



Charter Township of Bedford

Calhoun County, Michigan

5-Year Park & Recreation Plan 2020 – 2024

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SECTION A – COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

Part 1 – Introduction

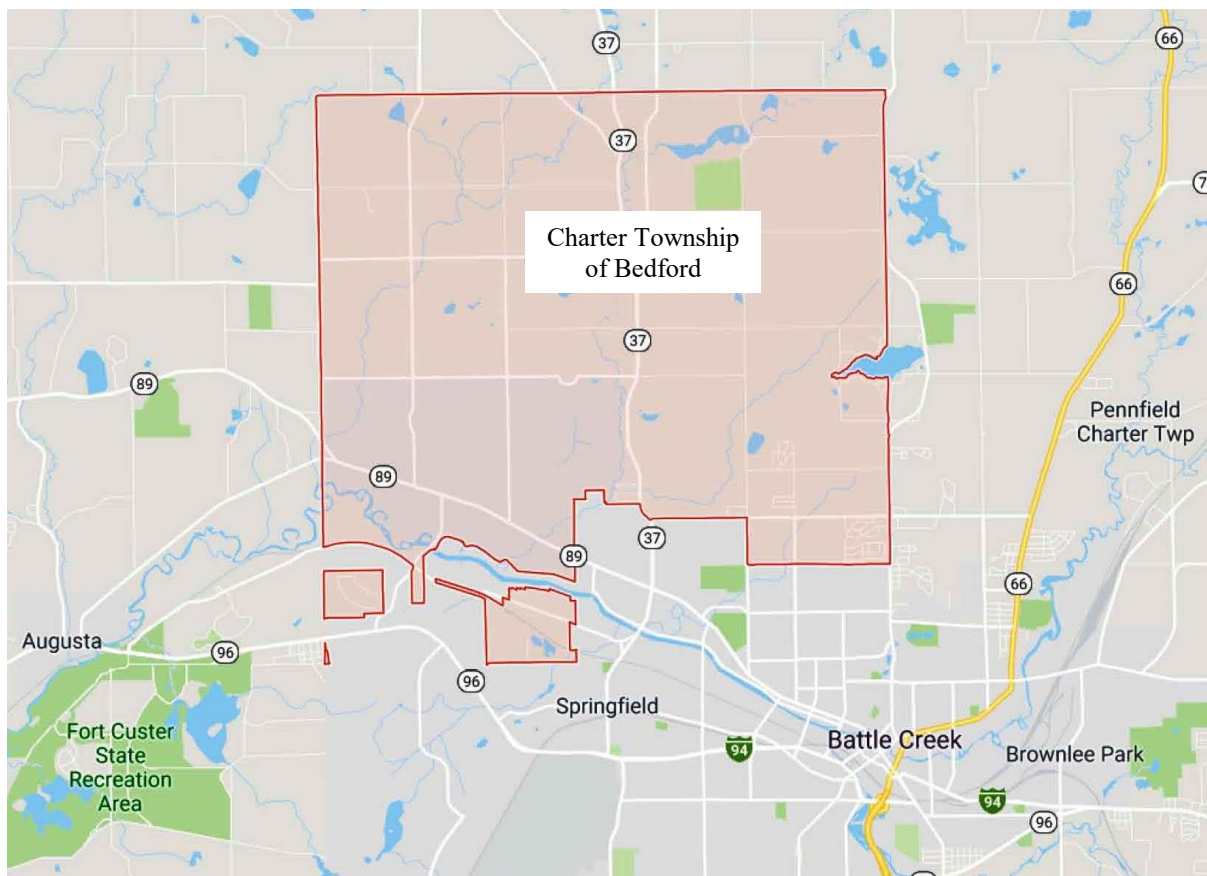
The Charter Township of Bedford (hereafter referred to as the Township) is located in the northwest corner of Calhoun County, bounded by Barry County on the north and Kalamazoo County on the west. As of 2016, the Township estimated population was 9,414. Most of the Township lies north of the Kalamazoo River and the City of Battle Creek. Three small noncontiguous areas of the Township lie south of the Kalamazoo River.

The City of Springfield and the City of Battle Creek abuts the Charter Township of Bedford to the south, and Pennfield Charter Township abuts on the east. Along with these state and local legal boundary neighbors, the U. S. Department of Veteran Affairs maintains a large facility within the Township’s southern boundary.

The Township’s close proximity to Battle Creek and Springfield, with their large industrial parcels and support utilities, has pushed the Township into becoming an urban location. The division of rural farms for housing development exacerbates this situation. Without sufficient sewer and municipal water in the proper locations, industrial and commercial endeavors are at a disadvantage.



Location Map



Map of the Township

Before any recreation plan is adopted and enacted, it is first important to understand the needs of the Township and its residents, what recreational opportunities already exist and what future projects and programs are relevant to the residents of the Township. This is based on the age, physical ability, population, density and the availability of recreation facilities in the surrounding communities. This input is a critical component of this plan and getting the participants united to develop a recreation plan to enhance the quality of life for everyone in the Township.

The foundation for the development of the Charter Township of Bedford Park and Recreation Plan was based on the following goals:

- Involve the Township residents and stakeholders in the process to develop a Five Year Recreation Master Plan.
- Inventory and map existing Township recreational facilities.
- Build a strong foundation of Township stakeholders in addressing the future recreational needs and priorities of the Township.
- Enable the Township to be eligible for financial assistance based upon the Recreation Plan.
- Facilitate inter-agency collaboration in establishing recreation goals, objectives, and actions.
- Continue to support and implement improvements for barrier-free, universal access to Township parks.
- Consistency with and expansion upon goals and objectives set forth in existing planning documents for both the Township and county wide.

This newly prepared recreation plan’s intended use is to guide Township officials on all future recreational and park projects within the Township. Specifically, this plan is developed in accordance with the guidelines for Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plans published by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). A five-year, MDNR approved recreation plan is necessary for the government entities to pursue MDNR administered grants. This plan is written for the Charter Township of Bedford, and it covers the park facilities and recreation within the community.

Part 2 – Social Characteristics

Population

The population of the Charter Township of Bedford is estimated to decrease slightly by 103 persons to 9,414 between 2000 and 2016, or -1.1%. This is a modest decrease in numbers, given the economic conditions from 2007 to early 2010. The County has a -2.4% decline from 2000-2016.

Table 2-1 Charter Township of Bedford Population, 2000-2016				
	2000	2010	2016*	% Change 2000-2016
Charter Twp of Bedford	9,517	9,357	9,414	-1.1%
Calhoun County	137,985	136,146	134,691	-2.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2010 &
* U.S. Census Bureau 2016 estimate

Median Age

While the overall population is the most important consideration, there are other characteristics to consider when planning for a community’s recreation. The age distribution of a community influences the types of facilities and programs needed. Table 2-2 shows that the Township’s median age (44.6) is higher than the County average. This would indicate that the Township has an older age base than the rest of the county due to a lower percentage of persons in the 18 and under age groups. Of course, the Township should not ignore the other age groups since they still comprise a large portion of the overall population.

Table 2-2 Median Age in Charter Township of Bedford, 2000-2016		
	2000	2016*
Charter Twp of Bedford	40.0	44.6
Calhoun County	39.2	40.0
Michigan	33.5	32.8

* U.S. Census Bureau 2016 estimate

Average Household Size

The size of families in the Township follows Calhoun County and Michigan in the trend for smaller households. The general trend toward smaller family size may be due to many factors including the end of the baby boomer generation, divorce, widowed older persons and young people waiting longer to get married.

Table 2-3 Average Household Size in Charter Township of Bedford, 2000-2015			
	2000	2015	% Change 2000-2015
Charter Twp of Bedford	2.52	2.29	-9.1%
Calhoun County	2.47	2.22	-11.1%
Michigan	2.49	2.18	-12.5%

* U.S. Census Bureau 2015 estimate

Income, Poverty and Employment

Year-round Township households had a median income of \$53,493 in 2015 estimates. This compares with \$44,681 for Calhoun County and \$49,576 for the State of Michigan.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2012-2106 Estimates

Physically Challenged

Subject	Charter Township of Bedford, Calhoun County, Michigan					
	Total		With a disability		Percent with a disability	
	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error
Total civilian noninstitutionalized population	9,339	+/-81	1,365	+/-242	14.6%	+/-2.6
SEX						
Male	4,956	+/-228	857	+/-157	17.3%	+/-3.1
Female	4,383	+/-239	508	+/-150	11.6%	+/-3.4
RACE AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN						
White alone	7,973	+/-287	1,212	+/-221	15.2%	+/-2.8
Black or African American alone	1,008	+/-256	67	+/-51	6.6%	+/-5.1
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	22	+/-22	0	+/-14	0.0%	+/-52.6
Asian alone	0	+/-14	0	+/-14	-	**
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	11	+/-19	0	+/-14	0.0%	+/-74.4
Some other race alone	0	+/-14	0	+/-14	-	**
Two or more races	325	+/-132	86	+/-80	26.5%	+/-20.7
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	7,856	+/-288	1,205	+/-219	15.3%	+/-2.8
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	181	+/-118	7	+/-12	3.9%	+/-5.9
AGE						
Under 5 years	483	+/-167	0	+/-14	0.0%	+/-4.5
5 to 17 years	1,545	+/-242	131	+/-73	8.5%	+/-4.6
18 to 34 years	1,786	+/-211	120	+/-67	6.7%	+/-3.8
35 to 64 years	3,891	+/-239	582	+/-153	15.0%	+/-3.8
65 to 74 years	905	+/-147	289	+/-91	31.9%	+/-8.5
75 years and over	729	+/-137	243	+/-83	33.3%	+/-10.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2015 Estimates

The disability status of a population may be especially significant when considering recreational needs for a community. With 14.6% of the total Township population affected by some form of disability, these individuals may have difficulty participating in recreational programs, accessing facilities or even getting to designated public areas. Understanding the disability status of the Township’s population may assist decision-makers in determining adequate programs and appropriate locations for recreational activities. With the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), all areas of public service and accommodation became subject to barrier-free requirements, including parks and recreation facilities and programs.

Part 3 – Physical Characteristics

Transportation Network

The Michigan Department of Transportation maintains 7.5 miles of road in the Township: M-89 (Michigan Avenue) and M-37 (Bedford Road). The Calhoun County Road Department owns and maintains the remainder of the roads in the Township.

