly encourage the construction of the Heritage Trail northward from M-22 along CR 669 to Good Harbor Beach, using federally owned land that avoids traversing private property.

National Park Service officials have indicated that CR 669 will be promoted as a “spur” for the Heritage Trail. The NPS has indicated they will place directional signs letting trail users on the M-22 route know that they can turn north onto CR 669 and access Good Harbor Beach and associated facilities. We believe this should be more than just a secondary thought or suggestion – make it part of the Heritage Trail!

We believe there is great merit to actually constructing the recreational trail alongside CR 669 (or inclusion of very wide shoulders) north to Lake Michigan. The north end of CR 669 has improved parking, picnic and restroom facilities and would create an important beginning point for Heritage Trail users that wish to use the Heritage Trail towards Port Oneida. These existing improved facilities and parking space are rare features along the Heritage Trail and should be utilized. This route would be on Park property without transgressing private property.

Almost all of the road right of way of CR 669 is already cleared of vegetation. CR 669 already has a wide shoulder base that could easily be used for paving wide designated bicycle lanes or even used for constructing a separate railway. CR 669 is in desperate need of upgrading so this would be the perfect time to consider accommodating the Heritage Trail and to do so in a way that separates trail users from road traffic. This is also a very quick and cost-effective way to provide trail users access to Good Harbor Bay and allow them to use existing parking and restroom facilities.

The Heritage Trail would then provide an excellent opportunity for people to use the trail from Empire all the way to Good Harbor Bay at the end of CR 669 – over 20+ miles of recreational opportunities. The Heritage Trail would be longer than the 17 mile Leelanau Trail from Traverse City to Suttons Bay – another recreational opportunity that is available for people to use.

We believe the NPS and the community will have accomplished its goal of providing multi-use recreational opportunities from one end of the park to the other and everyone will be pleased with the opportunity to recreate along M-22 and M-109 from the visitor center in Empire through Glen Arbor to Good Harbor Beach at CR 669. We encourage decision makers to seriously consider this CR 669 opportunity that uses federally owned land with no environmental impact. It would be a win win win!

Little Traverse Lake Property Owners Association

