

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SHORES & ISLANDS OHIO AWARDS DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT GRANT TO PARK DISTRICT OF OTTAWA COUNTY

PORT CLINTON, OHIO, JUNE 27, 2023 --- The Park District of Ottawa County is proud to announce they have been awarded a Destination Development Grant, presented recently by Shores & Islands Ohio, the destination marketing organization for Erie and Ottawa counties.

More than \$460,000 in grants were awarded to 51 different recipients in Erie and Ottawa counties under this program, a major component of Shores & Islands Ohio's strategic plan that focuses on supporting efforts to enhance the destination for visitors and residents alike.

This matching grant program is for the purpose of assisting Shores & Islands area businesses, organizations, and communities in developing activities or projects that will attract and engage visitors, serve and educate regional tourism partners, and generate economic growth for their communities and the region through travel and tourism development.

The Park District of Ottawa County received a grant in the amount of \$6,459.00 to assist in the development of a comprehensive trail feasibility study for the peninsula region, titled the Marblehead Peninsula Trail Feasibility Study, and help create additional public engagement opportunities. With outdoor recreation driving the tourism industry in Ottawa County and data reflecting that trails are the most popular outdoor recreation activity statewide, developing and improving multiuse trails could significantly impact the regional economy. This feasibility study will gather all existing data and public input and bring together all collaborating partners throughout the Marblehead Peninsula region. The feasibility study is critical to future state and federal grant funding for multi-use trail projects.

The grant monies will bolster the public engagement component of the feasibility study and provide for an increase in outreach efforts to actively engage both year-round and seasonal residents, students, families, and the active senior community. The completed study will be accessible on the Park District website for reference and future usage. Printed copies will be provided to all public officials. The feasibility study will be the main planning tool for future trail implementation. The Park District submitted a Request for Qualifications in order to hire a qualified consultant to facilitate the feasibility study. Qualification packages are due no later than July 7, 2023. Upon hiring a qualified consultant, the Park District will work with the consultant and local officials to establish a detailed timeline for the study. The study will likely take 6-12 months to complete. Including additional public engagement opportunities will lengthen the timeline, but will provide more thorough results. Through discussions and previous project estimates the Park District has budgeted \$60,000 for the project.

Shores & Islands Ohio received applications for a variety of projects from across the two counties including expansions, restoration, signage and infrastructure improvements, start-ups of new tourism-enhancing businesses, marketing, and more. The grants support tourism

industry and community collaborations that maximize the economic return on public and private investments, spur increased visitation and enhance the quality of life for residents.

For more information on the Park District of Ottawa County, contact ottawacountyparksoh.org or Executive Director Jannah Wilson at jwilson@ottawacountyparksoh.org or (419) 707-4051.

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