Climate

Lake Michigan affects the climate of the Township, which is approximately 50 miles to its west. Summers are warm and humid, while winters are moderate to severe with abundant snowfalls. This causes precipitation levels to be from 40-70 inches a year maintaining our streams, lakes and wetlands.

Topography & Landforms

Like much of Calhoun County, the Township is known for gently rolling hills and traversable terrain formed by past glacial activity. Glacial moraines and kettle lakes dot the landscape. Most of the Township is between 825-900 feet above sea level, some of the highest levels in the County. The lowest levels are found along Augusta Creek as it flows south to the lowlands of the Kalamazoo River.

Woodlands

The establishment of wetland designations is a responsibility of the Department of Environment, Great Lakes & Energy (EGLE). There are lakes and streams throughout the Township. We also have large stands of hard woods and evergreens/pines, which are found mostly in agricultural and open space designations. These wooded plots provide an atmosphere conducive to wildlife development and maintenance. Even with the wetland locations, there is a large abundance of available land for residential development.

Wetlands

The wetlands in the Township are like the County in that wetlands with associated woodlands that existed during the time of large expanses of pre-settlement wetlands have been reduced to small, scattered upland areas or wetlands associated with floodway/floodplain areas. Upland wetlands have been reduced due to filling, subsurface drainage and drain construction undertaken to improve agriculture. Most upland wetlands are forested and are less than 20 acres in size. Both upland and coastal wetlands provide opportunities such as hiking, nature viewing, hunting, and environmental education.

The following Wetlands Map shows wetland areas that serve to provide wildlife habitat, stormwater storage, water quality improvement, natural scenery and other benefits. Generally, these areas exhibit severe limitations for the use of individual waste disposal systems. Many of the wetlands are located along the various water bodies such as rivers, creeks, streams and drainage ditches.

Hydric soils are also identified on the Wetlands Map. These are soils that have formed in the presence of water for sustained periods. They can be used to help locate wetlands, especially those that have been disturbed or altered by fill or excavation. Hydric soils may be unsuitable for certain types of development and can be an indicator of high groundwater levels.

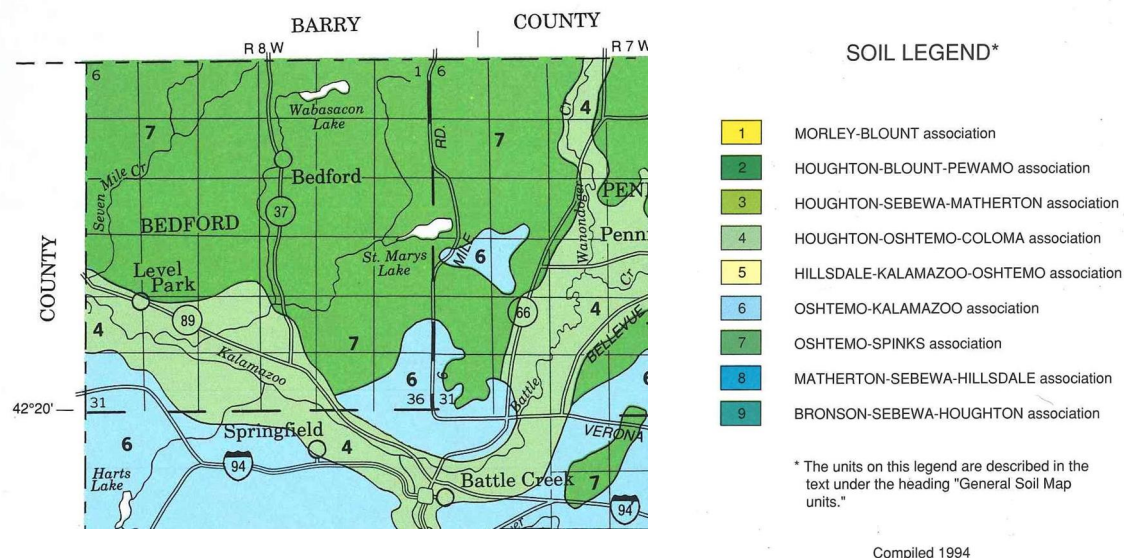
Because they occur where the dry land meets the water, wetlands play a critical role in the management of our water-based resources. Acre for acre, wetlands produce more wildlife and plants than any other Michigan habitat type. Wetland species also comprise a critically important segment of these species.

Prior to park & recreation development, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) should be consulted to review the results of a wetlands determination. The impacts of development within wetland areas should be carefully considered, and a permit from the MDNR should always be obtained if regulated wetlands are to be impacted.

Soils

Two predominant soil types are found in the Township. The first is the Houghton-Osthemo-Coloma association in the southern 1/4 of the Township. This is described as nearly level to steep, very poorly drained to excessively drained, mucky soils on flood plains and loamy and sandy soils on outwash plains, moraines and stream terraces and in glacial drainage ways. The northern 3/4 of the Township contains soils in the Oshtemo – Spinks association. These are described as gently rolling to steep, well drained loamy and sandy soils on outwash plains.

Generally, well-drained, coarse-textured soils provide the most suitable foundations. Poor soil stability occurs with soils containing large concentrations of organic material, such as muck, silt, and clay. The areas of poor soil stability are concentrated in low-lying and poorly drained areas adjacent to rivers and creeks. In these low-lying areas, the presence of water in and near the surface contributes to frost heave, compression, shrinkage and swelling.



Water Resources & Drainage

The Waubascacon Creek flows from the northwest corner of the Township through the center until it reaches the Kalamazoo River, which traverses the southern portion of the Township. The Seven-Mile Creek bisects the western one-third of the Township and flows into the Kalamazoo River. Several drains run north to south within the Township draining the wetlands. These drains run into the creeks as well as to the river. The Township has within its boundaries many small private lakes that are mostly within the agricultural zones. There are also two large lakes: St. Mary's Lake and Waubascacon Lake. Approximately one-half of St. Mary's Lake is in the Township while the other half is in Pennfield Charter Township.

Floodplains

The federal government, through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), has developed the 100-year flood plain designation. This designation, with its accompanying maps, lay out the restrictions for development in these areas. If government flood insurance is obtained, residential housing may be built in flood plain areas. Some of the flood plain areas in the Township are part of a continuous designation covering Kalamazoo, Calhoun and Jackson Counties. It is important to maintain the integrity of the floodplain and its ability to handle the overflow of the flooding rivers. When a portion of the floodplain is built on or filled in to accommodate development, it forces flood waters onto other properties.

Fish and Wildlife

The area's wildlife is typical of that found in most of Lower Michigan. Common wildlife includes deer, raccoons, opossums, rabbits, muskrats, beavers, squirrels, rodents and other small mammals. The area is home to a variety of birds including owls, wild turkeys, pheasants and many others. The area is also a seasonal home to many migratory birds including ducks and Canadian geese.

Water Supply

Private wells are the main source of domestic water in the Township and range from 25 to 200 feet in depth. The water table is generally high and, in some instances, can impede septic system installation and operation. As stated, the wetland and floodplain designations are throughout the Township. The Zoning Map displayed in this section is provided for use in identifying the various areas of distinction.

Wastewater

The Morgan Woods/Orchard Park subdivisions are supported by both water and sewer hookups via the City of Battle Creek, as is a portion of St. Mary's Lake. The large manufactured home parks off M-37 (Bedford Road) are supported by sewer and water provided by the City of Battle Creek. Some homes in various parts of the Township are connected to city water due to groundwater contamination.

Part 4 – Community Services/Land Use

Community Services

The Battle Creek Police Department serves the Township. Patrols are available 24 hours a day. The Township currently enjoys a low crime rate as compared to the national and state averages. Police services are provided via a contract with the Battle Creek Police Department. Residents of the Township receive the same police services as the residents of the City of Battle Creek. Residents benefit from police coverage, the detective lab, criminal investigation services, road patrols and other beneficial services. The special assessment district levied each year by the Township Board and agreed upon by the citizens, finances both the Police and Fire Department.

The Fire Department, which is strictly paid part-time, is supported by three (3) fire stations. The oldest station, which is referred to as the No. 1 station, is in the Village of Bedford on Bedford Road (M-37). It was built in 1937. The station is outdated, and future plans will be made to replace it as current fire apparatus specifications preclude placing updated rigs in this facility. The No. 2 station is housed in the Township Offices building, which is on S. Uldriks Drive. This building was built in 2001 and houses any and all currently specified fire apparatus. The No. 3 station, which is on Morgan Road, was built in 1997 and meets all of the requirements for future needs.

The three (3) fire stations house a total of seven types of apparatus: grass fighting rigs, tankers, and first run engines. Currently 27 fire fighters are trained and certified by the State of Michigan as having the up-to-date classifications needed to provide emergency services to the Township. As the Township grows, the older station and present equipment must be maintained, repaired, or replaced. In doing so, careful consideration must be given to financial feasibility.

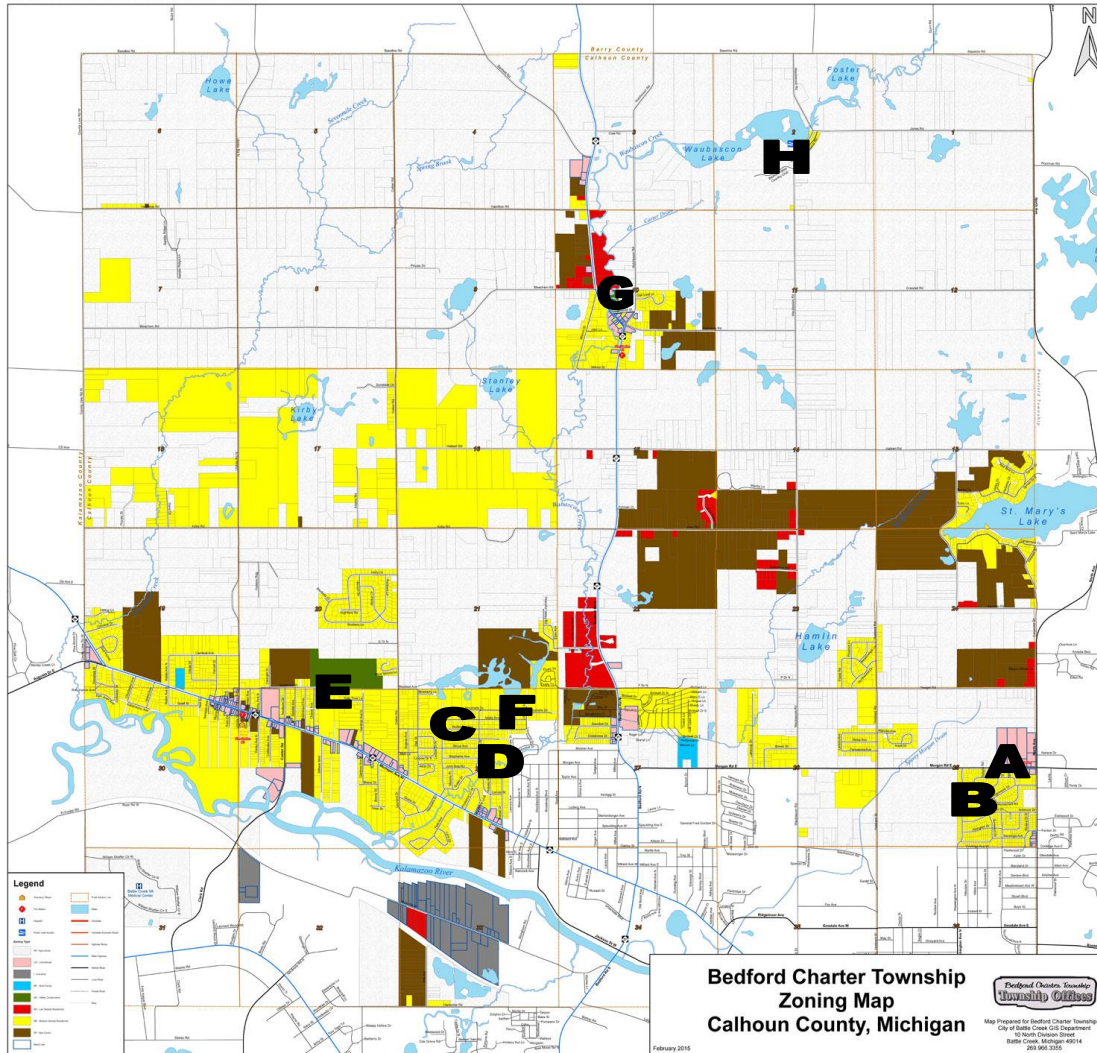
Land Use

The primary use of land in the Township is residential which includes platted subdivisions of record dating back over 50 years, and developments. It is expected that this type of expansion will continue due to the available affordable land within the Township. There is a moderate amount of commercially zoned land, generally along Bedford Road (M-37), Custer Drive, West Michigan Avenue (M-89) and North Avenue. The current zoning supports gas stations, convenience stores, auto repair sales, lawn mower sales, hardware and grocery stores.

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF BEDFORD PARK & RECREATION PLAN 2020-2024

Industrial zoning is practically non-existent except for a gravel pit and a pallet making facility. Industrial development has been hampered by not having the availability of municipal water and sewer.

Agricultural land comprises a large part of the Township and most likely will be developed into residential use. Two (2) large dairy farms are in operation in the Township, with their remaining farmable lands under production, supporting livestock and cash crop operations not necessarily in full-time operation.



Zoning Map w/Park Locations

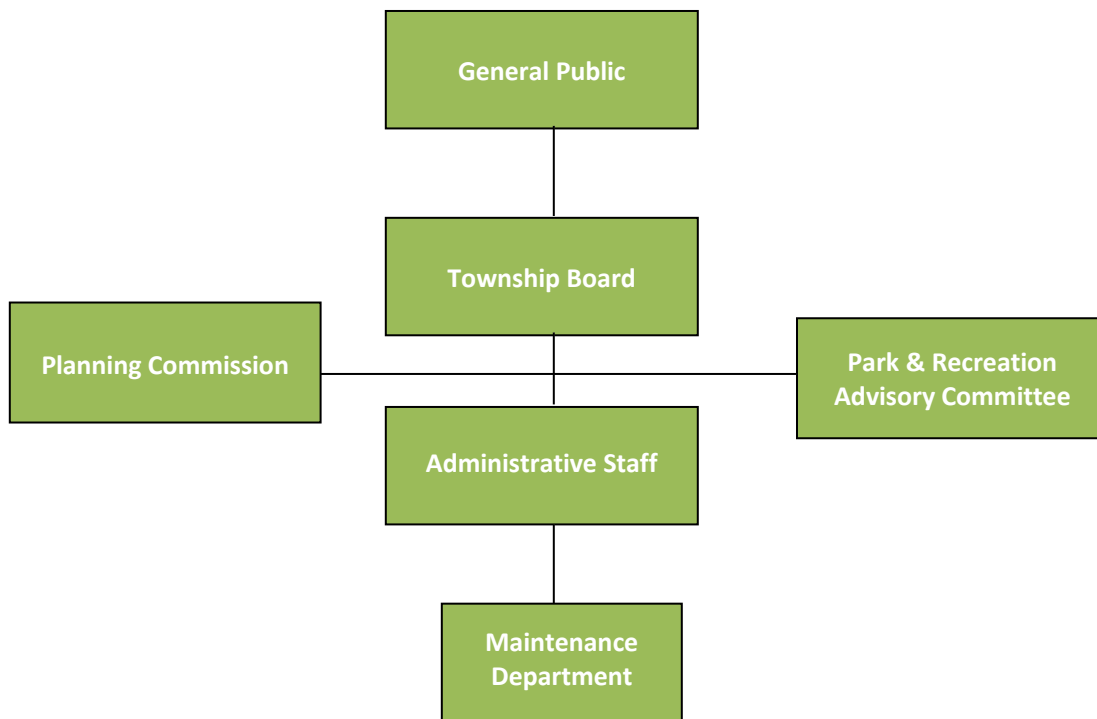
A	Algonquin Park	D	Brookside Park	G	Skeets-Gerhman Park
B	Ardmoor Park	E	Markham Park	H	Waubascon Lake Boat Launch - MDNR
C	Brookside Annex	F	Simmons Ball Diamond		

SECTION B - ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

Recreation planning is a method for anticipating and arranging recreational improvements so that they may be implemented on a reasonable schedule and without an adverse effect on a community's administrative and financial structure. An effective recreation plan will recognize the practical relationship between a community's administrative structure and its ability to follow through on a recommended recreational improvement program.

The Township governing body consists of an elected supervisor, clerk and treasurer, and four board members. The Township has in place an appointed Planning Commission, Board of Appeals, Board of Review, and a Fire Chief. Hired staff includes an assessor, electrical, mechanical, plumbing and building inspectors and a building and zoning administrator. A Park & Recreation Advisory Committee was established in 2019.

The chart illustrates the relationship among the various entities involved in recreation within the Township. The administrative structure is as follows:



The Maintenance Department of the Township consists of one (1) full-time employee and seasonal part-time help when needed. This department is responsible for mowing of the parks and cemeteries as well as providing sexton services. All minor repairs to the Township buildings are maintained by the head of this department which is housed in fire station No. 1. There are also two storage and maintenance shops at this location.

**Township Parks
Expenditures and Budgets
2015-2018**

Park operation and maintenance (fiscal year ending in December)	
Year	Expenditures
2015	\$19,400
2016	\$24,850
2017	\$16,970

The annual operation and maintenance funds listed above were used for grounds upkeep and repairs to park facilities.

SECTION C – DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

Township recreational facilities cannot be effectively provided without some basis from which the type, quantity, location, need and priority for that facility have been determined. Several methods for determining a community's recreation needs and priorities have been identified. These methods include observed use levels for existing facilities, comparisons of recreational facilities between similar communities, unique opportunities for certain types of facilities, guidelines or standards based on quantity per population, and projected population growth.

Existing recreation opportunities can be compared to recreation standards to determine deficiencies. However, great care must be taken to apply common sense and knowledge of the community. These standards will be used only in conjunction with other methods to determine recreation deficiencies and priorities.

For this Recreation Plan, public strategic planning workshops were facilitated by Planning Commission members and Planning Consultant on April 9, 2019, and June 25, 2019. At the workshops, it was determined that a strong desire existed within the Township to improve the recreational facilities throughout the Township but with an emphasis on developing improvements at Ardmoor Park, Markham Park and Skeets Gehrman Park as the top three priorities.

The purpose of the strategic planning process was to receive direct input from key individuals within the Township relative to the identification and ranking of the current recreation needs. The issues and needs were identified and discussed at the workshops and are incorporated into this document. A draft copy of this plan was placed on file at the Township Hall and a public notice was placed in the local newspaper (see appendix) to invite further public comment on the plan. The information contained in the draft report was presented to the Township Board at a public hearing on March 12, 2020, to further allow public comment on the issues and recreational needs of the Township residents.

On March 12, 2020 at the meeting of the Township Board, the 5-year plan was formally adopted. Meeting minutes and resolution are attached (see appendix).

SECTION D – RECREATION INVENTORY

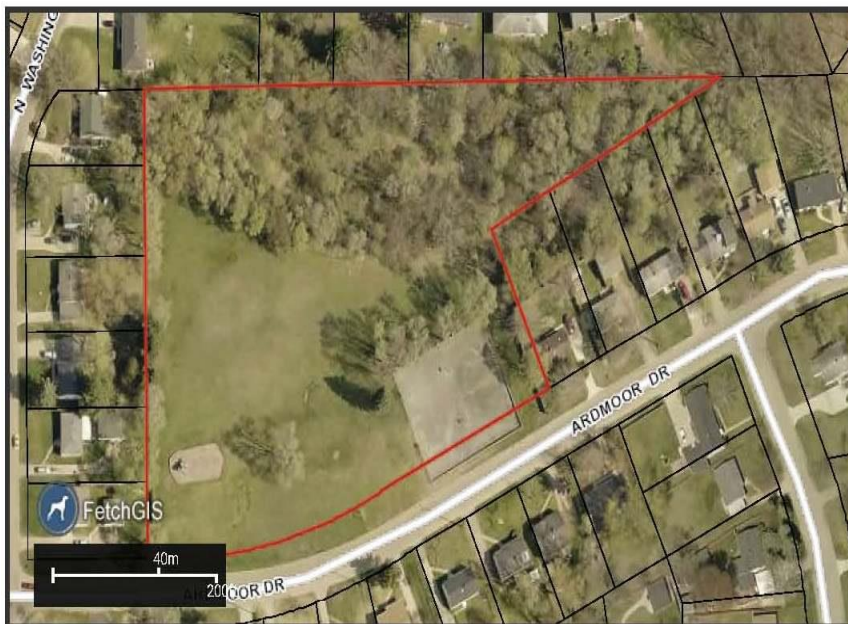
An essential element of a recreation plan is the inventory of existing local and regional, public and private recreation facilities that are available to the Township’s residents. This inventory provides a basis from which a comparison can be made of existing recreation opportunities with the community’s identified recreation needs. This inventory process also identifies barrier-free facilities. This will ensure that citizens with disabilities will fully enjoy these facilities. Involving advocate organizations and utilizing the knowledge of the Township staff will help facilitate this element of the inventory process. This facility inventory establishes the foundation from which a recreational improvement program can be developed and implemented.

Part 1 – Recreational Facilities within the Township

Algonquin Park- located behind Fire Station 3 on Algonquin Street. Amenities include a small children’s play area. The park property is owned by the Charter Township of Bedford.

Acreage: 3.3

Accessibility Assessment: 1- No paved parking, walkways or accessible restroom facilities.



Ardmoor Park located on Ardmoor Drive near Washington Avenue, has a small children’s play area and older basketball courts that are reaching end of useful life-cycle. The property is owned by the Caloun County Road Department.

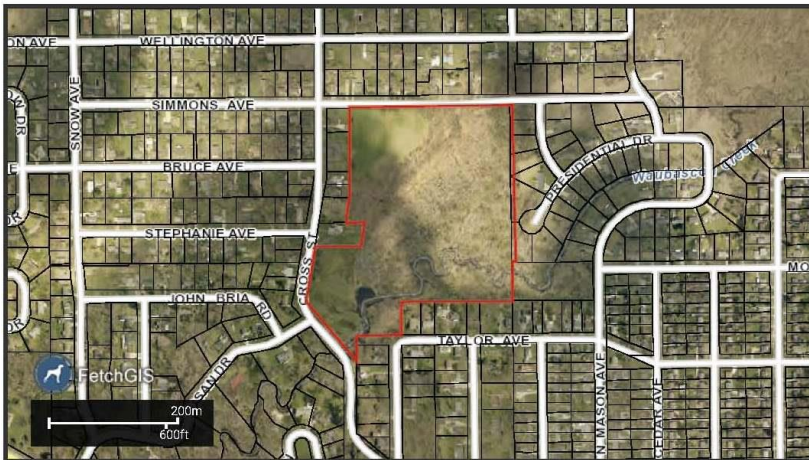
Acreage: 4.68

Accessibility Assessment: 1 – No paved parking, walkways or accessible restroom facilities.

Brookside Annex - located at the corner of Cross Street and Wellington Street, contains basketball court and tennis court only. The park property is owned by the Charter Township of Bedford.

Acreeage: 0.5

Accessibility Assessment: 1- No paved parking, walkways or accessible restroom facilities.



Brookside Park - located on Cross Street near Susan Drive, is currently undeveloped and has Waubascon Creek running through it. The park property is owned by the Charter Township of Bedford. The Simmons Ball Daimond is located on the NW corner of the site.

Acreeage: 23.5

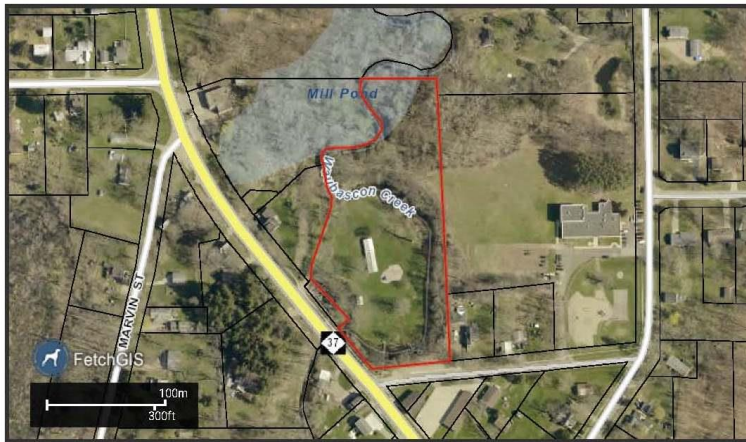
Accessibility Assessment: 1 - No paved parking, walkways or accessible restroom facilities.

Markham Park - located at the corner of Markham Street and Duane Street, contains 55 acres of wooded trails that locals have used for riding unauthorized motor vehicles. It also has an old backstop from a ball diamond. The park property is owned by the Charter Township of Bedford.

Acreeage: 55.5

Accessibility Assessment: 1 – No paved parking, walkways or accessible restroom facilities.





Skeets-Gerhman Park -

Located on M-37 and Bevier, has a small playground, bathrooms, covered pavilion and picnic tables. The park property is owned by the Charter Township of Bedford.

Acreage: 4.0

Accessibility Assessment: 1 - No paved parking, walkways or accessible restroom facilities.

Waubascon Lake Boat Launch -

Located on the south shore of Waubascon Lake, this site provides an unpaved access point for boaters to launch from. The park property is owned by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Acreage: 1.5

Accessibility Assessment: 1 - No paved parking, walkways or accessible restroom facilities.



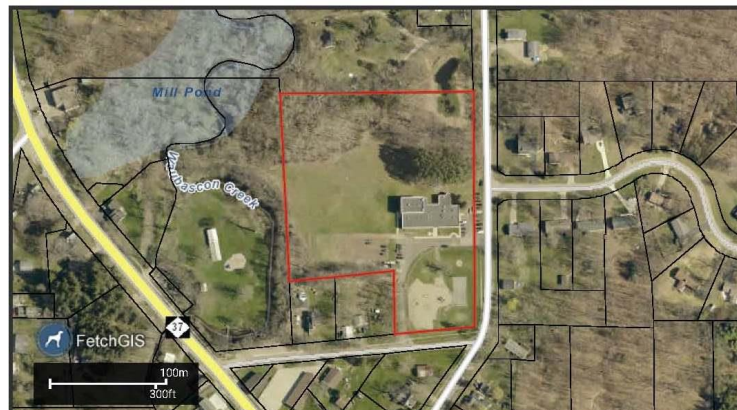
Part 2 – School Recreational Facilities

Charter Township of Bedford has four different school districts that serve the Township. They are Battle Creek Schools, Pennfield Schools, Hastings Schools and Gull Lake Schools. However there is only one school building that is active in the Township and it is with Gull Lake Schools.

Gull Lake Home School Partnership - It's located on Hutchinson Road and provides a park and playground.

Acreage: 6.97

Accessibility Assessment: 1 – No paved parking, walkways or accessible restroom facilities.



Part 3 – Private Recreational Facilities

Gull Lake View Golf Club & Resort has become one of the largest golf resorts in the World, featuring six championship courses in one amazing destination. The courses are located in nearby Augusta and the Township.

Marywood Golf Club in Pennfield Township is a public golf course that opened in 1926. Designed by Maurice McCarthy, Marywood Golf Club measures 6,631 yards from the longest tees and has a slope rating of 132 and a 73 USGA rating. The course features (3) sets of tees for different skill levels.

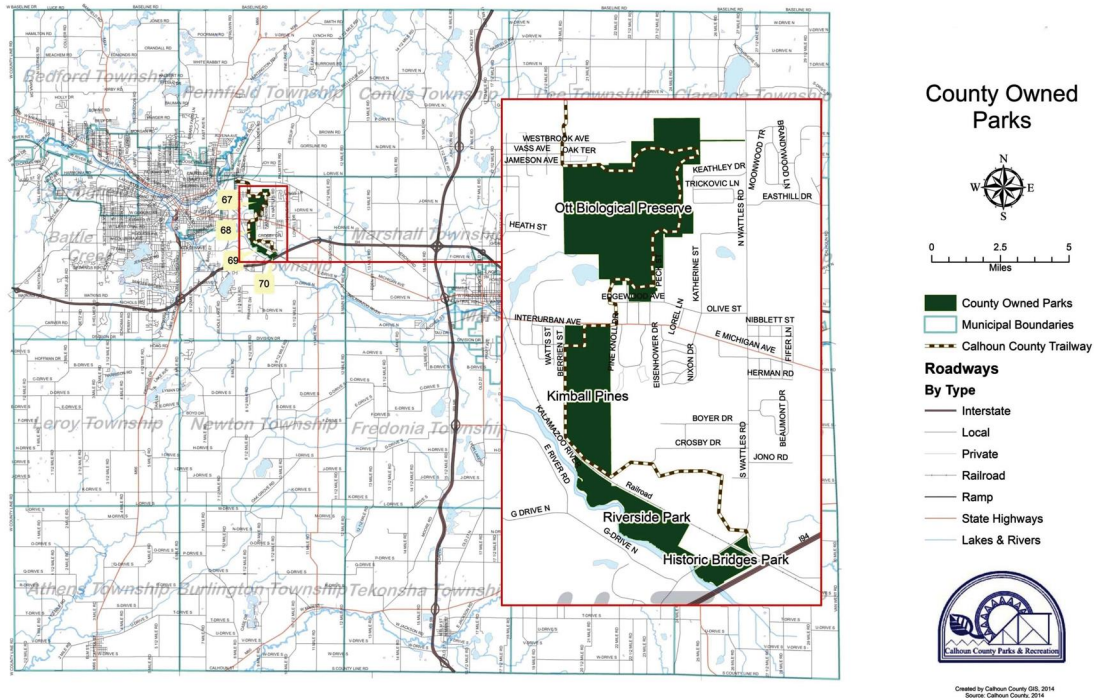
Part 4 –Regional Recreational Facilities

Fort Custer Recreational Area - Located in Augusta between Battle Creek and Kalamazoo, Fort Custer features three lakes, the Kalamazoo River, second-growth forests, prairie restoration areas, a 219-site campground, and a trail system used by mountain bikers, equestrians, hikers, and dog-sledders. The campground is year-round. It is modern (electricity and flush toilets) mid-April through mid-October, and it is semi-modern (electricity, but the water is turned off.) mid-October through April.

Kimball Pines (Calhoun County) - In the 1960s Kimball Sanitarium was purchased by the County. It was the first major recreational development for a park in Calhoun County when it was opened in May of 1975.

Riverside Park (Calhoun County) - In 1972, the county purchased 4,200 feet of river frontage from Walter Mulvaney which is now known as Riverside Park. This acquisition joined Kimball Pines and Historic Bridge Park to create one long contiguous piece of park land divided by a railroad.

Historic Bridge Park (Calhoun County) - Existed as a roadside park from the early 1900's. In the late 1980's the roads and bridges connecting the park were assessed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and deemed substandard. Consequently, F Drive North was rerouted, and a new bridge was constructed to provide an adequate, safe entrance to the park.



Ott Biological Preserve (Calhoun County) - In 1911 the first 105 acres were acquired by Jay R. D. Snyder and Edward Brigham (founder of the Kingman Museum). An additional 151 acres were purchased by Dr. John Harvey Kellogg in 1946 and all of the land was deeded to Albion College. Then in 1977, the county purchased the 256-acre park from Albion College for \$56,000.00. The final 42 acres were donated by Mr. Alex Sutarek, bringing the total to 298 acres in 1995.

In early 1994 the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners created a Citizen Advisory Committee to study the Preserve and make recommendations for its management. This committee eventually became a 501(C)3 called Friends of the Ott.

Calhoun County Trailway, Phase 1 - was completed in 2014. The 5.28-mile trailway connects all the parks and provides a non-motorized path for pedestrians and bicycle use. It was an eight-year project that was executed by the Calhoun County Trailway Alliance, Calhoun.

Battle Creek Outdoor Education Center (OEC) - The Outdoor Education Center (OEC), commonly called 'Clear Lake Camp', is a division of the Battle Creek Public School System (BCPS). It is located on Clear Lake in Dowling, Michigan, and offers a serene rural environment less than an hour's drive from Lansing, Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo.

As the oldest school camp in the nation, they have been offering programs to supplement school curriculum for over 60 years. They currently offer overnight and day programs to schools located across southern Michigan. In addition, they host weddings, family retreats, and workshops.

With 175-acres of forests, fields and lakeshore, the OEC is the perfect setting for groups to connect with nature.

A complete list of area park and recreation facilities administered by other Cities and Townships is included in the following table. Facilities in the Township and School facilities are outlined in parts 1 & 2 of this section.

Park Name	Address	Ownership	Acres	Restrooms	Visitor Center	Concession Stand	Pavilion	Grille	Playground	Picnic	Baseball	Hiking	Parking	ADA Accessible	Boat Launch	Disk Golf	Tennis	Basketball	Shuffleboard	Fishing	Volleyball	Community Gardens	Handicap Accessible	Accessible to Water	Other	
McIntosh Park	Hoaglin St	City of Albion	12.7	X					X	X	X							X								
Ketchum Field	North St	City of Albion	7.5	X					X	X	X							X								
Crowell Park	N Superior St	City of Albion	2.0																							
McChes Park	River front	City of Albion	216							X	X													X	Old train trestle	
Holland Park	W Case St	City of Albion	8.0	X			X		X	X	X						X	X								
Harris Field	W Case St	City of Albion	7.4	X	X				X	X	X															
Washington Street Park	Washington St	City of Albion	0.9						X										X							
Molder Park	N Superior St	City of Albion	0.0																						American Molder at use location	
Boomerfield Park	East Superior St	City of Albion	0.1									X														
Lloyd Park	East Case St	City of Albion	0.8																	X						
Stoffer Park / Market Place	211 Market Place	City of Albion	1.8										X												outdoor market place	
Porter Street Canoe Dock	Porter St	City of Albion	0.1											X											X	
Ridger Park	112 W Case	City of Albion	9.3	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X						foot ball, strolling, skating, swimming	
Victory Park	121 W Case	City of Albion	59.3	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X						foot ball, strolling, skating, swimming	
Berens Park	Waters St	City of Albion	10											X						X						
McAuliffe Park	Austin Ave	City of Albion	7.6	X					X	X	X							X							Flower garden Basic dog park	
Albion Berrien Dog Park	E Pike St. & Division	City of Albion	0.8																						Bike trail	
Full Park	Park Ridge Drive, B.C.	City of Battle Creek	89.7	X		X		X	X	X	X	X														
Julia Miller Park	Corner of Rosemeath & Howland	City of Battle Creek	0.4				X	X	X																	
Claude Brass Park	N Washington Ave	City of Battle Creek	5.0	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X						X								
Irving Park	Corner of Emmett and North Ave	City of Battle Creek	48.9				X	X	X	X	X	X														Horshoes
Bailey Park	7400 Division Dr.	City of Battle Creek	97.0	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X						X
Quaker Park	135 Fremont St	City of Battle Creek	2.8				X	X	X	X																Historic
Piper Park	Capital Ave NE	City of Battle Creek	7.2		X	X	X	X	X	X	X															Performance area
McCanby Park	N Washington Ave & W Mich Ave	City of Battle Creek	1.8							X	X						X	X								Strolling
McCreo Park	McCreo St	City of Battle Creek	17.9			X			X	X	X							X	X							Strolling
Monument Park	Division & Michigan Ave	City of Battle Creek	1.1				X		X	X	X	X														Memorials
Meachem Park	Meachem St	City of Battle Creek	0.7				X	X	X	X	X							X								Strolling
Prospect Park	S Washington Ave	City of Battle Creek	2.2																							
Post Park	E Michigan Ave	City of Battle Creek	7.9		X		X	X	X	X								X								Track
CHH Street Park	CHH St	City of Battle Creek	1.2																			X				
Hamilton Park	154 Academy St	City of Battle Creek	2.8				X	X	X	X																Drinking fountain
Willard Beach Park	Capital Ave SW	City of Battle Creek	17.0	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X													Swimming
Woodland Park & Nature Pres	Helmer Ave	City of Battle Creek	14.7							X	X															Biking, Trails, Cross Country Skiing
Stellrecht Park	85 Bennett St	City of Battle Creek	0.6					X	X	X								X								Benches
Lulla Arboretum & Kingman M	929 W Michigan Ave, B.C.	City of Battle Creek	66.1	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X											Strolling, Bike trail
Hamilton Park	Hamilton Ave	City of Battle Creek	0.8				X	X	X																	
Friendship Park	Capital Ave N & State St W	City of Battle Creek	1.7											X												performance area
Horshoe Bend Park	Wagner Drive	City of Battle Creek	2.0				X	X	X	X	X									X						
Wave Park	McCanby St	City of Battle Creek	0.1						X	X																performance area
Begg Park	503 Military Ave	City of Springfield	9.3	X			X	X	X	X	X	X			X											performance area
Blinder Park Zoo	7400 Division Dr	City of Battle Creek	433.0	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X												Animals train, tram & carousel rides
Cook Plant	Corner lot of Kalamazoo & Linden	City of Marshall	0.7																							
Alcott Park	600 block Alcott	City of Marshall	0.8																							
Garvin Property	600 block Union	City of Marshall	11.7																							
Marshall Athletic Fields	1201 W Michigan Ave	City of Marshall	14.2					X		X	X															foot ball
Carver Park	Corner of Exchange & Michigan	City of Marshall	0.3																							water fountain
Ketchum Park	Montgomery St	City of Marshall	21.3	X			X	X	X	X	X	X														Skateboarding
Stuart's Landing	603 Homer Rd	City of Marshall	10.2	X			X		X	X	X	X								X						Band Shell
Brook Watson Ave	18 W Miller Rd	City of Marshall	149.2																							Trails
Sherman Park	200 block Linden	City of Marshall	1.6																							
Clarendon Township Park	22 Mile Rd	Clarendon Township	7.0																							
Convis Township Hall	19500 15 Mile Road	Convis Township	8.4																							
Leroy Township Park	671 Graham Lake Terrace	Leroy Township	6.0						X				X	X												
John Wilson Park	N Capital Ave	Village of Athens	14.3	X					X	X	X	X								X	X					Farmer's market, horseshoes
Wabster Street Park	Wabster St	Village of Homer	1.8	X					X	X	X						X	X			X					
Grist Mill Park	M-50	Village of Homer	2.5	X							X	X									X					Linear path
Lakewood Park	Waterman St	Village of Homer	8.2	X					X	X				X												
Chesney Park	ERandall St	Village of Tonawanda	7.0						X	X	X	X														
Greenwood Park	Greenwood Ave	Wash. Hight as Unit of Methodist	9.8						X	X	X	X						X								
Mill Race Park	Capital Ave SW	WK Kaling Foundation	1.8						X	X	X												X	X	Track	

Part 5 – Barrier Free Evaluation & Universal Access

The ultimate goal is to provide recreation opportunities that include everyone. With the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), all areas of public service and accommodation are subject to barrier-free requirements, including parks and recreation facilities and programs. This planning process should include methods to ensure that the Township Park and Recreation system is accessible to persons with disabilities. The Township completed an evaluation of existing facilities in 2010 to determine if they are barrier-free.

When looking at areas to determine their accessibility to all people, we started by asking these simple questions:

Is it possible for a person who has a sight or hearing disability, uses a wheelchair, uses a walking aid such as crutches or braces, has a mental disability that affects learning and understanding, can safely and independently:

- Get from the arrival place to the activity area?
- Move around the area?
- Do what others do in the area?
- If not, what is getting in the way?
- How can this barrier be removed?

Common components that need to be looked at to answer these basic questions include: parking, paths of travel from parking, street or sidewalk to activity areas, the activity areas themselves, signage, support facilities such as restrooms, surfacing, and communications required for recreation programs and general use of a facility or area. The existing Township Parks all lack these basic facilities and were evaluated on the following criteria and scored 1-5.

5- Facility is fully accessible. Features and facilities meet and exceed the Uniform Building Code and take into consideration Universal Design principles. Main elements such as the washrooms, entrances, parking, and amenities are barrier free.

4- Majority of the facility is accessible; however, there are some accessibility barriers. Some improvements are needed to make the facility fully accessible.

3- Facility is partially accessible. Barriers exist to fully access the facility, and an alternate facility may be necessary.

2- Facility is partially accessible. Barriers exist to fully access the facility, and an alternate facility may be necessary.

1- Facility has poor accessibility. Accessibility barriers may exist at entranceway, recreation area and washrooms. Alternate facility is recommended for barrier free access.

The following is a chart with each of the parks within the Township with their respective accessibility ranking:

Park Name	Algonquin Park	Ardmoor Park-CCRD	Brookside Annex	Brookside Park	Markham Park	Simmons Ball Diamond	Waubascon Lake Boat Launch-MDNR
Accessibility*	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Universal Access

Another often overlooked category is universal access. This practice goes way beyond typical Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations to practice “common and equal experiences for all.” The goal of universal access is, throughout concept and design phases, to incorporate technology, materials and other considerations that promote equal opportunities for people of varied abilities. These concepts should be kept in the forefront as a prime consideration in the 5-year Master Plan and individual parks or projects as they develop and progress.

Type of Recreation Facility	Universal Access Design Considerations:
Archery range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All stations. ▪ Route to retrieval area for each target. ▪ Targets also usable with cross bows. ▪ Arrow back stop to limit retrieval distance. ▪ Larger maneuvering spaces to accommodate archers with shooting assistants.
Beach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Routes over the beach and into the water, can be portable/temporary matting if it needs to be taken in and out for beach cleaning/dragging or in the off-season. ▪ Wide enough for side by side walking/passing. ▪ At beach route end have an accessible area at the water's edge large enough to park multiple chairs while the owners are in the water. ▪ With a transfer system at the water's edge so people can get down to the ground level and into the water.
Boardwalk wetland and water access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 6 feet minimum width so two people can walk side by side or people can pass. ▪ Edge treatment to prevent roll/step off. ▪ If side rails are used, more than 25% must be lowered for easy viewing in various places along the boardwalk. ▪ Interpretive information in a variety of alternative formats such as auditory, large print, Braille, pictures, etc.
Campgrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All sites and amenities. ▪ Accessible surface on all sites, including rustic sites. ▪ Larger spaces to accommodate side lifts on campers and vehicles. ▪ Accessible tables, grills (15 "minimum, 34 "maximum height), and fire rings on all sites. ▪ Centrally located restrooms on easy routes from each site.
Camping Cabins and Yurts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Larger clear space and maneuvering spaces in between all furnishings, including when all are in use (beds, tables/chairs with people seated at the table, shelves within lowered reach ranges, lowered wall hooks, etc.). ▪ Larger clear space thoughtfully located for typical portable items such as coolers, luggage, equipment/food bins/tubs, etc.
Canoe/kayak/boat launch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wider route so someone can hand wheel boat on dolly to launch pulling boat next to them if they are in a wheelchair or two-person carry down. ▪ Accessible surface to water's edge and into water at a launch. ▪ More gentle slopes for easier entry and exit when hand wheeling a boat. ▪ Some type of "rack" to stabilize a boat at a transferable height then some type of mechanism/roller system to move, while seated in the boat, into the water. Some means of transfer assistance such as overhead bars will be required. ▪ Some type of winch system to help pull a boat out of water back into the rack to exit/transfer out. ▪ If there is a dock, provide a transfer system on the dock, so a person can be seated on the dock to transfer over to a boat in the water that is in some type of a stabilizer rack.

Canoe/kayak/boat launch (Con't)

- Adaptive kayaks available for use.
- Shore station with a platform (instead of “V” rack) with a transfer system on the deck of the shore station, located next to a dock so someone could roll/get on the platform and lower it to the right level to transfer into a boat.

Type of Recreation Facility	Universal Access Design Considerations:
Fishing dock/pier and observation/viewing decks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More than 25% of the rails are lowered in various locations or no rails at all with only an edge treatment to prevent roll off. ▪ Sitting benches (all with backs and arm rests) scattered about so anglers can choose to sit or stand to fish. ▪ Tackle box stands next to one bench end (not both) leaving one end clear space for sitting side by side with someone in a wheelchair. ▪ A variety of fish landing cutaways strategically placed. ▪ Variety of accessible opportunities—over-water fishing, shore fishing, in-water fishing, etc. ▪ Transition plates between access route and deck/pier.
Nature center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All interpretive information in a variety of alternative formats such as auditory, large print, Braille, pictures, etc. ▪ Creative use of technology such as mp3 players for auditory descriptions (this gives the info. directly to the individual), closed loop assistive listening devices and closed-circuit captioning of all interpretive presentations. ▪ All displays at lowered heights for sitting or standing viewing. ▪ All operating mechanisms that are operable with one hand and do not require tight/pinch/grasp/wrist twist to operate.
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More than minimum number of accessible spots. ▪ Each connected directly to an accessible route to the park elements and NOT into the traffic flow. ▪ Thoughtfully located nearest the activity entrance, which might require multiple lots (some near the beach, some near the playground, some near the bathhouse, etc.).
<p>Picnic areas and elements:</p> <p>Pavilions, picnic tables, grills, fire rings, water pumps, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All located on accessible routes. ▪ all tables, grills, fire rings, water pumps, etc. are accessible. ▪ Level routes onto pavilions with no changes of level from path to pavilion surface. ▪ Wider routes and clear space with firm surface around all elements so someone with mobility limits can easily move around the element (table, grill, etc.). ▪ A variety of table styles, some with clear sitting space on the side, some with extended tabletops on the end ▪ Some fixed tables to ensure they remain accessible (not moved off into a grassy or sandy area, etc.). ▪ Clear space all around each element so people can approach and use the grill, fire ring, etc. from the front, back and either side. ▪ Grills you can lower/raise the cooking surface with one hand. ▪ Raised fire building surfaces so you can place wood without leaning too far over from a standing or seated position.

Type of Recreation Facility	Universal Access Design Considerations:
Playgrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ramps and transfers. ▪ Has both ramp and transfer access to all play components. ▪ Ramps to every “getting on spot” or “sit/stand & do it spot” of every play component. ▪ Transfer system from the ground up to the main deck located near the exits of slides and climbers furthest from the ramp onto the structure. ▪ Only unitary safety surface such as poured-in-place or rubber tiles NOT any loose fill materials likes shredded rubber, wood chips, engineered wood fiber, or any other non-unitary surface material. ▪ On deck transfer platform at the entry point of every slide. ▪ On deck transfer platform with one open transfer side and one side with transfer steps to every entry/exit point of every climber, so kids climbing up can get down to the deck to move to another component, as they may have left an assistive device at the ground. ▪ A good variety of things to manipulate that make noise or music, have high contrast/bright colors, games that two kids can play (to foster social interaction), Braille and sign language panels to teach awareness, easy to operate with just one hand with a whole fist (does not require tight/pinch/grasp/wrist twist to operate). ▪ Different high contrast colors for decks versus transfers so kids with low vision can perceive a change in level. ▪ Play panels are located at heights so they can be used from a seated position or standing.
Restrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More than the minimum number of accessible units. ▪ Multiple unisex/single user toilet rooms/units so opposite sex care givers can assist; also good for parents of young children of the opposite sex so kids aren’t sent alone into the multi-user restroom. ▪ Thoughtfully located near areas of activity such as play areas, beaches, fishing piers, etc. ▪ Accessible door pulls and water faucet handles - all accessible port-a-johns, again big enough for individual use or care giver/parental assistance.
Skiing/sledding hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accessible route to top (no steps), possibly using a “magic carpet” lift ▪ Level surface for sled mounting at hilltop. ▪ If staffed, provide ATV transport or have policy that allows personal ATV use. ▪ Transfer at hill bottom to help transfers.
<p>Sports fields/courts</p> <p>Fields: soccer, football, baseball, etc.</p> <p>Courts: tennis, basketball, bocce, horseshoes, etc.</p> <p>Other: skate parks, frisbee golf</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Routes to both sides of all fields and courts, not just end zones. ▪ Accessible seating spaces both ground level and elevated if risers/bleachers are provided. ▪ Accessible seating spaces scattered throughout all viewing areas and levels with companion seating on both sides of the space. ▪ All lowered service windows at all concession areas. ▪ Wider gate openings into court areas (tennis, bocce, basketball) and skate parks to accommodate wider sports wheelchairs. ▪ Routes to both horseshoe pits and along both sides of the route between pits. ▪ Level routes onto bocce courts with sitting benches at both ends.

Type of Recreation Facility	Universal Access Design Considerations:
Trail: nature trail, walkway, pathway, etc. (Con't)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Multi-use trail - 8 feet, with slopes under 2%, wider width so two people can walk side by side or people can pass. ▪ Walkways within a site – at least 6 feet wide and have slopes under 2%. ▪ Regional trail system - at least 10 feet wide, with 1-foot buffers on either side, with slopes under 2%. ▪ Unitary surface like concrete, boardwalk or asphalt, crushed aggregate/screenings that have been “stabilized” or natural soils enhanced with soil stabilizers. ▪ Transition plates between trail and pedestrian bridges, decks, etc. ▪ Contrasting color treatment of the surface and textured surface. Treatments such as brushed concrete at intersections or interpretive stations to cue people who have vision impairments that there is something to pay attention to at that spot. ▪ Close to level cross slopes (side to side) and very gentle running slopes, no steep sections, larger (greater than 60” by 60”) level areas at all turns and intersections. ▪ Thoughtfully laid out on the site to maximize the experience with minimal difficulty. ▪ Accessible amenities such as benches, restrooms, drinking fountains, etc.

The goal of full accessibility is stated as a primary goal in the action plan outlined by the Township.

Part 6 – Recreational Programs

There are no activities or recreational programs currently provided by local nonprofit groups in the Township. There are several local organizations that want to help in any way they can, and those include the Bedford Lions Club, Bedford Masonic Lodge, Elks Lodge #131, Lakeview/Urbandale Kiwanis, Urbandale and Level Park Area Business Association. There are over a dozen churches located in the Township, and most of them will be interested in helping or participating in recreational programs in some way.

Part 7- Past Grant Status

Following is a Past Grant Inventory and breakdown of these projects and the grant and local funds expended over and above those itemized discussed above.

- | | | |
|----------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. None | Status: N/A | Grant Source: NONE |
|----------------|--------------------|---------------------------|

SECTION E – ACTION PROGRAM, CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEDULE AND RATIONALE

In defining the action program, the formulation of community goals and objectives for the provision of recreation is a vital component. The goals and objectives represent the purposes for a Township's role in providing recreation to its residents as well as outlining the direction that the Township's effort should take in the long term. Goals are the general targets for which a community aims for while objectives are the specific steps that can be taken towards that goal. A recreation plan identifies those actions that can be undertaken to implement the objectives and fulfill the Township's goals. The goals and objectives for the Township in meeting the recreation needs of residents are outlined below.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal 1

PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY-BASED RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES THAT IMPROVE THE OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF BEDFORD AREA RESIDENTS.

Objectives:

The various input received from the Township during this planning process has provided many suggestions for improvements in the park facilities and recreational programs. The Township will continue to use these suggestions to guide their planning for the future.

Potential Actions:

- A. Continue to add amenities and support facilities to the current Township park facilities based upon community input and current needs of the community.
- B. Provide recreational opportunities for people with disabilities.
- C. Ensure that improvements and upgrades to existing park facilities are handicap accessible, where feasible.
- D. Construct restroom facilities, play areas, ADA parking, picnic facilities and other recreational facilities as priority items identified in community workshops.
- E. Promote low water and native planting restoration whenever practical especially in the addition of bioswales, rain gardens and stabilization plantings in areas of erosion.
- F. Look at options for improving educational and interpretive signage in all the parks including signs for persons of various disabilities.

Goal 2

PROVIDE QUALITY LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES WITH SPECIAL CONSIDERATION GIVEN TO IMPROVE HEALTH AND FITNESS.

Objectives:

The Community's recreational facilities and programs offer the community an opportunity to enjoy nature and take part in activities that will improve health and fitness. The Township realizes the importance of providing top quality park facilities and programs and would also like to continue to improve the health and fitness of its residents.

Potential Actions:

- A. Provide both passive and active programming for a variety of ages and abilities of the population.
- B. Add recreational facilities based upon recreation trends and input from the community.

Goal 3

PROVIDE ADDITIONAL NONMOTORIZED TRAILS FOR RECREATIONAL AND TRANSPORTATION USES.

Objectives:

Providing the Township with a trail system which is our “safe highway” by connecting our schools, parks and residential areas is a high priority.

Potential Actions:

- A. Create an accessible trail system in the Township area with a focus on continuing to connect our existing parks, neighbors and destination points.
- B. Connect a future Township trail system to neighboring communities.
- C. Explore cooperative efforts with the surrounding communities to promote, manage, oversee, plan and seek joint funding for trails in the regional area and to avoid duplication of efforts and to enhance the connectability of the trails and ensure the best regional outcomes.
- D. Develop system of wayfinding signage to aid users in navigating and utilizing park facilities.

Goal 4

PROVIDE RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES THAT FOCUS AND TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF BEDFORD AREA WATER RESOURCES.

Objectives:

Many residents have commented on the natural beauty of our trails and parks in the Township which utilize the Kalamazoo River as a focal point. They also responded that they also felt it was important to develop recreational opportunities that take advantage of what our river has to offer. This can be very important to local residents as well as those interested in visiting the community. The Kalamazoo River recreational opportunities can be seen as an economic development tool.

Potential Actions:

- A. Develop opportunities with other agencies in our community to educate our residents about our local natural resources.
- B. Enhance fishing, canoeing and kayaking opportunities on the Kalamazoo River.
- C. Enhance and expand our use of our natural resources for festivals and special events.
- D. Promote stormwater run-off quality control measures to improve water habitat for fish.

Goal 5

ACQUIRE AND RETAIN PUBLIC LAND FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

Objectives:

As the Township continues to grow our local officials need to be conscious of the need for acquiring additional park land as it becomes available.

Potential Actions:

- A. Retain existing parkland and acquire new public lands to meet the future recreational needs of the community.
- B. Preserve and protect open space and other important natural features in the Township.
- C. Develop programs for evaluating future land acquisition.
- D. Preserve floodplains and wetlands for recreation purposes whenever possible.

- E. Acquire property adjacent to existing park properties whenever possible to allow for the greatest flexibility and offer economy of sharing infrastructure when expanding or adding recreation activities to existing dedicated parklands.

Goal 6

CREATE COMMUNITY AWARENESS OF THE TOWNSHIP RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND PROMOTE THEM TO OUR LOCAL CITIZENS AS WELL AS TO THE VISITORS OF THE TOWNSHIP.

Objectives:

Make residents and visitors aware of all the parks that are available in our Township.

Potential Actions:

- A. Develop additional print and web-based media to describe existing recreational opportunities available to the residents of our service area.
- B. Develop additional print and web-based media to describe and highlight our existing park facilities.

Goal 7

DEVELOP A SYSTEM OF PARK FACILITIES THAT PROMOTE FOUR SEASON USE.

Objectives:

Provide residents with opportunities for recreation that provide multiple seasons of use within the Township and the respective park facilities.

Potential Actions:

- A. Construct compatible yet diverse uses within the parks that promote spring, summer, fall and winter uses.
- B. Explore options for all-season facilities such as warming shelters and restrooms in the parks as appropriate.
- C. Review options for winter ice skating area.
- D. Explore options for recreational programs with the four area schools.

Goal 8

CONTINUE THE IMPROVEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN CONCEPTS AT ANY AND ALL TOWNSHIP PARK LOCATIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH A SPECIFIC PARK'S DEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN.

Objectives:

Develop new and expanded facilities and programs at the park including new restrooms, picnic facilities, paved parking, walking paths, new play equipment and lighting.

Potential Actions:

- A. Improve restroom facilities.
- B. Provide for universally accessible play areas, picnic facilities and shelters.
- C. Provide for paved parking areas and trails to provide barrier-free access to all areas.
- D. Provide additional non-motorized trails to better connect Township destinations and areas.
- E. Improve signage for any visually or physically impaired park users.

Goal 9

TO ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE TOWNSHIP BY PROVIDING MULTIGENERATIONAL, FULLY ACCESSIBLE AND SAFE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES THAT ARE RESPONSIVE TO THE NEEDS OF ALL RESIDENTS WITH HIGH-QUALITY RECREATIONAL FACILITIES THAT EFFICIENTLY UTILIZE AVAILABLE RESOURCES.

Objectives:

- A. Develop a variety of recreational facilities that reflect the changing and diverse needs of the Township residents.
- B. Improve existing recreational facilities to more effectively fulfill the needs of Township residents and to encourage regular use of these facilities.
- C. Add LED solar lighting at all park facilities to improve safety.
- D. Develop certain recreational facilities as identified by the survey and needs assessment and establish priorities for their development.
- E. Utilize design, construction, and maintenance practices that maximize the benefits provided for the resources expended.
- F. Plan improvements that offer both active and passive recreation opportunities.
- G. Develop unique recreational opportunities for elderly and physically challenged citizens. Every recreational opportunity should be fully accessible to all individuals whenever possible.
- H. Provide play areas that are in conformance with the "Playground Equipment Safety Act."

Goal 10

CREATE NEW PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION.

Objectives:

As Michigan continues to struggle, it is important to take advantage of collaborations and partnerships as a cost-effective way to offer recreational programs in the Township.

Potential Actions:

- A. Coordinate existing recreational projects and programs with the four area school districts, Calhoun County, Pennfield Charter Township, Ross Township, City of Springfield, City of Battle Creek, MDOT, and volunteer groups and look for ways to utilize existing facilities as well as expanding recreational programs as new facilities are developed.
- B. Encourage the cooperation and participation of adjacent communities in the formation of a regional recreational advisory board in an effort to combine resources and avoid duplication of facilities and services.
- C. Utilize public and private-sector cooperation in the promotion of recreation and the improvement of recreational opportunities.
- D. Encourage the participation of volunteers in the development of recreational facilities.

Goal 11

TO PROVIDE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES THAT PRESERVE AND PROTECT THE NATURAL AND HISTORICAL FEATURES WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP.

Objectives:

- A. Identify and inventory those natural and historical features that reflect the unique character of the Township.
- B. Minimize the impact of recreational activities on the integrity of the Township's natural and historical resources.
- C. Take advantage of the extensive Kalamazoo River frontage for recreational development.
- D. Purchase waterfront or green space properties as opportunities arise.

Goal 12

TO CONTINUALLY IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF AND THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR RECREATION IN THE TOWNSHIP BY REASSESSING COMMUNITY RECREATION NEEDS, TRENDS AND CHARACTERISTICS.

Objectives:

- A. Periodically update this Recreation Plan.
- B. Develop an expanded survey to ensure public needs and desires in areas of parks & recreation.
- C. Expand and develop community park advocates through the ongoing efforts of the existing parks & recreation advisory board.
- D. Provide opportunities for the involvement of Township residents in the identification, selection, and development of recreational facilities.
- E. Monitor the effectiveness of the Township's efforts in fulfilling identified goals and objectives by providing opportunities for residents to evaluate the progress of recreational development.
- F. Monitor the effectiveness of the Township's efforts in providing fully accessible opportunities for Township residents.
- G. Facilitate regular meetings of the Park & Recreation Advisory Committee.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

A variety of factors, including community characteristics, population trends, existing recreation facilities and identified recreation needs, contribute to the formulation of specific recommendations for plan implementation. These specific recommendations represent the actions that can be undertaken to achieve the objectives that have been directed towards the Township's recreation goals. These recommended actions also represent the substance and purpose of a recreation plan that is the development of a strategy for effectively closing the gap between existing recreation opportunities and recreation needs. A general statement can be made that all of the properties currently operated as park facilities in the Township lack facilities such as paved parking areas, paved walks and restroom facilities. This is a primary concern regarding ADA accessibility at all the Township parks.

In instances of emerging areas of recreational needs, such as the development of non-motorized trails, it is logical to expect that the project limits will need to be established by the identification of key connection points that should not be excluded or limited by geo-political boundaries. The Township should explore the cooperation and participation of adjacent communities such as Ross Township, Pennfield Charter Township, City of Springfield, City of Battle Creek and Calhoun County in the formation

of a regional recreational advisory board in an effort to combine resources and avoid duplication of facilities and services.

In the opening discussions with members of the Planning Commission and Township residents, a common goal of the need for the development and improvements of the following were top priorities:

- 1) Ardmoor Park
 - a. Solar lighting
 - b. Bleachers
 - c. Picnic Tables
 - d. Grills
 - e. Pavilion-Metal Carport
 - f. Playground Equipment
 - g. Compost Toilets
 - h. Universally Accessible Paths
 - i. Universally Accessible Parking

- 2) Markham Park
 - a. Solar Lighting
 - b. Dog Park
 - c. Splash Pad
 - d. Nature Trails
 - e. Disc Golf
 - f. Compost Toilets
 - g. Bike Trails
 - h. Playground Equipment
 - i. Universally Accessible Paths
 - j. Universally accessible Parking

- 3) Skeets Gehrman Park
 - a. Facelift/update Paint
 - b. Solar Lighting
 - c. Compost Toilets
 - d. Message Board
 - e. Playground Equipment
 - f. Splash Pad
 - g. Universally Accessible Paths
 - h. Universally Accessible Parking

The following recommendation and capital improvement schedule outlines and assigns relative priorities to activities and projects that can be implemented in both the short-term and long-range future to improve recreational opportunities in the Township. Those activities and projects that can be undertaken during the five-year planning period (2020-2024) have been summarized in a Capital Improvement Program Schedule (**Table 4**). This schedule includes cost estimates as well as possible funding sources for each suggested project.

While these projects are recommended for implementation during the planning period, they are highly dependent upon financial and administrative feasibility. It is also suggested that the Township take advantage of any unscheduled opportunities that may arise. Such opportunities can be evaluated and included in this plan as an amendment to the schedule.

TABLE 4
Capital Improvement Schedule

Year	Project	Est. Cost	Justification	Funding Source
2020	Various Parks – Add LED solar lighting.	\$15,000	Goal 9	\$15,000 Local Match Donations/Foundations
2021	Ardmoor Park – Bleachers, picnic tables, grills, pavilion, lighting, playground equipment, Vault Restroom Building and ADA Improvements – Parking, ADA walks, and rain gardens	\$275,000	Goals 1,2,7,8,9	\$275,000 MNRTF \$125,000 Local Match Donations/Foundations
2022	Various Parks – Add LED solar lighting.	\$15,000	Goal 9	\$15,000 Local Match Donations/Foundations
2023	Markham Park – Dog Park, Splash Pad, Disc Golf, lighting, playground equipment, Vault Restroom Building and ADA Improvements – Parking, ADA walks & trails, and rain gardens	\$250,000	Goals 1,2,3,7,8,9	\$250,000 MNRTF or MDOT TAP Program \$100,000 Local Match Donations/Foundations
2024	Recreation Plan Update	\$4,000	Goal 11	\$4,000 local

Abbreviations

MDNR - Michigan Department of Natural Resources
LWCF - Land and Water Conservation Fund
TAP -Transportation Alternatives Program

MDOT – Michigan Department of Transportation
MNRTF- Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund

FINANCING MECHANISMS

The following paragraphs briefly outline existing sources of funds for financing the future recreational improvements in the Township.

1. General Funds

The Township’s general fund has been the primary source of funds for operating and maintaining its current facilities. Future site improvements, acquisition and development will remain dependent on these tax-supported funds, as will the continued operation and maintenance of these facilities. Consequently, recreation planning must be coordinated with the yearly budgeting process for the Township’s general funds.

2. Donations and Gifts

The availability of donated land, labor, equipment and funds from individuals and organizations is an attractive and effective way to improve recreational opportunities in The Township. Over the past few years, several groups and individuals have contributed significantly. Such support should be encouraged to continue.

3. Multijurisdictional Funding

One of the primary goals of establishing a trail authority comprised of adjacent townships would be to establish a joint source of funding for acquisition, development and maintenance of multi-jurisdictional trail projects. It is too premature to discuss levels or formulas for financial participation/contribution, but by forming such a coalition, the individual townships will collectively be in a stronger position in seeking future matching grants than if pursuing projects individually.

4. *Non-local Financial Assistance*

Many communities seek outside sources of funds to supplement their local sources when providing recreational improvements. There are several programs administered by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) that can provide some financial assistance to local recreation projects. Funding amounts available to communities vary from year to year depending on Federal support and State legislative agendas.

The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) is a competitive grant program administered by the Michigan Department of Transportation that funds projects such as nonmotorized paths, streetscapes and historic preservation of transportation facilities that enhance Michigan's intermodal transportation system and provide safe alternative transportation options. These investments support place-based economic development by offering transportation choices, promoting walkability and improving the quality of life. The program uses Federal Transportation Funds designated by Congress for these types of activities. Some key information on the TAP program is as follows:

- Funding will be reduced from the current \$23 million a year to \$14-16 million a year. Project funding will be more competitive than previously with the average per capita award in the \$44-\$50 per person range.
- The minimum match is still 20%, however historic average is 34% and the 2011 average was 44% local match to grant. Any project request for over \$2,000,000, the total project must be 50% grant-50% match. The most favorable grant request will likely be in the \$500,000 range.
- Regional Trails will still be a priority, as will urban area streetscapes. Museums and historic preservation projects will be phased out for funding consideration.
- Preliminary grant application review with regional staff is encouraged to determine the competitive nature of the project and gather suggestions from TE staff. Project narratives should focus on intermodal transportation opportunities as they relate to the larger picture in the community, traffic calming, improving safety and improving water quality through best management practices.

The **Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF)** is administered by the MDNR. The MNRTF program utilizes the royalties from oil, gas and other mineral developments on state-owned lands to help finance the acquisition and the development of outdoor recreation facilities.

Any unit of government, including school districts, may apply for grants to develop or acquire land(s) for public recreation or resource protection purposes. Application forms are available on February 1 of each year. The application deadline is April 1 of each year. The MDNR submits a list of recommended projects to the legislature the following January and funds are available after legislative appropriation, usually the following fall.

All local units of government must provide a local match of at least 25 percent of total project costs. For **MNRTF** development projects, the minimum funding request is \$15,000 and the maximum is \$300,000. Proposals must be for outdoor recreation or resource protection purposes. Outdoor recreation support buildings and other facilities are eligible for development funding, as is the renovation of existing recreation facilities.

All applicants must have a current DNR-approved community recreation plan, documenting the need for project proposal. In addition, any private individual may nominate land for public acquisition under this program. All nominations are reviewed by the MDNR for possible acquisition and the landowner is not required to be the person nominating a parcel of land for public acquisition. Nomination forms are

available at any time from the DNR Recreation Division and may be submitted to the Department year-round.

The Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (**LWCF**) program makes money available to the States for land acquisition and development of outdoor recreation facilities. From 1965 to 1996, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) received over \$100 million in LWCF assistance for more than 1,500 projects, over 1,100 of which have been grants to local governments. The objective is to provide grants to local units of government and to the State to acquire and develop land for outdoor recreation.

Applications are evaluated on established criteria including project need, capability of the applicant and site and project quality. At least 50 percent match on either acquisition or development projects is required from local government applicants with a \$30,000 minimum and \$100,000 maximum funding limit. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) makes recommendations to the National Park Service (NPS), which grants final approval. Criteria are spelled out in the "Recreation Grants Selection Process" booklet given to all applicants.

PA 32 of 2010 created the Local Public Recreation Facilities Fund to be used for the development of public recreation facilities for local units of government. Money for this fund is derived from the sale of the **Recreation Passport** which replaces the resident Motor Vehicle Permit (MVP) — or window sticker — for state park entrance. The passport will be required for entry to state parks, recreation areas and boating access sites. Ten percent of remaining revenue will be used to fund the **Recreation Passport local grant program**. A 25% minimum local match is required for the Passport grant program with a maximum grant amount of \$150,000 and a minimum of \$7,500.

The grant program may only be used for local development projects. The program is focused on renovating and improving existing parks, but the development of new parks is eligible. In addition, projects must fulfill the following requirements in order to be eligible:

- Current annual capital improvement plan (CIP) – must include the proposed project. If your community does not have a CIP, you must have a current approved recreation plan on file with the DNR.

Organizations with an interest in developing fishing conditions in their areas may be able to get financial assistance from a program established through the **State Game and Fish Protection Fund**.

This fishing development grant is offered through the MDNR and can be as much as \$200,000 annually, in cash or in-kind services. Projects eligible for funding include culvert modifications for improved stream flow; livestock or sheet erosion control projects; the development of spawning riffles, fish cover structures, or spawning reefs; and the construction of fishing piers and rough fish barriers.

The MDNR accepts grant proposals from organized fishing groups and local units of government. In all cases, projects can approach other sources such as the federal government for additional matching funds.

The **Historic Preservation Grant Program** is administered by the Department of State with funds made available through the National Park Service of the Department of Interior. The intent of the program is to conduct surveys of architectural, engineering, archaeological and historic resources, to identify and nominate eligible properties to the National Register of Historic Places and to plan for the protection of those cultural/recreational resources.

The funds for this program are apportioned by the National Park Service directly to the State, which, in turn, allocates funds on a project-by-project basis to local governments, organizations and individuals.

In Michigan the Historic Preservation Grant program is administered by the Michigan Department of State. The amount of assistance is up to 50% of the project expenses. Grantees are reimbursed at the completion of the project for work done within the days of a contract between the Department of State and the grantee. EXPENSES INCURRED PRIOR TO THE EXECUTION OF A CONTRACT ARE NOT ALLOWABLE PROJECT COSTS AND WILL NOT BE REIMBURSED.

The **Inland Fisheries Grant Program** offers grants up to \$30,000 for projects that enhance the state's aquatic resources. This program may be applicable to the scenic overlook fishing platforms and educational kiosks.

The Township is committed to review all available funding sources and prepare the necessary plans, reports, cost estimates and funding applications, to achieve the goals of this recreation plan.

Waterways Program Grants are funded through the Michigan State Waterways Fund from state marine fuel tax and watercraft registrations. By law, administration of the Waterways Program is through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and overseen by the Department's Parks and Recreation Division.

Grants provide funding assistance for design/engineering and construction of public recreational harbor/marina and boating access site/launch facilities throughout the state. Only local units of government (Township, City, or County) and public universities are eligible. Applicants may cooperate with community/sports organizations in the implementation of projects. On-site investigation by DNR, Parks and Recreation Division staff may be required to determine suitability of proposed work. Applicants may also be required to document area boating demand. Greater priority may be given to projects for which a local applicant documents their match capabilities equal to or greater than the percentage of project cost they are required to provide. The local match can include in-kind expenses as long as they are well documented.

Applications, and all required information, must be received by 5:00 p.m., **April 1st**. If April 1st falls in a weekend, the deadline would be the last State of Michigan working day prior to April 1st. The application review and funding process for projects is from April 1st until an appropriation is approved by the Legislature. This can take up to 18 to 24 months. Notification of approval for engineering and smaller sized construction projects may occur within six months after completed application form and proper documentation are received. Funding for construction is not released until permits are secured.

5. Millage

In an effort to raise matching funds or fund projects with local money, many community leaders have placed ballot proposals before their residents for a dedicated increase in their existing mill property tax to fund park maintenance and repair, including care for new parks and newly acquired parks, compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as well as safety and security improvements. Establishment of a Park Improvement/Development, Maintenance and Repair Millage will assure that parks and facilities will be maintained at the level of quality expected by park users and that new parkland will have adequate amenities.